

TOOLS

FOR DEVELOPING

COMMUNICATION PLANS

Students with disabilities, like all students, must have the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of their education. Being able to effectively communicate with others is a critical component of a child's education. Communication plans that outline how a student with unique communication needs will effectively communicate with others must be included in the communication needs section of the individual education program (IEP) for all Louisiana students classified as Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or Deaf/Blind and are strongly recommended for students with other exceptionalities experiencing communication barriers as a result of their disability.

The tools in this document will help IEP teams determine a student's current communication needs and establish a plan for ensuring the student is able to fully participate in all aspects of his/her education.

These tools will help IEP teams remain in compliance with:

- Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA 2004)
- Louisiana Act 250 (2015) Louisiana Deaf Child's Bill of Rights



DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION PLAN: FACTORS TO CONSIDER

These questions should be used to facilitate a discussion among all IEP team members who review the student's needs. The result of this discussion should be used to identify the student's current communication abilities and needs.

SECTION 1: LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION NEEDS

1. The student's current primary language is one or more of the following (check all that apply):

The primary language is the language most frequently used across settings by the student (i.e. classroom, extracurricular events, home).

American Sign Language

Signed language other than ASL

List:

Spoken English

Spoken language other than English

List:

The Student Communicates in English via a communication device as indicated below:

Low tech AAC systems

List:

High tech AAC systems

List:

Mobile devices

List:

Emerging/No formal language skills identified

Describe:

Other

Describe:

2. The student's current primary mode of communication is one or more of the following (check all that apply):

Check communication modes that are most frequently used and preferred by the student to receive communication and express ideas across settings (i.e. classroom, extracurricular events, home).

RECEPTIVE	EXPRESSIVE
Signing (ASL, English)	Signing (ASL, English)
Auditory/Oral	Oral/Spoken English
Cued Language	Cued Language
Finger spelling	Finger spelling
Tactile (ASL, English)	Tactile (ASL, English)
Gestures	Gestures
Graphic/textile communication system	Graphic/textile communication system
Object/picture system	Object/picture system
List:	List:
Electronic Apps	Electronic Apps
List:	List:
Other	Other
Describe:	Describe:

SECTION 1: LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION NEEDS *(continued)*

3. How effective is the student’s current language and mode of communication identified in Section 1 with the following individuals:

	Very Effective		Effective		Somewhat Effective		Not Effective	
	Language	Mode	Language	Mode	Language	Mode	Language	Mode
Family/Caregivers								
School Staff								
Peers								

4. If the student’s current language and mode of communication is somewhat effective or not effective, what changes and/or supports are needed?

SECTION 2: OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIRECT COMMUNICATION

Direct Communication – is communication that occurs without assistance from communication devices or adults trained in specific communication methods.

Direct Instruction – is when instruction is delivered, received, and reciprocated by the teacher using the primary language of the learner without the need of a third party or medium.

1. How does the student use direct communication with school staff in:

a. Instructional Settings:

b. Assessments:

c. Extra Curricular Activities:

2. How does the student use direct communication with peers in:

a. Instructional Settings:

b. Extra Curricular Activities:

3. Does the teacher provide instruction in the student’s primary language?

SECTION 3: CLASSROOM CONSIDERATIONS

1. What language and communication supports are **currently used** to help the student participate and make progress in the general education curriculum?

Instruction delivered directly by a teacher proficient in the language(s) and communication modality(s) identified in Section 1.

