mn DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Special Education Assistive Technology

Report to the Legislature

January 22, 2018

As required by Laws of Minnesota 2017, 1st Spec. Sess. chapter 5, article 4, section 10

For more information:

As requested by Minnesota Statutes, section 3.197: This report cost approximately $12,411.32 to prepare, including staff time, printing and mailing expenses.

Upon request, this material will be made available in an alternative format such as large print, braille or audio recording. Printed on recycled paper.

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Legislative charge

The *Special Education Assistive Technology* report is due to the Legislature on February 15, 2018. This annual report is mandated by laws of Minnesota 2017, 1st Special Session Chapter 5, Article 4, Section 10. The legislation requires the commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) to examine and collect data, such as financial data and surveys, and consult with stakeholders, including the Minnesota Assistive Technology Advisory Council and other interested parties. The commissioner must report on the use of assistive technology by students and recommend statutory changes to encourage child-centered assistive technology plans in Individual Education Programs (IEPs) or Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs).[1]

Overview

Assistive technology (AT), as defined in Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 (34 CFR sections 300.5 and 300.6), consists of devices and accompanying services that support a student with an IEP or IFSP. AT includes devices ranging from a low-tech pencil with a grip to a high-tech voice-activated computer. AT services assess needs and support the use of the device, i.e., evaluation, purchasing, maintaining, coordination, and training.[2]

When students have an IEP or ISFP, student planning teams are required to consider whether AT devices or services are needed to meet student goals and objectives. If AT is needed, the school district is required to provide the AT devices or services.

AT devices and services continue to expand in variety as new technologies are developed and improved. The expansion of AT choices affects the ability of both parents and school districts to understand the best AT choice to support their students.

This report found that both parents and school districts face similar challenges when determining the best AT for students. Even though the challenges are similar, parents and school districts experience them differently. This report examines the current state of AT in Minnesota's school districts and includes recommendations to support the ability of parents and school districts to support their students.

One of the challenges identified in the report is the lack of a common understanding of the definition of AT. Without a common understanding, it is difficult for parents and school districts to engage in a thorough and productive AT conversation.

This report will expand on these common themes: (1) staff knowledge and time, (2) access to AT resources, (3) AT funding and cost, and (4) technology changes and knowledge of new applications.

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[1] See Appendix A for the full text of the legislation.

[2] See Appendix B for the full definition of AT.

MDE Assistive Technology Advisory Group process

The Commissioner of MDE convened the Assistive Technology Advisory Group (MDE ATAG) to assist MDE in the development of the AT report. Advisory group participants included parent advocacy organizations, educator and administrator associations, the state's federally-funded AT Act Program, System of Technology to Achieve Results (STAR), a program within the state Administration agency, MDE and other state agencies.[3] MDE engaged the services of Management Analysis and Development (MAD), a division of Minnesota Management and Budget, to facilitate the MDE ATAG, analyze survey results and to contribute report content.

The group met three times: September 16, November 30, and December 21, 2017. The first meeting focused on the current MDE financial tracking system, the definition of AT, and how to inform the AT report. The group advised MDE to conduct surveys of both parents and school districts. In partnership, PACER,[4] The Arc of Minnesota,[5] and MDE developed and managed the two surveys. PACER and The Arc of Minnesota administered and distributed the survey via email and Facebook. MDE administered and distributed the school district survey.[6]

The group reconvened on November 30 to review the survey results and identify recommendations to support parents and school districts in addressing student AT needs. The recommendations addressed the issues, barriers, and possible solutions raised in the survey results and in workgroup discussion.

Following the November 30 meeting, MDE drafted the initial AT legislative report for the advisory group's review. The advisory group reconvened on December 21 to review the draft and provide input.

MDE ATAG members are reassured by the collaboration and partnership experienced during the group's time together. Members have demonstrated a willingness to work together and learn from each other. The result is a strong commitment to improve the use of assistive technology in Minnesota's schools.

The draft AT legislative report was brought to the Minnesota Assistive Technology Advisory Council on January 16, 2018, to review the draft and provide input. Members of the council are looking forward to the continued opportunity to partner with the MDE ATAG to further the AT recommendations.

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[3] See Appendix C for a complete roster of the advisory group.

[4] PACER is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to enhance the quality of life and expand opportunities for children, youth, and young adults with all disabilities and their families.

[5] The Arc of Minnesota is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote and protect the human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

[6] See Appendix D for parent and school district surveys and cover letters. See Appendix E for the results of both surveys.

Survey methodology and limitations

At its meeting on September 26, 2017, the advisory group decided to collect additional information by designing and implementing two AT surveys: one for parents and one for statewide special education directors. The advisory group wrote the survey questions and cover letters.

The parent survey was distributed by PACER and The Arc of Minnesota. PACER sent the survey to 8,496 email addresses in the PACER database for Minnesota parents of children with disabilities ages birth to 22. There were 236 responses, which is about a 2.8 percent response rate. The Arc of Minnesota sent the survey to its public policy advocacy email list with 984 Minnesota members, including people with disabilities, their family members, direct service professionals, management staff at service agencies, and county-level state agency employees. The survey link was also posted twice on The Arc of Minnesota Facebook page. The Arc of Minnesota outreach yielded 17 responses, which is about 1.7 percent of The Arc of Minnesota list. Survey responses from PACER and The Arc of Minnesota were combined for reporting results.

MDE sent the special education director survey to 170 statewide licensed directors. This yielded 55 responses, which is a response rate of 32 percent. Nearly all respondents (98 percent) indicated that their numerical survey responses were estimates rather than actual counts.

The survey results in this report represent the opinions and information provided by individuals who responded to the survey. Some surveys are designed to gauge the opinion of an entire population or group, and the results can be said to be representative. This survey, however, was designed to gather as much information as possible from the parents and special education directors, and the individuals who chose to respond may not be representative of the whole population. The response rate for the special education director survey was 32 percent and the response rate for the parent survey was very low at less than 3 percent. Respondents seemed forthcoming in their comments so readers can use this information to help understand the current situation for at least this subset of respondents. Since the respondents in both surveys were not a random sample of the population, it is not appropriate to determine statistical level of confidence or margin of error.

Survey results

Demographics

The demographics of the survey responders were broken out as either *Twin Cities metropolitan area* or *Greater Minnesota*. For the parent survey, 66 percent of respondents were from the Twin Cities metro area. For the special education director survey, 37 percent of respondents were from the Twin Cities metro area.

The parent survey asked about the student's type of school. Ninety percent of respondents indicated the student attended a public school that was not a charter school, 5 percent attended a charter school, and 5 percent attended a private school.

