

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

A Special Education Guide to Assistive Technology



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Technical Assistance guides are developed by the Division of Special Education to provide guidance to schools, parents and advocates regarding eligibility for and the implementation of services to students with disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Administrative Rules of Montana, and Montana statutes.

This document contains recommended practices and procedures that may enhance the services to children and youth with disabilities. All policy statements regarding the delivery of special education and related services are contained in the current *Montana State Plan Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*.

This guide was updated in February 2004. This document replaces the April 1997 edition of the Assistive Technology guide.

If you have questions after reviewing this guide, please contact the Division of Special Education at 444-5661 or 1-888-231-9393.

You can find an electronic copy of this guide and other OPI resource materials on our website at:

www.opi.state.mt.us/speced

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Assistive Technology

**For all students, technology makes things easier.
For students with disabilities, technology makes things possible.**

The decision whether a student with disabilities requires an assistive technology service and/or device in order to benefit from her or his education program is an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team decision. In making this decision the IEP team must consider the individual student's assistive technology needs in relation to his or her education program.

The term "assistive technology" encompasses a broad range of assistive devices from "low tech" to "high-tech" learning tools.

- Low-tech examples: pencil grips, highlighters, paper stabilizers.
- High-tech examples: computers, voice synthesizers, Braille readers.

Assistive Technology

1. What is an assistive technology device?

Assistive technology devices are any item, piece of equipment, or product system (software) used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a student with disabilities.

CFR 300.5 Assistive technology device

2. What is an assistive technology service?

Assistive technology services directly assist a student with disabilities in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.

CFR 300.6 Assistive technology service

3. Why is assistive technology important?

Assistive technology is important because, for some students, without assistive technology they would not have access to or be able to benefit from their educational program.

4. When should the assistive technology devices or services be provided for a student?

When the student is not successful in his or her educational program and the IEP team has determined that the use of assistive technology device(s) and service(s) are necessary for the student to be successful in his/her educational program.

Assessment

5. Must assistive technology be considered for all students with disabilities?

Yes.

CFR 300.346 Development, review, and revision of IEP

6. What kinds of devices qualify as assistive technology?

Any item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a student with disabilities and which the IEP team specifies is necessary for the student to receive a free, appropriate public education (FAPE).

7. Who is qualified to assess a student's need for assistive technology?

Montana does not have licensing or certifications standards for specialists in assistive technology. If a district does not have personnel who are knowledgeable in assistive technology, the district can obtain assistance by contacting knowledgeable providers (e.g., MonTECH, PLUK, etc.).

8. What is the role of the parent in determining a student's need for an assistive device or service?

Parents, and the student, if appropriate, should be invited to participate in all aspects of the process. They can provide valuable information regarding fitting, customizing, and adapting the technology to their child.

9. How is the determination made that an assistive technology device or service is educationally necessary for a student?

The student's IEP team determines that an assistive technology device or service is educationally necessary for a student to benefit from his or her education program.

CFR 300.346 Development, review, and revision of IEP

10. When are assistive technology or assistive technology services considered a related service?

Assistive technology devices or services are considered to be related services when the IEP team determines that the service(s) is required to assist a student with disabilities to benefit from his or her educational program.

CFR 300.24 Related services

11. Can an independent educational evaluation be requested by the parent to address a student’s need for assistive technology?

Yes. The school district is required to evaluate a student in all areas of suspected disability including, if appropriate, evaluating the student’s need for assistive technology. A parent has the right to an independent educational evaluation if the parent disagrees with an evaluation obtained by the school.

Choosing an Assistive Technology Device

12. What procedures should be followed when determining a student’s need for an assistive technology device?

Many factors will need to be addressed because of the unique needs of each individual student. Districts are encouraged to develop a process for this determination. An example Framework for Assistive Technology Consideration can be found on page 19.

13. Is a school district required to provide “state-of-the-art” assistive technology for a student?

The decision as to what type of assistive technology is appropriate should be based on the assistive technology assessment and IEP team decision. The school must provide appropriate technology for the student’s needs to ensure FAPE. If specific assistive technology is necessary to ensure FAPE for a student and no other assistive technology can meet the student’s educational needs, the district must provide the required assistive technology. If a less expensive assistive technology would accomplish the same goals, the school district is under no obligation to choose a more expensive option.

14. Can school district administrators instruct personnel not to include assistive technology in the IEP?

No. The IEP team determines a student’s need for assistive technology devices and services. A school may not prevent IEP teams from identifying a student’s need for assistive technology.

CFR 300.346 Development, review, and revision of IEP

15. What constitutes an unreasonable amount of time to obtain an assistive technology device?

It is not possible to set a specific time period. However, once an assistive technology device is determined necessary for the student’s instructional program, the district must implement procedures necessary for obtaining the device without unnecessary delay. When a delay is anticipated (e.g., equipment is on backorder from the company) it is best practice for the school to inform the parent and to implement procedures to ensure that the student has access to the instructional program. It may be possible for the district to rent, borrow or lease an appropriate device in the interim.

16. Are there any places in Montana that offer the opportunity to try out equipment before a purchase is made?

Yes. See Resources on page 26.

