

## Accessibility and Accommodation Considerations

\*Please Note: This is not an exhaustive list of accommodations. For more resources on building an accessible classroom, visit [www.mataninc.org](http://www.mataninc.org)

**Everyone has a unique way of learning and each student needs different levels of support in order to succeed in a classroom setting. You will be teaching students with and without diagnosed disabilities; sometimes you will know what those are, and sometimes you won't. While certain students will require specific accommodations and modifications to lessons/activities, there are many universal features of an accessible classroom that enhance the learning experience for all students!. Here are some suggestions to consider!**

### Create a Physically Accessible Space:

- Keep the room as open as possible, allowing students with mobility needs to navigate it safely.
- Provide a variety of seating options (i.e. consider size of chairs and tables, flexible seating, standing desks, wobble chairs, or exercise bands at the bottom of chairs for fidgeting/bouncing).
- Display instructions/expectations and schedules clearly in the classroom in an age and skill appropriate manner (i.e. include visuals for non-readers and for clarity).
- Be aware of environmental factors that could lead to overstimulation such as loud noises, bright fluorescent lighting, visually distracting wall decorations, crowded spaces and intense smells.
- Create a “calm down corner” or “break space” in the classroom, if possible, where visual supports are available to assist with strategies to self-regulate.
- Provide fidget tools to students that may need them and set clear expectations on how to use them appropriately. Note: For some people, engaging in an activity that uses a sense other than what's required for the task at hand (i.e. listening to a lesson) — known as “Secondary Focusing” — can increase focus and improve performance.

### Create Accessible Content for All Students :

- Provide choices for students as much as possible (i.e. options for a variety of ways to answer questions, various writing utensils, options for how to engage in an activity, choices for the order in which to complete tasks, etc.).
- Present new content through a variety of modalities (i.e. pictures/visuals, auditorily, with a video, writing things out, etc.)
- Mix and vary activity types (i.e. a physically engaging activity followed by a seated activity, followed by a small group activity).
- Provide opportunities for pre-teaching of concepts or skills before they are formally taught in the classroom. (i.e. vocabulary word previews, definitions, etc.).
- Offer word banks, graphic organizers, sentence starters and templates for writing.
- Model expectations for activities, assignments or projects so that students understand the goals.
- Utilize “check for understanding” strategies such as having students repeat directions, asking them to summarize small parts of the lesson throughout to see if they are following, etc. These techniques provide opportunities to gauge students' level of understanding and figure out if/when to reteach material.
- “Chunking”, or breaking down tasks into smaller elements, makes it easier to manage and complete those tasks.
- Provide frequent and natural movement and brain breaks throughout class, taking into account the developmental needs of students.
- Allow wait time between a teacher asking a question and seeking a response, as well as between a student's response and the teacher's reaction.