Joseph, a student with autism in Ms. Mendez’s inclusion kindergarten class, experienced difficulty attending during group activities. He spent a significant amount of time looking at his hands and quoting parts of his favorite videos. Attempts to engage Joseph resulted in vocal protests and, at times, mild aggression. Ms. Mendez realized that she needed to address those behaviors but was unsure of how to do so. She consulted with an Intervention Assistance Team (IAT) whose members had experience designing appropriate interventions for the problem behaviors of students with autism. They generated a number of hands-on activities to help Joseph maintain his visual engagement during the group learning activity. This article describes empirically supported, field-tested strategies that have resulted in increased engagement and fewer problem behaviors for Joseph and other students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) who are being educated in inclusive classrooms.

Recent legislation supporting the right of all students to access the general education curriculum and instructional environment, along with empirical support attesting to the efficacy of inclusive education (see box, “What Does the Literature Say?”), has redefined the roles of special education teachers, general education teachers, paraprofessionals, and other service providers whose expertise is required for teaching students with disabilities in inclusive educational venues. Many students with disabilities are now included in general education classes for a majority of the school day. Their success in that environment often depends on the collective expertise of educational professionals working together to assist the student in attaining prosocial and proacademic goals. This statement is certainly true for students with ASD, many of whom are now instructed exclusively in general education classes.

The increased numbers of students with ASD that educators encounter in mainstream settings result not only from legal and empirical support for this placement option but also from increases in the incidence of this disorder. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2006) reported that the occurrence of autism has increased from 2 to 6 children per 1000. Between 1994 and 2003, the number of students receiving special education services with an autism diagnosis increased six-fold. Even those figures may be underestimated, because not all children with ASD receive special education services under that label.

Students diagnosed with ASD often present unique and challenging behaviors that impede their success in inclusive classrooms. For example, they may demonstrate perseverative and self-stimulatory behaviors, impairments in social interactions and relationships, and impaired communication and language skills. As a result, they often display a limited range of interests, lack peer relationships, and resist participation in games and activities (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2000), all of which are contrary to common characteristics for same-grade peers in general education settings. Those deficits can jeopardize student learning, not only because they interfere with relationships but also because they interfere with the learning environment for students with ASD as well as for others. In addition,
What Does the Literature Say About Including Students With ASD?

Despite ongoing debate, the inclusion of students with ASD in general education classes continues to be a recommended practice. It is, first of all, considered a civil right that has been supported by legislation since Public Law 94-142 was passed in 1975. This landmark legislation along with other legislation passed soon after made discrimination against persons on the basis of the presence of a disability illegal. Additionally, persons with disabilities are guaranteed a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. The 1990 amendment (IDEA) to this law increased the protection of student rights by adding that every child should receive a free and appropriate education that is individualized to meet specific needs (Schreibman, 2005). More recently, the 2004 amendments to IDEA continue to support inclusion for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment that is appropriate for the student.

Another reason inclusion receives continued support is that it has been found to result in gains in social development (Schreibman, 2005). Learning to function with various types of people in more complex group settings offers important benefits for students with disabilities. When placed in restrictive settings, students with ASD tend to interact with instructors rather than develop peer relationships (Donnellan, Mesaros, & Anderson, 1984). Researchers have found that, when compared with those enrolled in self-contained programs, students who participated in inclusive programs improved as much or more in the area of social competence (Fisher & Meyer, 2002).

Finally, support for inclusion is based on reports of positive academic outcomes. Although results of studies have been mixed (Harrower & Dunlap, 2001), evidence has suggested that inclusion increases academic gains, particularly for those who demonstrate greater intellectual abilities (Schreibman, 2005).

The professional literature does provide teachers with information based on research findings. Rogers (2000), however, noted that strategies researched in well-controlled laboratory settings may be difficult for classroom teachers to implement. Some authors, therefore, have suggested that educators be provided more detailed information regarding effective interventions for students with ASD that are not only evidence-based but also field-tested—ones that are, therefore, effective and practical for use in applied settings (Marks et al., 2003).