17. If the IEP team cannot come to consensus regarding an assistive technology device or service, what should occur?

The IEP team should work toward consensus, but the public agency has ultimate responsibility to ensure that the IEP includes the services that the student needs in order to receive FAPE. It is never appropriate to make IEP decisions based upon a majority "vote." If the team cannot reach consensus, the public agency must:

- Inform the parents of the district's proposals or refusals, or both, regarding the student's educational program; in this case, provide the parents with a written copy of the IEP that includes not only those items upon which the parents and district agree in addition to those items the district proposes as essential for the provision of FAPE; and
- Advise the parents that they have the right to seek resolution of any disagreements through informal processes such as the OPI's Early Assistance Program, or requesting formal mediation or initiating an impartial due process hearing.

Every effort should be made to resolve differences between parents and school staff through voluntary mediation or some other informal step without resort to a due process hearing. However, mediation or other informal procedures may not be used to deny or delay a parent's right to a due process hearing, or to deny any other rights afforded under Part B of IDEA.

The IEP meeting serves as a communication vehicle between parents and school personnel, and enables them, as equal participants, to make joint, informed decisions regarding the:

- Student's needs and appropriate goals;
- Extent to which the student will be involved in the general curriculum and participate in the regular education environment and state and districtwide assessments; and
- Services needed to support that involvement and participation and to achieve agreed-upon goals.

Parents are considered equal partners with school personnel in making these decisions, and the IEP team must consider the parents' concerns and the information that they provide regarding their child in developing, reviewing, and revising IEPs.

IDEA Appendix A - Question 9

Purchasing an Assistive Technology Device

18. Who is required to provide assistive technology devices and services?

Once the IEP team has determined the need for assistive technology, the school district is obligated to provide or purchase the assistive technology device(s) and/or services.

19. Can schools require the parents to pay for an assistive technology device or service?

No. Special education and related services must be provided “at no cost to the parent.”

CFR 300.26 Special education

20. Are there options for districts to consider other than purchasing the assistive technology device?

- Medicaid, with parent approval
- Private insurance with parent approval
- Renting or leasing
- Community and service groups
- Grants and private foundations

(See Resources on page 26)

21. What resources are available to assist in obtaining appropriate assistive technology devices and services?

There are a number of parent, professional and advocacy organizations or associations that offer assistance regarding assistive technology devices and services. See Resources on page 26.

22. Who owns the assistive technology purchased for an individual student?

If the school purchased the device(s), it is the property of the school. If the assistive technology was purchased using the student’s Medicaid or private insurance funds, the device belongs to the student. If the device was donated, ownership would be determined by the conditions of the donorship. If the parents or third party pays for a portion of a device, and the school pays a portion of a device it is advisable that a written agreement be drawn up between the school and the parents regarding ownership.

23. When a student moves from school to school within the same district, does the district-purchased assistive technology device follow the student?

If an assistive device is included in a student’s IEP, it must be provided in whichever school the student attends in that district. The same device may not necessarily follow the student from one school to the next, but a device that fulfills the assistive technology needs identified in the IEP would need to be provided.

24. When a student moves from one school district to a different school district, does the assistive technology device that was purchased by district A follow the student to district B?

Since District A owns the device, it may keep the assistive technology device for use by other students. Or District A may decide to transfer or sell the assistive technology device to District B.

25. If an assistive technology device is no longer needed by a student and the device was paid for by Medicaid or private insurance, can it be donated for use by another student?

Yes. A student's parents could donate the assistive technology to the school for use by other students or to any other program, organization or individual of their choosing such as the MonTECH program, PLUK, etc.

Training in Using the Assistive Technology Device or Service

26. In addition to the student, who else should receive training on how to use an assistive technology device or service?

Anyone with whom the student may use the device. This includes parents, special education teachers, bus staff, paraprofessionals, lunchroom staff, general education teachers, relevant peers and others. It is the district's responsibility to train appropriate staff members in proper use of the technology. Each teacher and provider involved with the student must be informed of the specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the student in accordance with the IEP.

300.342 When IEPs must be in effect

27. What kind of training and technical assistance should be provided to families, peers and professionals?

Depending on the technology and the involvement of the family, peers and professionals with the child, training and technical assistance should include, but not be limited to, providing information and training about:

- the device and how it works;
- programming and setting up the device;
- recognizing and fixing minor problems;
- integrating the device into the student's life at home;
- integrating the device into the student's education goals and objectives;
- maintenance of the device(s) and;
- resources within the local community for repair services.

Using the Assistive Technology Device or Service

28. When can an assistive technology device be used in the regular education setting?

The IEP team determines when and how the student will use the assistive technology device in the regular education setting. Following the development of the IEP this information must be shared with all of the student's classroom teachers and other service providers who have need of such information.

300.342 When IEPs must be in effect

29. Can a student be required to bring a personal assistive device (such as a laptop computer) to school for use as assistive technology?

No. However, the family may wish for the student to use his or her own equipment in school, since he or she may be most familiar or comfortable with that equipment.

30. Can students take assistive technology devices owned by the school to their home?

This decision must be made 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 a free appropriate public education.

31. Can an assistive technology device be used by more than one student?

If the device is the property of the school, it can be used by more than one student so long as each student who requires use of the device has access to it as identified in his or her IEP. If the device is owned by an individual student, parent approval must be obtained before other students may use the equipment.

