School Profile of Assistive Technology Services

Penny Reed, Ph.D.
May 2000

Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative
CESA #2
448 East High Street
800-991-5576
www.wati.org
Greetings,

I hope you will find the School Profile of Assistive Technology Services manual to be a useful tool. The School Profile of Assistive Technology Services was developed to serve three purposes: (1) to assess the over all adequacy of assistive technology services in a district, (2) to identify specific areas or groups of staff members who require training or technical assistance, and (3) to document change over time.

To be most effective, the School Profile of AT Services should be completed by a large percentage of the special education staff. They should answer the questions independently without prior discussion among themselves. After they have answered the questions, significant benefit comes from a discussion of how and why they answered as they did. This discussion reveals differences in knowledge, perception, use of resources, and other factors, which the district can then address through training or technical assistance.

You will need to compile the information, this involves giving all of the response sheets to someone to enter into a data base or summarize by hand. In order to analyze your information, you will need to be able to sort your data by position (e.g. LD teacher, OT, SLP, etc.), by grade level (e.g. early childhood, elementary, middle school, secondary, etc.), by frequency of use of AT; and possibly by building.

**Utilizing the Resulting Information**
First look at the composite profile: Look for overall strengths and weaknesses across all staff. Next, look at the information sorted by position, grade level, frequency of use, building, etc. Are there weaknesses or differences in responses based on these groupings.

Provide an opportunity for staff to discuss their individual responses as well as the composite and sorted profiles. Encourage them to discuss what they see as factors affecting their responses. Note the significant points made during this discussion.
**Action Steps**
Share the results with your planning committee, task force, or full staff—whatever group will be planning and implementing changes in assistive technology services in your school district. With the results of the profiles in mind, use the Action Planning form to develop a plan to improve your weak areas:

For both overall responses and the responses of specific groups—
What are the specific concerns within each section of the School Profile?
What are the three weakest areas overall?
What steps will you take to improve each of these areas?
Include time lines and specify people responsible for each action.
Set a date to review your overall progress on completing the identified actions.

**Questions**
If you have questions about the School Profile of Assistive Technology Services, please contact me by email at: jgierach@cesa2.k12.wi.us. I hope you find the School Profile of Assistive Technology Services both easy to use and beneficial.

Sincerely,

*Jill Gierach*

Jill Gierach, MSE ATP, Director
Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative

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The School Profile of Assistive Technology Services

Background

The School Profile of Assistive Technology Services was developed to serve three purposes: (1) to assess the over all adequacy of assistive technology services in a school district, (2) to identify specific pockets or groups of staff members who require training or technical assistance, and (3) to document change over time.

To be most effective the School Profile of Assistive Technology Services should be completed by a large percentage of the special education staff. You should answer the questions independently without prior discussion with your colleagues. After you have answered the questions, significant benefit comes from a discussion of how and why you answered as you did. This discussion reveals differences in knowledge, perception, use of resources, flow of information within your school and district, and other factors which the district can then address through training or technical assistance.

Directions

Directions for Completing the School Profile
Complete the demographic information about yourself at the top of the Response Sheet. Read each statement in the left hand column of the School Profile itself. Then read each of the five descriptors across the page for that statement. The descriptors range from Highly Satisfactory (5) to Needs Improvement (1). Select the descriptor which, in your opinion, seems to best describe the situation in your school. Record your answers on the Response Sheet. The Response sheet is designed to provide a visual profile of the strong and weak areas in your school and district.

Please note that in Section 2 on Evaluation, the questions are about the School Psychologists or Diagnosticians who regularly evaluate children for eligibility for Special Education, not an AT Specialist.

In Section 3. Extended Assessment the “team” may vary. It may be the IEP team, the IEP team with the addition of someone with specific expertise in AT (such as a district AT Consultant or Specialist), or a separate, specialized AT Team that exists in your district to address assistive technology questions. Do your best to try to think about how that team operates, whoever they are.

Directions for Utilizing the Resulting Information
First look at your profile: Look for both strengths and weak areas. Is there anything that surprises you? Is there anything you would like to change?
It is now useful to discuss your answers with your colleagues. Do you disagree on some areas? If so, why? Are some individuals aware of information or resources while others are not?

Once your responses have been summarized into composite profiles for all who responded, you may note differences in responses based on: grade level, type of students served, years of experience, frequency of AT use, or building in which they work.

**Developing an Action Plan based on the School Profile Responses**

Within your school district the full staff, a subcommittee, or task force may want to utilize this information to identify areas for improvement. Low scores on specific components indicate a need to address those areas.