Parent survey

The parent survey found that fewer than half of respondents (121) felt that AT in the IEP or IFSP is meeting or moderately meeting their student's needs. A similar number of respondents (111) were not sure or did not respond to the question. Fewer than 10 percent of respondents (21) stated that AT in the IEP or IFSP does not meet the student's needs.
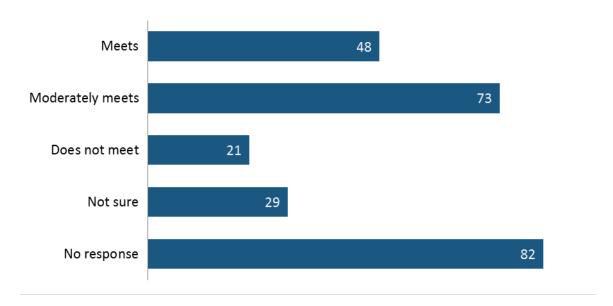
Figure 1: Does Assistive Technology in the IEP/IFSP meet the child's need(s)? (n=253)

Response	Count
Meets	48
Moderately meets	73
Does not meet	21
Not sure	29
No response	82

The parent survey requested narrative responses describing perceived barriers to the use of AT and recommended improvements. Approximately half of the survey respondents provided narrative responses for each question. The advisory group and facilitators reviewed the comments for themes. Five themes emerged in the comments about barriers to the use of assistive technology. These themes are presented below in order of prevalence in the comments.

Barriers

Respondents most frequently mentioned that school employees lacked knowledge of AT. Comments included:

- *"Staff are open and willing but have less knowledge than family about what is available and even less knowledge about using specific tools."*
- *"There is a lack of knowledge about assistive tech, no consistency in staff and no professional development or training on how to use the tech."*

Respondents indicated that parents sometimes requested AT but schools would not agree to provide it. Comments included:

- *"AT was discussed but they bypassed my request for it saying he didn't need it."*
- *"It was all me pushing for it and they were not on board and it has been a struggle."*

Funding for AT was another identified barrier:

- *"I was told that the school could not recommend AT or they would have to pay for it."*
- *"Our district has limited resources. …unless I provide the AT, they will not include it in his IEP."*

Some parents noted that it took a long time to obtain AT:

- *"It took a long time to get him approved."*
- *"Getting them to actually do anything with technology takes months and months of red tape, bureaucracy and delays."*

Stigma was another theme. Some parents commented that their child refused to use AT because they were embarrassed:

- *"Our son as a sophomore doesn't want to be different than other kids and refuses to consider some assistive technology."*
- *"One year he could have used an iPad but they had stickers that said something like '[school district] Special Education' on it…"*

Recommended improvements

Parents' responses about recommended improvements fell into two themes. The first recommendation theme related to AT knowledge and training. Comments included:

- *"Would like to see a really knowledgeable AT resource person be available to come to team meetings as a consultant."*
- *"TRAINING for staff."*
- *"I wish all staff had to have a general AT class."*

The other theme for parent-recommended improvements involved a desire for more effective collaboration between parents and schools. Some parents felt they knew which type of AT would help their child and that the school was not receptive to their suggestions:

- *"It would be great if they were more open to parent recommendations."*
- *"Listen to parents. Allow us to be part of the conversation."*
- *"Encourage the team to consult the parents at the onset of the conversation."*

School district survey

The purpose of the school district survey was to examine the use of AT in Minnesota school districts. This was accomplished by collecting information about the number of IEPs or IFSPs and the quality of the IEP/IFSP process, access to AT resources and information, and funding approaches for AT purchasing.

Difference in total number of IEPs/IFSPs and where AT was considered

In general, school districts reported a difference in the number of IEPs/IFSPs and the number of IEP/IFSPs where AT was considered. [7]

Table 1: Number of IEPs and IFSPs where AT was considered

Category	IEP	IFSP
Total number of IEP/IFSP reported	8923	1108
Number of IEP/IFSP where AT was considered	6529	734
Number of IEP/IFSP with an AT component	2686	306

How AT is discussed with parents

The language schools use when they talk about AT with parents is important because it can lead to a difference in the understanding of the definition of AT and has the potential to reduce the opportunity for parents to discuss their child's AT needs.

School districts were asked to identify how they talk about AT when talking with parents. Most of the respondents (86.7 percent) indicated that when they talk about student supports, they use the term *assistive technology* to describe devices and services provided to the student to increase, maintain, or improve the student's functional capabilities and/or access to curriculum and environments. Another 6.7 percent indicated that when they talk about student supports, they do not use the term *assistive technology* to describe devices and services provided to the student to increase, maintain, or improve the student's functional capabilities and/or access to curriculum and environments. The remaining 6.7 percent talk about AT only for students who qualify for special education in specific categories, such as autism, blind/visually impaired, developmental cognitive delay, learning disability, traumatic brain injury, or physical health disability.

AT Training or technical assistance

The federal definition of AT includes both the device and the service. A service means any service that directly assists a student with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an AT device. This includes training or technical assistance for professionals.

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[7] The advisory group noted that there should not be a difference between these numbers. All IEPs and IFSPs should consider AT. The advisory group concluded that this difference indicates either a need for training or that some special education staff may have misinterpreted the question and discussed AT only if there was a need.

School districts were asked to identify from a variety of listed methods how they train staff about considering and using AT. The most common responses were hands-on training with devices, group training sessions, and attending conferences.

School districts were asked to identify how they inform staff on AT policies and procedures for the need, selection, acquisition of AT, and use of AT. Their most common responses were:

- ongoing professional development (68.2 percent)
- instructions in IEP/IFSP documentation (68.2 percent)
- email from district leadership, (54.5 percent) and
- checklist in IEP/IFSP documentation (43.2 percent)

Available resources

Specialists

Most of the respondents indicated that their school district has used a range of special education specialists. This is dependent on the student's IEPs/IFSPs and the type of specialist needed to support the student. The respondents indicated a low use of oral/aural deaf teachers (6.7 percent) and speech language pathologists (11.1 percent). This could either reflect a low incidence population, such as blind/visually impaired or deaf/hard of hearing, or an inability to access those specialists. The respondents identified other specialists, such as parents, assistive technology consultants, technology integrationists, special education teachers, and others, such as counselors and paraprofessionals.

Devices

Most of the respondents indicated students have a range of devices and aids available to them:
- Assistive listening devices (91.3 percent)
- Cognition aids/Instructional aids (91.3 percent)
- Alternative input devices (87.0 percent)
- Vision aids (82.6 percent)
- Positioning (84.8 percent)
- Augmentative and alternative communication (82.6 percent)
- Recreational and leisure aids (78.3 percent)
- Aids for daily living (78.3 percent)
- Mobility aids (76.1 percent)
- Access and environmental controls (73.9 percent)
- other (13.0 percent)

The responses to the availability of specific AT highlighted devices like Chromebooks or iPads and whether they are considered AT. Some districts supply these devices to all their students while others do not. For some students, these devices are considered AT. The students' IEP/IFSP determines if it is considered an AT device.