32. Can students become too dependent on assistive technology?

Proper assessment, assistive technology choice, implementation, and periodic reviews of assistive technology usage and the need for the assistive technology can prevent inappropriate dependency. Assistive technology is appropriate when it compensates for disabilities so that the individual can function as independently as possible. The IEP team should determine the student's need for assistive technology based on the results of assessment and annual reviews.

33. Why do some students refuse to use an assistive technology device?

When this occurs, it is important to discuss the reasons with the student, teachers, parents and others. Following are some reasons why a student may not use an assistive technology device:

- The student was not involved in decision-making.
- The device was not appropriate for the intended purpose.
- The device is inconvenient or impractical to use.
- The device inhibited some other important function.
- The device can't be modified or upgraded to meet changing needs.
- The device is cumbersome or unattractive.
- The functional needs of the student changed.
- Medical intervention (surgery, medications) made it unusable.
- Use of the technology increased medical or safety risk.
- Training on the device and its use was not provided.
- Technical support was not readily available.
- Student was self-conscious about using it.
- For communication devices, the student may continue to use previous communication methods (gestures, eye gaze) rather than the new device or

system, if she or he is able to get what they want by using the previous method rather than by using the new method.

Repair and Maintenance

34. What are the responsibilities of the student, educators and parents in the maintenance and repair of assistive technology devices and reporting broken devices?

It is the joint responsibility of the parent, student and school personnel to take reasonable care of assistive technology devices. The IEP should identify methods for reporting problems and completing repairs prior to using the assistive technology device.

35. If an assistive technology device is lost or damaged beyond repair, who replaces the device?

The school district is responsible to arrange for the repair or replacement of assistive technology devices. The district should ensure that proper safeguards are taken to protect the device if the student has a history of losing or damaging assistive technology devices.

36. Is the school liable for family owned assistive technology devices used at school to implement the student's IEP?

The IDEA doesn't specify the responsibility of the school. The school district should take proper precautions to protect the equipment while it is in school buildings or being transported between home and school.

37. What provisions could be made for the student while an assistive technology device is being repaired?

During the development of the IEP, the IEP team should identify the steps to be taken if the device needs repairs; how a substitute device will be provided; and other temporary options would offer an acceptable substitute to the student's device. It may not be possible to provide the same device in the interim. Parents, Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK), MonTech or other parents/districts may be contacted about a loaner device.

38. What is important to know about a warranty?

The manufacturer's warranty should be reviewed prior to purchasing an assistive technology device and before making any repairs or modifications to the device. In some cases, warranties may be voided if persons other than the manufacturer or authorized service representatives attempt to repair a device.

39. Should assistive technology devices be insured?

It is the school district's decision to carry insurance. School district insurance policies may cover an assistive technology device purchased by the district for student use or may offer additional coverage that includes assistive technology devices. Assistive technology devices purchased by funding sources other than the school may or may not be covered while the

student is on school premises or involved in school activities. It is important for school staff to investigate the district's insurance to determine what the policy currently covers and whether or not the policy insures against loss or damage of assistive technology devices.

