

The Assistive Technology Evaluation Process

What are the Assistive Technology Evaluation Units at the Department of Education?

1. Technology Solutions @ District 75
2. Center for Assistive Technology (CAT) @ The Office of Related and Contractual Services (ORCS)

How do I know which team to contact if I would like to request an evaluation?

Technology Solutions is responsible for evaluating students that are:

1. serviced in District 75 school sites (citywide programs)
2. that have hearing and/or visual impairments
3. students on home instruction
4. students in hospital schools.

To request an evaluation:

If your student falls into any of the above categories, you must fill out a referral form to request an evaluation. The Technology Solutions referral form, known as the Assistive Technology Consideration form, can be obtained on the District 75 website under forms and files or by clicking on this link _____.

To prepare a school based evaluation:

If you are a staff member working with a student and feel that there is a team at the school that would be able to collaborate to do An Assistive Technology Evaluation and would be able to make a justified recommendation then you would use the approved evaluation form found on the D 75 website referred to as the ATEA form. You can obtain this form by clicking on this link _____.

The **Center for Assistive Technology (CAT) @ ORCS** is responsible for evaluating students (exclusive of those determined to have vision or hearing impairments) that are:

1. in community school district programs
 - a. in general education
 - b. in special education
2. preschool students

To request an evaluation:

If your student falls into any of the above categories, you must fill out a referral form to request an evaluation. Referral forms used by the Center for Assistive Technology can be obtained by contacting their office at 212-374-2158

I am unsure if my student should be referred to the Technology Solutions Team or the CAT team.

Look on page one of the student's IEP. If District 75 is indicated in the box marked "service district" on this page, your student should be referred to the Technology Solutions Team. If the box marked "service district" indicates a CSE or Region, refer to the CAT team.

My student is hearing/visually impaired, but I don't see District 75 on the first page of the IEP. What should I do?

Not all students with hearing and visual impairments are serviced through District 75. Minor vision deficits, and minor hearing loss do not always require services through EVS.

Students with FM Units are not always hearing impaired. If a student has an FM Unit for Central Auditory Processing Disorder, they are not hearing impaired and are most likely serviced through the Community School District (CAT team).

Who is allowed to refer student's for Assistive Technology Evaluations?

The request for an Assistive Technology Evaluation may be made by school staff, parents, guardians, or any other concerned party.

I have completed the appropriate evaluation referral. Do I need to include anything else with the completed referral form?

Yes. The referral packet must include:

1. The appropriate referral form completed by various staff members as dictated by the referral.
2. A copy of the most recent IEP.
3. A cover letter requesting the evaluation with a clearly identified contact person for scheduling purposes.

Where do I send the completed referral packet?

The completed referral packet, inclusive of completed referral form, IEP, and cover letter, must be sent to the School-Based Support Team (SBST) or the IEP Review Team at your school site. The SBST or IEP Review Team will forward the packet to the appropriate evaluation team (Tech Solutions or CAT Team). The appropriate evaluation team will schedule the evaluation with the contact person at the school or home listed on the referral sheet/contact letter.

(If there is not SBST or IEP Review team at the school site, give the referral packet to the school psychologist)

Why must the package go through the SBST/IEP Review Team at my school site?

The SBST/IEP Review Team must be aware of the Assistive Technology evaluation because the equipment that is recommended by the team becomes IEP mandated equipment. The SBST/IEP Review Team at your school site will make the revisions to the student's IEP to reflect that he/she has been identified as a student in need of assistive technology and which device the student will be using to assist him/her in achieving the goals written in the IEP.

If I already know the device I would like to use with a student, can I do the evaluation myself?

All Regional students must be evaluated by the CAT team. In certain circumstances, the region may accept an outside or private evaluation. This is at the discretion of the region.

At District 75, we allow school staff to conduct their own evaluations if they feel confident and have the appropriate devices at the site to assess the student. To receive the device you are requesting, you must:

1. Complete the ATEA referral form
2. Attach current IEP
3. Include an additional narrative report attached to the front of the ATEA form summarizing your findings and making a recommendation for the desired device.
4. The completed referral packet, inclusive of completed referral form, IEP, and narrative, must be sent to the School-Based Support Team (SBST) or the IEP Review Team at your school site. The SBST or IEP Review Team will forward the packet to the Technology Solutions. The Technology Solutions Team will schedule the evaluation with the contact person at the school or home listed on the referral sheet/contact letter.
5. The narrative will be reviewed:
 - a. If recommendation is deemed appropriate, the device will be sent to the school along with a letter to the SBST/IEP Review Team with instructions to add the equipment to the student's IEP.
 - b. If based upon the narrative, the team feels another device may be more appropriate, a member of the Tech Solutions team will visit your site to review the request and recommendation.

What happens after the Assistive Technology Evaluation occurs?

The respective technology team will take the information given in the referral form, along with the results of the evaluation, and complete an evaluation report inclusive of the equipment recommended and goals. Three copies of this Assistive Technology Evaluation Report are sent to the school:

1. One copy to the SBST/IEP Review Team so they are able to make the appropriate changes to the student's IEP.
2. One copy to the school staff who requested the evaluation
3. One copy to be sent home to the student's parent/guardian

Now that the evaluation is completed, how do I get the recommended equipment?