This article provides empirically supported, evidence-based intervention strategies that have also been field-tested and found effective for improving academic and social skills in early childhood and early elementary age students with ASD who are being educated in inclusive settings. Reviewing the professional literature and constructing a repertoire of strategies that are either based on, or adapted from, empirical studies that substantiate their effectiveness in remedying social and academic skills deficits of students with ASD initially derived these interventions. Each strategy in the repertoire was categorized for its effectiveness in increasing auditory, visual, social, or physical engagement, the four main areas in which many of the behavioral characteristics and skills deficits associated with ASD can be classified (APA, 2000). Then, when a student with ASD exhibited difficulty engaging in inclusive instructional activities, the IAT, co-teacher, or general education teacher responsible for the student’s education referred to the repertoire of strategies and designed an intervention that was individually tailored to the student’s skills deficits and the demands of the task at hand. Finally, the interventions field-tested and found effective in these applied, elementary and early childhood settings were selected as the basis for current recommendations.

Strategies researched in well-controlled laboratory settings may be difficult for classroom teachers to implement.

An important point to note is that each of the recommended interventions can be modified and tailored to a student’s unique engagement difficulties and linked with baseline assessment data. They are, therefore, compatible with Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM; Shapiro, 2004) and other evidence-based assessment methods suitable for documenting a student’s response to intervention (RTI). Finally, each strategy has the potential of being adapted to a single-subject research design based on Differential Reinforcement of an Incompatible (DRI) behavior as the treatment variable (Alberto & Troutman, 2003, chap. 8). Strategies, therefore, have the advantage of reducing inappropriate behavior by increasing the engagement of the student in proacademic and prosocial behavior. This feature is important to the success of these strategies, because inappropriate behaviors have been shown to decrease when on-task behaviors increase (Watanabe & Sturmey, 2003).

Auditory Engagement

Students demonstrate auditory engagement by following verbal instructions and responding to questions from both teachers and peers regarding the task at hand. However, communication impairments characteristic of individuals with autism include difficulty comprehending-
ing language (APA, 2000). Many students with ASD are unable to efficiently process auditory input and may miss verbal cues or withdraw during verbal instruction. Teachers of students with ASD often observe that they have difficulty listening to and following directions, especially during large-group, inclusive activities. In that situation, auditory focus cues, such as ringing a bell or rhythmic clapping, that cue the whole group to become silent can be given to gain students' attention before instruction is delivered. Additionally, music has been found to help individuals with autism attain both behavioral and communication objectives (Kaplan & Steele, 2005). Therefore, during more challenging instructional events, such as transitions and extended listening activities, some children with ASD are more engaged if language is presented in song (Grandin, 2002).

**Using Songs to Facilitate Transitions**

When teachers transition from one activity to another, the likelihood of misbehavior increases (Kounin, 1977). Such transition times can be especially difficult for students with autism, as they require shifts in attention and behavior. A song indicating that it is time for a change in activity may help gain students' attention by cueing the required behaviors. By selecting songs for common transitions, students learn what transition is occurring, where they are to go, and what they are to do. The song must consistently be associated with the same transition for the strategy to be effective during the acquisition phase of learning to comply with transition requests. Teachers can measure the effectiveness of this strategy by documenting the level of prompting needed or the length of time required by the students to complete the transition. 

*Example.* Judy, a 7-year-old first-grade student with autism, was easily distracted when the class was directed to put away materials. Although she initiated clean up, she soon began to perseverate on the items. Her behavior was noticed and reported by disapproving classmates, but when the teacher attempted to verbally redirect her behavior, Judy resisted and sometimes became disruptive. The teacher solved the problem by teaching the class the familiar children's song, "Clean Up, Clean Up, Everybody, Everywhere." Initially, a classroom aide provided physical prompts requiring Judy to put away toys to the rhythm of the song. As the prompts were faded, the song was a sufficient reminder of what she should be doing, and she was able to stay on task.

**Using Songs During Listening Activities**

To be successfully included in general education classes, students with ASD must be able to participate in group activities, such as circle time and story time. These activities require higher level listening skills that are difficult for some students with ASD and may result in inattention and self-stimulatory behavior. To maintain engagement throughout such activities, one helpful tactic is to intersperse brief songs within verbal instruction, especially when the student with ASD seems to be "drifting" off task.

*Example.* Jose, a 5-year-old kindergarten student, was more interested in quoting his favorite movies than attending to circle activities. Knowing that he enjoys music, his teacher began singing the days of the week before the opening activities and discussion of the calendar. She continued this approach throughout circle time, using songs to introduce the next topic. She monitored Jose's attention level by noting the frequency and duration of eye contact and his ability to respond appropriately to topic-related questions, then inserted songs as needed to maintain the group's focus.

