

Strategies to Support & Engage Individuals with Special Needs

- Establishing a good structure: visual schedules & routines
- Warnings/prompts for transitions from one activity to another
- Use of a visual timer or clock on your phone/app to help prepare student for transitions
- Giving choices, either of which is acceptable to the instructor/volunteer
- Giving clear directions to students: HOW they are given is VERY important for students to understand and agree to compliance
- Make your directions short and succinct
- Don't talk down to the students, especially if they are older; be respectful of age
- Never assume that someone cannot understand your speech. Always talk to the student, no matter the disability...not the parent, caregiver or interpreter
- Often a comfort toy or activity to assist with transitions
- A sensory box with a transition/favorite toy, special snack & sensory items can be created for your student to help with times during class when the activity is not appropriate/too challenging/uninteresting and/or during a sensory break