Assistive Technology:
More than "Checking A Box"

Sara Pericolosi
Alt+Shift

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Michigan Alliance for Families
information, support, and education

Alt + Shift
Rethink the possible. Realize potential.

Alt+Shift is an *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) Grant Funded Initiative through the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education

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Please Note

In this webinar, Alt+Shift will provide information and resources regarding assistive technology best practices.

Student specific solutions, including the use of specific tools, are determined by your learner's IEP team. For assistance navigating IEP meetings, contact Michigan Alliance for Families. For assistance with disagreement resolution or complex meetings, contact Special Education Mediation Services (https://www.mikids1st.org/).

Meet the Presenter

Sara Pericolosi

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- AT/AAC Specialist
- Speech-Language Pathologist

Learner Outcomes

- Explore how Assistive Technology can be written in various sections of an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

  - Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

  - Transition

  - Goals/Objectives

  - Supplementary Aids and Services

  - Testing

  - Related Services, Transportation

- Identify next steps

Special Factors

For each individual learner, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team must consider the:

- need for assistive technology devices and services
- communication needs

More than Checking a Box

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❑ need for assistive technology devices and services
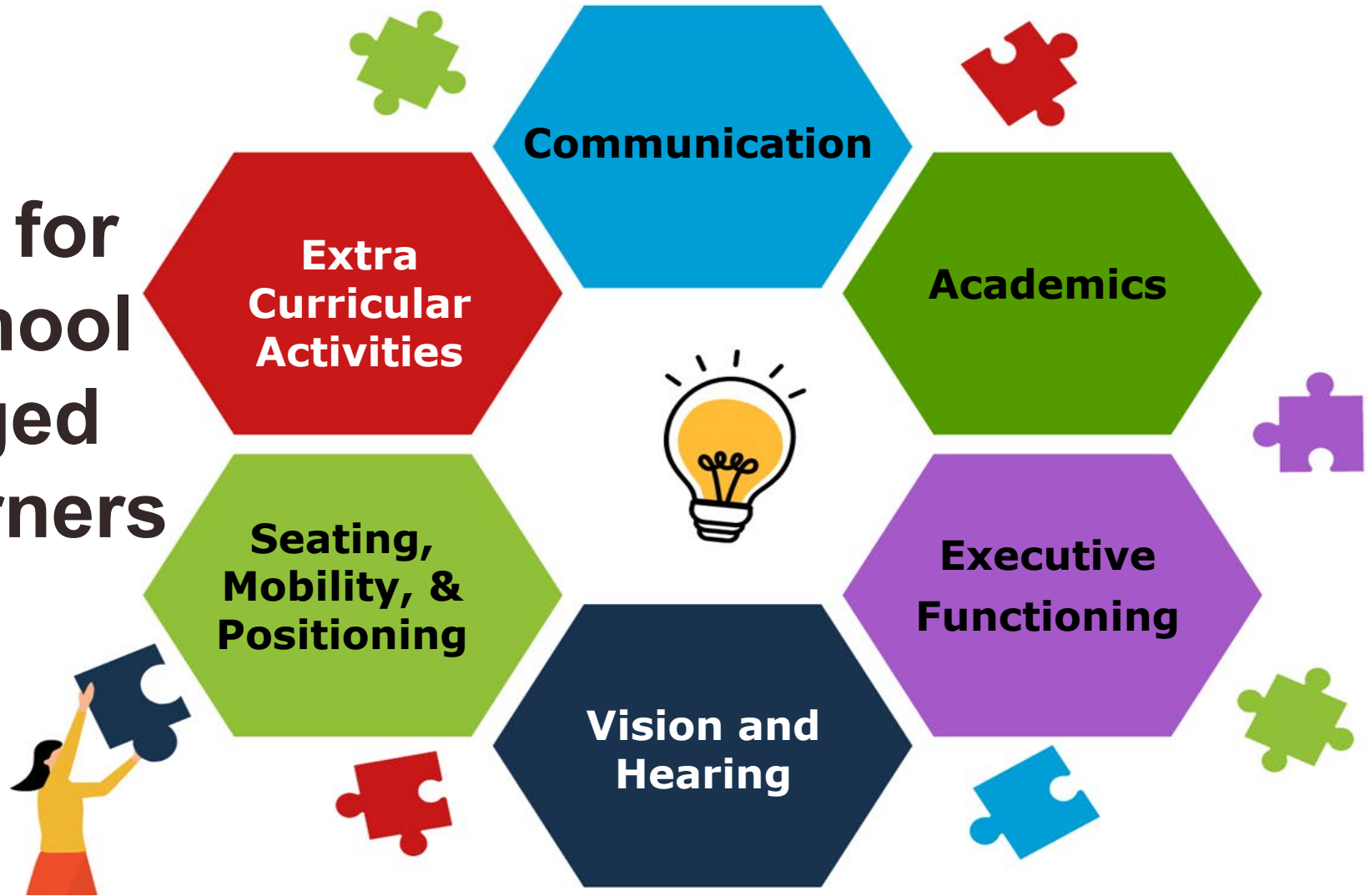
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What is Assistive Technology (AT)?

