Assistive Technology in Texas Schools Series

Providing Assistive Technology:
An Administrator's Perspective

Supplementary Handouts for Participants

Assistive Technology in Texas Schools Series

Providing Assistive Technology: An Administrator's Perspective is a professional development module that was collaboratively developed by:

- **Texas Assistive Technology Network, with leadership provided by Region 4 Education Service Center and**
- **Texas Education Agency**

The Assistive Technology in Texas Schools Series consists of professional development modules that may be downloaded at no cost from the Texas Assistive Technology Network (TATN) website at http://www.texasat.net. Region 4 Education Service Center (ESC) provides leadership for the decentralized function of assistive technology and facilitates the network of representatives from the 20 regional education service centers in Texas. TATN has developed a framework for statewide collaboration to ensure the coordination of ongoing needs assessment, setting state priorities, and providing training, products and services to build district capacity to provide effective services in assistive technology.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Texas Assistive Technology Network, led by
Region 4 Education Service Center

Linda Chromaster, Region I ESC	Rita Reeder, Region IX ESC
Susan Matthews, Region II ESC	Gayle McNurlen, Region X ESC
Mary Scott, Region III ESC	Peggy McNairn, Region XI ESC
Diana Carl, **Lead**, Region 4 ESC	Paul Guardiola, Region XII ESC
Beth Goodrich, Region 4 ESC	Angie Mendez, Region XIII ESC
Cecilia Robinson, Region 4 ESC	Mary Ann Brady, Region XIV ESC
Angela Standridge, Region 4 ESC	Sandra McClintock, Region XV ESC
Theresa Tanchak, Region 4 ESC	Max Hudson, Region XVI ESC
Dana Pitman, Region V ESC	Anita Neff, Region XVII ESC
Ana Deter, Region VI ESC	Shorty Thomas, Region XVIII ESC
Robert Smith, Region VII ESC	Lou Ann Rosario, Region XIX ESC
Connie Rhymes, Region VIII ESC	Judi Gamez, Region XX ESC

ESC contact's information available at TATN Website:
http://www.texasat.net

Region 4 Education Service Center
7145 West Tidwell
Houston, Texas 77092-2096
Diana Carl, Director
Special Education Services
Telephone: 713.744.6386
Fax: 713.462.6827
E-mail: dcarl@esc4.net
Region 4 Website: http://www.theansweris4.net

Texas Education Agency
Division of Special Education
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701-1494
Telephone: 512.463.9414
Fax: 512.463.9560
Website: http://www.tea.state.tx.us

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

Legal References

IDEA '97

This document represents informal guidance for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Amendments of 1997, (IDEA '97); however, the regulations upon which it is based are binding on public agencies receiving funds under Part B. Therefore, the statute and regulation which constitute the legal authority for this document, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq. and 34 C.F.R. § 300 et. seq., should be used for citation purposes.

34 C.F.R. § 300.5 Assistive Technology Device

As used in this part, 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 the functional capabilities of a child with a disability.
(Authority 20 U.S.C. 1401(1))

34 C.F.R. § 300.6 Assistive Technology Service

As used in this part, assistive technology service means any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. The term includes:
(a) The evaluation of the needs of a child with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the child in the child's customary environment;
(b) Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by children with disabilities;
(c) Selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices;
(d) Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;
(e) Training or technical assistance for a child with a disability or, if appropriate, that child's family; and
(f) Training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education or rehabilitation services), employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of that child.
(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(2))

34 C.F.R. § 300.308 Assistive Technology

(a) Each public agency shall ensure that assistive technology devices or assistive technology services, or both, as those terms are defined in Sections 300.5-300.6, are made available to a child with a disability if required as a part of the child's
    (1) Special education under Sec. 300.26;
    (2) Related services under Sec. 300.24; or
    (3) Supplementary aids and services under Sections 300.28 and 300.550(b)(2).
(b) On a case-by-case basis, the use of school-purchased assistive technology devices in a child's home or in other settings is required if the child's IEP team determines that the child needs access to those devices in order to receive FAPE (Free and Appropriate Education).