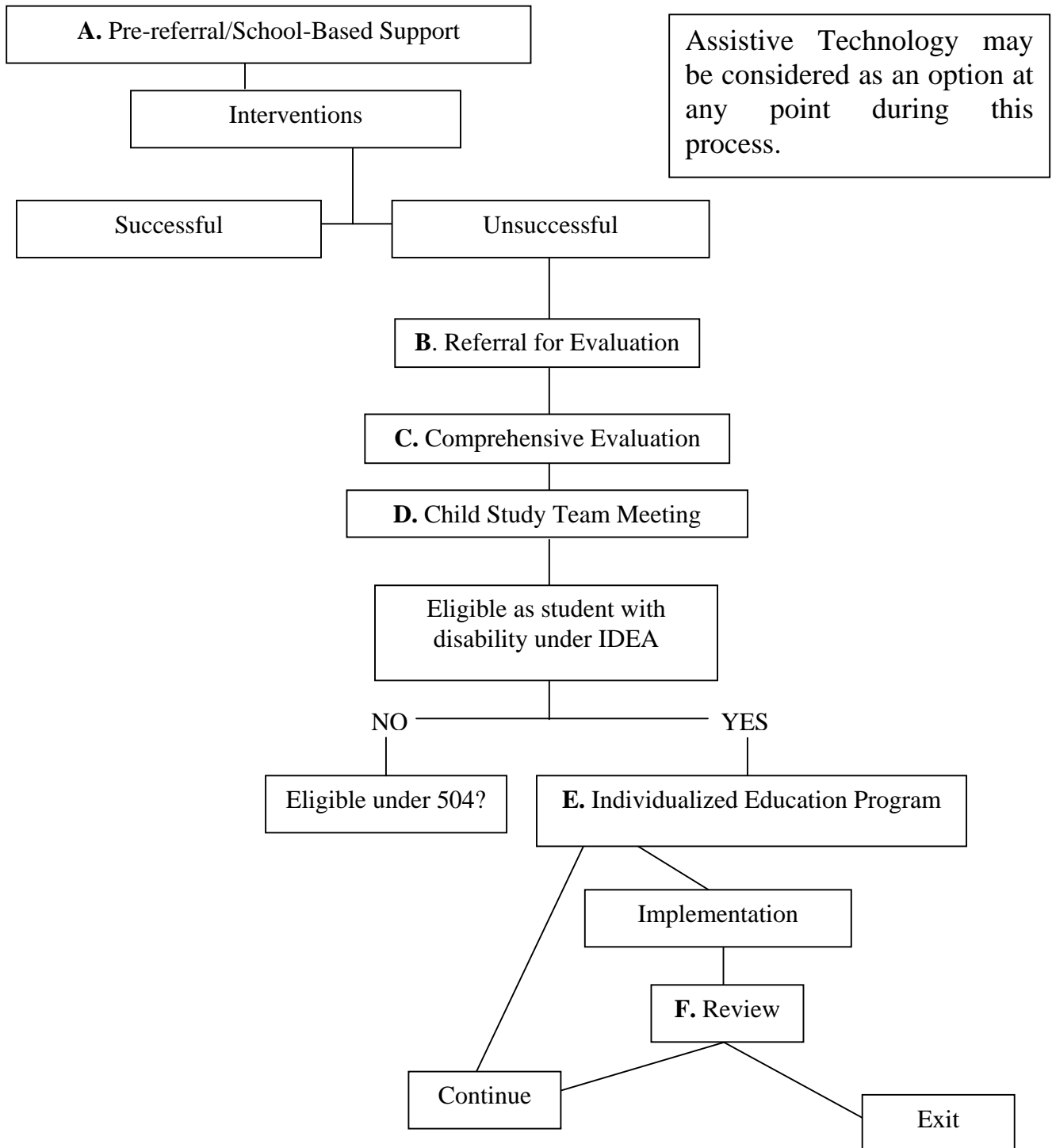
Legal Responsibilities

In accordance with the IDEA, the school district must ensure that assistive technology devices or assistive technology services are made available to a child with a disability if required as a part of the child's special education or related services in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The determination as to what is an appropriate program for each student must be identified in the IEP. There must be a relationship between the educational needs of the student and the assistive technology device and/or service. Assistive technology services and devices must be provided for the student, in accord with the IEP, at no cost to the parent.

The school district is responsible for ensuring that the assistive technology device(s) identified in the student's IEP is in working order and if it is lost or stolen that the device is replaced. If the device is broken, the district must provide repair or replacement, as appropriate.

Assistive Technology As Part of the Special Education Process

The process used to identify a student's need for assistive technology under IDEA is the same as is used for determining the need for special education and the development of an IEP. The following chart and narrative illustrate how assistive technology considerations can be addressed in the special education process.



A. Pre-referral/School-Based Support Team

The pre-referral/school-based support team should consider assistive technology as a tool to address educational problems in the general education program prior to special education referral.

B. Child Find/Referral to Special Education

If the school-based support team determines that the student is not able to function within the general education curriculum even with the intervention(s) tried, the team should refer the student for a comprehensive evaluation.

Notice and Consent (Permission For Evaluation)

Permission to evaluate is needed before evaluation occurs.

C. Comprehensive Evaluation

After it has been determined that an assistive technology assessment is needed as part of the comprehensive evaluation.

D. Child Study Team (CST) Meeting

The Child Study Team determines whether the student has a disability that adversely affects the student's educational performances and because of that disability needs special education. Students who do not meet the eligibility criteria may meet the eligibility requirements of Section 504.

E. Individualized Education Program (IEP)

If an assistive technology evaluation was conducted as part of the comprehensive evaluation, the IEP team members must consider the results and recommendations of the evaluation when developing the IEP.

F. Review

The IDEA requires that each student's IEP be reviewed at least annually. This should include a review of the effectiveness of the assistive technology and strategies and whether further assessment is required and/or revisions need to be made.

Assistive technology and strategies should also be reviewed when:

- the assistive technology is thought to be ineffective;
- the student is ready to use a new assistive technology device or service; and
- the student is transitioning to a new educational environment. The new setting should be analyzed to ensure the assistive technology is compatible to that setting.

Assistive Technology Consideration Process

1. Identify possible need for assistive technology devices or services.
2. Collect and analyze information about the student and her/his environments (playground, classroom, lunchroom, etc.) and how possible assistive technology devices could used.
3. Collect and analyze information about the tasks the student is expected to complete in each environment (be specific).
4. List all previous assistive technology strategies and devices, including no-tech, low-tech, and instructional strategies.
5. If needed, include persons with expertise in specific areas, e.g., behavior, technology, etc.
6. Identify and select strategies and assistive technology devices to be used in each environment.
7. Develop a plan for trials of devices and strategies being considered.
8. Create a plan for obtaining devices that are successful.
9. Create a plan for training the student, staff, parents and others in the use of the assistive technology strategies and device(s).
10. Develop a maintenance and repair plan.
11. Routinely evaluate the effectiveness of the assistive technologies and strategies, including from the student.
12. Repeat any of the above steps and make changes as necessary to ensure success.

Questions To Ask When Considering Assistive Technology Devices and Services

The following are questions to answer when considering a student's need for assistive technology. Each person* involved with the student should have the opportunity to review these questions before making choices about the student's assistive technology needs.