Financial data

Most of the respondent districts (71 percent) track their assistive technology purchases with MDE fiscal software. There are seven codes school districts use based on the type and use of the AT:

- 406: Instructional Software License Agreements
- 430: Supplies and Materials – Non-Individualized Instruction
- 433: Supplies and Materials – Individualized Instruction
- 466: Instructional Technology Devices
- 506: Capitalized Instructional Technology Software
- 533: Other Equipment Purchased for Special Education Direct Instruction
- 556: Capitalized Instructional Technology Hardware

The remainder of districts use spreadsheets (12 percent), don't know how they track it (9 percent) or use their own software, track it another way, or don't track (9 percent).

Sources for AT

When asked what sources districts use to acquire or provide AT, the most common answers were IDEA Special Education funding (80.4 percent), student-owned devices (76.1 percent), third-party billing (67.4 percent), lending libraries and other loan systems (69.6 percent), and district funding (67.4 percent). When asked which one they use most often, IDEA Special Education funding was at the top (50.0 percent), followed by "I don't know" (22.7 percent) and district funds (20.5 percent).

When asked how they determine what source to use, the respondents consider four factors:

- The student's needs
- The type of AT
- How and where it will be used
- Source and availability of funding

Barriers

School districts where were asked to identify barriers or challenges that exist for students accessing AT in their district. The barrier themes identified by the school districts are very similar to those identified by parents.

Funding resources and cost

Many of the respondents identified funding resources and cost as a barrier for students accessing AT in their district. Respondents noted the high cost of some AT, both in purchasing, ongoing maintenance, and upgrades of equipment, as well as software licensing.

> *"One barrier is the cost of certain technologies for some of our most complex students, i.e., eye-gaze systems. Another barrier is the cost for district-wide licenses of programs that are beneficial for multiple students, i.e., Boardmaker Universal costs $7000.00 a year to renew!"*

For some, there is an apprehension to bring up AT as a necessity because then the district will have to find a way to purchase it. One district commented on the struggle to find funds for families:

> *"Funding – staff afraid to speak up and discuss the need for AT as it results in resource allocations."*

Staff knowledge and time

Many districts identified staff knowledge and time as possibly interconnected barriers. Staff knowledge might be limited because they do not have time to develop that knowledge.

> *"Staff state that they do not have enough time to learn the AT that their students need although there are opportunities given…"*

Access to AT resources

Many school districts identified access to AT resources as a barrier. There are two access barriers: location and AT resources. For some, it is difficult to access AT due to distance. For others, teachers cannot efficiently access various AT resources such as lending libraries or clearinghouses.

> *"We are working to create a seamless system for staff to access the assistive technology the students need. Our biggest issue is that staff identify that students have a need but they are unsure of what equipment meets the need and how they can access the material for their student."*

Technology changes and knowledge of new applications

AT has changed a great deal in recent years. New technology enters the field while staff are building their understanding of what is currently available. Understanding the capability of the technology requires research, hands-on training, and experimentation.

A few school districts identified rapid changes in technology and new applications as barriers. It is very similar to the theme about staff knowledge and time, and acknowledges the rate at which technology changes.

> *"The rapid change of technology and the need to maintain updates in hardware and software at a consistent compatibility level, as well as the need for learning new methods of accessibility access to new technology for both students and staff."*

Suggested solutions

The respondents suggested various solutions to support the ability of parents and school districts to understand the best AT choice to support their students.

Update MDE AT guidance manual

Update the 2003 AT guidance manual, including policies, procedures, checklists, and AT flowcharts for teachers.

> *"Having a current MN State AT Guidelines (manual) would be highly beneficial to reference to in parent meetings and staff trainings so we all are speaking the same language and have the same understanding and resources to meet the needs of the students."*

Centralize AT knowledge and resources

Increase access to AT by centralizing AT knowledge and resources in MDE or school districts—for example, create a clearinghouse for iPad apps.

> *"We would love to see MDE maintain a comprehensive library of assistive technology devices and allow school access to that library for trials and identification of appropriate devices."*

Staff development opportunities

Increase opportunity for professional and paraprofessional development.

> "Continual training to become familiar with existing and evolving assistive technologies available to educators and students."

Do not create more paperwork

> "...I would avoid anything that is going to put more stress/paperwork on staff. The more 'steps,' paperwork, and procedures we have the more that things are done to get them done vs what is in the best interest of students."

Advisory group recommendations

At its meeting on November 21, 2017, MDE ATAG developed recommendations based on member knowledge, member experience, parent and district survey results, and discussions. These recommendations were refined at the December 21 meeting.

Communication

1. **Clearinghouse:** PACER and STAR will collaboratively lead an effort to curate and promote access to AT resources for parents and educators through their websites and Minnesota's Guide to Assistive Technology[8]. The advisory group found that AT resources exist at the national, state and local levels and that there is no way to view all the resources or determine where there are gaps or redundancies. A clearinghouse would assemble or catalog AT resources for the benefit of both parents and educators. The clearinghouse would include existing program resources that provide software, hardware, applications, funding and expertise on AT from organizations including PACER, MDE, and STAR[9]. The clearinghouse development team will also consider including a cross-listing of AT devices by purpose and use.

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[8] Minnesota Department of Administration. "Welcome to Minnesota's Guide to Assistive Technology." Accessed January 16, 2018, https://mn.gov/admin/at/.

[9] STAR AT resources are available at: https://mn.gov/admin/star/resources/

Documentation

2. **IEP form modification:** Document the correct use of the IEP form AT checkbox. The IEP form has a checkbox to indicate whether AT was considered. MDE and MASE will lead an effort aimed at providing more specific guidelines for the use of the checkbox with consultative input from PACER. The guidelines would indicate discussions or actions in order to check the box.
3. **IFSP form modification:** MDE will lead an effort to add a checkbox for AT to the IFSP form. The current IFSP form does not have an AT checkbox. This recommendation is to add an AT checkbox to the form and provide specific guidelines indicating required discussions or actions to check the box.
4. **Update the MDE AT manual:** MDE will lead the project to update the MDE AT manual. This manual was last updated in 2003. Updates should include the manual sections addressing Universal Design for Learning (UDL); Accessible Educational Material (AEM); AT in the IFSP, technology trends; 1-to-1 initiatives; Student, Environments, Tasks, and Tools (SETT); and funding. Updates developed in 2012 but not implemented will be considered as well as new content. The revised manual will include links to new resources such as the proposed AT clearinghouse.
5. **IEP AT discussion outline:** MDE will lead the effort to develop an outline to guide the parent/school AT conversation that takes place around the IEP to ensure transparency, collaboration, and consistency. Parent-school collaboration around AT is mandated but may not be consistent. A discussion outline would serve to document and structure that collaboration.
6. **AT frequently asked questions (FAQs):** MDE ATAG will develop FAQs for AT that address documentation, coding, funding, and outside resources.

