Use of this document: Communication behaviors that may be supported through use of AAC are individually selected based on needs and skills. This document provides examples of communication behaviors that are often targeted for support through

Communication repair	Communication attempt is not understood by the listener. Student recognizes the indication of communication failure. Attempts to repair communication are unsuccessful or require extensive effort and turn exchange between the speaker to successfully convey the message. Communication repair attempts are not productive and may not be attempted because of history of failure.	Communication attempt is not understood by the listener. Student recognizes the efficiency of the AAC device in communication repair and on the second (or third) attempt to repair, augments the messages using the AAC device. Communication repair attempts are productive (successful and faster).
Avoidance of communication failure on first attempt	Communication attempts are 100% unsuccessful for unfamiliar listeners or for unknown topics with familiar listeners. The student recognizes communication failure and continues or discontinues communication, both resulting in continued communication failure or requirement for extensive communication repair attempts.	Student recognizes the communication contexts that will be unsuccessful and identifies those in which using an alternative form of communication will result in success on the first attempt. (e.g. unfamiliar topic with familiar people; communication used daily that is understood by familiar people, but not understood by unfamiliar listeners). The need for communication repair is reduced because the student identifies the likely contexts beforehand and selects alternative communication (AAC device) on the first communication attempt.

MBAEA

Initiation	Limited use of symbolic language to gain attention of others for specific purposes. One or two communication behaviors (e.g. vocalization with or without pointing, beckoning gesture) may be used for all initiation. Change in initiation may be observed through increased frequency and/or through refinement of initiation attempts.	Student combines unaided initiation with symbolic language, augmenting the communication by providing language. (e.g. vocalization with pointing toward a headphone + AAC device message Those not mine.). This initiation leads to increased equitable turn exchange between speaker and listener in the ensuing conversation. This success leads to more initiation attempts.
Turn exchange	Single turn, turn in response to direct question only, or repetition of the same communication behavior for each turn.	Expanded symbolic language provides the student with options for turn exchange in conversation. In the case of the student who takes a single turn, AAC provides simplified motor and/or cognitive access to a communication behavior that can serve as a turn in conversation, albeit one that is not generative nor self-selected (e.g. sequenced or single entry with generated speech). In the case of the student who responds with one turn to direct questions or who repeats the same utterance on each turn, the student's expanded symbolic language and successful communication in a well structured AAC environment, provides opportunity for successful back and forth in communication. The student expands turn exchange in both content and frequency.
Maintenance and shift of topic in conversation	Student communicates about topics that are familiar and understandable for the people in the environment. Topics are never shifted by the student because communication failure will result. The student becomes accustomed to successful communication on topics that are familiar and understandable to familiar people. Communication topics are restricted and limited to these.	The AAC device is used successfully to expand to different or related topics. Novel communication occurs that is understood. In a well structured AAC environment, the opportunity to learn to shift to novel topics is created and the student learns that communication about any topic can be successful. Strategic skills for topic management

MBAEA

		using an AAC device are applied. Communication topics are limitless.
Appropriate closing for context	Adults close the communication interaction or the student uses a student-specific behavior that is interpreted by adults to indicate end of conversation (e.g. head down).	The student has options for language and uses those for ending conversations. The student uses age and context appropriate closings, depending on the listener (e.g. friend, teacher, younger child, parent, bus driver, personal attendant, etc.). The student initiates closings and responds to the communication partners' closings.
Expressive language	Expressive language is reduced by the initial and ongoing impact of the communication disability on expressive and receptive language.	Access to full language is available and used. Expressive vocabulary, word combinations and grammatical structures are applied with increasing frequency and complexity. Expressive language develops. The student uses language to stimulate the environment to higher levels of interaction. As a result, receptive language develops and, in turn, expands expressive language.
Expansion of communicative functions	Limited access to vocabulary limits expressive functions to beginning skills in this area (e.g. request, rejection/acceptance, response to initiation by another person).	The student uses word combinations to experience typical communication and expands communication functions, increasing in frequency and complexity. Age and context appropriate communication develops and the student is able to use a variety of advanced functions (e.g. negotiation, explanation, persuasion, etc.).

Remote communication (e.g. phone, video calls, texting, etc.)	Communication is limited to questions by the other person with vocalization or silence for phone communication. Video calls are similar because references outside of the video screen are unsuccessful. Pointing to events or objects outside of the video screen is ineffective. Letters, numbers, words and editing features in a digital environment are not available for texting or other digital communication.	The student uses language to interact with the communicator on the phone or web. Using words that are produced through speech generation on the AAC device, the student engages in communication independently, discusses events/topics removed from the narrow video screen and applies communication skills used in face to face to the remote communication contexts. Full access to text communication is available.
Accuracy and Rate of communication	Communication may be rapid, but unsuccessful, resulting in extensive communication repair.	Communication using AAC device may be slower per utterance, but more successful. Strategies to increase accuracy and rate are identified, learned and applied resulting in continuous improvement in accuracy and rate of communication in all environments.
Number of communication partners	Limited to familiar people who are family or paid partners. Often limited to familiar topics. Does not approach and initiate with unfamiliar people. Class friendships are unbalanced in terms of the contribution of communication to the activities with the typical speaker dominating. Peers (and some adults) may equate and respond to the student's level of expressive skills resulting in interactions that are characteristic of a younger child for play and social exchanges.	Development and use of expressive language, communicative functions, conversational management and skilled use of remote communication increases the number of communication partners. Communication partners are self-selected and include people in the community, educational environment, internet, family, friends, neighbors and the world. There are no personal restrictions to the development of short and long-term communication partners who are not paid. Communication partners interact at age-appropriate levels.
Enjoyment or tolerance of communication	Communication is infrequent and reduced by all measures when compared to peers. Communication does not appear enjoyable to the student.	Easy access to successful communication results in increased communication. There are measurable indications (e.g. frequency) or length (e.g. maintains interaction longer, with more words, with more turn exchanges,

		etc.). There is an appearance of enjoyment (e.g. smile and turn exchange) in the act of communicating with people. Student now chooses activities that involve communication with greater frequency.

Small and large changes in communication can be observed during well-planned trials with AAC devices. Large changes can be observed, for some students, in the target communication areas listed above. For some students, the use of an augmentative or alternative form of communication is a process that is observed in small, incremental steps. Progress toward communication and language learning is individual and some small indicators of progress for some student can include these behaviors:

- ❏ Quiets during language modeling using AAC (e.g. body movement decreases).
- ❏ Visually attends to language layout (e.g. pictures and text) when adult or peer is using AAC (e.g. student looks to the display briefly or for longer periods of time).
- ❏ Spontaneously selects an entry (regardless of selection method) (e.g. reaches out to touch the AAC device).
- ❏ Visually engages listener after selection of entry (i.e. looks at person he/she is talking to after saying something).
- ❏ Plays with the AAC device (e.g. selects words and changes screens, touching buttons while looking and listening).
- ❏ Searches for a word that was previously used (e.g. moving between pages and visually moving eyes around the page).
- ❏ Selects words and indicates with head shake or verbal that the word is not the anticipated selection. Does not look at the adult after selection.
- ❏ Shows AAC device to peer.
- ❏ Looks for or points to AAC device if not easily accessible at time of needed response.
- ❏ Moves AAC device at times of transition (or signals for adult to move the AAC device).

END