

**ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY**  
**GUIDELINES FOR IEP**  
**TEAMS**

## **Guidelines Regarding Assistive Technology For IEP Teams**

1. The need for assistive technology should be considered at each step of the Special Education process. It is a collaborative school-based approach that includes the parent, the student, and multi-disciplinary service providers who are knowledgeable of the disability and the aspects of assistive technology associated with those disabilities.
2. Assistive technology is a “tool” for access that helps students work around or compensate for deficits. “Assistive technology is not designed to improve particular skills or teach particular subjects.” (Bridges to Reading, pg.5) AT is not instructional software.
3. Assistive technology ranges from low technology (such as, pencil grips, raised line paper, picture communication boards, highlighting tape) to high technology (such as, listening devices, voice output communication devices, computers with text to speech programs that transcribe print into Braille). It is important to understand that the legal definition of AT is broad and the word “technology” in the term assistive technology does not demand the use of a device or system with electronic components.
4. The level of technical assistance and training of the AT device should be considered in relation to the student’s learning potential, motivation, chronological age, developmental level and curriculum access needs. The level of technical assistance and training needed for the school personnel and parents to support the student’s use of the device should also be considered.
5. Consideration of assistive technology should be completed after development of the IEP goals and objectives each year in order to address changes in the student’s needs, new tasks to be completed, and advancements in technology.
6. Consideration of assistive technology should be a brief process and does not imply that an AT assessment or AT equipment will be needed for every student with a disability. If the student’s performance of working toward mastery of the goals and objective is adequate in relation to his/her abilities, the IEP team would conclude that AT is not needed and document the data or basis for that decision.

If the IEP team recommends a short-term trial of assistive technology equipment available at the school, the nature and extent of the trial period should be written into the IEP as an assistive technology service.

If the IEP team needs more information to make a decision concerning assistive technology, a recommendation would be made to the District Assistive Technology Team for AT support services of consultation or assessment.

7. The IEP team should determine if the supports and services needed for the student are available at the campus through access to technology commonly used by other students,

such as general education technology. The IEP team should determine if the student needs access to assistive technology that may be available in the classroom or school campus, or if exclusive use of the equipment is required.

## **ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY – WHO NEEDS AT?**

### Appropriate Reasons for Assistive Technology Referral

1. Student is not making progress toward mastery of IEP goals because she/he cannot access materials.
2. Student does not have a communication system which allows for wants and needs to be met.
3. Motor skills are so limited that the student cannot use normal classroom tools.

### Inappropriate Reasons for Assistive Technology Referrals

1. Student lacks the motivation necessary to make academic progress.
2. Student is not making academic progress due to limited cognitive skills, inappropriate instructional strategies, or inappropriate placement.
3. Student is not making academic progress due to behavioral interference with classroom performance.
4. Lack of educational opportunity, i.e., truancy.
5. Poor handwriting in absence of a physical disability.