

# Supporting Student Communication

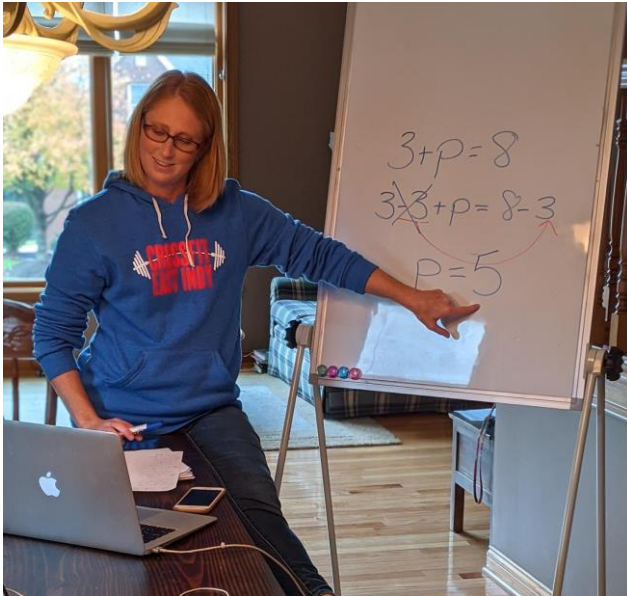
*Before we get started,  
please introduce yourself  
in the chat box!*

**Name**

**District/State**

**Share a Celebration**

# Speaker Introduction



## Contact Info:

Cara Westerman

Email: [cwesterman@newpal.k12.in.us](mailto:cwesterman@newpal.k12.in.us)

- **Special Education Teacher for 12 years.**
- **Taught in Cincinnati, Ohio at Norwood Middle School.**
- **I am currently working at New Palestine High School.**
- **I worked as a Job Coach and an Assessment Specialist for adults with disabilities at Jewish Vocational Services.**
- **I also worked as a classroom assistant at an Elementary School.**

# The Project SUCCESS Team



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## Paraprofessional Resources

Webinars and resources specifically designed to provide practical, universal tips for paraprofessionals supporting student learning.

### 2020-2021 Paraprofessional Webinar Series



# What is Communication?

## Why is It Important?



**Watching the recorded webinar?**  
Respond to the question within the  
Communication Engagement  
Guide.

# Agenda



- **Types of Communication**
- **Student Communication Support**
- **Assistive Technology**
- **Core Language**
- **Improve your Communication**

# Objectives

Participants will be able to...

- Define and understand types of student communication, as verbal or non-verbal
- Identify ways students communicate in the classroom
- Implement student communication strategies
- Improve communication with students



# Types of Classroom Communication



# Types of Communication in the Classroom

## Students who are verbal

- Students use words to communicate

## Students who are non-verbal

- Students use a variety of means to communicate

**Important:** Expressive Language skills are not linked to receptive language skills, as well as student intellectual ability.



How do the students  
in your class  
communicate?

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# Ways to Support Communication in the Classroom

## Sign Language

- Use basic signs with students
- Know your students' signs



# Ways to Support Communication in the Classroom

## Gestures

- Pointing
- Use Fewer Words
- [Prompt Hierarchy](#)



# Ways to Support Communication in the Classroom

## Visuals

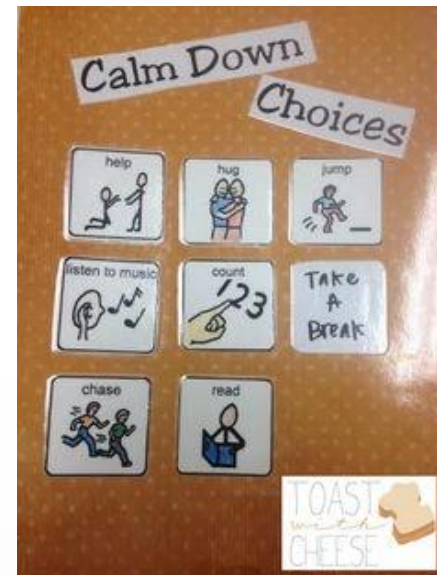
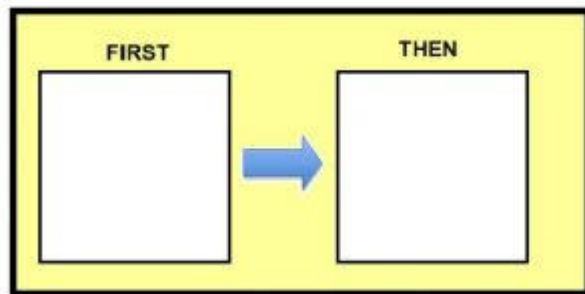
- Picture-Paired with Words
- Aides in Communication and Understanding



