

Assistive Technology IEP Tips

Assistive technology may be any tool that assists a child's performance with a functional task that they cannot perform well or cannot perform at all because of their disability. **Assistive Technology must be considered for ALL IEPs!**

Assistive Technology devices and services are defined in IDEA as:

§300.5 Assistive Technology Device

Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of children with disabilities...do not include a medical device that is surgically implanted or the replacement of the device.

§300.6 Assistive Technology Service

Any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. Such terms include:

(A) the **evaluation of needs including a functional evaluation**, in the child's customary environment;

(B) **purchasing, leasing or otherwise providing for the acquisition** of assistive technology devices;

(C) **selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing of assistive technology devices**;

(D) **coordinating with 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 an individual with disabilities**, or where appropriate that child's family; and

(F) **training or technical assistance for professionals** (including individuals providing education and rehabilitation services), employers or others(s) who provide services to employ, or are otherwise, substantially involved in the major life functions of children with disabilities. [Authority 20 U.S.C., Chapter 33, Section 1401(26)]

§300.105 Assistive Technology

Each public agency shall ensure that assistive technology devices or assistive technology services or both, as those terms are defined in 300.5 - 300.6 are made available to a child with a disability if required as a part of the child's (a) Special education under 300.36; (b) Related services under 300.34; or (c) Supplementary aids and services under 300.114(a)(2)(ii).

AT Consideration

Any and all assistive technology must be documented in the IEP if the student needs it to be successful with the curriculum even if it is a Tier 1 intervention (example: touchscreen computer - Chromebook).

Consider the following areas and need for assistive technology for the student to access their education in all their environments:

-Seating, Positioning, & Mobility

-Computer Access

-Mathematics

-Recreation/Leisure

-Reading

-Communication

-Vision

-Feeding

-Writing

-Organization

-Hearing

AT/AAC should be listed throughout the IEP:

* Special Considerations and at least one additional starred item must be completed for IDEA compliance.

- *Special Considerations
- *Special Education - Present Levels and Goals/Objectives
- *Related Services
- *Supplementary Aids and Services
- Strength's statement
- Accommodations and Modifications/ Alternate Assessments
- Transition Services
- Nonacademic and Extracurricular Activities
- Meeting Minutes (consideration and results of consideration)

Special Considerations

3a. If there are communication needs, does the child have a consistent, reliable, and effective mode of communication?	Yes No
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3b. If YES, what is the student's primary mode of communication?
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AAC Example: STUDENT is considered an emergent / context-dependent /independent communicator utilizing total communication (list multiple communication modalities). (if applicable) Speech Generating Device (SGD) is sent back and forth between home and school environments.

5. Is Assistive Technology necessary in order to implement the student's IEP?	Yes
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5a. If Assistive Technology is required to implement the IEP, describe the Assistive Technology that is needed?
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- Currently used AT
- AT/AAC Evaluation
- Consultation with outside AT professionals
- AT/AAC trials
- Include time frames during which it is expected that a decision will be reached.
- Include any necessary services under SUPPLEMENTARY AIDS AND SERVICES
- **Always include backup systems/alternative systems whenever possible within the IEP!** For example, a paper communication core board alongside a Speech Generating Device

Example: STUDENT requires access to a Speech Generating Device with robust vocabulary AAC system throughout the school day to communicate with peers and adults. A paper based AAC systems is also being utilized.

***Present Levels**

AAC needs change and the Present Level area is a perfect area to discuss current needs!

1. Current AAC is no longer effective for the student (explain why it is no longer effective and state if

- further assessment is needed)
2. List current need for assessment of AAC
 3. Student's current AAC system is effective (include examples!)

Documenting the name of a device:

Multiple products may offer the needed features, specific products change over time, and new products are created! ONLY describing the features of the currently used AAC may be valuable, thus allowing for the use of another AAC device or method when needed.

However, if a device has specific characteristics that require the student to learn operational skills that are unique to the specific device, or the child has become accustomed to a feature/style that would make it detrimental to change to a different product, name the product!

Examples:

“STUDENT is non-speaking. With his school provided speech-generating device (which includes core and fringe vocabulary, social phrases, and quick access to highly motivating personal vocabulary) he is able to respond to questions during group circle times and communicate basic wants and needs.”