*(Student, paraeducators, special education teachers, parents, regular education teachers, principals, peers, maintenance staff, office staff, lunchroom staff, home service providers, transportation staff, etc.)

Assessment

What will happen if the student does not have assistive technology?

What is the purpose of the device?

(handwriting, computer access, communication, hearing, writing, reading, studying, math, seating and positioning, mobility, vision, etc.)

What devices/methods have been used in the past with this student to address this need? For each device/method, what has been the success?

If devices/methods failed, why did they fail?

What devices/methods is the student currently using to meet his or her needs?

What are the student's current abilities?

What will the device do that the student currently cannot do or has trouble doing?

What current IEP goals are related to the student's needs for assistive technology?

What will limit the student's use of the device? (mobility, availability, physical limitations, etc.)

How often will the student use the device/method?

Choosing an Assistive Technology Device

What device is needed?

How often will the student use the device/method?

Is the considered device/modification the least restrictive technology?

Where will the student use the device?

(Home/ sped classroom/ regular ed classroom – which classes? / on the bus/ physical education / lunchroom / recess, etc.)

Who will the student use the device with? Peers? Teachers?

Will the assistive technology device be “test-driven” prior to purchase?

Are there other people in the school/district/community who have used similar devices?

- How easy is the device to set up, learn to use, operate, maintain and repair for the student, teachers and parents?
- Is the device portable and flexible enough that the student can/will use the device?
- Is the device portable and flexible enough for moving around the school?
- Is the device portable and flexible enough to use on transportation?
- Is the student concerned about the appearance of the technology device or using it around peers?
- Have plans been made for use of the assistive device in other environments and during transition times?
- Is the considered device/modification the most cost-effective approach to meeting the student's need?

Purchasing an Assistive Technology Device

- Who will purchase the device?
- What is the effectiveness, reliability, durability, safety, comfort, and long-term use of the assistive technology device?
- When will the device need to be replaced or updated?
- How easy is the device to store and transport? Will there be a need for any additional equipment such as carrying cases, mounting systems, etc.?
- If software is to be used, do you know the memory, operating system and speed of the computers on which the software is to be used?
- What is the compatibility and expandability of the device(s)?
- Have assistive technology manufacturers or other organizations (MonTECH, PLUK) been contacted about loan programs?

Training in Using Assistive Technology Device or Service

- What training will the student receive to use the assistive technology device?
- Who will deliver the training(s)?
- Who else will be trained to use the device or trained about the device?
(Paraeducators, special education teachers, parents, regular education teachers, peers, principals, maintenance staff, office staff, lunchroom staff, home service providers, transportation staff, etc.)
- How will substitute staff be trained in the use of the device?
- How will future needs for training be identified?

Using the Assistive Technology Device or Service

- Who will determine if the device is being used successfully?
- What IEP goals will be developed for the use of the assistive technology device?

How will the IEP include assistive technology services?

When will the success or failure of the device be reviewed? By whom?

How will the student provide feedback on the use of the assistive technology device?

Repair and Maintenance

Who will pay for repairs?

Are local resources available to provide technical support or repair of the device(s)?

When the device breaks, who will repair the device?

Who will be responsible to contact the repair provider? To get the device to the repair location? To make sure that the repairs occur?

How will the need for the assistive technology be addressed while repairs are occurring?

Student-Centered Assessment

The school district must evaluate a student in all areas of suspected disability, including whether the student needs assistive technology devices or services. When the CST or IEP team determines that a student needs an assistive technology assessment, the school must provide for the assessment. A school may use its own personnel or, if it participates in a special education cooperative, use cooperative staff to conduct or assist with the evaluation or contract with an individual or organization to assist with conducting the evaluation.

The assistive technology assessment must be conducted within the student's customary environments, since the assessment is being conducted for the purpose of determining the appropriateness of an assistive device(s) for the student's educational program. "Customary environments" means the environments in which the students receives his or her education instruction.

Professional Development

The implementation and use of assistive technology services and devices includes training or technical assistance for the student or, if appropriate, the student's family, as well as training or technical assistance for persons providing education or rehabilitation services, employers, or other individuals who provide services to or are substantially involved in the life of the student.

CFR 300.6 Assistive technology service

Schools may address training needs by:

- Using school personnel to provide the necessary training, since these people are a valuable resource for creating a "train the trainer" model. Outside resources can be used to consult and provide training where needed.
- Reviews of training needs should be regularly scheduled and occur whenever there is a change in the student's educational program.
- Retraining may be necessary when the IEP is revised, new staff are employed, or the student's placement is changed.

General Professional Development

Professional development is important because a lack of meaningful training in assistive technology can lead to product abandonment. It is to the benefit of the school district that school personnel have some awareness training regarding assistive technology devices, services and resources. This training is important so that district personnel are knowledgeable of the obligations of the district under IDEA, the resources available within the district to address students' assistive technology needs, and the basic process to follow if a parent or school personnel think a student may need assistive technology devices or services. When providing awareness training, it is important to think about including the following groups:

- All educators involved in the educational process of the student (special educators, paraprofessionals and general educators)
- Parents
- Students
- Others who interact with the student:
 - Bus drivers
 - Lunchroom or playground assistant
 - Peers

School districts should provide inservice in the following areas:

- Legal requirements related to assistive technology devices and services.
- Factors that may lead to consideration of a student's need for assistive technology.
- Student-centered assessment process to determine a student's need for an assistive technology devices and/or services.
- Documentation of assistive technology and assistive technology services on the IEP.
- Development of IEP goals and objectives for assistive technology services and devices.
- Implementation of assistive technology across settings.
- Common assistive technology devices (low tech/high tech).
- Resources for information and support.