The Action Planning form can be used to develop a plan to improve assistive technology services in your school building or district. To use the form:

♦ Note the component(s) about which you are concerned.
♦ Describe where you are now in relation to that component.
♦ Target where you would like to be in the future.
♦ Describe the action(s) you will take to get there, the date by which each action needs to be completed and the person responsible.
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<td>Highly Satisfactory</td>
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**School Profile of Assistive Technology Services**

**Variations**

- Device(s) and Services
- Effective AT implementation
- Training
- Materials and Resources
- Parental involvement
- Staff development

**Components of AT Inclusion**

- Physical and Learning Environment
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Assessment and Evaluation
- Parental Involvement
- Staff Development

**District Promotes**

- District uses procedures
- District要做好相关的活动
- District is responsible for responding to requests

**School District**

- AT devices, AT services, AT software, AT training, AT materials, AT resources

**AT Needs**

- AT needs assessment
- AT devices and services
- AT training
- AT materials and resources
- AT implementation strategies

**AT and ITPA**

- AT and ITPA can do
- AT and ITPA processes
- AT and ITPA services

**Supports**

- AT and ITPA support
- AT and ITPA collaboration
- AT and ITPA communication

**Key Points**

- AT and ITPA key points
- AT and ITPA important points
- AT and ITPA crucial points

**Summary**

- AT and ITPA summary
- AT and ITPA overview
- AT and ITPA conclusion
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>District assessment does not need to be conducted</th>
<th>Assessment conducted</th>
<th>Recommendations made, if any. (Report(s) and Interdisciplinary teams)</th>
<th>Students' needs identified (in a multi-disciplinary approach)</th>
<th>District/Local Educators, Parents, Personal, and Students' needs addressed (if available)</th>
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<td>No additional support is needed.</td>
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<td>4. Plan Development</td>
<td>Components of Effective At ( \text{Highly} ) Satisfaction</td>
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<td>(1) Needs Improvement</td>
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<td>A. Clear Responsibility</td>
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<td>5. Implementation</td>
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<td>A. Identify responsibilities.</td>
<td>B.</td>
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<td>4. Plan Development</td>
<td>Components of ( \text{Highly} ) Satisfaction</td>
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<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Initial Consultation</td>
<td>After completing an evaluation and analysis of available resources, the district sent a memorandum notifying local educational agencies that assistive technology services were available.</td>
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<td>B.</td>
<td>Periodic Review</td>
<td>The district reviewed the plan annually to determine whether the student's needs were met and to discuss the latest information about the technology being used.</td>
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<td>C.</td>
<td>Service Provision</td>
<td>The district was responsible for providing assistive technology services to the student.</td>
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<td>D.</td>
<td>Initial Consultation</td>
<td>The district consulted with the student's parents and other professionals to determine the student's specific needs.</td>
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<td>E.</td>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>The district provided ongoing consultation and technical assistance to the student's teachers and related personnel.</td>
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<td>F.</td>
<td>Assistive Technology Plan</td>
<td>The district developed an assistive technology plan to meet the student's individual needs.</td>
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<td>G.</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>The district evaluated the student's progress and determined whether the assistive technology services were effective.</td>
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**Notes:**
- The assistive technology plan was developed in consultation with the student's parents and other professionals.
- The district reviewed the plan annually to determine whether the student's needs were met and to discuss the latest information about the technology being used.
- The district was responsible for providing assistive technology services to the student.
- The district consulted with the student's parents and other professionals to determine the student's specific needs.
- The district developed an assistive technology plan to meet the student's individual needs.
- The district evaluated the student's progress and determined whether the assistive technology services were effective.
### School Profile of AT Services Response Sheet

**Name:**

**Position:**

**Building:**

**Grade Level:**

**Frequency of AT Use:**

**Years of Experience:**

Place a (√) in the corresponding column that best describes your situation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of Effective AT Service Delivery</th>
<th>Highly Satisfactory (5)</th>
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<th>Needs Improvement (2)</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
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<td>2. Evaluation</td>
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<td>3. Extended Assessment</td>
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Resources for your
School Profile Action Plan

If your profiles show weaknesses in specific areas, you may want to look for resource materials to assist you. Here are some that you may find useful. They are arranged by topic under Print Resources and are more general under the other categories. This is certainly not all of the resources available, but they should provide a starting place.

Print Resources

Assessment or familiarity with assistive technology devices:

Closing the Gap Newsletter and Directory, Closing the Gap, P.O. Box 68, Henderson, MN 56044. Telephone 507/248-3294 or email <info@closingthegap.com>

Referral, Plan development, or Transition:

Bowser, G. & Reed, P. (1998). Education Tech Points: A Framework for Assistive Technology Planning. Winchester, OR: Coalition for Assistive Technology in Oregon (CATO). (Note: individuals within Wisconsin can also get it from WATI because we have an arrangement with the Coalition for Assistive Technology in Oregon. Others should contact CATO directly at 541-440-4791).