**Visual Engagement**

Typically, students demonstrate visual engagement by looking at instructors or social partners, as well as the materials being presented and discussed. Students with autism, however, may become fixated on the movement of objects in the classroom and may also attend to other inappropriate visual stimuli (APA, 2000). This tendency is problematic because visual engagement is a necessary requisite for increasing social and academic independence, maintaining focus on salient information required for academic skill mastery, and observing age-appropriate social skills. Visual engagement is especially difficult in larger inclusive classrooms owing to the complexity of the environment. The inability of students with ASD to stay appropriately engaged often interferes with their acquisition of essential social skills and academic behaviors. The use of visual aids has
been recommended to elicit a higher level of appropriate social and academic behavior on a variety of tasks in both experimental and natural learning environments (Quill, 1995), and they are equally adaptable and effective for use in applied educational settings.

**Increasing Independence**

The inability of students with autism to function independently is often evident in their lack of age-appropriate, goal-directed behavior. They also exhibit little variety and creativity in the high-frequency, free-time activities they choose (Schreibman, 2005). As a result, to participate in routine classroom activities they require excessive prompting, which can be difficult for teachers to provide in inclusive classrooms. The use of visual schedules and a variety of modeling techniques can be used to increase their independence and reduce the need for continuous teacher intervention.

**Using Visual Schedules**

Visual schedules are particularly helpful to students with autism because they clearly indicate what has been completed and what must be done next (Marks et al., 2003). These aids have been found to be effective in reducing the latency time between activities and in increasing students' ability to transition independently (Dettmer, Simpson, Myles, & Ganz, 2000). This strategy is easily implemented in inclusive settings, because most classroom activities are composed of component parts that can be represented visually in sequence to create schedules made up of photographs, drawings, or words (Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication-handicapped Children, 2004).

**Example.** A problem tolerating the schedule existed for 6-year-old Steven who enjoyed circle time but preferred the following activity. He continuously interrupted the class by asking what was next and when circle time would be finished. The teacher tried rewarding him for speaking when given permission, but this strategy failed to decrease his interruptions. Recognizing his dependence on the teacher for schedule information, the IAT recommended a visual schedule of circle-time activities for the class. Each activity (greetings, calendar, weather, book, and song) was represented by a drawing, which, when completed, was removed from the schedule, revealing what would occur next. As Steven learned to monitor the schedule, he could see progress toward a preferred activity and was able to attend without interrupting.

**Visual Engagement—Calendar Book**

Visual schedules are particularly helpful to students with autism.

**Example.** Jose attended a general education kindergarten class during free centers, which included mathematics, reading, writing, art, and “dress-up.” His teacher chose the centers in which he was to participate and arranged digital pictures sequentially to create a schedule. She then placed it in a location that Jose could easily access and taught him to look at the first item on the schedule and then proceed to the correct location. On completion of the first activity, Jose was taught through the use of faded prompts to remove the picture representing the completed activity and proceed to the next. This intervention resulted in his acquiring the ability to transition independently. To reinforce the use of the schedule, when he had completed it, Jose was given free time during which he chose and engaged in a highly preferred activity.

**Incorporating Models for Play**

Children with autism tend to play with toys inappropriately or self-stimulate using parts of the toys (Schreibman, 2005). This atypical behavior interferes with their inclusion in general education classrooms because it sets them apart from their general education peers. Providing models that elicit appropriate play is, therefore, helpful. By being shown photographs of predefined structures of such items as interlocking cubes, blocks, and train tracks, students who have difficulty developing
and executing original ideas are provided with a model to copy. As a result, students use the materials as intended and engage in fewer stereotypical activities, as can be documented by recording the duration of time spent engaged in appropriate play.

Example. Isaac enjoyed building block structures; however, he tended to build the same structure several times and then lose interest in the activity. After analyzing this behavior, his special education co-teacher intervened by placing 10 digital photographs of pre-made block structures in the tub of blocks. Isaac was then referred to the photos and instructed to copy the structures, thus maintaining his focus in the inclusive activity for longer periods of time. As a result, he was able to engage in age-appropriate behavior and independently meet a general education academic expectation. As his skill in block building increased, the co-teacher provided increasingly complex models for Isaac.

