A Thoughtful Assistive Technology Process

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&

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Let’s learn a bit about the audience

How many of you are:
- Teachers
- Instructional Assistants
- Therapists
- DDD Case Managers
- Parents
- Other??
This presentation will discuss the assistive technology process in the school setting with primary examples in the secondary setting following the process of consideration, evaluation/assessment, trial, implementation, and periodic review. Participants will learn about team roles and how educationally relevant assistive technologies can be identified and supported by the various team members. This presentation is considered an introductory level course for those providers who have not yet regularly participated in the assistive technology process or for those new practitioners who are looking for guidance on a thorough and thoughtful assistive technology process.
Key Learning Outcomes

1) The participants will be able to identify five key elements of the assistive technology process.

2) Participants will be able to name three key team members and explain the importance of their roles in the assistive technology process.

3) Participants will be able to communicate the importance of following a thorough assistive technology process.
Models/ Sources

- QIAT=Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology
- WATI=Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative
- ASNAT=Assessing Students’ Needs for Assistive Technology
- GPAT=Georgia Project for Assistive Technology
- HIAT=High Incidence Assistive Technology
- Education Tech Points=Coalition for Assistive Technology in Oregon (Bowser & Reed)
AT Laws Affecting School Districts

- 300.308 Assistive Technology
- 300.5 Assistive technology device
- 300.6 Assistive technology services
- 300.346(a)(2) Consideration of Special Factors

(ASNAT, 2009, page 2-3)
What is AT?

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)
Statute I.A.602.1

“In general -- the term ‘assistive technology device’ means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

Exception -- the term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such device.”
AT vs. Educational Technologies

Educational Technologies
- smart board
- classroom sets of calculators, word processors

Assistive Technologies
- Specific tools a special education student requires to access their education or campus
Rationale for an AT Process

“Neither the law nor the regulations provided guidelines for school districts in the implementation of these requirements. This may be part of the reason that school districts still struggle to comply with the laws relating to assistive technology” (ASNAT, 2009, page 3).
5 Step Process

1. Consideration
2. Assessment/Evaluation
3. Trial
4. Implementation Plan
5. Periodic Review
Team Members:

“A basic principle in IDEA is that no one person has sufficient knowledge or expertise to make all of the decisions about the educational needs of a student with a disability”.  
(Education Tech Point: A Framework for Assistive Technology, pg 8)

“The effective and efficient provision of appropriate assistive technology services requires each service provider to not only develop his/her individual knowledge base, but also to work more cooperatively as members of one or more teams”.  
(Education Tech Points: A Framework for Assistive Technology, pg 15)
Team Members

- Parent and, when appropriate, the child
- Special Education Teacher
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- General Education Teacher
- Vision/Hearing Specialist
- Interagency Personnel
- School District Representative
- School Psychologist
- Speech Language Therapist
- AT Specialist
- Others as Needed
Step 1: Consideration

Consideration is required to take place annually for each student receiving special education services.

The student is meeting his/her annual goals, producing successful work, and able to access his/her environment and curriculum?
Consideration Cont.

- AT is not needed
- AT is needed, and is successfully being used
- AT may be needed, but the IEP team is unsure what service or device would meet the student’s needs
- The team is unsure what AT is, and so must find resources in order to make an informed decision regarding consideration.

Document in IEP. Further process has already been completed/not needed/in place

Continue 5 step process
Step 2: Assessment/Evaluation

- Technology Type
- Team Members
- Information (student, tasks, environment)

Formal  Informal
Assessment/Evaluation cont

SETT (Joy Zabala)

S=Student
E=Environment
T=Tasks
T=Tools

TEST (Christine Flanigan)

T=Tasks
E=Environment
S=Student
T=Tools
Assessment/Evaluation cont.

- Do we think the student might benefit from technologies?
- What technology FEATURES might the student benefit from?

**AT Features:**
- Portable
- Color Filters
- Phonetic Spell Check
- 15 in screen or larger
- Key Guard
- Pressure Amount
- Camera

**NOT Features:**
- Ipad
- Surface Pro Tablet
- Big Keys Keyboard
- Nova Chat
**Student:** Resource level freshman, team reported needed AT for “writing”, formal evaluation completed

**Features:** Portable, word processing, TTS

**Accommodations recommended:** Provided notes, decreased document transfer when possible

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<th>Chromebook</th>
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**Student:** Freshman taking gen ed. classes, team reported difficulties with writing legibility, formal eval completed.

**Features:** EdTech, Portable word processing, decreased start up time, robust spell check, speech-to-text
Step 3: Trial

Go in with a plan!

1. Identify goals, scope, timelines
   - Data Collection & Information Gathering Activities -- Pick one class, one/two tasks, determine specific data to be collected
     - Examples:
       - AAC: student’s ability to answer comprehension questions during a daily group reading activity
       - Word Processor: legibility of bellwork assignments in English class
       - Adaptive Keyboard: student’s use of the device and time spent to complete written

2. Acquire Equipment Needed for Trial

3. Complete the trial
4. Decision Making:
   - Analyze the data
     - Team feedback
     - Did the student use the device?
     - Does a different device need to be trialed?

5. Make Recommendation
   - Did we see a change?
   - Does the student actually require the device for FAPE?
Step 4: Implementation

1. Acquisition
   - Don’t forget the accessories

2. Plan
   - Who’s overseeing the implementation?
   - How & when will the device be used?
   - Who’s in charge of programming if required?
   - What happens if the device breaks?
   - Training Needs

Formal

Informal
3. IEP Documentation

- Present Levels
- Special Considerations
- Annual Goals/Objectives
- Related Services
- Supplementary Aides and Services
- Supports to School Personnel
- Accommodations
- Testing (district and state)
- Transition Service Plan - coordinated activities
Step 5: Periodic Review

- This could be with annual IEP or not
- Check-in:
  - Is the student still using the tech
  - Ongoing problem solving
  - Ongoing training needs
  - Product maintenance
- Consider student competencies and remember to reflect if services are still needed
Competencies

- **Operational Competence** - making the device work
- **Functional Competence** - using the device to overcome barriers
- **Strategic Competence** - knowing when to use the device
- **Social Competence** - using the device in real world competencies
The End!

Questions?