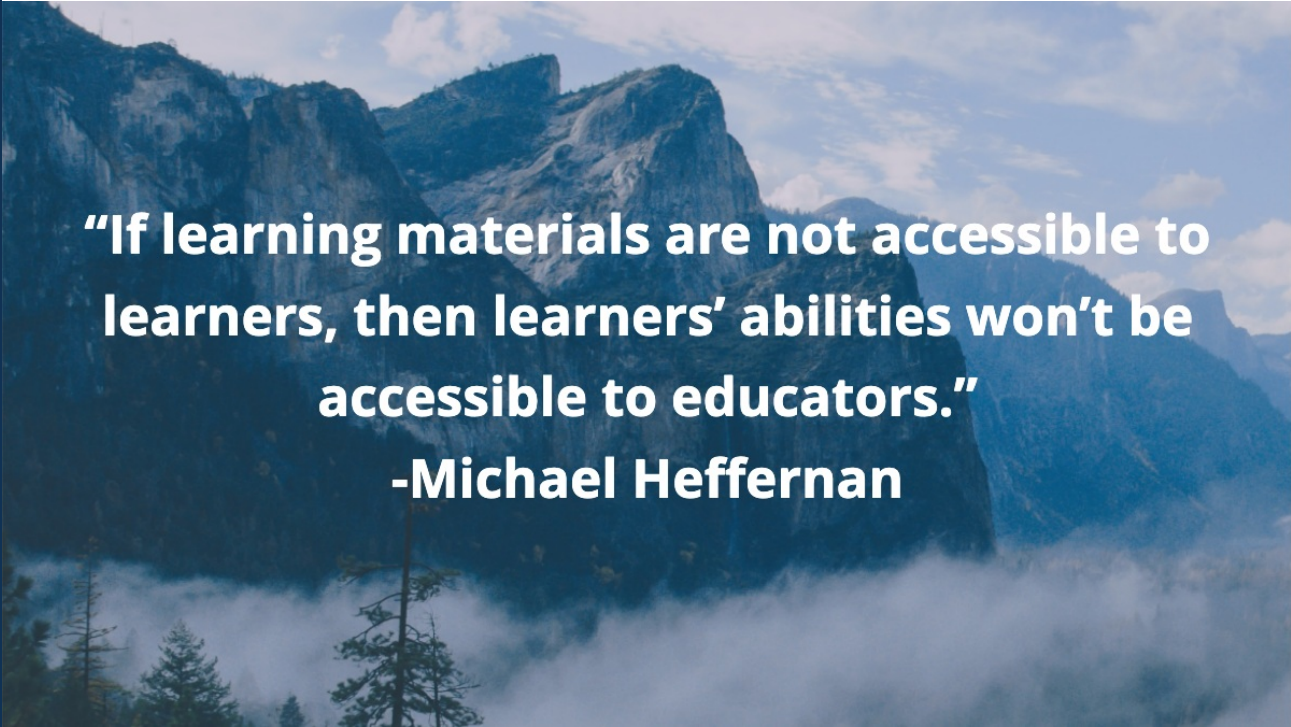




Alaska Center for
Accessible Materials
(AKCAM)

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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“If learning materials are not accessible to learners, then learners’ abilities won’t be accessible to educators.”
-Michael Heffernan

Letter from the Editors

Angel Black, AK Deaf-Blind Project Coordinator & Tyler Arsen, AKCAM Coordinator

In education, the term access typically refers to the way in which educators strive to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to take full advantage of their education. Equality looks different depending on the student. A disability has the power to challenge the concept of what equal access means. Although awareness of accessibility in education is widely recognized, implementation often proves to be a challenging endeavor—even more so during this past year. This newsletter explores access in its many forms, depending on the needs of the student.