- 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 a person with a disability.

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

"For people without disabilities, technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible."

--IBM Training Manual, 1991

AT for School Aged Learners

Communication

Extra Curricular Activities

Academics

Seating, Mobility, & Positioning

Executive Functioning

Vision and Hearing

Back to "The Box"

Assistive Technology (AT) Consideration **must** take place for **every** student receiving special education services.

For each individual learner, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) must consider the:

- need for assistive technology devices and services

Consider This...

Assistive Technology (AT) Consideration is a process that involves:

- ❏ Collaborative decision making

- ❏ Reviewing existing information about a learner

- ❏ Collecting additional information (if needed)

- ❏ Deciding whether or not AT is needed

- ❏ Identifying the AT in order for the learner to be successful (if needed)

Common Errors of AT Consideration

- AT is considered for students with severe disabilities only.

- No one on the IEP team is knowledgeable regarding AT.

- Team does not use a consistent process based on data about the student, environment and tasks to make decisions.

- Consideration of AT is limited to those items that are familiar to team members or are available in the district.

- Team members fail to consider access to the curriculum and IEP goals in determining if AT is required in order for the student to receive Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

- If AT is not needed, team fails to document the basis of its decisions.

5 Outcomes of Assistive Technology Consideration

Developed by Karen Janowski

01 We've considered AT and it's not necessary at this time.

02 We've considered AT and the AT currently in place is working and the student's needs are being met.

03 We've considered AT and found that the student has not had access and may benefit from AT.

04 We've considered AT, the student is currently using AT, but still has unmet needs.

05 We've considered AT, and we as a team do not have enough information. More information or data is needed.

We Need More Info...Now What?

SETT process

- Student
- Environment
- Tasks
- Tools

Fonner Modified SETT framework

- Provides guidance with device/tool trials, data collection, and implementation plans

Who Can Contribute to the Convo?

Consideration, Selection, and/or Implementation

Anyone on the student's IEP Team

- Student

- Parent

- Teacher

- Ancillary staff

- Other people actively involved in student's life

AT Skills Inventory (bit.ly/ATskillsinventory)

Sections of an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

- Transition

- Goals and Objectives

- Supplementary Aids and Services

- Testing, Transportation

- Related Services

Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP)

Consider:

- Learner strengths, parent concerns, special factors

- Progress on previous goals and objectives

- Baseline of how they access and participate in educational tasks

If the learner moves tomorrow, will the new team know how to best support him/her?

Suggested Components of the PLAAFP

- Academic Achievement

- Communication

- Medical/health

- Social-emotional/behavioral

- Perception/Motor/Mobility

- Adaptive/Independent living skills

- Transition/Vocational

- Transportation*

Example: Further Exploration of AT for Written Expression

Nick's weak grasp from a neuromotor condition limits his handwriting to a few sentences. He dictates longer assignments to his resource teacher. To increase his independence, further assessment is needed to find accommodations that allow him to write paragraphs on his own.

