

An AAC needs assessment assists the educational team in determining whether a student's current systems of communication (including any aided supports) are meeting the student's needs for showing what they know or understand; building independence; and building relationships or social connection. If additional supports are indicated, the process includes evaluating the underlying skills or factors that impact the identification and selection of appropriate communication strategies and tools in order for the team to discuss potential solutions and next steps.

Student Information:

Name:	Birthdate:	Age:
School District:	School of Attendance:	
Date of Report:	Assessor:	

Primary participants for reviewing/determining AAC supports:

Name(s):	Role:
	Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

RECORDS REVIEWED

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

PURPOSE/CURRENT NEED FOR THIS ASSESSMENT

THIS ASSESSMENT INCLUDES:

1. A summary of _____'s current communication strategies
2. A description of any aided supports currently available
3. A summary of current skills as they relate to the use of AAC supports
4. Recommendations for the IEP team to consider

All tools/activities used were valid for the specific purpose for which they were used and were selected as most appropriate when considering the student's cultural and individual needs, and language and cognitive levels. **No** standardized tests were administered as assistive technology (AAC) is not an evaluation for eligibility (see description above). Information gathered will be reviewed with the educational team in order to make team-based priorities and decisions.

NOTE: In Microsoft Word, you can open up the document from being set in "form fill" to make any changes you need (e.g. to delete a section; to fix spacing; to insert a snip). To do this, select the "Review" tab/Restrict Editing/and then in the menu on the right side scroll to the bottom and hit "Stop Protection". You can now change the text that has been locked and move things around. Once you are done, hit "Yes, Start Enforcing Protection" again to re-lock the text/document. There are no passwords so just click "OK". You can then begin, again, to check boxes and enter text into the text fields. Be careful that you don't accidentally "delete" a check box or text field when you have the document unlocked! If you do, give us a call for assistance.

PHASE 1: HOW DOES THE STUDENT CURRENTLY COMMUNICATE?

Communication sampling tool:

State which assessment tool you are using for this section (the TALC, the Communication Matrix, Communication Sampling & Analysis). Provide a brief description of the tool (see boxes below). Use the verbiage of your specific tool in descriptions below.

<p>TALC: Senner & Baud, 2013 www.Talcaac.com A language sampling tool for multimodal communicators that analyzes through observation of Learning Context, Communication Partner Circle, Communication Mode and Purpose, Level of Prompting required and Level of Success of interaction.</p>	<p>Communication Matrix: Rowland, 2007 https://communicationmatrix.org/ An inventory tool (hard copy and free online version) to collect information about a student’s communication skills across “reasons to communicate” [functions] (e.g. refuse, obtain, social, information) and “levels of communication behavior” [means] (e.g., pre-intentional, conventional, concrete symbolic, abstract symbolic)</p>	<p>CSA: Buzolich, Russell, Lunger-Berg, McCloskey/ unpublished, 2007 http://csa.acts-at.com/ A communication performance assessment tool (transcription in a time/event sample) for observing and analyzing communication behaviors in natural settings.</p>
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Observation/settings:

Describe the student’s current range of communication behaviors (or means):

Use your notes from this section of the ‘Data Gathering Tool’. The ‘Questions to Consider’ should help you draft a brief paragraph to summarize this information. If you used the CSA, this is a great place to use your ‘snipping tool’ for graphs.

What does the student communicate for and about (or communication functions):

Again, use your notes from this section of the ‘Data Gathering Tool’ and the ‘Questions to Consider’ to help you draft a brief paragraph to summarize this information. If you used the CSA, this is a great place to use your ‘snipping tool’ for graphs.

Describe verbal behavior:

Use this section of the ‘Data Gathering Tool’, the “Questions to Consider” and/or the “Probes for Meaningful Use of Speech” to draft a summary. If no functional speech, indicate that.

Current use of aided communication tools:

If does not apply, delete this header/section. If you checked “yes” on the ‘Data Gathering Tool’ [student has tools], use the information in this section to describe and identify any areas of need from ‘Patterns of Participation’.

ARE STUDENT'S CURRENT SYSTEMS (including vocalization/verbalization, nonverbal behavior and any aided systems currently in place) OF COMMUNICATION MEETING HIS/HER NEEDS?

Use your 'Data Gathering Tool' prompts for 'Interpretation of Data' to help clarify what the needs are, answer the question "YES" or "NO", and summarize your rationale.

YES

If "yes", change 'Summary' to read 'Summary and Recommendations'. You will delete out the rest of the report template. Use the summary to provide recommendations for supporting continued use and skill development of verbal communication and/or aided tools.