Funding

7. **Maximize third-party reimbursements:** MDE, in partnership with Department of Human Services, will develop strategies to educate school districts and parents in order to maximize third-party reimbursements for AT. Due to the complexity of funding for AT, at times third-party reimbursements may not be used optimally. Parents and schools need tools to enable maximizing third-party reimbursements.

Measurement

8. **Improve quality of metrics:** Develop better metrics so that AT can be accurately assessed. There is a lack of awareness or understanding around the definition, need, and use of AT. This adversely affects the ability to collect and act on accurate information. MDE will lead this effort as they continue to work on the inter-agency Olmstead measures.
9. **Quantify use of AT resources:** In order to optimize the use of AT resources in Minnesota's school districts, it is important to gather more data to understand current regional and school district processes and available resources for the active consideration of AT in educational planning for students with disabilities. This data would provide a baseline for continuous improvement and help MDE and its partners leverage resources for improvement efforts. MDE and STAR will lead this continuous improvement effort through its current participation with other state agencies in Minnesota's Olmstead Plan.

Monitor progress

10. **Advisory group:** PACER and MDE will continue to convene the MDE ATAG meetings in order to monitor progress on the recommendations and the effects of the work.

Purchasing

11. **Bulk purchasing options**: STAR and MDE will work to explore opportunities for cooperative AT purchasing to take advantage of discounts for volume purchases of AT. Some school districts might need to purchase only one or a few of a particular AT item. Grouping purchasing across the state or between multiple states as in the Minnesota Multistate Contracting Alliance for Pharmacy (MMCAP)[10], could allow for cost savings through volume purchase discounts.

Training

12. **Training resources:** PACER, STAR and MDE will collaboratively lead the effort to provide training statewide on AT for parents and educators in various formats, including workshops, in-person, live streaming, online, and print. Minnesota Administrators for Special Education (MASE) will also participate in implementing this recommendation. One of the concerns of both parents and school districts was a lack of knowledge about AT. One way to share AT knowledge is to create tip sheets and videos that demonstrate effective use of AT. This would provide multiple modes of training, support, and coaching. These tip sheets and videos should be available in multiple languages (English, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish) and targeted separately to parents and educators.
13. **College course work:** MASE will lead an effort to recommend that Minnesota colleges provide information about AT in relevant special education courses and to provide content that can be used in college coursework.

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[10] The Minnesota Multistate Contracting Alliance for Pharmacy (MMCAP) is a free, voluntary group purchasing organization for government facilities that provide healthcare services. MMCAP, "About Us." Accessed January 2, 2018, http://www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/mmcap/.

Conclusion

MDE formed an advisory group of stakeholders and subject matter experts to help examine AT use in IEPs and IFSPs across the state and produce recommendations in response to the legislative charge of recommending changes to encourage child-centered assistive technology plans in IEPs or IFSPs. The advisory group produced thirteen recommendations. These recommendations cover communication, documentation, funding, measurement, purchasing, and training.

The commissioner of MDE has reviewed the recommendations and looks forward to collaborating with their partners to explore, learn and implement AT improvements.

Appendix A: Text of legislation

Laws of Minnesota 2017, 1st Spec. Sess. chapter 5, article 4, section 10

SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY STUDY.

Subdivision 1.

Study.

The commissioner of education must examine the use of assistive technology in Minnesota school districts. The commissioner may examine financial data, survey school officials, and use other methods to collect data on the use of assistive technology by Minnesota's students. The commissioner must consult with the Minnesota Assistive Technology Advisory Council and other interested organizations to determine the scope and focus of the study.

Subd. 2.

Data reporting.

The commissioner must examine the federally required uniform financial accounting and reporting standards object codes and, if necessary, recommend changes to better capture school district spending on assistive technology. The commissioner must examine approaches to collecting additional student-level assistive technology data through the electronic data reporting system.

Subd. 3.

Assistive technology manual.

The commissioner must examine the department's assistive technology manual, and determine whether to prepare a revised manual.

Subd. 4.

Report.

The commissioner of education must report to the chairs and ranking minority members of the legislative committees with jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education by February 15, 2018, on the use of assistive technology by Minnesota's students and recommend statutory changes to encourage individualized education programs and individualized family service plans to incorporate a child-centered assistive technology plan.

Appendix B: Definition of assistive technology

The definition for assistive technology device and service is found in IDEA regulations 34 C.F.R. Sections 300.5 and 300.6.

§300.5   Assistive technology device.

Assistive technology device means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such device.

§300.6   Assistive technology service.

Assistive technology service means any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device. The term includes –

(a) The evaluation of the needs of a child with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the child in the child's customary environment;

(b) Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by children with disabilities;

(c) Selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, or replacing assistive technology devices;

(d) Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;

(e) Training or technical assistance for a child with a disability or, if appropriate, that child's family; and

(f) Training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education or rehabilitation services), employers, or other individuals who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of that child.

Appendix C: Assistive Technology Advisory Group roster

Name	Role
Aaron Barnes	MDE, Workforce and Low Incidence Supervisor
Alicia Jepsen	MASE, Benton Stearns Education District, Director of Special Ed.
Alicia Munson	The Arc of Minnesota, Senior Policy Director
Annette Miller	MASBO, SWWC Service Cooperative Director of Finance
Bridget Gilormini	PACER, Simon Tech Center Director
Daron Korte	MDE, Assistant Commissioner
Erica Klein	MMB/MAD
Jenny Roth	DHS, Human Services Program Rep.
Joanne Karch	MASE, Hopkins Schools Asst. Dir of Special Services
Jodi Altringer	Centers of Excellence Prof Development Facilitator
Jodi Schmidt	MASBO, North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale School Accountant
Kara Tempel	MDE, Infant and Toddler Intervention Part C Coordinator
Kim Moccia	ADM, State Program Admin Director
Kris Van Amber	MMB/MAD, Facilitator
Kursten Dubbels	MDE, Assistive Technology Specialist
Michele Bedor	MASE, Eastern Carver County Schools Manager
Mike Gude	The Arc Minnesota, Communications Director
Paul Ferrin	MDE, Special Education Finance Supervisor
Paula Goldberg	PACER, Executive Director
Rebecca Tetlie	St. Paul Public Schools, AT Professional
Robyn Widley	MDE, Special Education Director
Ryan Tangen	MASBO, Detroit Lakes Public Schools Business Mgr.
Tom Delaney	MDE, Interagency Partnerships Supervisor
Tom Melcher	MDE, School Finance Director

MASBO: Minnesota Association of School Business Officials

MASE: Minnesota Administrators for Special Education

STAR: System of Technology to Achieve Results

Assistive Technology in the Classroom: Parent Survey

Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your participation will inform the Minnesota Commissioner of Education of the use of assistive technology (AT) by Minnesota school districts and assist in determining the overall effectiveness of current policies and funding for AT. We want to know more about the efforts made by your child's school to identify and make appropriate assistive technology decisions as part of your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

This survey is specifically about assistive technology, which is both a device and a service. Devices include any item that increases, maintains, or improves the functional capabilities of an individual with a disability. Services include teaching to use, assessing use, teaching individuals and their support personnel to use, and customizing a device. Examples of assistive technologies include a range of items from no-tech/low tech items like pencil grips, to mid-tech items like voice-activated software and tablet computers, to high-tech.

