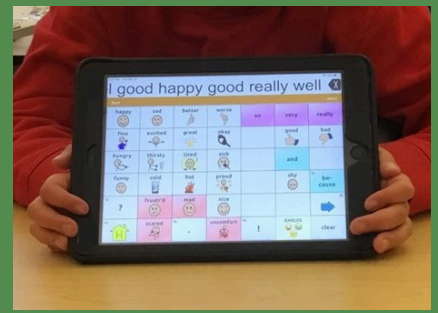


# Communication: Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC)



## What is it?

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) includes tools and methods that help individuals with verbal communication challenges. These can range from gestures, symbols, and pictures to high-tech devices like speech-generating tools and communication apps. AAC enhances the ability to express needs, thoughts, and ideas, empowering users to engage in social interactions, education, and daily life, ultimately improving their quality of life.

## Why use it?

AAC is vital in education and life as it empowers individuals with speech and language impairments to express themselves and engage meaningfully. In schools, AAC ensures students with communication challenges can fully participate, interact with peers and teachers, and access the curriculum. By using AAC, educators foster an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally, breaking down barriers to communication and learning.

## How to use it?

Effective AAC use involves selecting tools and strategies tailored to the individual's needs through an assessment by a speech-language pathologist or AAC specialist. After selecting the right system, users need training and practice, while educators, caregivers, and peers must learn to support AAC use. Consistent use across settings—home, school, and community—integrates AAC into daily life, ensuring effective communication in all areas.

## Examples we use in Bellevue School District

- High-tech devices such as iPads with Proloquo2Go, TouchChat with Word Power, Proloquo4Text
- Low-tech systems such as core vocabulary boards
- Mid-tech devices such as Quicktalkers