# Ways to Support Communication in the Classroom

## Choice Making

- Tangible Item
- Picture Choices
- First/Then Boards



What types of communication supports have you used in your classroom?

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Respond to the question within the Communication Engagement Guide.

# Assistive Technology



# Assistive Technology Pre-Assessment



## 1. I understand what assistive technology is.

- Little to none
- Average
- Expert

## 2. I can name the three types of assistive technology.

- Little to none
- Average
- Expert

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Communication Engagement  
Guide.

# Assistive Technology Pre-Assessment (cont.)



## 3. I understand the impact assistive technology has on student learning.

- Little to none
- Average
- Expert

## 4. I understand how to support the use of assistive technology in the instructional process.

- Little to none
- Average
- Expert

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# What is Assistive Technology?

- Low and High Tech
- Must be used consistently
- Must be used across all settings
- Usually specified in a student's IEP

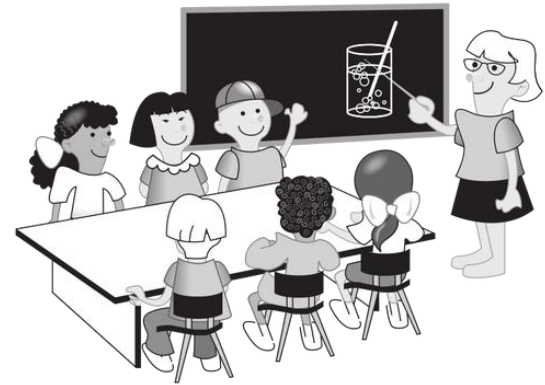


# Why is Assistive Technology Important?

## Communication



## Access to Education



# Using Assistive Technology with Students in the Classroom

## Low Tech

- graphic organizer
- visual schedule
- adapted pencil
- adaptive paper
- pencil grip
- slant board
- post-its
- classroom seating
- visual timers



# Using Assistive Technology with Students in the Classroom

## High Tech

- AAC devices
- Switches
- Buttons

<http://www.autismadventures.com/low-tech-mid-tech-and-high-tech/>



*Always have the AAC devices out and ready to go.*

## MODEL MODEL MODEL

- When you are working with students, model using the device to communicate.
- Use Buttons/Switches to assist with classroom participation.



# Using Core Language to Support Student Communication

## What are **Core Words**?

- Core Words are everyday words such as:

**Go, Stop, More, On, Off, Up, Down**

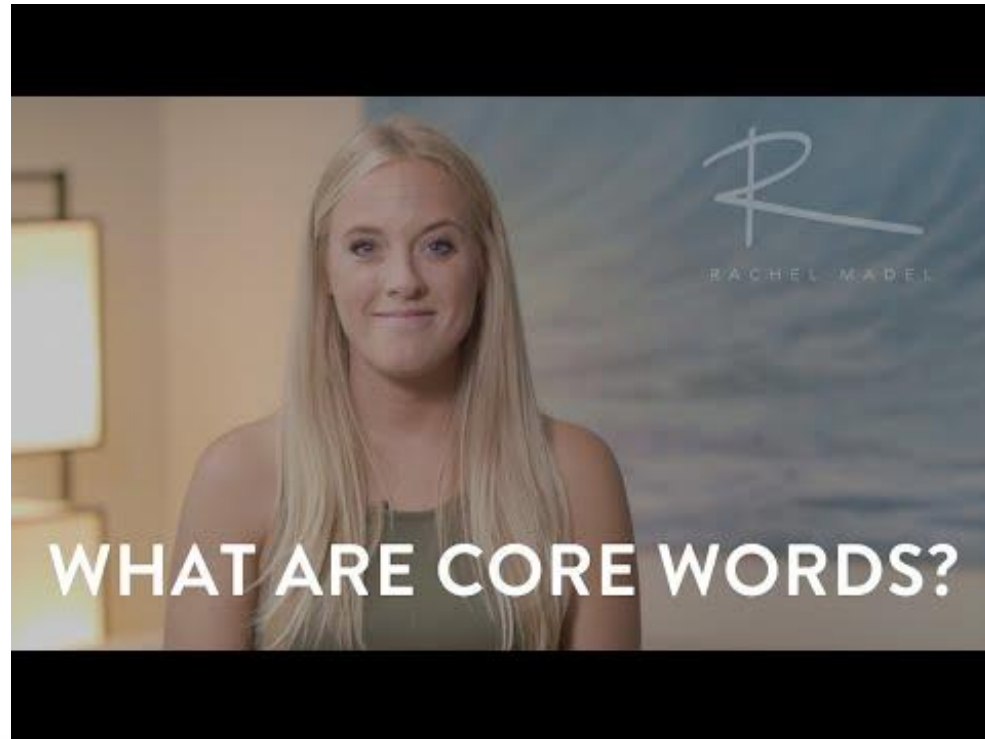
- Core Words are important to use and teach students so that they can learn to communicate in full, meaningful sentences.