If you have more than 1 child who has an IFSP or IEP, please respond to this survey thinking about the experience you have had with just 1 of your children. You can use the comment box at the end to share any additional experiences you would like to share.

Qualifier

1) Did any of the children in your family have an IEP/IFSP for the 2016-2017 school year?

( ) Yes – an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)

( ) Yes – an Individualized Education Program (IEP)

( ) No

Number of Children

2) How many children in your family have an IEP/IFSP for the 2016-2017 school year?

( ) 1

( ) 2

( ) 3

( ) 4 or more

Child's Age

3)   How old was your child in the 2016-2017 school year?

( ) Under 1 Year

( ) 2

( ) 3

( ) 4

( ) 5

( ) 6

( ) 7

( ) 8

( ) 9

( ) 10

( ) 11

( ) 12

( ) 13

( ) 14

( ) 15

( ) 16

( ) 17

( ) 18

( ) 19

( ) 20

( ) 21

Categorical Disability

4) What is your child's primary disability?

( ) Intellectual disability

( ) Autism

( ) Hearing impairments (including deafness)

( ) Speech or language impairments

( ) Visual impairments (including blindness)

( ) Serious emotional disturbance

( ) Orthopedic impairments

( ) Traumatic brain injury

( ) Other health impairments

( ) Specific learning disabilities

( ) Other (please specify):

School Type

5) What type of school did your child attend in the 2016-2017 school year?

( ) Public School that is not a charter school

( ) Charter School

( ) Private School

Location

6) Where do you live?

( ) Twin Cities Metro Area

( ) Greater Minnesota

AT Familiarity

7) How familiar are you with assistive technology?

( ) Not at all familiar (I may have heard the phrase, but I'm not sure what it means)

( ) Moderately familiar (I have some experience with assistive technology or awareness of the concept, but I'm not certain what it means or how it works)

( ) Very familiar (I know what assistive technology is and how it might be used for individual students)

AT in Conversation

8) The following list outlines some ways that district staff could talk about assistive technology with students and families. Please check which your child's IEP/IFSP team uses.

( ) District staff specifically talked about "assistive technology" using that phrase.

( ) District staff talked about devices that could help my child, but they didn't use the phrase "assistive technology."

( ) District staff have not talked to me about devices that could help my child.

Parent Involvement

9) Please check which option best reflects your level of involvement in discussions and decision making about the inclusion of assistive technology in your child's IEP/IFSP.

( ) I was involved in the discussion and decision making with my child's IEP/IFSP team about whether my child needed assistive technology.

( ) Assistive technology was discussed at my child's IEP/IFSP meeting but I was not a part of the decision about whether my child needed it.

( ) Assistive technology was not discussed at my child's IEP/IFSP meeting, and I was not part of the decision making process about whether my child needed it.

10) Please add any additional comments:

AT for Your Child

11) This list includes the types of assistive technology devices that a child may need. Please check which of these are included in your child's IEP/IFSP.

[ ] Not applicable

[ ] Access and environmental controls (electronic controls, switches, special keyboards or mice, remote controls, etc.)

[ ] Aids for daily living (adapted utensils, plates and cups, non-skid surfaces, and specially designed toilet seats, etc.)

[ ] Alternative input devices (switches, touch screens, etc.)

[ ] Assistive listening devices (hearing aids, amplifiers, captions on media/video, etc.)

[ ] Augmentative and alternative communication (picture boards, voice output communication devices, communication software, etc.)

[ ] Cognition aids/Instructional aids (book holders, adapted pencils, visual schedules, software/apps, etc.)

[ ] Mobility aids (walkers, canes, scooters, etc.)

[ ] Positioning (adjustable chairs, tables, standers, wedges, etc.)

[ ] Recreation and leisure aids (adapted toys, bicycles, etc.)

[ ] Vision Aids (large-print books, audio books, magnifiers, talking computer software, talkers, etc.)

[ ] I'm not sure

[ ] Other device(s) (Please describe the other type of device(s)):

AT Needs Met

12) Does the assistive technology device(s) included in your child's IEP/IFSP meet your child's need(s) to participate and make progress in their educational program?

( ) It does not meet my child's need(s)

( ) It meets my child's need(s) a moderate amount

( ) It meets my child's need(s) very well

( ) I'm not sure

Absence of AT Technology

12) In the previous question, you indicated that your district tends to only talk about assistive technology for students who qualify for special education in specific categories. Please check the categories that apply to this statement:

( ) My child's IEP/IFSP may not include any assistive technology devices, but I think it should

( ) My child's IEP/IFSP may not include any assistive technology devices, but I am not sure that these types of devices would be helpful or necessary for my child

---

Barriers

13) Have you experienced any barriers to including assistive technology in your child's IEP/IFSP?

( ) No

( ) Yes (please explain):

Possible Improvements

14) What (if any) improvements would you recommend to how your child's IEP/IFSP team makes decisions about assistive technology for your child?

Final Thoughts

15) Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Thank You!

Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us.

Assistive Technology in the Classroom: District Survey

Introduction

Thank you for taking this survey! We're using the information you provide to complete a report required by the Minnesota Legislature. In some questions, we ask that you provide specific information - it's okay to provide estimates or approximations if you need to, but please be as accurate as you can be. You are the only person in your school district who will receive this survey, so please ask others to help with responses if needed.

This survey is about assistive technology. Assistive technology is a device and a service. Devices include any item that increases, maintains, or improves the functional capabilities of an individual with a disability. Services include teaching to use, assessing use, teaching individuals and their support personnel to use, and customizing a device. Examples of assistive technologies include a range of items from no-tech/low-tech items like pencil grips to mid-tech items like voice-activated software and tablet computers and high tech systems that integrate mobility, communication, and environmental controls.

District Identification

1) What school district or service cooperative do you represent?

Respondent

2) What is your job title?

      ( ) Special Education Director

      ( ) Special Education Coordinator

      ( ) Special Education Supervisor

      ( ) Other:

2016-2017 IEP Data

These questions ask for information about use of assistive technology in your district. If you need to, you can save this survey and return to it later. Click the "save" button at the top of the page before exiting the survey.

It is okay to provide estimates or approximate numbers, but please be as accurate as you can be.

