Facilitating Collaboration: Roles and Responsibilities of the Team in Implementing AAC

Note: This is not intended as a comprehensive list of roles/responsibilities or team members, but rather as a resource for effective collaborative teaming.
All team members are responsible for the effective provision of Communication Rights, and modeling best practices of responsive communication partners.

Name and Role	Roles and Responsibilities (examples)
Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI)	o Share results of FVA, LMA, and clinical vision reports with team and implications for AAC implementation, including CVI intervention strategies/adaptations based on CVI Range Assessment (Roman, 2007) o Guide the team in determining additional considerations for access to AAC including: optical devices, positioning and seating, lighting and other environmental adaptations (eg, highlighting a shelf in red tape for a student who has CVI) o Provide the team with input on implementing AAC use to address skills across the areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum, and assist in developing routines and lesson plans in these compensatory areas o Ensure that visual and tactile design considerations have been met in appropriately adapting AAC modes and access to modes, and promote ongoing evaluation of AAC implementation and adaptations
Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP)	o Observe AAC implementation across school activities; document communication progress through ongoing, online assessment o Update AAC system as needed based on assessment results o Provide team members AAC system updates o Consult with educational team on questions or feedback regarding AAC impelmentation o Model AAC implementation across routine activities; train classroom staff on AAC device use o Identify and refer team members to current research, strategies and training related to AAC
Classroom Teacher	**The teacher can often be the educational team leader, and is often responsible for facilitating communication between team members, as well as creating the structure of educational routines and activities.** o Lead the classroom team in carrying out AAC consistent implementation across the school day: **set expectations and communicate roles and responsibilities to ensure consistent access to and use of AAC** o Complete task analysis, activity skills matrix, and other planning tools to determine the student's level of independence and the communication partners' level of prompting in the use of AAC throughout the day o Lead the classroom team in planning and carrying out relevant routines and activities, ensuring the integration of social experiences and educational goals to support communication development o Support role release and role responsibility for all team members in implementing AAC o Ensure the inclusion of AAC-related goals and management needs on the student's IEP

Name and Role	Roles and Responsibilities (examples)
Paraprofessional or Intervener	**The paraprofessional often has the strongest role in supporting a student's communication development.** o Support communication development throughout the student's day by acting as a "bridge NOT a barrier" to accessing all environments, routines, social exchanges, and instructional materials o Provide adequate "wait time" between communication exchanges and allow for the student to process o Respect the student's hands and use hand-under-hand guidance to support exploration and joint attention when appropriate; lead the team by modeling best responsive communication practices and strategies o Scaffold prompting in collaboration with the teacher and educational team, and implement team goals o Provide the team with additional input on the student's communication modes, preferences, performance and progress in all relevant routines, activities, and social experiences
Occupational Therapist (OT)	o Provide the team with input on fine motor goals and challenges and implications for AAC implementation including: grasp and reflexes, use of fingers and hands (bilateral integration, hand dominance, hand-eye coordination, wrist stability, thumb opposition, finger strength and isolation of fingers) o Provide the team with additional input regarding the sensory status of the student and how this may affect AAC implementation including: sensory integration difficulties etc. o Provide the team with additional suggestions for adaptive supports for access: slant boards, adaptations to grip, texture/type of material, orthotics and other physical supports o Assist in design and creation of adaptations for implementation
Physical Therapist (PT)	o Provide the team with input on gross motor goals and challenges and implications for AAC implementation including: crossing midline, head & neck support as it affects visual and tactile access, low/high muscle tone o Provide the team with additional suggestions for adaptive supports for access: adaptations to seating (Rifton chairs, classroom chairs) and tables or desks, postural supports including neck, trunk, arm supports (individually created or pre-made) o Assist in design and creation of adaptations that provide increased physical access and stability
Teacher for the Deaf (TOD/HH)	o Carry out ongoing communication-related assessments and provide relevant information on results to the team throughout AAC implementation o Provide the team with ongoing consultation and feedback regarding implementation of AAC systems to meet literacy and communication targets for individuals with combined sensory impairments o Assist in ongoing implementation of AAC based on system updates
Orientation & Mobility	o Provide the team with input on safe travel/O&M skills and goals that may impact access and use of AAC in routines; provide ongoing support for addition of relevant vocabulary used in travel routines

Name and Role	Roles and Responsibilities (examples)
Instructor (O&M, COMS)	o Provide the team with recommendations for adaptations and guide the implementation of AAC to be used within O&M activities and travel routines, including labeling familiar routes
Parent/Caregiver	**The Parent/Caregiver can be the most important, consistent member of the team and is often the "voice" or advocate for the student.** o Provide feedback or initiate questions related to AAC system use in the home setting o Offer expectations, priorities, hopes for updating the AAC system based on child's changing needs or skills o Model AAC system implementation in home environments for school staff and team members o Offer input on medical, physical, emotional, or communication changes that may alter device implementation and use o Reinforce school use of an AAC system at home
Student	**The student is the <u>center</u> of the team, and drives individualized AAC design and implementation** o Possesses unique communication skills that may be augmented through access to alternative system(s) of communication o Shows changing interest and motivation for topics, partners, activities that guides team members in targeting specific messages for AAC systems throughout implementation o Communicates across expanded partners and environments; guides team members in providing efficient access to an AAC system based on these changing needs
School Psychologist / Social Worker	o Conduct ongoing psychological/academic assessments and interpret results o Offer input to team members related to the student's changing skills within (but not limited to) cognitive, social, emotional, communication, daily living, motor, sensory domains o Communicate with outside AAC providers throughout implementation
School Administrator	o Plan and implement staff development, ongoing training, and awareness training for staff and student peers o Support collaborative team efforts by providing time to meet, facilitate team meetings when necessary o Facilitate role responsibility when necessary