34 C.F.R. § 300.346 Development, Review, and Revision of IEP

(a)   Development of IEP
    2) Consideration of special factors. The IEP team also shall --
            v) consider whether the child requires assistive technology devices and services
(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1414 (d)(3) and (4) (B) and (e))

This page intentionally left blank.

QUALITY INDICATORS
FOR ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

The QIAT Consortium

The consideration of assistive technology devices and services is required during the development of every Individualized Educational Program (IEP) and every Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) for children from birth to school age. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (IDEA '97) requires that each team that plans for the education of a child with a disability document any assistive technology devices and/or services the child may need. Despite this requirement, there has been no agreed upon description of high quality assistive technology services by which schools can measure their compliance.

Since the summer of 1998, the Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology (QIAT) Consortium has focused its efforts on defining a set of descriptors that could serve as over-arching guidelines for quality assistive technology services. The Consortium has attempted to develop descriptors that are applicable regardless of service delivery models. It is the belief of the Consortium that these descriptors can be used to guide:

1. school districts in the development and provision of quality assistive technology services which are aligned to federal, state and local mandates;
2. assistive technology service providers in the evaluation and improvement of their services;
3. consumers of assistive technology services in the selection of adequate assistive technology services;
4. university faculty and professional development providers in the delivery of programs that develop knowledge and skills needed to offer quality assistive technology services;
5. leaders in the development of regulations and policies related to the use of assistive technology in education.

When reviewing or using the Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology, it is important to be aware of some basic assumptions that pertain to all areas of QIAT. First, it is essential that ALL assistive technology services developed and delivered by states or districts are legally correct according to the mandates and expectations of federal and state laws and are aligned to district policies. Second, assistive technology efforts, at all stages, involves on-going collaborative work by teams which include families and caregivers, school personnel, and other needed individuals and service agencies. Third multidisciplinary team members involved in assistive technology processes are responsible for following the code of ethics for their specific profession.

Note: IDEA '97 requires that assistive technology devices and services be provided for all children with disabilities who need them. This applies to children from birth to twenty-one years of age. In the following document, when the term IEP is used, the reader can assume that the indicator also applies to IFSPs unless otherwise indicated.

This page intentionally left blank.

Quality Indicators for Administrative Support

This area defines the critical areas of administrative support and leadership for developing and delivering assistive technology services. It involves the development of policies, procedures, and other supports necessary to sustain effective assistive technology programs.

1. **The education agency has <u>written procedural guidelines</u> that ensure equitable access to assistive technology devices and services for students with disabilities, if required for FAPE.**

   <u>Intent:</u> The education agency has clear written procedural guidelines that provide equal access to assistive technology devices and services for all students. Access to AT is the same for the student regardless of abilities, economic status or geographic location. All district personnel are familiar with the procedural guidelines.

2. **The education agency has clearly defined and <u>broadly disseminated policies and procedures </u>for providing effective assistive technology devices and services.**

   <u>Intent:</u> District personnel in special education and general education are familiar with the policies and procedures in both special education as well as general education. The procedures are readily available at each campus and all school personnel know how to access the procedures.

3. **The education agency has <u>written descriptions of job requirements</u>, which include knowledge, skills, and responsibilities for staff members who provide assistive technology services.**

   <u>Intent:</u> The education agency has clear written statements of job requirements that address the necessary AT knowledge, skills and responsibilities for all staff members. This includes all personnel from the classroom through central office. This could be reflected in a position description, assignment of duty statement or some other written description.

4. **The education agency employs a <u>range of personnel with competencies</u> needed to provide quality assistive technology services within their areas of primary responsibility.**

   <u>Intent:</u> The agency employs staff members from the classroom through the central office who have knowledge and skills of AT commensurate with job requirements.   Though classroom teachers, supervisors and purchasing agents may need different knowledge and skills related to assistive technology, all must be knowledgeable for the system to work well.