**MODEL MODEL MODEL**

- When you are working with students, model using these words. Use the student's device when talking with them.



# Core Vocabulary Explanation



[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UG5JeH2H\\_OY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UG5JeH2H_OY)

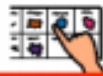


# Communicating to Help My Students Understand Me

- Speak Clearly
- Use Fewer Words
- Ask 1 Question at a time
- Wait Time
- Avoid Using Idioms
- Use Gestures and Picture Cues






















# How Can I Communicate Better to Help My Students Understand Me?



I CAN communicate. Here's how to help me!

Please keep this card attached to my AAC system!

 DON'T do this...	 Do this...
<b>DON'T</b> expect me to know how to communicate without first <b>SHOWING ME HOW</b> .	<b>MODEL, MODEL, MODEL</b> for me. Show me what to do before asking me to do it.
 <b>DON'T</b> talk so much that you forget to let me talk.	 <b>PRESUME MY COMPETENCE. I can do it!</b>
 <b>DON'T</b> prompt me every second. I need time.	 <b>WAIT</b> 10-20 seconds before re-prompting me. <i>Count in your head!</i>
 <b>DON'T</b> teach me <b>ONLY</b> to request or communicate wants & needs. I have lots of other things to say.	 <b>FOLLOW</b> a prompt hierarchy, only going as far as I need. <i>(Here's one from Environmental Communication Teaching -Dr. George Karlan.)</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pause. Focus your attention on me. Pause.</li> <li>2. Ask me an <b>OPEN-ENDED</b> question. Pause.</li> <li>3. Give me a partial prompt. Pause.</li> <li>4. Request my response. Pause.</li> <li>5. Give me a full model. Pause.</li> </ol>
 <b>DON'T</b> take away my device if I'm not cooperating. That's my voice!	Let me know what you heard and then model what I can add.
 <b>DON'T</b> put words on my system that I won't use again.	 <b>TEACH</b> me to direct action, comment, reject & more. Besides wants & needs, I need to share my thoughts, worries, fears, and joys. I need to make friends and to become literate.
 <b>DON'T</b> always stop me from "babbling" or exploring my device by pushing buttons. I need time to learn.	 <b>GIVE</b> me <b>CORE WORDS</b> including verbs, describing words, and function words... <b>NOT JUST NOUNS!</b>
 <b>DON'T</b> move my symbols. I need them to stay in the same spot so I can develop a motor plan.	 <b>COLOR CODE</b> parts of speech for me.
 <b>DON'T</b> leave my system in my desk, cubby, or backpack.	 <b>MAKE SURE</b> I have access to my words at <b>ALL TIMES</b> .
 <b>DON'T</b> expect me to talk in sentences right away. No one else does when they learn to talk!	 <b>PROVIDE</b> aided language input. <u>USE SYMBOLS</u> when talking to me!

This 4x6 index card template was created by Lauren Enders, MA, CCC-SLP with content by Lauren Enders, Pat Mervine, Melissa Skocypec, & Cathie VanAlstine. Use the back of this card for important information about the way I communicate, my preferences, and my dislikes. The idea for the card was suggested by Maurwen Welch of [www.rea@focolorado.com](http://www.rea@focolorado.com).