“STUDENT has received instruction and is beginning to effectively use a speech generating device with customizable core and fringe vocabulary during engaging, social conversation with peers. STUDENT has been successfully using a school provided iPad with XXX app (Core 60 vocabulary set) to accomplish this at this time.”

“STUDENT is able to communicate for a variety of functions using total communication methods. STUDENT communicates using vocalizations, gestures, and pictures at this time. STUDENT currently uses one hit speech generating buttons, and 4 choice picture boards. The DEVICE TRIALED was trialed and is currently in the approval process with STUDENT'S private insurance (as of X DATE) as this device accounts for vision and motor deficits but is a robust language system. During the trial period, STUDENT used the device to direct other people's actions, express feelings and wants/needs and socially engage with family. STUDENT also selected meaningful core words as well as fringe vocabulary in order to request objects, greet others, continue activities, and cease activities.”

***Goals**

Assistive technology may be included in the annual goals if:

- It states how the assistive technology will contribute to achieving the goal
- It states why the technology will be used to accomplish a specific goal
- States that the device will be utilized to acquire the goal

Utilize DAGG-2 (<https://www.tennesseetalks.org/blog/tobii-dynavox-dynamic-aac-goals-grid-2-dagg-2>) for possible AAC goal ideas and wording.

Examples (many others in DAGG-2):

-Given total communication (verbal, sign, and AAC), STUDENT will increase his functional communication skills by independently producing verbal, sign, and/or AAC responses in 60% of opportunities across 3 consecutive data collection dates as measured by performance on therapy tasks and observation.

-Given total communication (sign, verbal, AAC) and a model, STUDENT will answer questions using total communication and 1-3 word responses in 60% of opportunities across 3 consecutive data collection dates as measured by performance on therapy tasks and observation.

-Given total communication (sign, verbal, AAC) and a model, STUDENT will comment, request, or ask questions using total communication and 1-3 word utterances at an average of 1 time per minute across 3 consecutive data collection dates as measured by performance on therapy tasks and observation.

-Given a visual prompt as needed, STUDENT will identify a communication breakdown and use repair strategies by repeating himself more clearly and/or utilizing AAC system (either speech generating device or paper based) in 3 out of 5 opportunities across 3 consecutive data collection dates as measured by observation and performance in classroom activities.

Program Modifications/Supports for School Personnel- Include any needed assistive technology, related services direct support, or training needs in order for goal to be obtained.

***Related Services**

- The law states that the list of related services is not exhaustive and may include other developmental, corrective, or support services (including AT)
- Related Service area should be utilized for training of the technology.
- In order for students to be successful with assistive technology devices, they need to receive proper training on the use of the equipment, which can occur as a related service. Training on assistive technology devices can be written into the IEP as a related service.
- Preparation for the use of assistive technology devices can be worked into multiple related services. Examples of this include situations where occupational therapy is needed prior to being able to access assistive technology devices or exercises are needed to prepare the student to use a computer keyboard or a communication board.)

***Supplementary Aids and Services**

Assistive technology is necessary as a supplementary aid if its presence (along with other necessary aids) supports the student sufficiently to maintain placement in a least restrictive environment, provides more independence and requires little instruction.

- For example, if a student with multiple physical disabilities can make independent, educational progress on his or her IEP goals in the regular classroom with the use of a computer and an augmentative communication device and cannot make such progress in that setting without the devices, those devices are necessary supplementary aids.

Accommodations and Modifications/Alternate Assessments

- AT as an accommodation cannot invalidate the construct being tested
- Important to review state and local guidelines for allowable testing accommodations for standardized testing.
- AAC should be regularly used for participation in educational activities in order for it to be a testing accommodation.
- On the flip side, AT/AAC should be provided if deemed necessary within the classroom, even if it cannot be used in state assessments.

Transition Services

- AT/AAC may need to be listed with Transition Services.
Example: "The case manager from the Department of Human Services will contact public and private agencies to assist with obtaining funding for the AAC device for STUDENT before the team's annual IEP meeting. The speech language pathologist will identify potential sources for technical support after he leaves high school to give to the family."