3) These numbers are estimated:

( ) Yes

( ) No

4) In total, how many students in your district had IEPs?

5) How many IEPs showed that assistive technology was considered?

6) How many IEPs included assistive technology?

2016-2017 IFSP Data

These questions ask for information about use of assistive technology in your district. If you need to, you can save this survey and return to it later. Click the "save" button at the top of the page before exiting the survey.

It is okay to provide estimates or approximate numbers, but please be as accurate as you can be.

7) These numbers are estimated:

( ) Yes

( ) No

8) In total, how many students in your district had IFSPs?

9) How many IFSPs showed that assistive technology was considered?

10) How many IFSPs included assistive technology?

Assistive Technology Practices

11) How do you track assistive technology purchases? (Please check all that apply)

[ ] We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 406: Instructional Software License Agreements

[ ] We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 430: Supplies and Materials - Non-Individualized Instruction

[ ] We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 433: Supplies and Materials - Individualized Instruction

[ ] We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 466: Instructional Technology Devices

[ ] We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 506: Capitalized Instructional Technology Software

[ ] We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 533: Other Equipment Purchased for Special Education Direct Instruction

[ ] We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 556: Capitalized Instructional Technology Hardware

[ ] We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using this other code:

[ ] We track using our own fiscal software

[ ] We track using a spreadsheet

[ ] We track some other way:

[ ] We don't track purchases like this

[ ] I don't know

Assistive Technology Service Staffing

Individuals who may provide information regarding the need for, selection, acquisition, and use of assistive technology.

12) Please select the specialist(s) your district has utilized. (Check all that apply)

[ ] Assistive Technology Specialist (ATP)

[ ] Audiologist

[ ] Teacher of the Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI)

[ ] Teacher of the Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)

[ ] Developmental Disabilities Teacher

[ ] Early Childhood Special Education Teacher (ECSE)

[ ] Physical and Health Disabilities Teacher (PHD)

[ ] Developmental Adaptive Physical Education Teacher (DAPE)

[ ] Physical Therapist (PT)

[ ] Occupational Therapist (OT)

[ ] Orientation and Mobility Specialist (O&M)

[ ] Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP)

[ ] Teacher for Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD)

[ ] Academic and Behavioral Specialist (ABS)

[ ] Teacher for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

[ ] Learning Disabilities Teacher (LD)

[ ] Oral/Aural Deaf Teacher

[ ] General Education Teacher

[ ] Social Worker

[ ] Developmental Cognitive Delay Teacher (DCD)

[ ] Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA)

[ ] Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA)

[ ] Other - Please describe the other type of individual who can recommend assistive technology devices and/or services:

[ ] We do not have access to any of these individuals

Assistive Technology Devices

Types of devices that may be available to students to borrow and try out.

13) Please select which of these are available to students in your district. (Check all that apply)

[ ] Alternative input devices (switches, touch screens, etc.)

[ ] Assistive listening devices (hearing aids, amplifiers, captions on media/video, etc.)

[ ] Vision aids (large-print books, books on tape, magnifiers, talking computer software, Braillers, etc.)

[ ] Cognition aids/Instructional aids (book holders, adapted pencils, visual schedules, software/apps, etc.)

[ ] Mobility aids (walkers, canes, scooters, etc.)

[ ] Recreational and leisure aids (adapted toys, bicycles, etc.)

[ ] Aids for daily living (adapted utensils, plates and cups, non-skid surfaces, and specially designed toilet seats, etc.)

[ ] Augmentative and alternative communication (picture boards, voice output communication devices, communication software, etc.)

[ ] Positioning (adjustable chairs, tables, standers, wedges, etc.)

[ ] Access and environmental controls (electronic controls, switches, special keyboards or mice, remote controls, etc.)

[ ] Other - Please describe:

[ ] We do not have access to any of these categories of assistive technology.

Acquiring Assistive Technology

14) Which of these sources do you use to acquire/provide assistive technology? (Check all that apply)

       [ ] Waivered Services Funding

       [ ] Third Party Billing

       [ ] District Funds

       [ ] IDEA Special Education Funding

       [ ] Lending Libraries & Other Loan Systems

[ ] Student Owned Devices

[ ] Build New or Modify Existing

[ ] Other - Please Describe:

[ ] I Don't Know

15) How do you determine which source to use?

Acquiring Assistive Technology (cont.)

16) Of these, which do you use most frequently?

( ) I Don't Know

Informed Parents

17) This list highlights some ways that special education coordinators might talk to parents about assistive technology. Please check the most prevalent choice for your district:

( ) When we talk about student supports, we use the term "assistive technology" to describe devices and services provided to the student to increase, maintain or improve the student's functional capabilities and/or access to curriculum and environments.

( ) When we talk about student supports, we DO NOT use the term "assistive technology" to describe devices and services provided to the student to increase, maintain or improve the student's functional capabilities and/or access to curriculum and environments.

( ) We only talk about assistive technology for students who qualify for special education in specific categories.

( ) We talk about assistive technology, but only when the parent asks specifically

( ) We don't typically talk about assistive technology at all

Informed Parents (cont.)

18) In the previous question, you indicated that your district tends to only talk about assistive technology for students who qualify for special education in specific categories. Please check the categories that apply to this statement:

[ ] Autism

[ ] Blind or Visually Impaired

[ ] Deaf-Blind

[ ] Deaf or Hard of Hearing

[ ] Speech Language

[ ] Developmental Disability

[ ] Developmental Cognitive Delay

[ ] Learning Disability

[ ] Emotional Behavior Disorder

[ ] Physical Health Disability

[ ] Other Health Disability

[ ] Traumatic Brain Injury

[ ] Early Childhood Special Education

19) In the previous question, you indicated that your district does not typically talk about assistive technology with parents. Please explain why you don't talk about assistive technology.

Staff Training

20) Which of the following methods does your district use to train staff about considering and using assistive technology?

[ ] Hands-on training with devices

[ ] Video training

[ ] Online training

[ ] Webinars

[ ] Group training sessions

[ ] Assistive technology teams project sponsored by MDE

[ ] Regional AT networks

[ ] Regional workshops

[ ] Attend conferences such as Closing the Gap, Charting the Cs or ATIA

[ ] Other - Please Describe:

[ ] We do not provide training to staff

Staff Training (cont.)

21) Which of the following methods does your district use to inform staff about district policies and procedures for identifying the need for, selection, acquisition, and use of assistive technology? (Check all that apply)

[ ] Email from district leadership

[ ] Formal policy in a manual with other district policies

[ ] Position description

[ ] Ongoing professional development

[ ] Performance reviews

[ ] Instructions in IEP/IFSP documentation

[ ] Checklist in IEP/IFSP documentation

[ ] Use MDE or other guidelines (WATI, GPAT, QIAT, etc.)

