Assistive Technology Considerations in the Transition Planning Process

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Agenda

- Overview of Assistive Technology(AT)
- Transition planning and Assistive Technology(AT)considerations
- Assistive Technology in the IEP
- Tips for CSE meetings, school professionals, agencies
- Links to Resources

What comes to mind when you hear "**Assistive Technology**"?

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What are Assistive Technologies?

Tools which…

Extend a person's **functional abilities** *(Physical, Social, Communicative)*

Can enhance academic success by **increasing access to information and opportunities** that might otherwise be unavailable or that might impose barriers

Give greater control over one's life

Allow students to…

Participate in, and **contribute more fully to activities** in their home, school, work environments and in their communities

Interact to a greater extent with individuals who do not have disabilities

Benefit from similar opportunities as those individuals who do not have disabilities, by making the **performance of tasks quicker and easier**

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Assistive Technology (AT) <u>Device</u>   *8 NYCRR 200.1(e)*

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 student with a disability

(Such term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such a device)

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Assistive Technology Device Examples

Low-Tech	Mid-Tech	High-Tech
• Pencil grips, Adapted pen • Adaptive seating, cushions • Book holders, Slant boards • Simple switches • Picture-based communication boards	• Electronic magnifiers • Portable notetakers • Voice amplifiers • Wheel chairs • Audio books • Spell checkers	• Computers, tablets • Text-to-Speech Software • Speech-to-Text Software • Augmentative Alternative Communication(AAC) Devices • Eye-controlled computer • Frequency Modulation (FM) Auditory Trainers

Assistive Technology (AT) Service *200.1(f)*

Any service that directly assists a student with a disability
in the **selection, acquisition, or use of** an assistive technology device

Evaluation of needs

Purchasing, leasing, or other acquisition

Selecting, designing, fitting, **customizing**, adapting, applying, maintaining, **repairing, or replacing**

Coordinating and using with other therapies, interventions, or services

Training or technical assistance

- For a **student** with a disability

- For a student's **family** if appropriate

- For **educators, employers, or other individuals** who provide services or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of that student (i.e. job coach)

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Student Needs Relating to Special Factors

The CSE shall consider whether the student requires **assistive technology devices and services,** including whether the use of school-purchased AT devices is required to be **used in the student's home or in other settings** in order for the student to receive a free appropriate public education(FAPE)

STUDENT NEEDS RELATING TO SPECIAL FACTORS

BASED ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE STUDENT'S NEEDS, THE COMMITTEE MUST CONSIDER WHETHER THE STUDENT NEEDS A PARTICULAR DEVICE OR SERVICE TO ADDRESS THE SPECIAL FACTORS AS INDICATED BELOW, AND IF SO, THE APPROPRIATE SECTION OF THE IEP MUST IDENTIFY THE PARTICULAR DEVICE OR SERVICE(S) NEEDED.

Does the student need strategies, including positive behavioral interventions, supports and other strategies to address behaviors that impede the student's learning or that of others? ☐ Yes ☐ No

    Does the student need a behavioral intervention plan? ☐ No ☐ Yes:

For a student with limited English proficiency, does he/she need a special education service to address his/her language needs as they relate to the IEP?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

For a student who is blind or visually impaired, does he/she need instruction in Braille and the use of Braille? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

Does the student need a particular device or service to address his/her communication needs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

    In the case of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, does the student need a particular device or service in consideration of the student's language and communication needs, opportunities for direct communications with peers and professional personnel in the student's language and communication mode, academic level, and full range of needs, including opportunities for direct instruction in the student's language and communication mode?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not Applicable

Does the student need an assistive technology device and/or service? ☐ Yes ☐ No
    If yes, does the Committee recommend that the device(s) be used in the student's home? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What is Transition Planning?

