

"10 Things Everyone Needs to Know about Assistive Technology in 2006"

Joy Smiley Zabala, Ed.D. , ATP

Assistive Technology and Leadership
P.O. Box 3130, Lake Jackson, TX 7756

Email: joy@joyzabala.com
<http://www.joyzabala.com>

<p>1) Assistive Technology is essentially a legal term.</p>	<p><u>Assistive Technology Device</u> <i>(a)any item, piece of equipment or product system... that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.</i> <i>(b) EXCEPTION: The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted or the replacement of such device.</i> Public Law 108-446 Section 602(1)</p> <p><u>Assistive Technology Service</u> <i>any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.</i> Public Law 108-446 Section 602(1)</p> <p><u>Universal Design</u> Universal design has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 3002. "A concept or philosophy for designing and delivering products and services that are usable by people with the widest possible range of functional capabilities which include products and services that are directly usable (without requiring assistive technologies) and products and services that are made usable with assistive technologies." AT Act of 1998, P.L. 105-394, S. 2432</p> <p><u>UDL</u> Multiple means of: representation; 2) engagement; and 3) expression</p>
<p>2) The primary purpose of Assistive Technology is the enhancement of capabilities and the removal of barriers to achievement.</p>	<p><u>The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Amendments of 1997</u> - IDEA ensures FAPE - FAPE is defined by the IEP - AT required to implement the IEP and support educational achievement must be provided at no cost to the family.</p>
<p>3) Assistive Technology is related to function, rather than to specific disability categories.</p>	<p><u>Functional skills for learning include:</u> reading, written expression, math, communication, recreation, daily organization, seating/positioning, hearing, seeing, self-care, mobility, behavior, specific task-related skills, etc.</p>

<p>4) Assistive Technology may be applicable to all disability groups and in all phases of education.</p>	<p>While there may be prerequisites for the use of specific Assistive technology devices, there are not prerequisites for Assistive technology devices and services, per se.</p>
<p>5) Assistive Technology service provision follows a student-centered process that requires a team approach.</p>	<p>TATN Training Modules – http://www.texasat.net TAM Monographs – 3 monographs http://www.tamcec.org/products.htm The SETT Framework - http://www.joyzabala.com</p>
<p>6) a) Assessment and intervention form a continuous, dynamic process. b) Systematic problem analysis and solving are essential.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student, Environments, Tasks, then Tools - The goal of SETT Framework is to help collaborative teams identify student-centered, environmentally-useful, and tasks-focused tool systems that foster the educational achievement of students with disabilities.
<p>7) When a team can describe the student, the environments and the tasks, they can describe the tools that are needed to support success!</p>	<p>After building shared knowledge about the student, the environments, and tasks, ask, <i>“If there were something that would help this student, do these tasks in these environments, what would it be like?”</i></p>
<p>8) The least complex solution that will remove barriers to achievement should be a first consideration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - View technology is part of a SYSTEM of tools! - Recognize that assistive technology can BE a barrier - Try to determine tool systems that remove more barriers than they create
<p>9) AT does not eliminate the need for instruction in skills pertinent to the tasks. (academic, social, vocational, recreational, or other)</p>	<p>Having a means to do something does not mean that the student knows how to do it. Assistive technology enables students to be actively involved in instruction and other curricular and extra-curricular educational activities.</p>
<p>10) There are many ways to do it right!</p>	<p><u>Effective Decision-Making and Good Stewardship</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avoid device abandonment and underutilization - Try before you buy - Plan for implementation - Identify expected change - Evaluate effectiveness - Think Return on Investment (ROI) <p><u>Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Services in Schools</u> - QIAT (http://www.qiat.org)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consideration - Assessment - IEP Development - Implementation - Evaluation of Effectiveness - Transition - Professional Development - Administrative Support