## What is an Autism Spectrum Disorder?

**A neurobiological disorder. Affects perception.**
Communication and Social Challenges.

**Can affect motor skills. Exhibits uneven learning profile. Presents differently in everyone.**

**Sensory - easily under or over stimulated.**
Organization and prioritization challenges. Often suffers from anxiety.

## What might it look like in a classroom?

**May appear inattentive or bored. May see repetitive behaviors (rocking, finger movements).**
May display different emotions when stressed.

**May have poor awareness of body in space. Lacking organizational skills. Strong focus on one task at a time. Difficulty with group work.**

**Trouble staying on topic and maintaining conversations. Literal interpretation of words. Knowledgeable in areas of interest.**

## What are the strengths of an autistic student?

“**Out of the box**” thinker. Task oriented. Reliable, once expectations are understood.

**Ability to maintain prolonged, intense focus on subjects of interest, Excellent long term and rote memory.**

**Excellent visual-spatial skills, Intelligent, Strong attention to detail.**

## What are the challenges of an autistic student?

May misread social cues. Stress relieving activities may make other uncomfortable. Intelligence and large vocabulary may hide challenges.

**Sensory perception can interfere with learning. Multi-tasking is extremely difficult. Difficulty with changes and how transitions are communicated.**

**Limited sense of time/use of time. Difficulty with changes and how transitions are communicated. Limited sense/use of time. May be stressed with group work.**

## What can I do to help support this student’s learning?

- Provide quiet areas for learning and test taking
- Respect student’s chosen level of eye contact
- Allow for sensory items
- Provide hands on learning and visual aids

- Provide peer mentors
- Allow extra transition time
- Allow for adjusted seating placement
- When under stress, ask if the student would like to leave for a few moments

- Talk to the student and find out what they like/need
- Allow more time
- Provide step by step written instruction
- Talk to the student and find out what they like/need