Assistive Technology Implementation

When your child needs assistive technology (AT) devices or services to actively participate in the curriculum, the ARD Committee defines the use of AT devices, AT services and other strategies that promote your child’s achievement. The AT details become part of individualized education program (IEP) for the student. The plan for the implementation of the AT device or services should be collaboratively developed, meaning you as the parent should provide some input. Parents should also share in the responsibility of implementing the use of the device or service.

Home Use & Family Owned Devices Used at School

The ARD Committee is responsible for determining if the school-owned AT must be made available to the child at home in order for the student to receive FAPE.

An example of when the ARD Committee might determine that AT is needed in the student’s home is when the device is needed in order for the student to complete homework assignments. In some cases parents may be held liable for damages to or loss of a district-owned device if this happens due to the parent’s negligence. Also, in Texas, the school district board of trustees has the right to require payment of a security deposit. If parents are unable to pay the fee, it must be waived.

There may be situations in which a family-owned AT device is used at school. Make sure to document who should be responsible for upkeep and maintenance of the device. The district assumes liability when a family-owned device is part of the student’s IEP. Yet, family-owned devices that are not documented in the IEP are not the responsibility of the school district.

When the need for Assistive Technology is important for your child to receive educational benefit, the ARD committee may need to create a plan for addressing situations that arise when the AT device or service is not available due to repairs or maintenance. By documenting what will occur when a device doesn’t work or requires repairs, your child will be able to continue actively participating in educational activities that increase their functional performance and academic achievement without unnecessary delays.

Transfer of Devices

In Texas, AT devices may be transferred to a student’s new campus or new district, to a state agency that is providing services to the student after graduation, to the student, or to the parents of the student (if the parents have guardianship) for continued use by the student through the sale, lease, or loan of the device. Transfer of the device is not mandatory. If the district that owns the AT device agrees to the transfer, there must be a written transfer agreement between the district...
and the student or the parent (with guardianship). If the transfer is a sale, both parties must enter into a uniform transfer agreement.

Resources:

TEA Assistive Technology Question and Answer regarding use of a school-purchased assistive technology device in the student's home

Texas Assistive Technology Network’s (TATN) on-line AT training modules on Consideration, Legal, Administration, Implementation, Reading, Writing, and Transition of AT users are excellent. Please see their other resources on Accessible Instructional Materials and Universal Design For Learning.

Texas Project FIRST:

- What is Assistive Technology?
- Consideration of Assistive Technology
- Documentation, Implementation & Evaluation
- Technology Links

Office of Special Education Programs - The Family Center on Technology and Disability. They also have a nice Fact Sheet on various Assistive Technology laws.

National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities –

- Training Module 8 on National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS)
- Assistive Technology Act

National Center on Accessible Educational Materials - This site provides resources for educators, parents, students and others interested in learning more about and implementing Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) and the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS). The website features FAQs for families, decision-making tools and videos to assist students who have difficulties with traditional print-based instructional materials.

National Center on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) – Learn about UDL guidelines, implementation ideas, and other resources (lots of video content)

Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology (QIAT) – Provides guidance on the development and delivery of assistive technology services.

Texas Technology Access Project – Provides short term loans of equipment to families/persons with disabilities. See their on line catalog of available no tech/low tech/high tech devices.

Ability Connection Texas – It’s AT program (aka Removing Limits Through Technology Program) is a resource that educates children and adults on how to use AT, and for accessing AT organizations and manufacturers.
Georgia Project for Assistive Technology – Listings of various assistive technology solutions.

Valdosta State University – Videos on various assistive technology devices