NO

If exploration of additional tools or strategies ARE recommended, you will check NO and use the summary to describe the need for additional supports, and move on to Phase 2 of this assessment process.

Summary:

PHASE 2: OBSERVATIONS/DATA COLLECTION OF STUDENT'S CURRENT SKILL LEVELS (related to using aided communication tools)

Refer to these sections in the 'Data Gathering Tool' to complete these summary statements.



MOTOR ~ ACCESS

Data gathering tools:

Summary of mobility/positioning:

Summary of access skills:

Overall **Motor-Access** considerations for potential communication tool(s):



SENSORY ~ PERCEPTUAL

Data gathering tools:

Summary of vision/hearing/tactile:

Overall **Sensory-Perceptual** considerations for potential communication tool(s):



COGNITIVE ~ LINGUISTIC

Data gathering tools:

Summary of general cognitive/language skills:

Summary of symbolic skills:

Summary of literacy skills:

Overall **Cognitive-Linguistic** considerations for potential communication tool(s):



SOCIAL ~ STRATEGIC

Data gathering tools:
Motivation to communicate:
Partner considerations:
Summary of social skills:
Summary of strategic skills:
Overall Social-Strategic considerations for potential communication tool(s):

SUMMARY:

Skills student currently demonstrates: *Based on the information gathered, _____ demonstrates the characteristics of having an 'Level Communicator Profile', with the following description:*

Use the 'Targeting Outcomes for Different Communicator Levels' handout to identify and describe your student. Remember, students can bridge levels.

What outcomes are we working toward?: *Our goal for all individuals with complex communication needs is to support them in developing the skills needed to participate fully in all aspects of life including expressing wants and needs, exchanging information, building social closeness and participating effectively in social routines. In order to support _____ in moving closer to achieving these long-term outcomes, the following priorities are identified for current skill building:*

- _____
- _____
- _____

Again, use the 'Targeting Outcomes for Different Communicator Levels' handout to select some appropriate targeted outcomes for the student.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Recommendations for STRATEGIES to support current priorities for skill development:

At this time, _____ would benefit from continuing to use multimodal communication which will allow _____ to build language skills through increasing the range of communication forms and functions _____ has access to. The focus of using a multimodal approach is to increase meaningful and active participation in the learning environment and building relationships and social connection with peers, staff and family.

Specific multimodal and communication partner strategies to consider:

Describe any multimodal communication strategies (means or behaviors) you want the team to support, e.g. using a specific behavior to indicate 'yes or no'; using environmental eye pointing.

What partner strategies do you want the team to support? E.g. Aided language modeling with a 60 word core board; and what to model, e.g. 2-3 word utterances.

2. Recommendations for TOOLS to support current priorities for skill development:

would benefit from a tool/s that has the following critical features:

-
-
-
-
-

Use the 'AAC Feature Matching Worksheet' to identify the critical features your student will need in a tool.

Examples of tools that can meet _____'s current needs include:

	Tools	
	Description	

Use either the 'AAC FlipKit' or the 'Our Favorite Tools' handout to identify 3 potential tools and/or apps that will support the critical features identified. You can use the snipping tool to include a visual.

Describe some of the critical features (e.g. symbol, linguistic, voice, access, display, portability, operational) features that the team may want to compare/contrast.

NEXT STEPS:

The team may consider and prioritize tool(s) for exploration or trials. It is recommended that the team re-convene following any exploration or trial to review outcomes and make final recommendations. At that time, the team may want to consider specific IEP goals/objectives to support _____'s skill development (e.g. across the areas of social-strategic, linguistic, and/or operational competencies).

What collaborative teaming support(s) do you feel would be helpful? Check the box for the ones you are recommending; delete out the ones you are NOT recommending.

In order to build shared beliefs, responsibilities and priorities for supporting _____ in obtaining these outcomes, the team may want to consider using one or more of the following collaborative team processes once a system is in place:

- AAC Snapshot:** A shared summary of information that all team members need to know and understand as we work together to "move students forward" with communication competence using aided tools.
- AAC Roles and Responsibilities:** A plan for defining "who is doing what" when it comes to managing all of the support needed for a student with a more robust, aided communication system.
- Communication Access Plan:** A team-based collaborative process to identify current challenges, consider current settings and supports, and identify priorities for taking small steps towards implementing successful strategies to support skill development and communication competence for the student.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. I look forward to discussing these recommendations and supporting and _____ team in further developing _____ communication skills and competence.