Early Childhood:


Augmentative Communication:

Children with Severe Cognitive Disabilities:


Beginning Readers:


Physical Access to the Computer or Aug Com Devices:


Parents:


Web Resources

There are multitudes of web sites which have useful information about assistive technology. They all have links to others. Here are a few to get you started.

**Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative:** [www.wati.org](http://www.wati.org) This site has a variety of information on assistive technology and assessment.

**LD On Line:** [www.ldonline.org](http://www.ldonline.org) This site has a section on technology under LD In Depth.

**LD Resources:** [www.ldresources.org](http://www.ldresources.org) This site, run by Richard Wanderman, has a variety of information on assistive technology for individuals with learning disabilities.

**AAC Connecting Young Children (YACK):** [http://aac.unl.edu/yack/index.html](http://aac.unl.edu/yack/index.html). This site has excellent information on augmentative communication. It is great for a beginner.
EASI: www.rit.edu/~easi/. EASI stands for Equal Access to Software and Information. This site has a variety of useful information, including ideas on making science classes accessible to students with disabilities, and information about on-line workshops. This is an especially good site for gaining information about adapting instruction for students with vision or hearing impairments.

IntelliTools: www.intellitools.org. IntelliTools maintains a web site that has dozens of overlays for use on their IntelliKeys as well as other products. They may be downloaded and used at no charge.

Trace Research and Development Center: www.trace.wisc.edu Trace Center has many excellent resources on its website including an assortment of freeware/shareware that provides software adaptations such as fat cursor, larger type, sticky keys, etc. It also has the full Abledata database of over 23,000 assistive devices.

Video Resources

Assistive Technology: We Can Do It. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. $24. This video provides a brief look at young children using a variety of assistive technology.

NCIP Video Profiles, National Center to Improve Practice, EDC, Inc., P.O. Box 1020, Sewickley, PA 15143-1020. $29.99 each or $119.99 for set of five. These videos vividly illustrate how students with disabilities use a range of assistive and instructional technologies to improve their learning. The set includes: H591-Multimedia and More: Help for Students with Learning Disabilities; H592-Jeff With Expression: Writing with Word Prediction Software; H593-Telling Tales in ASL and English: Reading, Writing and Videotapes; H594-"Write" Tools for Angie: Technology for Students who are Visually Impaired; and H596-Welcome to My Preschool! Communicating with Technology.

The GATE-Part 1: People who Use Assistive Technology, ORCCA Technology, Inc., 317-B South Ashland Ave., Lexington, Kentucky 40502 606/268-1635 This interactive-multimedia CD-ROM explores the world of assistive technology as it is used successfully by individuals who need it in their daily lives, from preschoolers to senior citizens.

Vendor Resources

Please note that this list is not exhaustive. For additional vendors check the Closing the Gap Directory. In addition, many areas have resellers who provide local access to assistive technology and training.
ADAMLAB (aug. com.) 734/334-1415, www.resa.net/ADAMLAB
Adaptation, Inc. (taction pads, and other aug. comm.) 1-800-723-2783, www.adaptivation.com
Assistive Technology, Inc. (aug. comm.) 1-800-793-9227, www.assistivetech.com
Attainment Company, Inc. (aug. comm./other) 1-800-327-4269, www.attainmentcompany.com
Creative Communicating (support for aug. comm. & emergent literacy) 435/645-7737, www.creative-comm.com
Don Johnston, (computer peripherals and software) 1-800-999-4660, www.donjohnston.com
Riverdeep (software, Touch Window) 1-800-825-4420, www.riverdeep.com
Educational Resources (software) 1-800-624-2926, www.edresources.com
Franklin Learning Resources (speaking Language Master) 1-800-525-9673, www.franklin.com
Gus Communications, Inc. 360/715-8580, www.gusinc.com
Inspiration, Inc. (concept mapping and outlining software) 1-800-877-4292, www.inspiration.com
IntelliTools (IntelliTalk, Overlay Maker, IntelliKeys) 1-800-899-6687, www.intellitools.com
Lee Products Co. (removable highlighting tape, ask for retail source near you) 1-800-989-3544
Mayer-Johnson (aug. communication) 619/550-0084, www.mayer-johnson.com
RJ Cooper and Assoc. (software) 1-800-752-6673, www.rjcooper.com
Saltillio (Chatbox and other aug. comm.) 330/674-6722, www.saltillio.com
Slater Software (Picture It, Pix Writer) 719/479-2255, www.slatersoftware.com
SoftTouch/kidTECH (software) 805/396-8676
Tash International, Inc. (various comp. access) 1-800-463-5685, www.tashinc.com
Words + (aug. comm.) 1-800-869-8521, www.words-plus.com
Zygo Industries, Inc. (aug. comm.) 1-800-234-6006, www.zygo-usa.com