Instruction delivered through the use of a qualified interpreter/transliterating using:

American Sign Language Interpreting

English Transliterating

Oral Interpreting

Oral Language Facilitating

Cued Language Transliterating

Tactile Interpreting

Other
Describe:

SECTION 3: CLASSROOM CONSIDERATIONS *(continued)*

Instruction using one or more of the following assistive devices/services:

<input type="radio"/> Captioned Media	<input type="radio"/> CART
<input type="radio"/> C-PRINT	<input type="radio"/> FM System
<input type="radio"/> Hearing aid/Cochlear Implant Monitoring	<input type="radio"/> Low tech AAC Systems <i>List:</i>
<input type="radio"/> High tech AAC Systems <i>List:</i>	<input type="radio"/> Devices <i>List:</i>
<input type="radio"/> Note Taking	<input type="radio"/> Sound Field System
<input type="radio"/> Graphic/textile communication system	<input type="radio"/> Intervenor
<input type="radio"/> Other <i>Describe:</i>	

2. What additional language and communication supports are **needed** to help the student participate and make progress in the general education curriculum?

SECTION 4: FULL RANGE OF NEEDS

Full range of needs encompasses academic and social needs and all things related to supporting students experiencing communication barriers that are sometimes overlooked in the typical IEP meeting.

1. How does the student access information when the student's preferred language and mode of communication are not available?

2. How does the student access incidental learning?

3. How does the student experiences the same rewards and/or consequences as all students for his/her actions?

4. What opportunities are available for the student to interact with peers who do not experience communication barriers?

DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION PLAN: ACTION PLAN

This document should be used to develop a plan of how the student will communicate with others and how others will communicate with the student. The information in this plan should be captured in the communication needs section of the students IEP and used to assist in the development of communication goals.

SECTION 1: LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

1. Describe how the student's receptive and expressive language skills impact his/her academic performance with grade level content.

2. Describe the language and mode of communication the student will use in:

a. Instruction:

b. Assessment:

c. Extra Curricular/Social Settings:

3. How does the student use direct communication in:

a. Instruction:

b. Assessment:

c. Extra Curricular/Social Settings:

4. What assistive technology devices must the student use to access the general education curriculum?

SECTION 2: PROGRESS MONITORING

1. Describe how the following individuals will support the student with increasing his/her receptive and expressive communication skills:

a. Teachers:

b. School Staff:

c. Parents/Caregivers:

d. Peers:

e. Student:

2. Describe how the language and mode of communication will be routinely assessed for effectiveness in helping the student increase his/her receptive and expressive communication skills.

FREQUENTLY USED TERMS

AAC Systems – Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) refers to using a form of communication to supplement or replace spoken and/or written words.

American Sign Language (ASL) – ASL is a visual language used by deaf and hard of hearing people in the United States and Canada. ASL has syntactic (grammar/sign order), phonological (structure and organization of signs), morphological (how signs relate to one another), and semantic (how language structures meaning) rules that are distinct from English.

American Sign Language Interpreting – The process of a third party (interpreter) facilitating communication between persons who are hearing and persons who are deaf or hard of hearing by providing an interpretation of communication while working between spoken English and American Sign Language.

Assistive Listening Devices – Any and all types of devices that increase the sound and aid in the understanding of speech. These devices may include personal hearing aids, frequency modulation (FM) systems, induction loop systems, infrared, special inputs for telephone or television and amplified alarms and signals.

Auditory/Oral Mode of Communication – The development of speech and verbal language through the maximized use of residual hearing. An Auditory/Oral approach allows for visual cues, typically speech reading. An Auditory/Verbal approach focuses specifically on residual hearing and would not encourage relying upon visual cues.

Captioned Media – Includes filmstrips, films, videos, etc, that have the spoken word or the visual intent of the media represented by written language displayed on the screen as it is occurring.

CART (Communication Access Real-time Translation) – The simultaneous verbatim translation of the spoken word into English text using a stenotype machine, notebook computer and real time software, which displays the text on a laptop computer, monitor or screen. CART service is often provided in classroom settings for a student who is deaf or hard of hearing.

C-Print – Printed text of spoken English displayed in real time similar to open captioning. It is an effective means of acquiring information for some individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. C-Print provides a text of spoken information that is meaning-for-meaning rather than a verbatim transcription.

Communication Mode – The method a person uses to express and receive communication.

