



Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs
440 1st St NW Suite 360, Washington, DC 20001

November 13, 2017

Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Room 6W231
Washington, DC 20202

Docket ID: ED-2017-OS-0078

RE: Secretary's Proposed Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grant Programs

Dear Ms. Bell-Ellwanger:

On behalf of the Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP), a national, member-based organization, comprised of 54 state Assistive Technology Act Programs funded under the Assistive Technology Act, are writing in response to the Secretary's proposed priorities for competitive grant programs.

Proposed Priority 5—Meeting the Unique Needs of Students and Children, including those with Disabilities and/or with Unique Gifts and Talents

Comment: ATAP appreciates the attention that students with disabilities are given in this priority.

Recommendation: Amend the priority area (b) by adding the words in bold.

(b) Ensuring coursework, books, or other materials, **assessments and technology**, are accessible, **consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, the Communication Act, and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG2 AA)**, to students who are children with disabilities and/or individuals with disabilities under Section 504.

Rationale: Technology should be specifically mentioned since it is often used to deliver instructional content. Also, it is important to reference all the statutes that

impact the accessibility of instructional materials, including technology, in this priority area.

ATAP requests that the Department support that all digital assessments must be developed in conformance with nationally accepted accessibility standards (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines – WCAG2 AA) that provide a baseline of accessibility for assistive technology. ATAP believes the Department must address and prioritize ameliorating the barrier created for students with disabilities when assessments are designed without a fundamental requirement for digital accessibility and support for interoperability with assistive technology.

ATAP appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments on behalf of our 54 State AT Program members who support AT use in schools across the country. Please feel free to contact Audrey Busch, ATAP Director of Policy and Advocacy at 202.344.5674 or audrey.busch@ataporg.org with any questions.

Sincerely,



Audrey Busch
Director of Policy and Advocacy
Association of Assistive Technology Act Programs (ATAP)