5. **The education agency includes <u>assistive technology in the technology planning and budgeting</u> process.**

   <u>Intent</u>: Historically, the AT needs of the agency have either been separate or omitted. A comprehensive technology plan provides for the technology needs of all students in both general education as well as special education.

6. **The education agency provides <u>continuous learning opportunities about assistive technology</u> devices, strategies and resources for staff, family and students.**

   <u>Intent:</u> The training addresses the needs of the student, the family, and all of the staff involved with the student. Ongoing training and technical assistance opportunities are readily accessible to all members of the IEP team. The training and technical assistance includes training on AT devices, strategies and resources to support IEP goals and objectives.

7. **The education agency uses a <u>systematic procedure to evaluate</u> the components of assistive technology services to ensure accountability for student progress.**

   <u>Intent:</u> There is a clear systematic procedure with which all administrators are familiar and use regularly. This procedure is used consistently across the agency at both central office and the building level. The components of this process include budgeting, planning, delivery and evaluation of AT services.

<u>COMMON ERRORS:</u>

1. If policies and guidelines are developed, they are not known widely enough to assure equitable application by all IEP teams.

2. It is not clearly understood that the primary purpose of assistive technology in school settings is to support the implementation of the IEP for the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

3. Personnel have been appointed to head assistive technology efforts, but resources to support those efforts have not been allocated. (Time, a budget for devices, professional development, etc.)

4. Assistive technology leadership personnel try to or are expected to do all of the assistive technology work and fail to meet expectations.

5. Assistive technology services are established but their effectiveness is never evaluated.

Putting QIAT in Action: Quality Resources for Quality Services
Closing The Gap Preconference Workshop
October 15, 2003

Presenters: Diana Carl, dcarl@esc4.net
Gayl Bowser, gayl.bowser@douglasesd.k12.or.us
Penny Reed, pennyreed@charter.net
Joy Smiley Zabala, joy@joyzabala.com

Administrative Support Resources

Website Resources

- *A Resource Guide for Teachers and Administrators about Assistive Technology*, Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI): http://www.wati.org/resourceguide.htm
- Assistive Technology Model Operating Guidelines for Oregon: http://www.otap-oregon.org
- Assistive Technology Training Online Project (ATTO) http://atto.buffalo.edu/registered/ATBasics.php
- Maryland Teacher Technology Standards (includes assistive technology): www.smcm.edu/msde-pt3/Docs/MDTchrTechStdsMTTS.pdf or http://www.smcm.edu/msde-pt3/CatVI.htm
- Montgomery County Public Schools interpretation of Maryland's Assistive Technology Standard: http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/ogat/techstandards/standard6.shtm
- Six Steps to Improving Assistive Technology Services. Session presented at California State University at Northridge (CSUN), Conference on Disabilities: http://www.csun.edu/cod/conf/2000/proceedings/0059Reed.htm
- Technology Standards for School Administrators: http://cnets.iste.org/tssa/
- University of Maryland Technology Standards Protocol http://edtechoutreach.umd.edu/standards/ETO_standards_template.pdf
- Utah Interagency Assistive Technology Implementation and Reference Guide http://www.usor.state.ut.us/ucat/guidefinal.pdf
- Valdosta State University and Georgia Project for Assistive Technology, Assistive technology resources http://coefaculty.valdosta.edu/spe/ATRB/index.html
- Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency http://www.resa.net/assistive

Commercially Available Materials
- Bowser, G. and Reed, P., Assistive *Technology Pointers for Parents:* http://www.edtechpoints.org
- Bowser, G. and Reed, P., Education Tech Points: *A Framework for Assistive Technology Planning:* http://www.edtechpoints.org
- Discover IDEA CD 2002: http://www.ideapractices.org/resources/detail.php?id=22144

Golden, D. (1998). *Assistive technology in special education policy and practice.* Albuquerque, NM: Council of Administrators of Special Education, Inc.