ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY FOR VIRTUAL LEARNING

Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs

The State and Territory Assistive Technology (AT) Act Programs are equipped to work with State Education Agencies (SEAs) to support distance learning for students that need assistive technology. Funding dedicated to SEAs to support planning for and coordinating during long term closures that includes finding inclusive, accessible solutions for how to provide technology for online learning to all students that continue to be consistent with all Federal, State, and local requirements.

State and Territory AT Programs enable individuals with disabilities to learn about, access, and acquire assistive technology needed for education as well as employment, daily and community living. State and Territory AT Programs are able to best match the proper assistive technology with a students’ needs, provide the student with a device demonstration, loan a device, and provide training and support for the student and the use of the device.

Assistive technology and adaptive equipment can facilitate learning in a variety of ways for students with disabilities who need technology to maintain or improve their functionality. For example, a student who needs a device to facilitate communication may use an iPad with an app such as Proloquo4Text. This and other similar apps can be used by students who are unable or have difficulty speaking to communicate through typed text. State and Territory AT Programs have information about augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) options, including apps. SEAs can contact their AT Program to learn more about AAC apps that are available for loan as well as training and support available to students, parents, caregivers, and teachers.

Here you can find the list of the direct contact information for your State and Territory AT Program.

State and Territory AT Programs are uniquely positioned to support SEAs to aid in distance learning, including the purchase of educational technology (should additional funds be made available for State and Territory AT Programs). For students with disabilities, this may include assistive technology (AT) or adaptive equipment. State and Territory AT Programs are prepared to contract with SEAs to aid with such services and supports that help students with disabilities.

State Education Agencies should contact their State Assistive Technology Act Program for technical assistance and to learn more about available AT services that:

- Support the purchase of appropriate AT and adaptive equipment by aiding with AT assessments for students to identify the best match of AT for home learning environments;
- Provide training for, and support the use of, devices and equipment for both the student and parents for devices distributed to students either by the school or the devices and equipment purchased by an AT assessment conducted by a State AT Program;
- Aid in the development of and ensure accessible work materials are provided to families and students during remote/digital learning periods;
- Develop guidance for the State Education Agency on universal technology supports;
- Provide training for school-based therapists to effectively deliver tele-practice to special education students at home;
- Provide AT and training to Ed Techs and other paraprofessionals working in new eLearning environments;
- Provide information and referral to parents who have disabilities so they can best assist the eLearning of their school aged child at home (child could be general education or special education student).
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