Concept	Definition
Transition Planning is…	An ongoing process beginning no later than the first IEP to be in effect when a student is age 15, that **requires a partnership among the student, family, school district and as appropriate, other agencies** that can provide transition services to help students with disabilities **move from school to adult life**
Transition Planning focuses on…	Postsecondary goals in the areas of: • **Education and/or training** • **Employment and/or other productive activities** • **Independent living skills** Coordinated transition activities that will help the student **develop the skills needed** to meet their postsecondary goals

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AT Consideration & the Transition Planning Process

- When Assistive Technology consideration is combined with transition planning, **the scope of opportunities for achieving postsecondary goals broadens greatly**

- Families can provide key input and support for the use of AT **in the home and other out of school environments**

- Good **communication between the family and school**, allows everyone to share their perspectives and expertise

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A Bridge Between Needs and Abilities

Assistive Technology consideration generally, comes *after* **agreement on annual IEP goals** that the student will be expected to attain

It is really not possible to make a decision about AT until you can talk about the **specific tasks** that the student will be **trying to accomplish**

AT is **an accommodation**, the medium to reach a goal, most likely more than one goal

Could AT assist the student in the **mechanics** of producing work to increase the **quality** of the work produced by the student?

Could AT increase the student's ability
- to **read** at an age appropriate level and at a similar pace to peers?
- to **communicate** in a more age appropriate manner?
- to stand, walk, or sit **independently**?

Could AT enable the student to **participate** in extracurricular activities or **work-based learning experiences**?

General AT Screening During Transition Planning

Reading: *Can the student:*
- Physically manipulate books and print materials to read independently?
- Physically see and read typical text formats?
- Read and comprehend typical texts and materials? (e.g., newspaper, books, magazines)
- **Access and read materials from the Internet?**

Writing: *Can the student:*
- Write legibly in a traditional manner? (e.g., paper/pencil)
- Complete written forms?
- Access the computer in a typical manner?
- **Use the keyboard or word processor to complete written tasks?**
- Utilize features of word processing software to complete written work

Math: *Can the student:*
- Independently tell time?
- Complete math calculations?
- Use a typical calculator?
- **Use money skills appropriately?**

Learning/Studying: *Can the student:*
- **Understand and follow verbal instructions?**
- Independently follow a schedule?
- Independently utilize study strategies? (e.g., highlighting, outlining)
- Independently use organizational strategies for work materials and assignments?

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Source: Mississippi BEND AEA

General AT Screening During Transition Planning

Positioning & Seating: *Can the student:*
- Sit in a typical classroom chair/desk?
- Independently change positions when necessary?
- Tolerate being in class/work settings for the required period of time?
- Sustain attention for an adequate period of time?

Communication: *Can the student:*
- Communicate wants/needs to unfamiliar individuals?
- Help other people understand them better?
- Request clarification and information?
- Independently use the telephone?
- Access and use electronic forms of communication?

Recreation and Leisure: *Can the student:*
- Participate in recreational activities in a typical manner?
- Choose leisure activities and manipulate the necessary materials? (e.g., cards, game pieces, art materials)

Activities of Daily Living: *Can the student:*
- Physically manage grooming and hygiene needs?
- Independently prepare and eat meals?
- Independently dress and do laundry?
- Complete housekeeping activities?

Mobility: *Can the student:*
- Independently navigate inside and outside customary environments?
- Carry necessary materials between locations? (e.g., backpack, equipment)
- Operate controls to activate public building access devices (e.g., power doors, elevator controls)
- Independently arrange transportation?
- Independently access public transportation?
- Drive a car?

Source: Mississippi BEND AEA

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Assistive Technology Consideration Outcomes

- If the student **independently accomplishes required tasks** within the relevant instructional or access areas **using standard classroom tools,** Assistive Technology is <u>not</u> required.

- If the student **accomplishes the required tasks** within the instructional or access areas using standard classroom **and modifications and accommodations that are currently in place,** Assistive Technology is <u>not</u> required.

Source: Georgia Project for Assistive Technology

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Assistive Technology Consideration Outcomes

- If the student **accomplishes the required tasks** within the relevant instructional or access areas **with assistive technology that has been determined educationally necessary and is currently in place,** Assistive Technology is required.

