



Alexander County Schools Autism Team Newsletter

November 2021

2021-2022 Autism Team Meeting Date Schedule:

- December 16th at 3:30pm
- January 20th at 3:30pm
- February 17th at 3:30pm
- March 17th at 3:30pm
- April 28th at 3:30pm
- May 19th at 3:30pm

***All meetings will be held
by Zoom until further
notice*

Core Members of the 2021-2022 Autism Team:

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Helpful Classroom Strategy - Alternative Lighting

Many students with Autism experience hypersensitivity and hyposensitivity. These students may be over-responsive and under-responsive to stimuli. These responses can lead to sensory overload, where the student's ability to cope is completely overwhelmed.

Sometimes simple environmental changes can impact a student's sensory response. Think of it as an accommodation to the environment. We have accommodations and modifications for academics, so why not consider accommodations and modifications for the classroom environment? These changes in the environment can assist students in processing information from their senses and produce desirable responses.

Lighting is one strategy that can be used in classrooms to affect sensory responses of students. Most classrooms have a lot of lights that are LED or fluorescent. These lights may be too bright or make noise to some students. This can cause a distraction, sensory overload, or in some cases cause mi-

graines. Some alternative lighting solutions include using only half of the overhead lights, using lamps instead of overhead lights, utilizing ActivPanels or smart boards as a source of light, opening blinds or curtains, or covering the overhead lights. These are easy solutions to consider when adapting the classroom environment to help sensory sensitivities and important considerations to be discussed through school-based problem solving teams such as the Student Support Team, 504 Team, and/or IEP Team.

In order to support students with Autism in Alexander County Schools, the Alexander County Autism Team has materials available to support students with Autism in the total school environment. We have a lending library of resources including blue magnetic light covers. If you would like to request light covers to change the environment in a classroom, please contact a core team member of the Alexander County Autism Team.

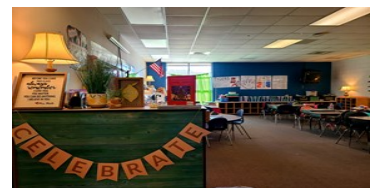
*Mrs. Smith's classroom at
Alexander Central High School*



*Mrs. Wills and Mrs.
Fincannon's classrooms at
Ellendale Elementary*



*Mrs. Steele's classroom at
Ellendale Elementary*



Consultation with the Autism Team



The mission of the Alexander County Schools Autism Team is designed to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder throughout the total school environment. In order to do this successfully, the core team members of the Autism Team are here to support school staff through consultation services. We can offer a range of services including problem-solving

individual student needs or skill deficits to examining systemic functioning within a specific classroom, grade level, or school. The Autism Team hopes to provide services to school staff to ensure that each student thrives within our district. Please reach out to one of our core team members with questions or concerns as we are here to help!