Student Specific Training

School personnel who work with a student should have training on the use and maintenance of the assistive technology, as appropriate, and should know who to contact for assistance, equipment repair or maintenance. Training should include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Review of the student's educational and assistive technology needs.
- How the student will use the assistive device in his or her educational program.
- Methods to evaluate the effectiveness of the assistive technology.

Peer Group Awareness Training

Students who require assistive technology devices may feel more comfortable using the device(s) with peers if assistive technology information is shared with the student's peer group.

Such training can help:

- create an understanding of the student's assistive technology and the need for the assistive technology.
- foster acceptance in the social environment.
- reduce fears or discomfort about socializing with the student who uses the technology.

The student and parent are important parts of any training activities. Parents should be aware of and be invited to participate in all peer training activities.

Parent Training

Parents should be invited to participate in:

- Training on the use of the assistive technology
- Training on the implementation of the assistive technology
- Development of the maintenance plan
- Ongoing training opportunities
- Peer group awareness training

Funding for Assistive Technology

If a student who is eligible under IDEA requires assistive technology in order to receive a free appropriate public education, the school must provide the appropriate assistive technology devices and services at no cost to the parents.

School districts should be proactive in coordinating efforts to secure supplemental funding. Districts may use any of the following funds to purchase assistive technology devices and services.

- State education funds;
- State or local funds;
- Federal funds provided for special education and related services under IDEA for eligible students with disabilities; and
- Other available sources such as donations, private insurance and Medicaid.

When equipment is purchased with state or local district funds, state special education or IDEA funds, the equipment becomes the property of the school and the school is responsible for maintenance, repair and insurance.

If equipment is purchased with a family's insurance or student's Medicaid funds, the equipment becomes the property of the family and the family is generally responsible for maintenance, repair and insurance. If the parents or third party pays for a portion of a device, and the school pays a portion of a device, it is advisable that a written agreement be drawn up between the school and the parents regarding ownership and repairs.

Possible sources of funding are:

Public Programs

- Medicaid
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services

Private Programs

- Loans
- Private Insurance

- Non-Profit Disability Associations
 - These include, but are not limited to:
 - Braille Institute
 - March of Dimes
 - Muscular Dystrophy Association
 - National Easter Seal Society
 - United Way
 - United Cerebral Palsy Association
- Foundations
- Service Organizations
 - These groups include, but are not limited to:
 - Elks Club
 - Kiwanis
 - Knights of Columbus
 - Lions Club
 - Masons
 - Rotary Club
 - Soroptimists
 - Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)

Other ways of obtaining assistive technology devices:

- Local church, high school, neighborhood, labor union, or special interest groups (computer clubs, ham operators, etc.) may plan a fund-raiser.
- College student organizations (fraternities and sororities) may give money or students' time to help a special cause. Even if money is not available, they may be willing to help organize a fund-raiser.
- Borrow or rent the equipment from an equipment loan program, a dealer, a manufacturer or another family. Loans are usually for a limited time. If there is a fee for loaned equipment, some vendors will apply the fee to the purchase price.

Resources

The following is a list of resources that may be used to learn more about assistive technology funding options, services and assistive technologies.

Montana Resources

Montana Relay/Telecommunications Access Program (MTAP)

111 North Last Chance Gulch

Helena, MT 59604

800-833-8503

www.montanarelay.org

There are a variety of private individuals who provide these services throughout the state. Check your local listings or ask MonTECH or PLUK for references.

MonTECH Program

634 Eddy Avenue

Missoula, MT 59812

800-732-0323

montech.ruralinstitute.umt.edu

MonTECH is Montana's Technology-Related Assistance Program for People with Disabilities that provides information and assistance which lets inquirers know what type of equipment is available, where to find it, approximate cost and information on funding sources.

Parents, Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK)

516 North 32nd Street

Billings, MT 59101-0298

800-222-7585

www.pluk.org

PLUK serves the entire state, providing information on assistive technology.

(Information presented on this page was current as of the time of printing. If you are unable to locate any of these resources, please contact the Division of Special Education at 444-5661.)

National Resources

Closing the Gap

www.closingthegap.com

Computer technology in special education and rehabilitation.

LD Online

www.ldonline.org/ld_indepth/technology/technology.html

Technology can open doors and break down barriers for children, youth and adults with learning disabilities. Whether in the classroom or workplace, technology can provide a vital difference. Here we explore new developments in technology and practical insights into the promise and realities of making technology work for people with learning disabilities.

LD Resources

www.ldresources.com/articles/index.html

Resources for the learning disabilities community.

Microsoft Computers

www.microsoft.com/enable/guides/default.aspx

Provides a list of assistive technology and links to step-by-step tutorials that will help customize computers to accommodate an individual with a specific disability.