Source: Georgia Project for Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology Consideration Outcomes

- If the student **cannot accomplish** the required tasks within the relevant instructional or access areas **with modifications, accommodations, and/or assistive technology that is currently in place…**

  - If potential **AT solutions are known** to the IEP team, **trial use** of the identified AT solution may be implemented

  - If potential **AT solutions are not known** to the IEP team, the IEP team may choose to **recruit consultants** who can assist the team in addressing AT or **refer the student for an AT evaluation**

  - Or **a trial use period** may be recommended **at the end of the consultation or evaluation**

Source: Georgia Project for Assistive Technology

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Assistive Technology Evaluation

- The Committee on Special Education (CSE) team gathers and analyzes data about the student's **present levels of performance in relationship to customary environments and educational goals and tasks**, to determine if the student **requires** AT devices and services to **participate actively, work on expected tasks, and make progress** toward mastery of educational goals

- The CSE team may decide to complete an **AT evaluation** if there is **not enough infor**mation on appropriate or available AT. Can address:

✓ Academic and non-academic concerns
✓ Access to the general education curriculum
✓ Access to extracurricular activities
✓ Software and hardware options
✓ Environmental modifications
✓ **Transition services**

- **Results may recommend devices and services**, including modifications to a child's and family's environment, based on the child's and family's strengths, needs and lifestyle.

- CSE team members **should not limit** their thinking to only those devices and services **known or currently available** within the district

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Making the Match-Essential Elements

1. **The Student:** Consider skills and abilities, functional limitations, comfort with technology, training needs

2. **The Task:** Where can AT make the task possible, easier, and/or completed more efficiently? What component parts make up each task?

3. **The Environment:** What will "work" in the environment? Aesthetically? Preferentially? Requirements?

As a student's coursework gets more advanced, AT needs may change or increase

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Transition Planning Considerations

**Students often move from school
to the community/workplace**

- Is there a need to **modify** the AT to reflect changing needs in **different** environments?

- **How long will the student be in the environment**, and for what purposes (long-term skill development vs. short-term exploratory work experience)?

- Is there a need for **additional, different or new** technology that will better meet the needs of the student?

AT is a long-term solution that can continue to serve the person as their disability progresses or as their job tasks expand

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AT Examples for Transition Activities

- **School-to-Work aids and adaptations**
  - Scheduling (calendars, reminders, task analysis)
  - Switch/device, Adapted keyboard
  - Communication aid
  - Adaptive seating/positioning
  - Electronic organizer
  - Adapted computer input

- **Aids for Daily Living**
  - Eating, Dressing, Recreation & Leisure, and Home Living

  - It can be **less expensive to provide AT rather than extensive 1:1 assistance** (i.e. Spoon Grip)

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires school districts to provide **Accessible Instructional Materials(AIM)** to students who are blind or otherwise **unable to use printed materials**

Students with "print" disabilities should receive materials in accessible formats at the same time as their peers receive their textbooks

The National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC) makes it easier for districts to obtain materials for students with disabilities, and to do so in a more timely manner

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Tips for CSE/Transition Planning Meetings

Districts must provide **"appropriate"** AT when it supports the acquisition of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), not necessarily the **"best"** AT

Ask to include a participant who is sufficiently **knowledgeable about AT** to help lead the discussion (O/T,P/T,SLP)

Request or bring specific **resource information** about AT for discussion, to help the team focus on what exists for the tasks that are challenging

Don't forget about the student!
They should be included in discussion of AT and accommodating their needs and be aware of why they need it and how it can help now and in the future, after high school

Tips for CSE/Transition Planning Meetings

- **Family input** can help to shape decisions about the **practical use** of devices **in the home** environment and other **out-of-school environments**

  - *What are the difficulties your family wants Assistive Technology to resolve?*

  - *Does the AT help the student to accomplish (transition) goals stated on the IEP?*

- Begin to plan **trial periods** rather than making a final decision. This avoids frustration and allows for adjustments

- **Collected data** provides information to develop a successful plan and may show the AT tried, is not an appropriate solution to the problem

  - Differences in achievement with & without AT

  - Student preferences for competing AT devices

  - Teacher observations

  - Family input and feedback

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Tips for CSE/Transition Planning Meetings cont.

