Accessible Physical Spaces
Checklist

The term physical space refers to the overall design and layout of a given educational setting and its embedded learning components. Educators can ensure their physical space is accessible by organizing the environment and materials so that they maximize learning opportunities for and promote engagement of every student. Educators can make universal design decisions about key features of physical space that influence its accessibility, including: visuals, noise, lighting, materials, layout and seating. The checklist below can be used by leaders and educators to evaluate and plan for physical spaces in a school community.

Feature	Look for the Following Accessible Features
Visuals	☐ Anchor charts for frequently used protocols or procedures are in a place that all students can see and use consistent colors and fonts that are easy to read ☐ Daily and weekly schedules include photo models of expectations for each activity Stations, materials, and furniture (e.g. door, pencil sharpener, etc) are labeled in an appropriate way based on age, language acquisition, and functional skill level ☐ Word walls, vocabulary terms, timelines, and number lines match grade, subject, and current unit of study ☐ Images and wall decor represent student identities, interests, and cultures
Noise	☐ Options for loud environments, such as noise canceling headphones or earplugs, are available and easy to utilize ☐ Expectations around noise level are communicated through a relatable scale (e.g. silent library level, whisper level, recess level) ☐ Added sounds are addressed by opening/closing windows or turning on/off fans or air conditioning
Materials	☐ Dedicated spaces for supplies allow all students to use them (e.g. stored at appropriate heights) ☐ Classroom materials are available for each student. In the event that supplies are limited, a procedure for sharing is clearly defined to support materials management ☐ Supplies that improve student engagement, understanding and/or expression are provided with a procedure on use (e.g. text-to-speech software, pencil grips, organizational maps for note-taking) ☐ Visual checklists communicate what resources are available in the space and how they are used
Layout	☐ There are no obstructions or physical barriers to movement, such as things that can be tripped over or that prevent the free flow of movement from one activity to the next ☐ Space between desks or tables is wide enough for students using mobility devices ☐ Seating chart is predictable, yet dynamic based on student functional levels, strengths and needs, interpersonal relationships, and individual circumstances ☐ Seating configurations match class activities (e.g. desks into pods for a group activity, in twos for pair work, or a U-shape for full class discussion)
Seating	☐ Students are seated closer to the board to support hearing, visual and/or attention needs and away from windows to reduce distracting stimuli from outside ☐ A variety of options allow learners to choose where they will work (e.g. standing desks, stools, bean bag chairs, exercise balls, low desks, cushions, mats, or wobble stools)