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## What's New With Google Accessibility?

Google provides many accessibility features built into their Chromebooks and G Suite for Education Apps. They have recently added some additional accessibility features as well as a new accessibility logo. Here is an overview of some of the features:



- Cursor color options—in order to ensure students can see their cursor they can change the size and color by going to settings > mouse and touch pad. The cursor can now be changed to red, yellow, green, cyan, blue, magenta and pink—in addition to default black.
- Live captioning in Google Meet—although our system uses Zoom for most of our remote learning and web based meeting needs, we do still have access to Google Meet. The live captioning feature may be beneficial for students or parents that are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Closed Captioning in Google Slides— this is another tool that will benefit our students who are deaf or hard of hearing. As the teacher presents the slides the captions will show up on the screen. This can also benefit students who do not have hearing impairments as research has shown that captions can support vocabulary and literacy development .

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### AT Tip—Clear Cache and Cookies

*If a website won't load properly or things just suddenly don't seem right on your computer, you may need to clear your cache and cookies. This is often the case with GOIEP if it will not load, is taking a significant amount of time to load, or gives you the error message "user working in another tab."*

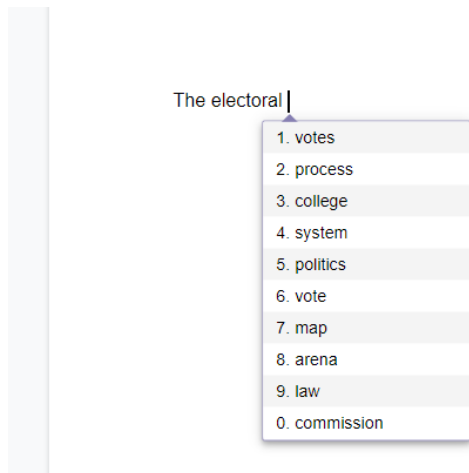
*Directions for clearing your cache/ cookies:*

1. Click the three dots in the upper right hand corner of Google Chrome.
2. Click "More tools" and then "Clear browsing data"
3. Click "Advanced" and be sure "Passwords and other sign-in data" is **NOT** checked. The first four boxes should be checked.
4. Change the Time range to "All time" and then click "Clear Data".

## Writing Supports

Written expression is a common area of weakness among our students. Many students know what they want to say in their writing but struggle with spelling, organization, or even the motor skills involved with writing and are unable to get their thoughts on paper. The good news is that we have some tools already available to use to support them with this skill. Check out some of these tools and ideas to support writing:

- Dictation — (also known as speech to text) Composing first drafts orally will allow students to avoid pitfalls of poor spelling, handwriting, punctuation, and even working memory deficits. It allows them to just focus on their thoughts and what they are trying to say in their writing rather than getting side tracked with the mechanics. Chromebooks have this feature built in. To access it within Google Docs go to Tools> Voice Typing > then click the microphone to speak.
- Graphic Organizers— Some students need help organizing their thoughts in order write. Graphic organizers are simple, yet effective, tools to help with this. They also help to break down the assignment into parts that may seem more manageable if the student has executive functioning issues. No-tech, printed graphic organizers are available as well as online graphic interactive graphic organizers.
- Word prediction— Some students may have a hard time thinking of words, spelling the words, or choosing the correct word for a sentence. Word prediction helps by offering suggestions as the student types. This tool is available on the Read&Write toolbar. See example below:



The sentence was typed in a Google Doc using the word prediction feature in Read&Write (the crystal ball on the toolbar). Notice I typed the first two words and have not started to type the third word but the program suggests words based on the perceived topic.

- Text to Speech— Many student already use this tool to read aloud online text that may be difficult for them. This can also be used as a writing tool to help students recognize and fix mistakes in their writing. Encourage your students to listen back to their stories or essays.

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