[ ] Other - Please Describe:

[ ] We do not have district guidelines for considering and using assistive technology

[ ] We have guidelines, but we have not communicated them

District Barriers

22) What (if any) barriers or challenges exist for students accessing assistive technology in your district?

District Improvements

23) What (if any) improvements would you recommend to your district assistive technology consideration, selection, acquisition and use policies and procedures?

Final Thoughts

24) Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Thank You!

Thank you for taking our survey. Your response is very important to us.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

October 2017

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The Minnesota Department of Special Education, PACER Center, and The Arc of Minnesota invite you to complete an online parent survey and share your feedback regarding the role assistive technology (AT) has played in your child's IEP/IFSP. We want to know about the efforts made by your child's school to identify and make appropriate accommodations for your child's education.

The Department is working with PACER and The Arc of Minnesota to conduct our web-based parent survey. We will not collect any personal information regarding your child on this survey.

You have received this letter because you are a parent on a list serv at PACER or The Arc of Minnesota whose child may have a disability. The purpose of the survey is to help inform the Minnesota Commissioner of Education of the use of AT by Minnesota school districts. Survey results will help the Commissioner to determine the overall effectiveness of current policies and funding for AT, and identify where there may be opportunities to improve.

Assistive technology is a device and a service. Devices include any item that increases, maintains, or improves the functional capabilities of an individual with a disability. Services include teaching to use, assessing use, teaching individuals and their support personnel to use, and customizing a device. Examples of assistive technologies include a range of items from no-tech/low tech items like a pencil grips, to mid- tech items like voice-activated software and tablet computers and high tech systems that integrate mobility, communication, and environmental controls.

The Minnesota Department of Education supports a variety of AT initiatives designed to help ensure students with disabilities have access to appropriate assistive technology and receive a free, appropriate public education. AT can be as simple as a pencil grip or as complex as a voice-activated computer.

You can complete the survey by going to: <SURVEY LINK HERE>

Your survey answers will remain anonymous. Please complete the survey and submit it by November 6, 2017

If you have any questions on this survey please call <PACER staff member or The Arc Minnesota staff member>.

Thank you very much in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Robyn Widley
MN Director of Special Education

m1 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Assistive Technology in the Classroom: A Survey for Districts

October 23, 2017

Dear School Administrator:

The Minnesota Department of Special Education invites you to complete an online survey and share your feedback regarding the use of assistive technology (AT) in classrooms across your district. We hope to know about the kinds of AT being utilized, how you receive funding for the AT being used, and how big the need for AT is in your district.

You are likely the only person in your school district who will receive this survey, so please ask others to help with responses if needed. The purpose of the survey is to help inform the Minnesota Commissioner of Education of the use of AT by Minnesota school districts as we prepare a report required by the Minnesota Legislature on the subject. Survey results will help the Commissioner to determine the overall effectiveness of current policies and funding for AT, and identify where there may be opportunities to improve.

The Minnesota Department of Education supports a variety of AT initiatives designed to help ensure students with disabilities have access to appropriate assistive technology and receive a free, appropriate public education. Assistive technology is a device and a service. Devices include any item that increases, maintains, or improves the functional capabilities of an individual with a disability. Services include teaching to use, assessing use, teaching individuals and their support personnel to use, and customizing a device. Examples of assistive technologies include a range of items from no-tech/low tech items like a pencil grips, to mid- tech items like voice-activated software and tablet computers and high tech systems that integrate mobility, communication, and environmental controls.

You can complete the survey by going to: http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/3915466/Assistive-Technology-in-the-Classroom-District-Survey

Please complete the survey and submit it by November 6, 2017. If you have any questions on this survey please call Diana Miller at 651.582.8616.

Thank you very much in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Robyn Widley
MN Director of Special Education

Appendix E: Survey results

Parent Survey Responses

PACER

1. Did any of the children in your family have an IEP/IFSP for the 2016-2017 school year?

Value	Percentage	Count
Yes - an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)	8.47%	20
Yes - an Individualized Education Program (IEP)	83.90%	198
No	7.63%	18
Totals	100%	236

2. How many children in your family had an IEP/IFSP for the 2016-2017 school year?

Value	Percent	Count
1	81.00%	179
2	13.57%	30
3	3.62%	8
4 or more	1.81%	4
Totals	100%	221

3. How old was your child in the 2016-2017 school year?

Value	Percentage	Count
0	0.00%	0
1	0.43%	1
2	0.85%	2
3	2.13%	5
4	2.13%	5
5	3.40%	8
6	9.36%	22
7	6.81%	16
8	2.98%	7
9	7.66%	18
10	6.38%	15
11	5.96%	14
12	5.96%	14
13	6.38%	15
14	10.64%	25
15	5.96%	14
16	7.66%	18
17	7.66%	18

Value	Percentage	Count
18	3.40%	8
19	0.85%	2
20	2.13%	5
21	1.28%	3
Totals	100.01%	235

4. What is your child's primary disability?

Value	Percentage	Count
Autism Spectrum Disorders	24.58%	58
Deaf-Blind	1.69%	4
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	3.39%	8
Developmental Cognitive Disability	17.37%	41
Developmental Delay	5.08%	12
Emotional or Behavioral Disorders	5.93%	14
Other Health Disabilities	12.71%	30
Physically Impaired	5.93%	14
Severely Multiply Impaired	4.66%	11
Specific Learning Disability	13.56%	32
Speech or Language Impairments	1.69%	4
Traumatic Brain Injury	1.69%	4
Visually Impaired	1.69%	4
Totals	99.7%	236

5. What type of school did your child attend in the 2016-2017 school year?

Value	Percentage	Count
Public School that is not a Charter School	89.32%	209
Charter School	5.13%	12
Private School	5.56%	13
Totals	100.01%	234

6. Where do you live?

Value	Percentage	Count
Twin Cities Metro Area	64.10%	150
Greater Minnesota	35.90%	84
Totals	100%	234

7. How familiar are you with assistive technology?

Value	Percentage	Count
1 - Not at all familiar (I may have heard the phrase, but I'm not sure what it means)	9.09%	18
2 - Moderately familiar (I have some experience with assistive technology or awareness of the concept, but I'm not certain what it means or how it works)	34.85%	69
3 - Very familiar (I know what assistive technology is and how it might be used for individual students)	56.06%	111
Totals	100.00%	198

8. The following list outlines some ways that district staff could talk about assistive technology with students and families. Please check which your child's IEP/IFSP team uses.

Value	Responses	Count
District staff specifically talked about "assistive technology" using that phrase.	34.85%	69
District staff talked about devices that could help my child, but they didn't use the phrase "assistive technology."	29.29%	58
District staff have not talked to me about devices that could help my child.	35.86%	71
Totals	100.00%	198

9. Please check which option best reflects your level of involvement in discussions and decision making about the inclusion of assistive technology in your child's IEP/IFSP.