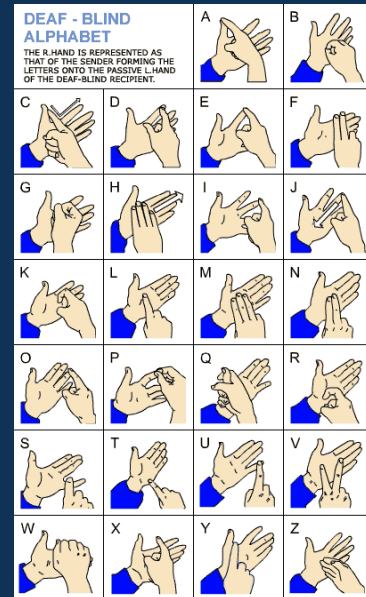
[Contact Us!](#)

Tactile Communication

by Angel Black, Alaska Deaf-Blind Project Coordinator

Every student with Deaf-Blindness is a unique individual who deserves to have **access** to the people and environment around them. **Access** to other people means that communication must take place and for a Deaf-Blind student communicating with others is a completely different process than it is for other students. Let's take a look at *Tactile Communication*.

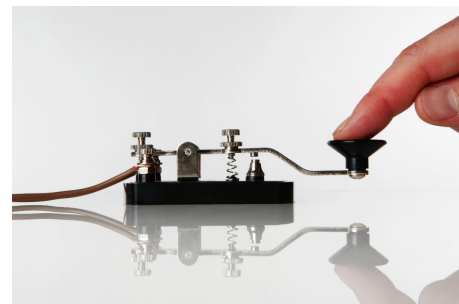
Tactile Sign Language is the variation of American Sign Language (ASL) which is a visual sign language. Tactile signing is communicated through touch. The receiver's hands are placed on top of the signer's hands in order to receive the signs. Tactile Sign Language may be the ultimate goal when teaching communication techniques to Deaf-Blind students, but there are several other forms that will also allow **access** to communication. [Read More](#)



Communication Study

A Computer Science student at Durham University in England is conducting a study on deaf-blind communication and is creating an interface for vibrotactile communication on Android phones.

The interface uses Morse code (dots and dashes to represent the letters of the alphabet) to allow a deaf-blind person to type text into the phone and “read” by feeling vibrations. For more information on this study, [click here](#).



Modifications Vs. Accommodations

by Tyler Arsen, AKCAM Coordinator

The special education setting can be intimidating, and sometimes it seems like the school staff speak a language of their own. However, as we all work together to advocate for our students, let's make sure that parents, teachers, and supporting staff are all on the same page!

The terms accommodation and modification may seem similar, but they impact a student's learning in different ways. [Read More](#)

What Do You Think?

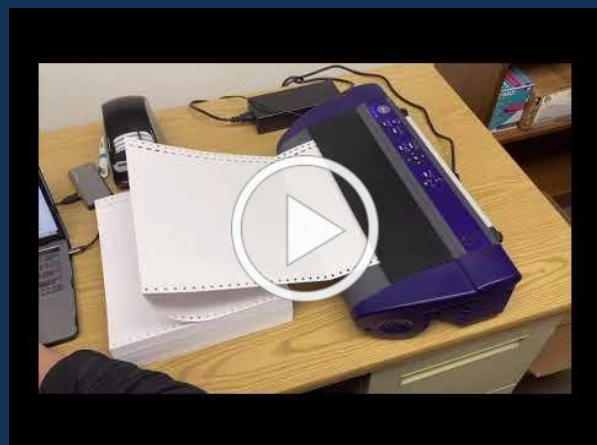


A 5th grade student with low vision sits in the front row of her class. She has no issue during lectures, but during in-class assignments and assessments, she reports neck and shoulder pain from leaning forward in order to view the material. She mentions that she experiences frequent headaches from visual strain.

What is an example of an accommodation that this student could benefit from?

- A. Allow the student to skip in-class assignments.
- B. Give the student an easier version of in-class assignments.
- C. Provide a video magnifier for easier visual access.

AKCAM works with teachers, parents and support staff to help determine which of these supports best help students access printed material and achieve their literacy goals. This video will provide insight into some of AKCAM's services!



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