Technology Solutions provides the equipment either at the time of the evaluation or if the equipment needs to be ordered, it is usually delivered or brought to the school within 45 days of the evaluation.

The Center for Assistive Technology (CAT) team provides the Regional Office with the ordering information. The Region will order the equipment on a purchase order.

Once the student receives the device, does it belong to the student, the school, or the Department of Education?

An IEP mandated device is the property of the Department of Education and is made available for the exclusive use by that student as indicated by the IEP. The device can accompany the student from the school to the home environment. As the student transitions to different schools/programs, it is the sending school's responsibility to send the equipment.

Can the student take the device home over holidays/summer vacation?

If the student wishes to take the device home over extended periods of time, a parent/guardian should sign a letter prepared by the school accepting responsibility for the device during this period. The letter should be placed in the student's school file, so there is no question as to the whereabouts of the device.

What if the recommended device is no longer meeting the needs of the student, What are the options?

Once the evaluation process has been completed once and the use of Assistive Technology appears on the student's IEP then a re-assessment of the equipment is simple. Just send a letter on school stationary documenting the reason for the re-assessment and send it to Technology Solutions 400 First Ave, NY, NY 10010, attention: Karen Gorman. Upon receipt an appointment for the re-evaluation will be put on the calendar. If new equipment is approved Technology Solutions will swap out the equipment and amend the data base reflecting the device the student is using. As information regarding the specifics of such equipment are added somewhat generically to the IEP there is no need to open or alter the IEP for this reason.

The student is leaving the Department of Education, what happens to their device?

The student's device must be returned to the Assistive Technology office upon leaving the Department of Education. Approximately 8 months before a student graduates/ages out/moves, the school should begin working with the Transition Team to order the assistive technology through the student's insurance.

I have the student's device, but I feel that I need more training on how to use it.

Technology Solutions will do an initial training on the day of the evaluation if the equipment is being supplied. If the equipment has to be ordered, or is being delivered, the team will re-visit the school for a training session once the equipment has arrived. If you need additional training, you **MUST** call the Technology Solutions Office and request this training as needed. The training may be offered on an individual basis, at one of the Technology Centers for larger groups, or via WebCast. Again, please contact the Technology Solutions Office for additional training information (212) 802-1530.

The Center for Assistive Technology (CAT) team also provides training on the devices upon request. Please contact the office at (212) 374-2158.

What does Assistive Technology encompass?

- Computer adaptations for access.
- Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC) devices.
- Low through high tech solutions for alternative access for writing
- Blind and low vision access to the general environment, reading materials, computer, etc.
- Access for hearing impaired, adaptations to the classroom and the computer to assist with hearing related deficits and supply appropriate access for classroom participation.
- Environmental controls and general access to the environment.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** The Department of Education does not have the staff to evaluate students for FM Units for Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD). Generally, the parent/guardian will need to have the student assessed by an audiologist specializing in CAPD. The results of the audiologist's evaluation along with recommendation for a device are forwarded to the district. Provision of an FM Unit will be determined by the district dependent on the results of the audiologist's evaluation.

Something is wrong with the student's device. What should I do first?

1. Check the back of the device. In most instances, there is a phone number and serial number. Call the manufacturer's Tech Support group. If it is determined that the device needs to be returned for repair, Tech Support will ask for the serial #. If the device is still under warranty, you will be given an RA# (Return Authorization #), and you will mail the device to them. They manufacturer will repair the device and mail it back to you at your school site.
2. If you cannot find the manufacturer's information on the back of the device, call the office of the team who recommended the device (Tech Solutions, 212-802-1530/CAT team, 212-374-2158) to attain this information.
3. If the manufacturer tells you that the device is no longer under warranty, take down the RA# given to you by the manufacturer and call Tech Solutions (212) 802-1530 or the region who supplied the equipment. The Department of Education is responsible for repairs related to all IEP mandated devices.
4. For District 75 students', there is an Assistive Technology Center in each borough. The coordinator at each center will be able to assist with information regarding equipment repair.

Bronx Tech Center
470 Jackson Avenue
Bronx, NY 10455
(718) 585-5510

Queens Tech Center
57-12 94th Street
Elmhurst, NY 11373
(718) 699-3632

Manhattan Tech Center
400 First Avenue
NY, NY 10010
(212) 802-1530

Brooklyn Tech Center
2525 Haring Street
Brooklyn, NY 11235
(718)743-6420

Staten Island Tech Center
155 Tompkins Avenue
Staten Island, NY 10304
(718)876-5194

Contact Information for the Assistive Technology Teams

Technology Solutions, District 75

400 First Avenue, Room 111
New York, NY 10010
Technology Evaluation Coordinator: Karen Gorman
Kgorman@schools.nyc.gov
Fax: (212) 802-1681
DO NOT FAX REFERRALS TO THIS OFFICE. REFERRALS MUST GO THROUGH THE
SBST/IEP REVIEW TEAM AT YOUR SCHOOL SITE.

The Center for Assistive Technology @ ORCS (CAT team)

Department of Education
52 Chambers Street, Room 218
New York, NY 10007
Phone: (212) 374-2158
Fax: (212) 374-5752
DO NOT FAX REFERRALS TO THIS OFFICE. REFERRALS MUST GO THROUGH THE
SBST/IEP REVIEW TEAM AT YOUR SCHOOL SITE.