National Federation of the Blind

<http://www.nfb.org/>

This website includes adapted materials.

Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Services

www.qiat.org

The QIAT Consortium is a nationwide grassroots group that includes hundreds of individuals who provide input into the ongoing process of identifying, disseminating, and implementing a set of widely applicable Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Services in School Settings.

SETT Framework

www.joyzabala.com

Resources for learning more about assistive technology devices and services in educational settings. It provides links to informational sites, as well as sites that provide opportunities to participate in collegial discussions and research on assistive technology.

Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative

www.wati.org

The Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative is a statewide project funded by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction to help all school districts develop or improve their assistive technology services.

(Information presented on this page was current as of the time of printing. If you are unable to locate any of these resources, please contact the Division of Special Education at 444-5661.)

IEP Goal Examples

The use of assistive technology should be integrated throughout the IEP. Citing specific equipment or software in goals and objectives is not recommended. Rather, include the specific target skill (independent writing, composition skills, etc.) and note the assistive technology device or service that is necessary for the student to succeed in the accommodation/modification section of the IEP.

PRESENT LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Nica uses Morse code and two head switches to access her computer and complete writing assignments. Accuracy is currently at 70%, speed is eight words per minute.

MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOAL

Nica will use a computer to complete writing assignments and increase writing speed to 15 words per minutes and accuracy to 80%.

SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES OR BENCHMARKS

Nica will complete writing assignments using Morse code with 80% accuracy on two of three assignments.

Nica will write at a minimum rate of 15 words per minute on two of three writing assignments.

PRESENT LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Based on handwriting assessment, Mike's legibility score is 50% and his speed is 15 letters per minute using a pencil. He touch types at 10 words per minute with 90% accuracy.

MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOAL

Mike will increase his handwriting legibility to 75% and his touch typing to 15 words per minute with 95% accuracy.

SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES OR BENCHMARKS

Using a pencil grip and a slant board, Mike will write legibly 75% of the time for 10 consecutive classroom samples.

Mike will touch type 15 words per minute at 95% accuracy using electronic keyboarding assistive technologies.

PRESENT LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

Rebecca demonstrates knowledge of basic computer functions using a standard keyboard and word processor. She dictates sentences and uses a scribe for transcription. She uses a spell checker to write short sentences. Typically she makes five spelling, four punctuation, and three grammar errors per page of familiar material.

MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOAL

Rebecca will compose paragraphs and classroom assignments using a word processor for correction of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

SHORT-TERM OBJECTIVES OR BENCHMARKS

Using a word processor, Rebecca will compose a complete paragraph consisting of four sentences, with fewer than a total of three spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors on a final report completed in the resource room on a topic identified the previous day.

Using a word processor, Rebecca will correct spelling on selected classroom assignments at 90% accuracy for five or more consecutive assignments.

Accommodations/Modifications Examples

These lists include modifications to materials and methods, as well as assistive technology examples. Other modifications may be available. Please keep in mind that not all modifications are appropriate for each student.

Skill Area	Method Accommodations	Material Accommodations	Technology Accommodations
Communication	Picture schedules Repeat directions Seat student near teacher	Carry pen and paper for writing	Electronic device with voice output Letter/word/icon communication board Picture schedules Pocket-size communication book Word prediction software

Skill Area	Method Accommodations	Material Accommodations	Technology Accommodations
Handwriting	Additional time on written assignments Chalkboard practice Examples on desk “Fill-in-the-blank” tests rather than essay Multiple choice tests Not grading handwriting Paper position Peer support Photocopy notes Tape paper to desk True or false tests Write on whiteboard	Arm stabilizer/arm guide Clipboards Correction tape/fluid Different colors of paper Different kinds of paper (linen, graph, etc.) Different line colors Different line spacing Different size pencils/pens Highlighters Labels/stickers with name Marker instead of pencil Paper stabilizers Pencil grip adapter Rubber name stamps Slantboard/wedge Stencils/templates Tracing paper Whiteboard	Custom keyboards Keyboard guard Slant board Speech recognition systems Use computer or word processor for writing Use handwriting font Wrist supports for typing

Skill Area	Method Accommodations	Material Accommodations	Technology Accommodations
Math	Avoid mixing “signs” on page for young students Don’t require copying problems Extra time for completion Reduce number of problems Study carrel for solo work Study guides Use calculator	Enlarge worksheets Math fact tables Provide worksheets with partial answers Reduce number of problems on page Use whiteboard Work on graph paper	Calculator Large key calculator On-screen calculator Talking calculator

Skill Area	Method Accommodations	Material Accommodations	Technology Accommodations
Organization	Color coding strategies for filing/homework Daily/weekly assignment schedule Have student repeat or write down directions Have student summarize directions Priority list Simplify directions Written directions	Appointment book Assignment notebook Bulletin board reminders Extra books at home Homework journal Locker organizer system Pocket organizer/schedule Process or schedule reminder on desk Schedule in notebook Storage cubicles Study guides	Calendar software Personal digital assistant (PDA) Pocket schedule Timers Voice recorders for reminders Wristwatch with alarm