Example: Further Exploration of AT for Self-Help Skills

Kyle enjoys interacting with peers in the lunchroom but needs a teaching assistant to feed him due to motor difficulties. Further assessment of adapted eating utensils may help him eat more independently.

Example: Further Exploration of AT for Communication

Susie uses head movements to answer yes/no questions and points or gestures to express her needs. She needs an AT assessment to see if an augmentative communication system could increase her expressive communication.

Example: AT Re-Assessment for Written Communication

Jon's handwriting is illegible. He types using a portable word processor at 10 words per minute (WPM), faster than his handwriting speed of 3 WPM. He may benefit from the use of keystroke reduction tools like word prediction to help him type faster. Further assessment of his AT needs can identify additional additional supports to improve his writing speed and meet academic writing demands.

Examples: AT is Effective

Writing difficulties: Julie uses a pencil grip to independently complete all her written assignments.

Auditory difficulties: Angie has a moderate hearing loss in both ears. She understands classroom lecture and discussion when wearing both of her hearing aids.

Visual difficulties: Bill reads eighth-grade-level text material on a closed-captioned TV when enlarged to 1-inch.

AT in Transition

- Employability
- Independent Living
- Post-Secondary Education
- Socialization
- Recreation and Leisure

Goals and Objectives

- Connect to the need expressed in the PLAAFP

- Include the task/skill the learner is expected to achieve

- Identify **how** the student will achieve the task/skill
  - What tool?
  - How much support?

- Goals are learner-driven (not staff-driven)

Example Goal for Communication

Using AAC and aided language input, Carolyn will produce 3-5 word utterances to participate in a three-turn conversational exchange at least once per day, 4/5 days a week, to enhance her communication skills.

Example Goal for Written Expression

Using an electronic graphic organizer, Ryan will independently write a 5-sentence paragraph with an opening topic sentence, three supporting details, and a closing sentence.

Supplementary Aids & Services: Things to Consider

- Accommodations and Modifications to Tests, Materials, and Presentation of Subject Matter

- Supports to Address Environmental Needs

- Specialized Equipment Needs

- Pacing of Instruction

- Consultative services

- Time/frequency/condition

- Location

AT or Universal Supports?

State/District Assessments

Accommodations are identified for each assessment

- Corresponds to a need identified in the PLAAFP

- Aligns with supplementary aids and services

Accommodations need to be used for more than just the state/district assessments

- Example: Questions are read orally for classroom assessments as well as state/district assessments

Related Services, Transportation

Direct services

- Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy

- Orientation and Mobility

Transportation

- Wheelchair lift

- Harnessing system

- Securement system

Resources

Alt+Shift

We collaborate with educators and families to improve educational outcomes for every learner by rethinking what is possible through our:

- Professional Learning Opportunities
  - Online Modules (available to anyone)
  - ISD Partnerships
- Lending Library (available to Michigan educators)
- Technical Support

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC)

- MDRC is a non-profit organization that partners with individuals, families, and organizations to build inclusive communities, foster disability pride, and eliminate oppression.

- MDRC provides training, resources, and services to parents, children, and adults with disabilities.

Phone: 517-333-2477 or 800-578-0280
Email: info@mymdrc.org
Website(s): www.mymdrc.org or
www.mymdrc.org/assistive-tech-program/

Michigan Disability Rights Coalition
With liberty and access for all.

Michigan Assistive Technology Program (MATP)

MATP is a FREE federally funded program that provides AT related supports around the state including:

- Awareness Information

- Training

- Demonstrations

- Loan Program

MATP is by people with disabilities for people with disabilities, their allies, and other community members.

Thank you!

AltShiftEduMichigan

@altshifteducation

altshift.education

We are here to support you!

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For more information visit
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