Maintaining Academic Group Focus

Many activities in general education, early childhood classrooms involve students' sitting as a group while attending to teachers and materials positioned in front of the class. Even though this skill is a necessary requisite for successful inclusion, it can be challenging for students with ASD, many of whom have difficulty recognizing relevant information in visually complex environments. Marks et al. (2003) recommended using "hands-on" support materials that helped students with Asperger's syndrome follow along with the information presented during instruction in general education settings. This suggestion was field-tested and found effective for students with ASD in an early childhood classroom. The students increased task completion within the required timeframe and decreased the need for redirection to task.

Following Information Presented on Boards

Teachers' use of bulletin boards and chalkboards to display information is common practice. Such visual aids are often arranged to reflect topics discussed during circle time and other group activities. Some of the larger boards typically display such information as morning routines and spelling word lists. Children with autism may have difficulty attending to this information, as it is typically placed at a distance and in a visual field surrounded by other complex stimuli. Providing small individual replicas of the information presented on the boards for the student to hold or place on his or her desk is helpful for increasing engagement and maintaining the student's group focus.

Example. Even though given preferential seating, Nathan had difficulty following along with the bulletin board materials used during circle time. His teacher, therefore, created a "hands-on" model of the bulletin board by creating miniature symbolic icons and arranging them on a laminated file folder. She then gave this folder to Nathan so that he could hold and refer to it throughout the activity. When she realized that another student was having similar difficulties, she created a book with each page representing a circle-time activity. The students initially required physical prompts to follow along, but as they demonstrated increasing independence, the paraprofessionals were able to reduce, and eventually eliminate, this assistance.

Following Stories Read Aloud

Story time led by both teachers and peers is often part of the daily schedule for young students in general education classrooms. This activity builds important listening and language skills necessary for elementary school success. Students with ASD may have difficulty attending to the story, as they are, again, required to focus on instruction and materials from a distance. On the basis of success in their practice, Marks et al. (2003) recommended remedying this situation by providing students with their own copy of the materials, thereby enabling them to turn the pages and read along with the teacher.

Example. Miss Cowley, however, found that this recommendation was not always practical in inclusive settings, for example, when two copies of reading materials are not always available. So she adapted this idea for use with Marcus, a student in her class who engaged in self-stimulatory behavior during story time. To increase his engagement, she devised simple, teacher-made books that reflected the story's main concepts and that proved to be equally effective in maintaining his group focus. The success of this
Intervention was evident in his increased ability to respond to questions related to the material.

**Identifying Salient Information**

Children with autism tend to perseverate, having difficulty disengaging their attention and shifting from one visual stimulus to another (Landry & Bryson, 2004). In addition, they may be unable to filter excessive information and focus on main concepts and ideas. Because general education classrooms tend to be more visually complex than those that are more restrictive, this impairment may significantly interfere with students' ability to participate successfully in inclusive activities. Therefore, a recommended tactic for teachers is to highlight salient information for students with autism (Marks et al., 2003). This approach can be employed during group instruction by using materials that can be removed and presented within close visual proximity to the student.

*Example.* Although Ms. Mendez pointed to the bulletin board to indicate what was being discussed, Joseph still had difficulty focusing on the relevant information. After consulting with the IAT, she modified the calendar bulletin board so that the days of the week and months of the year were printed on cards and attached with Velcro. Then, when discussing each topic, for example, “today,” “tomorrow,” and “yesterday,” she removed that card from the board and presented it to him. Ms. Mendez repeated this procedure each time the topic changed and found that Joseph required fewer redirections and responded to questions and instructions more appropriately.

### Social Engagement

Social engagement can be described as active participation in classroom activities. Students evidence this skill by responding to social initiations and questions from others, expressing individual wants and needs, and interacting with peers. The social skills deficits characteristic of students with ASD include impairments in these skill areas and often result in the delayed development of interpersonal relationships (APA, 2000). Instead of engaging with others, these students are often content to spend excessive amounts of time engaged in self-stimulatory behaviors while avoiding other, more social activities (Schreibman, 2005). Because successful inclusion requires the ability to socialize and participate in a variety of interactive tasks, these deficits must be addressed. Requiring responses to questions, encouraging the student to make choices, and facilitating interaction with peers are several ways to enhance social engagement and can be embellished by additional teacher structure and clarity.

### Requiring Responses

Teachers can encourage social engagement by simply asking questions throughout instructional activities and facilitating responses through the use of prompts and social reinforcement. As students with ASD begin responding to social interactions initiated by others, the probability that communication and joint attention will occur increases. As a result, these students become more aware of others and learn that they are expected to respond (Whalen & Schreibman, 2003). As this process occurs, the teacher can begin decreasing prompts and thinning the schedule of reinforcement required during the acquisition of those skills.