Skill Area	Method Accommodations	Material Accommodations	Technology Accommodations
Reading	Extra time for completion Provide chapter outlines Reduce reading level on assignments Shorten assignments Study carrel for solo work Study guides	Color overlays Enlarged print on assignments Highlight key words and concepts Large print books	Books on tape Close Circuit TV to enlarge books Electronic dictionary Screen enlarger for computer text Screen readers Use markers/ruler to guide reading

Skill Area	Method Accommodations	Material Accommodations	Technology Accommodations
Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation	Additional time on written assignments Peer support Recognition spelling test (identify correctly spelled words in multiple choice) Reduce assignments "Word wall" of common words and punctuation posted in classroom	List of problem words Pocket dictionary Reduce length of reading assignments	Computer spell check Electronic dictionary Personal electronic spellchecker Word prediction software

Skill Area	Method Accommodations	Material Accommodations	Technology Accommodations
Vision	Frequent breaks from tasks Longer time to complete tasks Peer readers Seating arrangement Shorter or no homework assignments Shorter tasks Typing instead of handwriting	Bold line paper Books on tape Braille textbooks Braille printer Change font Color overlays Different color paper Double-space text Enlarge font size Enlarge reading materials Enlarge worksheets Hand-held (or other) magnifiers Lighting (changes in) Raised line paper Write with wide marker instead of pencil	Anti-glare shield Audio recorder/player Braille labels on keyboard Close Circuit TV to enlarge books Enlarge zoom on computer Large-key calculator Large-key computer keyboard Magnifying glass Page magnifier Provide more or less lighting Rulers - large print Screen enlarger for computer Screen readers Speech recognition systems Talking calculator Video magnifiers Videotape lectures

Skill Area	Method Accommodations	Material Accommodations	Technology Accommodations
Written Expression	Accept outlines or notes to reduce written work Create sentences aloud Do not grade for spelling Extra time for completion Process reminders on chalkboard or desk Provide writing sample Shorten assignments Study carrel for solo work .	Pocket dictionary Pocket thesaurus Process reminders on chalkboard or desk	Electronic dictionary Electronic thesaurus Spell check Use computer or word process for writing Use tape recorder to do assignments verbally Word prediction software

Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) cited:

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.

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.

300.13 Free appropriate public education

As used in this part, the term free appropriate public education or FAPE means special education and related services that-

- (a) Are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge;
- (b) Meet the standards of the SEA, including the requirements of this part;
- (c) Include preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education in the State; and
- (d) Are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP) that meets the requirements of §§300.340-300.350.

300.24 Related services

(a) General. As used in this part, the term related services means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech-language pathology and audiology services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. The term also includes school health services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training.

300.26 Special education (reads in part)

(1) As used in this part, the term special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability,

300.342 When IEPs must be in effect (reads in part)

(b) Implementation of IEPs. Each public agency shall ensure that—

(2) The child's IEP is accessible to each regular education teacher, special education teacher, related service provider, and other service provider who is responsible for its implementation; and

(3) Each teacher and provider described in paragraph (b)(2) of this section is informed of—

(i) His or her specific responsibilities related to implementing the child's IEP; and

(ii) The specific accommodations, modifications, and supports that must be provided for the child in accordance with the IEP.

300.346 Development, review, and revision of IEP (reads in part)

(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.

(c) Statement in IEP. If, in considering the special factors described in paragraphs (a)(1) and (2) of this section, the IEP team determines that a child needs a particular device or service (including an intervention, accommodation, or other program modification) in order for the child to receive FAPE, the IEP team must include a statement to that effect in the child's IEP.

300.550 General LRE requirements

(a) Except as provided in §300.311(b) and (c), a State shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretary that the State has in effect policies and procedures to ensure that it meets the requirements of §§300.550-300.556.

(b) Each public agency shall ensure—

(1) That to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are nondisabled; and

(2) That special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

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Select Question

9. What is a public agency's responsibility if it is not possible to reach consensus on what services should be included in a child's IEP?

The IEP meeting serves as a communication vehicle between parents and school personnel, and enables them, as equal participants, to make joint, informed decisions regarding the (1) child's needs and appropriate goals; (2) extent to which the child will be involved in the general curriculum and participate in the regular education environment and State and districtwide assessments; and (3) services needed to support that involvement and participation and to achieve agreed-upon goals. Parents are considered equal partners with school personnel in making these decisions, and the IEP team must consider the parents' concerns and the information that they provide regarding their child in developing, reviewing, and revising IEPs (§§300.343(c)(iii) and 300.346(a)(1) and (b)).

The IEP team should work toward consensus, but the public agency has ultimate responsibility to ensure that the IEP includes the services that the child needs in order to receive FAPE. It is not appropriate to make IEP decisions based upon a majority "vote." If the team cannot reach consensus, the public agency must provide the parents with prior written notice of the agency's proposals or refusals, or both, regarding the child's educational program, and the parents have the right to seek resolution of any disagreements by initiating an impartial due process hearing.

Every effort should be made to resolve differences between parents and school staff through voluntary mediation or some other informal step, without resort to a due process hearing. However, mediation or other informal procedures may not be used to deny or delay a parent's right to a due process hearing, or to deny any other rights afforded under Part B.