Link to [Core Vocabulary Document](#)



Share two things you will implement in your classroom tomorrow as a result of this webinar.

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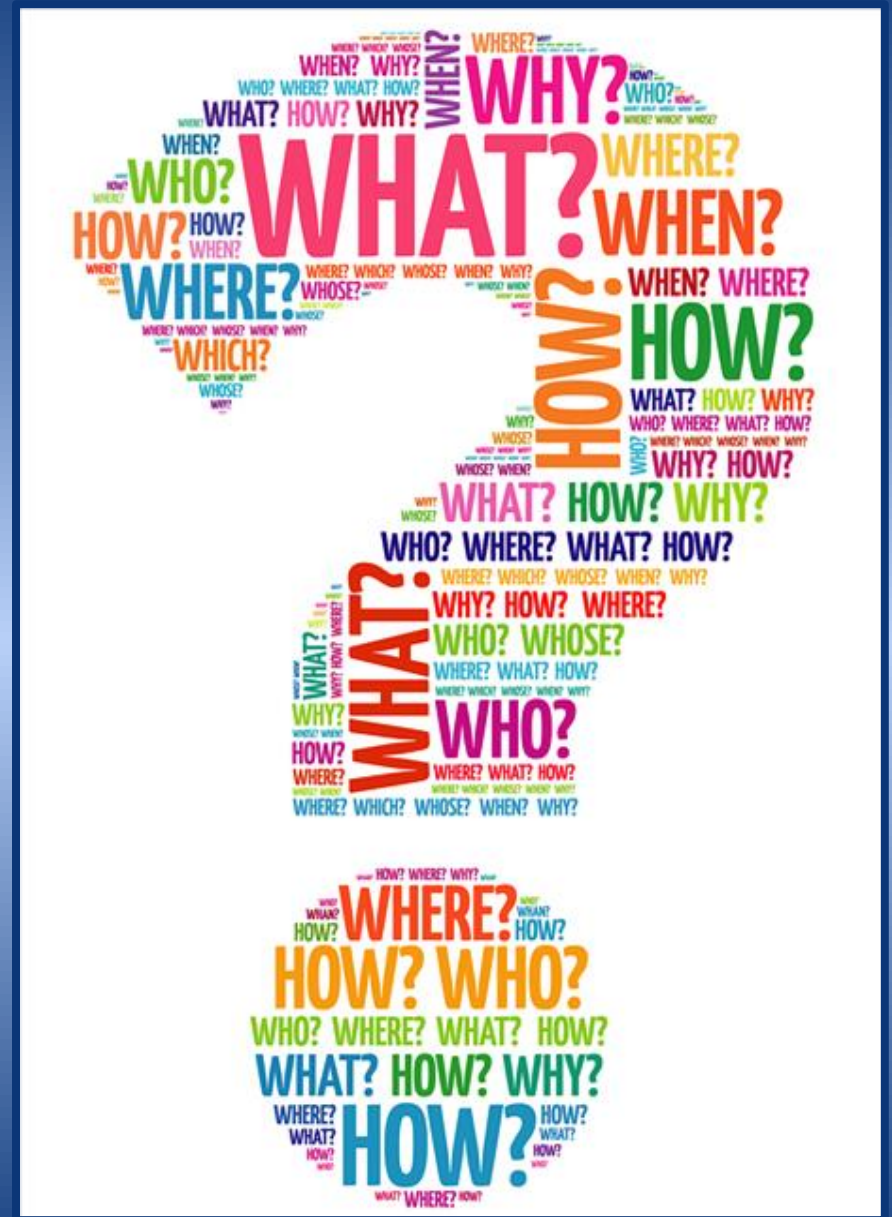
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# Q & A



The logo for Project SUCCESS. It features a circular icon on the left containing a stylized white arrow pointing towards the top-right. To the right of the icon, the word "Project" is written in a light blue, sans-serif font. Below "Project", the word "SUCCESS" is written in a large, bold, lime green, sans-serif font.

# Project SUCCESS

Questions?

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[mkeedymerk@pcgus.com](mailto:mkeedymerk@pcgus.com)