*Example.* During story time, one teacher found that students with autism were helped to be engaged with a task by frequently being asked simple questions about the information presented, such as, “What color is the bear?” or “How many monkeys are on the bed?” She also found that their attention increased when she checked for understanding by asking questions that required the students to immediately repeat a piece of information. For example, during calendar, she engaged a student by saying, “Today is Monday. Holly, what day is today?” Having the class respond in unison and using choral readings are effective variations of this technique that enhance the engagement of all students.

### Encouraging Choice Making

Reinhartsen, Garfinkle, and Wolery (2002) found that children's engagement in free play increased when they chose their toys. Favorable results were also found when students were given choices during teacher-assigned tasks; disruptive behaviors were reported to decrease while engagement increased (Moes, 1998). Those strategies have also been adapted to increase social engagement of students with ASD during instruction in inclusive settings, and have been found to be beneficial. During more structured work periods in which educational objectives were clearly specified, engagement was increased by allowing students to choose their own materials (i.e., crayon or marker; paper or white board). When participating in less structured activities, such as free centers, students were allowed to select the actual tasks that constituted their visual schedules. To monitor progress, students' engagement can be measured according to the duration or frequency of appropriate use of
materials and the frequency of competing behaviors.

Example. Billy, a 5-year-old with autism, had no difficulty during free centers but resisted more structured academic tasks. He was particularly resistant during mathematics, so his teacher encouraged choices within the math activities by allowing him to select both work materials, such as manipulative teddy bears or dinosaurs, for a counting activity and the sequence of assignments. When he was given some control in making choices, his attention to academic tasks increased and his resistance decreased.

Facilitating Peer Interaction

Facilitating interactions with typically developing peers also enhances social engagement. Reinhartsen et al. (2002) found that this outcome is more effectively accomplished when children are actively engaged in choosing the task; therefore, teachers may find students with autism are benefited by choosing activities and then having peers join in. Most likely, a preferred and familiar activity will be chosen, allowing the students to invest more attention in the interaction.

Example. Ms. Mendez found that her students with autism excel in completing puzzles, and they seem to enjoy sequencing tasks. She facilitated interaction among these students and their general education peers by having them complete an alphabet floor puzzle together. Prompting the students with autism to request the next letter in sequence or respond to peers’ questions, such as “What’s next?” enhanced their communication with peers, as demonstrated by the number of responses given and the duration of shared attention to the task.

Physical Engagement

Students demonstrate physical engagement in classroom activities by maintaining appropriate body posture and correctly using materials related to the task at hand. However, children with autism commonly engage in repetitive motor movements with their hands or their whole bodies (APA, 2000). During tasks that require sitting and listening, which are common in general education classrooms, these stereotypical behaviors are more likely to occur and result in decreased attention to task. Students with ASD can be physically engaged by providing an appropriate object to hold, incorporating opportunities to move, and including observation and imitation activities.

Providing Objects to Hold

One suggested practice that reduces stereotypical behaviors and engages students with ASD is the provision of an appropriate object to hold (Dahle, 2003). Giving the student a small item, such as a squishy ball, to hold and reinforcing the alternative behavior at varying intervals can be helpful in decreasing inappropriate hand movements. This approach, however, can be distracting to some students, so the use of manipulative materials that reflect the task at hand may be more beneficial.

Example. Daniel’s struggle with circle time included difficulty controlling self-stimulatory hand movements. To remedy this problem, Miss Cowley created a handheld replica of the calendar bulletin board using Velcro to attach the days, months, and weather conditions. When talking about today, she prompted Daniel to move the correct icon to the “today” space in his book as she moved the card on the bulletin board. To assess the effectiveness of this intervention, a classroom aide took a weekly tally of the number of times self-stimulatory behaviors occurred during circle time, and found that as Daniel’s independence in using these materials increased, the frequency of his self-stimulatory behaviors decreased.

Incorporating Opportunities for Movement

Throughout activities that require extensive sitting and listening, students with autism are helped by being given opportunities to move about. As a result, the students become actively engaged in the group activity and are less likely to withdraw. One way to accomplish this end is by having them assist in completing simple tasks that permit them to leave their seats and act as “teacher’s helpers.”

