



New Student AAC System *TRANSITION CHECKLIST*

Purpose

Use this checklist when a student who communicates with AAC is new to your classroom, changes classrooms or schools, or begins using a new AAC system. Complete it with the classroom team, SLP and AAC/AT support staff, with family input when appropriate.

The goal is not to master the device before the student arrives.

The goal is to make sure the student has access to a working communication system and that the adults around them know enough to get started.

A simple place to start

- 1 Make sure the device is present, charged and working.
- 2 Confirm the correct device, vocabulary/pageset and accessories.
- 3 Keep the AAC system available to the student throughout the day.
- 4 Know who to contact when you need help.

If you need help

Use your school or district support process. Your SLP, AAC/AT specialist, special education lead, family and device manufacturer/support team may all be useful resources. If an item on the checklist cannot be completed, identify who can help rather than leaving it unresolved.

IMPORTANT: Access comes first.

For many students, the AAC system is part of the communication support documented in the IEP. The system should be available during instruction, social interaction, transitions and other parts of the school day. It should not be removed as punishment or saved only for speech therapy.



New Student AAC System Transition Checklist

Use with classroom staff, SLP/AAC team and family as appropriate.

DEVICE + STUDENT SETUP

- ☐ Device comes to school charged, with a plan for charging during the day if needed.
- ☐ Confirm the student has the correct assigned or personal AAC device and needed accessories.
- ☐ Confirm the correct vocabulary/pageset/user file is open and looks as expected.
- ☐ Locate the student-specific device information sheet or district documentation. At DTA Schools, we call this an AAC Device Manual.
- ☐ Make sure the device information includes the basics you may need: device/app name, vocabulary/pageset, serial number, accessories, screenshots of key pages, backup location, support links and access information/passwords when appropriate.
- ☐ Device turns on and appears to be functioning properly.
- ☐ AAC system is kept available to the student throughout the school day and travels with the student as needed.
- ☐ Review software/app update notices and follow your school, district or family plan for completing updates.
- ☐ Update student-specific vocabulary or images as needed for current classmates, staff, places, activities and topics.
- ☐ Confirm the student's customized vocabulary is backed up and the team knows where the backup is stored.
- ☐ Create a backup communication plan for times the primary device is unavailable. This may include printed key pages, a communication book/board or another approved device with the student's vocabulary.

ADULT PREPARATION

- ☐ Adult partners know the basic operation of the AAC system and how to locate commonly used vocabulary.
- ☐ A staff member is assigned to do a quick device check at the beginning of the school day.
- ☐ All staff understand expectations for AAC access: available across settings and never removed as punishment.
- ☐ Adults know who to contact for device, vocabulary or access questions.
- ☐ Before lessons or routines, staff identify a few useful words/messages they can model on the student's AAC system.
- ☐ Adults model AAC during real activities without requiring the student to copy or respond every time.

About the DTA Schools AAC Device Manual

DTA Schools uses an AAC Device Manual to organize student-specific device information. The manual is not included with this free resource and is not required to use the checklist. Any district, program or team can use its own device information sheet to keep these details together.