

# PRINCIPAL'S HANDBOOK

TOPIC      Assistive Technology

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## DESCRIPTION

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal special education law, provides the following legal definition of **an assistive technology device**: "any item, piece of equipment, or product system... that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities." Under IDEA, assistive technology devices can be used in the educational setting to provide a variety of accommodations or adaptations for people with disabilities.

The IDEA also lists the services a school district may need to provide in order to ensure that assistive technology is useful to a student in the school setting. The law defines assistive technology service as: "any service that directly assists an individual with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device." This service includes all of the following possibilities:

- \*Classrooms will provide fundamental access to adaptive and assistive technology to facilitate instruction and access to communication
- \* Evaluation of the technology needs of the individual, including a functional evaluation in the individual's customary environment;
- \* Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices for individuals with disabilities;
- \* Selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing of assistive technology devices;
- \* Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;
- \* Assistive technology training or technical assistance with assistive technology for an individual with a disability, or, where appropriate, the family of an individual with disabilities;
- \* Training or technical assistance for professionals, employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or otherwise are substantially involved in the major life functions of individuals with disabilities.

The intention of the special education law is that, if a student with disabilities needs technology in order to be able to learn, District 75 will (a) provide access to programmatic equipment for access to learning and communication in the classroom setting (b) provide comprehensive evaluations for individual students that demonstrate a need for continuous and more comprehensive technology that what is available within the classroom, (c) acquire the necessary technology, whether it be through evaluation or provided by the school for programmatic use, (c) coordinate technology use with other therapies and interventions, and (d) provide and or facilitate training for the individual, the individual's family, and the school staff in the effective use of the technology.

During the time that students with disabilities are in school, they can have the opportunity to learn to use technology at the same time that they are learning academic subjects and social skills. The efficient and effective use of assistive

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technology can be as basic a skill for students with disabilities as reading, writing, and arithmetic since the use of technology can go a long way toward circumventing the limitations of disability and providing students with disabilities with a "level playing field" in every area of life accomplishment. It is the on-going responsibilities of classroom teachers to incorporate use with adaptations and assistive technology into their daily instruction.

If you feel a child is in need of an assistive technology evaluation by exceeding possibilities with programmatic equipment provided within the classroom setting please fill out an **Assistive Technology Consideration form** [http://schools.nycenet.edu/d75/technology/forms/AT/Consideration\\_revised.doc](http://schools.nycenet.edu/d75/technology/forms/AT/Consideration_revised.doc) and submit it to the IEP review team or school psychologist at your school. The team will forward to Technology Solutions for evaluation.

Note: D 75 School staff is able to perform their own assessment using the **ATEA**

[http://schools.nycenet.edu/d75/technology/forms/AT/0atea\\_complete.pdf](http://schools.nycenet.edu/d75/technology/forms/AT/0atea_complete.pdf) form also available on the D 75 Website. A school assessment is also submitted to the IEP review team or School Psychologist and sent to Technology Solutions for approval.

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LINKS/WEBSITES/RESOURCES <http://schools.nycenet.edu/d75/technology/formsAT.htm>

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RELATED TOPICS/RESOURCES ATEA, IEP Mandated Equipment, Programmatic Equipment, Assistive Technology

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FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE: Stella Porto –Instructional Specialist/Assistive Technology  
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DISTRICT 75  
RESOURCE

<http://schools.nycenet.edu/d75/technology/assistive/default.htm>

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