Example. Ms. Mendez noticed that Alan had difficulty sitting still and attending to instructional activities. To address this issue, she incorporated ways to allow him to physically assist her. For example, when reading a story to the class, Ms. Mendez allowed Alan to turn pages when instructed. During calendar activities, she had him point to the days of the week as the class sang. When it was another student’s turn to act as calendar helper, she encouraged
Alan's involvement by asking him to "Please give the pointer to Matthew." By affording him brief opportunities to move about and assist in group activities, Ms. Mendez found that Alan was less withdrawn and more attentive.

**Including Imitation Activities**

Finally, the ability to imitate is a core deficit for children with autism and is important to address, because it is related to play, communication, and other social behaviors (Schreibman, 2005). Increasing engagement can be further accomplished by including activities that focus on the development of this skill, because naturalistic imitation training had been shown to result in gains in object imitation, spontaneous language, and joint attention (Ingersoll & Schreibman, 2006). Incorporating imitation in classroom activities increases student engagement and is evidenced as the observation of, and response to, others' actions.

*Example.* Some teachers incorporate books that encourage movement during story time, for example, *From Head to Toe* by Eric Carle (1997). Others have used music to engage students, for instance, by encouraging imitative actions through dance. As students develop imitation skills during structured activities, the teacher can then shift the focus to encouraging the imitation of prosocial behaviors during other activities.

**Final Thoughts**

In summary, the intervention strategies suggested here are intended to be unobtrusive methods for increasing the probability that students with ASD will maintain academic engagement in instructional activities. The normalized behaviors promoted by these strategies are likely to determine whether the inclusion of these students in general education classrooms is successful. An important point to note is that many of the interventions recommended are useful for increasing the engagement of all students, both those with ASD and other class members, because they are used during group activities in which all students participate. Other interventions are individually prescribed but can be adapted for use with any student who has an attention deficit, regardless of whether the student is identified with ASD. Evidence has long shown (Kounin, 1966) that teachers who are most effective in managing the behavior of general education students are also more effective in managing the behavior of students with behavioral issues. Most of the strategies recommended here are thus designed for increasing teacher effectiveness in general as well as increasing the engagement of individual students with ASD. To be successful with either group, however, several points must be considered in the implementation of these strategies.

First, engagement strategies must expressly be taught to these students. Such direct instruction is especially important for students with autism because they are not as likely as others to vicariously acquire social and academic skills. They also do not typically respond to traditional verbal instruction and may require prompting (Harrower & Dunlap, 2001). Children with autism commonly require full physical assistance when acquiring new social and academic skills. Paraprofessionals or teacher aides are especially helpful during the acquisition phase of skill development, and their assistance can gradually be faded as students become more proficient.

Second, a great variation of skill levels exists among students with autism, and significant differences may be evident in the amount of time required for particular students to demonstrate independence in strategy use. Generally, interventions should be implemented and monitored for a 4- to 6-week period. If the student is demonstrating progress, the teaching phase of the intervention should be continued until independent performance on the part of the student is exhibited and maintained through the naturally occurring reinforcement in the classroom environment. If the student is...
not progressing after this period, a different strategy should be designed and implemented.

Generalization strategies will be necessary for students with ASD who are being integrated into inclusive classrooms. In this situation, an IAT, a special education consultant, or a special education co-teacher may be required to analyze the receiving environment to assure that the student has mastered the skills required for successful participation and that the receiving general education teacher has the necessary instructional materials and teaching skills to implement the interventions. Such an individual can make certain that previously acquired engagement strategies are maintained in the inclusive environment.

Finally, the interventions suggested here should not be viewed as constituting a finite list of recommendations for increasing the engagement of the group of diverse students labeled with ASD. Intervention strategies must be viewed as fluid and evolving rather than static. They are most effective when special and general education teachers first collaborate in a problem-solving analysis that evaluates students’ unique engagement deficits and then develop individually designed interventions that are linked with the unique requirements of a specific class activity. As a result, the intervention strategies field-tested in these inclusive settings are processes that provide general guidelines and structure for prescribing others that increase the engagement of students with ASD. Furthermore, these strategies, although presented in isolation, are often more effective when used in conjunction with one another. For example, during circle-time activities, the teacher is encouraged to increase auditory engagement by singing about the days of the week, to increase visual and physical engagement by providing a calendar book with movable icons, and to increase social engagement by asking questions about the information presented. This comprehensive approach may be challenging to implement, but it will result in success for both the teacher and the student with autism.

References
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