To the extent appropriate, with parental consent, the CSE must invite **agency representatives** that are **likely to be paying for transition services**

> ➤ **ACCES-VR** (Adult Career & Continuing Educational Services-Vocational Rehabilitation)

> ➤ **NYSCB** (NYS Commission for the Blind)

> ➤ **OPWDD** (Office for People with Developmental Disabilities)

> ➤ **OMH** (Office of Mental Health)

ACCES-VR's role is to assist the student in transition to obtain an **employment outcome** in the most integrated employment setting

The VR counselor can provide transition services that involve planning and preparing for the student's future employment goal

- **May include AT devices, services or evaluation if necessary and needed to secure and maintain employment**

- Can provide **incentives to employers if AT modifications are needed** in the workplace

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Assistive Technology Transition/Transfer

- Transition plans for students who use Assistive Technology address the ways the student's use of AT devices and services are **transferred from one setting to another**

- It involves people from different classrooms, programs, buildings, or agencies working together to ensure continuity

- Boards of Education have clear authority to dispose of property the district no longer needs

- Considerations
  - Surplus Nature of the Property
  - Disposition at Fair Market Value
  - Accountability Issues

- Schools can establish **buy-out programs to transfer surplus property to anyone** (i.e. another school district, BOCES, postsecondary institution, human service agency, employer, or private individual)

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Now what comes to mind when you hear "Assistive Technology"?

Increased Independence?

Improved Communication?

Maximized Participation?

Reduced Isolation?

Better Quality of Life?

Remember, **match the person to the technology,** not the technology to the person AND

Don't try to solve a **low tech problem** with a **high tech solution**

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Assistive Technology Resources

- **NYSED Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities** https://www.nysed.gov/special-education/assistive-technology-students-disabilities
- **NYSED Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) and Unified English Braille (UEB)** https://www.nysed.gov/special-education/accessible-instructional-materials-aim-and-unified-english-braille-ueb
  - The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires school districts to provide accessible versions of instructional materials to students who are blind or otherwise unable to use printed materials.
- **Bookshare**: https://www.bookshare.org/cms/
  - Books, newspapers, journals are available in digital format with text-to-speech for individuals who have a qualifying reading or perceptual disability, a visual impairment, or a physical disability that affects their ability to read printed works
- **Center on Inclusive Technology & Education Systems (CITES)** https://cites.cast.org/
  - Aims to empower school districts to build and maintain technology systems that include every student, particularly children and youth with disabilities who require assistive technology and accessible materials.
- **Closing the Gap** http://www.closingthegap.com/
  - A Guide to Assistive Technology Products
- **Wisconsin AT Initiative**: http://www.WATI.org
- **Job Accommodation Networ**k https://askjan.org/

Assistive Technology Program (ATP) at WIHD

- Our team collaborates with individuals and their families, caregivers, teachers, and/or related service providers **to identify assistive technology devices, adaptations, and strategies to improve mobility, communication, computer access, access to the school curriculum, or control over the environment**
  - Assistive technology training
  - Customized technical assistance-can be provided for the use of AT devices
  - Direct services-direct speech, language, and communication services; direct occupational therapy services to students in school through separate contracts with school districts
  - AT Equipment-Loan Program-Lower Hudson Valley Regional Technology Center-for residents of Westchester and Putnam counties.

- To access equipment, locate the Regional TRAID Center overseeing your county
  https://www.justicecenter.ny.gov/traid-program

- **WIHD Make It**- provides AT customized devices for individuals in Westchester County

- **WIHD Assistive Technology YouTube**- provides useful videos including recorded webinars, how to make AT adapted toys, and an AAC app series

- **Assistive Technology evaluations**-for individuals across the lifespan for the following: reading and writing, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), computer access, academic support as well as positioning of equipment

For more information contact:
914-493-1317 or atp@WIHD.org

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Any Questions?

Thanks for Attending!
Please complete our brief evaluation

For more information contact:

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