Cued Speech (Language) – A system where children learn to both “see” and “hear” speech and language. They focus on the movements that the mouth makes when one talks. This is combined with (a) eight hand shapes called cues; and (b) four positions around the face, indicating vowel sounds. The hand cues help the child distinguish the sounds that look alike on the lips.

Cued Speech (Language) Transliteration – The process of a third party (transliterater) facilitating communication between persons who are hearing and persons who are deaf or hard of hearing by providing a transliteration of the communication by working between spoken English and Cued Speech.

Direct Communication – Communication that occurs without the assistance of communication devices or adults trained in a specific communication mode.

Direct Instruction – When instruction is delivered, received, and reciprocated by the teacher using the primary language of the learner who is Deaf/HH without the need of a third party (interpreter/transliterater) or medium (captioning).

Electronic Apps – A computer program designed to run on smartphones, tablet computers and other mobile devices.

English Transliteration – A form of interpreting in which the language base remains the same (e.g., the transliteration of spoken English to a signed English system or to a form which can be read on the lips).

Fingerspelling – The representation of the alphabet by finger positions in order to spell out individual words or connected/longer strings of language.

FM System – An assistive listening device that transmits the speaker’s voice via a microphone to an electronic receiver in which the sound is amplified and transmitted to the student’s personal hearing aids or cochlear implant through direct audio input or through a loop cord worn around the neck. This reduces the problems of background noise interference and distance from the speaker.

Gestures – Movements of any part of the body to express or emphasize an idea, an emotion or a function. This is not part of a formal communication system.

Graphic/tactile system – A communication system that uses the sense of touch to decode and encode language information. The tactilely decoded/encoded language information can be in the form of objects, pictures with raised surfaces, textures, etc. Current technology exists to allow for decoding and encoding verbal and graphic information into receptive and expressive tactile language systems.

High tech AAC Systems – Electronic devices similar to computers.

Intervener – Intercedes between a child and the environment, allowing access to information usually gained through vision and hearing. Facilitates learning and the development of skills (e.g., receptive and expressive communication, interactive behavior).

Low Tech AAC Systems – Requires something external to the user that may be non-electronic or a simple electronic device.

Oral Interpreting – The art of moving the mouth in order to paraphrase what is being said; communicates the words of a speaker or group of speakers to an individual by inaudible mouth movements so that they can be read on the lips.

Oral Language Facilitator – An Oral Language Facilitator is trained support personnel in the field of deaf education who understands hearing loss, the impact of hearing loss in the classroom and how it affects learning, and the hearing technology used by students from an auditory oral educational background. An Oral Language Facilitator directly and indirectly supports students with hearing loss participating in a regular education setting by employing instructional strategies that are part of best practice in auditory oral training.

Object/Picture Systems – Visual-graphic symbols (i.e., pictures, photographs, line drawings, Blissymbols, printed words, traditional orthography) that stand for or represent what an individual wants to express.

Primary Language – The first language acquired by a child, also known as mother tongue, home language, native language, first language, and heritage language.

Qualified Interpreter – A person who is trained to facilitate communication between two languages and who is qualified according to state or national standards. In Louisiana qualified educational interpreters should have ancillary certification from the Department of Education. They may also hold national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf certification and have a qualifying score on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment.

Signed English – A system that was devised as a semantic representation of English for children between the ages of 1 and 6 years of age. ASL signs are used in English word order with 14 sign markers being added to represent a portion of the inflectional system of English.

Sound Field System – An environmental amplification system that utilizes a portable speaker system or placing a loudspeaker on one or more walls and/or ceiling. This type of system ensures that speech signal is evenly distributed throughout the classroom with the end goal of improving the signal to noise ratio for each student in the room.

Tactile Interpreting – Tactile interpreting is a method of interpreting for people who are both visually impaired and hard of hearing. The interpreter places his hands on the client's hands and signs.