Answer Choices	Responses	Count
I was involved in the discussion and decision making with my child's IEP/IFSP team about whether my child needed assistive technology.	63.40%	123
Assistive technology was discussed at my child's IEP/IFSP meeting but I was not a part of the decision about whether my child needed it.	13.40%	26
Assistive technology was not discussed at my child's IEP/IFSP meeting, and I was not part of the decision making process about whether my child needed it.	23.20%	45
Totals	100.00%	194

10. This list includes the types of assistive technology devices that a child may need. Please check which of these are included in your child's IEP/IFSP. (Check all that apply. If your child's IFSP/IEP does not include assistive technology, please advance to question #12 below.)

Value	Percentage	Count
Access and environmental controls (electronic controls, switches, special keyboards or mice, remote controls, etc.)	11.26%	17
Aids for daily living (adapted utensils, plates and cups, non-skid surfaces, and specially designed toilet seats, etc.)	11.26%	17
Alternative input devices (switches, touch screens, etc.)	18.54%	28
Assistive listening devices (hearing aids, amplifiers, captions on media/video, etc.)	15.89%	24
Augmentative and alternative communication (picture boards, voice output communication devices, communication software, etc.)	33.11%	50

Value	Percentage	Count
Cognition aids/Instructional aids (book holders, adapted pencils, visual schedules, software/apps, etc.)	38.41%	58
Mobility aids (walkers, canes, scooters, etc.)	11.92%	18
Positioning (adjustable chairs, tables, standers, wedges, etc.)	25.83%	39
Recreation and leisure aids (adapted toys, bicycles, etc.)	12.58%	19
Vision Aids (large-print books, audio books, magnifiers, talking computer software, talkers, etc.)	20.53%	31
I'm not sure	9.93%	15
Other device(s) (Please describe):	33.77%	51

11. Does the assistive technology device(s) included in your child's IEP/IFSP meet your child's need(s) to participate and make progress in their educational program?

Value	Percentage	Count
1- it does not meet my child's need(s)	12.82%	20
2- it meets my child's need(s) a moderate amount	41.67%	65
3-it meets my child's need(s) very well	28.85%	45
I'm not sure	16.67%	26
Totals	100.01%	156

12. If your child's IEP/IFSP does not include any assistive technology devices, please check which response below best matches

Value	Percentage	Count
My child's IEP/IFSP does not include any assistive technology devices, but I think it should.	61.04%	47
My child's IEP/IFSP does not include any assistive technology devices, but I am not sure that these types of devices would be helpful or necessary for my child.	38.96%	30
Totals	100.00%	77

13. Have you experienced any barriers to including assistive technology in your child's IEP/IFSP?

Value	Percentage	Count
Yes	52.11%	99
No	47.89%	91
Totals	100.00%	190

The Arc of Minnesota

1. Did any of the children in your family have an IEP/IFSP for the 2016-2017 school year?

Value	Percentage	Count
Yes – an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)	5.88%	1
Yes – an Individualized Education Program (IEP)	94.12%	16
No (no need to fill out the rest of the survey)	0.00%	0
Total	100.00%	17

2. How many children in your family have an IEP/IFSP for the 2016-2017 school year?

Value	Percentage	Count
1	76.47%	13
2	17.65%	3
3	5.88%	1
4 or more	0.00%	0
Total	100.00%	17

3. How old was your child in the 2016-2017 school year?

Value	Percentage	Count
Less than 1	0.00%	0
1	0.00%	0
2	0.00%	0
3	0.00%	0
4	5.88%	1
5	5.88%	1
6	5.88%	1
7	0.00%	0
8	17.65%	3
9	5.88%	1
10	0.00%	0
11	17.65%	3
12	0.00%	0
13	0.00%	0
14	5.88%	1
15	5.88%	1
16	17.65%	3
17	5.88%	1
18	5.88%	1

Value	Percentage	Count
19	0.00%	0
20	0.00%	0
21	0.00%	0
Totals	99.99%	17

4. What is your child's primary disability?

Value	Percentage	Count
Intellectual disability	17.65%	3
Autism	35.29%	6
Hearing impairments (including deafness)	5.88%	1
Speech or language impairments	0.00%	0
Visual impairments (including blindness)	0.00%	0
Serious emotional disturbance	0.00%	0
Orthopedic impairments	0.00%	0
Traumatic brain injury	5.88%	1
Other health impairments	11.76%	2
Specific learning disabilities	5.88%	1
Other (please specify)	17.65%	3
Totals	99.99%	17

5. What type of school did your child attend in the 2016-2017 school year?

Value	Percentage	Count
Public School that is not a charter school	94.12%	16
Charter school	5.88%	1
Private school	0.00%	0
Totals	100.00%	17

6. Where do you live?

Value	Percentage	Count
Twin Cities metro area	58.82%	10
Greater Minnesota	41.18%	7
Total	100.00%	17

7. How familiar are you with assistive technology?

Value	Responses	Count
Not at all familiar (I may have heard the phrase, but I'm not sure what it means)	5.88%	1
Moderately familiar (I have some experience with assistive technology or awareness of the concept, but I'm not certain what it means or how it works)	52.94%	9
Very familiar (I know what assistive technology is and how it might be used for individual students)	41.18%	7
Totals	100.00%	17

8. The following list outlines some ways that district staff could talk about assistive technology with students and families. Please check which your child's IEP/IFSP team uses.

Value	Percentage	Count
District staff specifically talked about "assistive technology" using that phrase.	52.94%	9
District staff talked about devices that could help my child, but they didn't use the phrase "assistive technology."	11.76%	2
District staff have not talked to me about devices that could help my child.	35.29%	6
Totals	100.00%	17

9. Please check which option best reflects your level of involvement in discussions and decision making about the inclusion of assistive technology in your child's IEP/IFSP.

Value	Percentage	Count
I was involved in the discussion and decision making with my child's IEP/IFSP team about whether my child needed assistive technology.	58.82%	10
Assistive technology was discussed at my child's IEP/IFSP meeting, but I was not a part of the decision about whether my child needed it.	11.76%	2
Assistive technology was not discussed at my child's IEP/IFSP meeting, and I was not part of the decision making process about whether my child needed it.	29.41%	5
Totals	99.99%	17

10. This list includes the types of assistive technology devices that a child may need. Please check which of these are included in your child's IEP/IFSP.

Value	Percentage	Count
Access and environmental controls (electronic controls, switches, special keyboards or mice, remote controls, etc.)	26.67%	4
Aids for daily living (adapted utensils, plates and cups, non-skid surfaces, and specially designed toilet seats, etc.)	33.33%	5
Alternative input devices (switches, touch screens, etc.)	26.67%	4
Assistive listening devices (hearing aids, amplifiers, captions on media/video, etc.)	13.33%	2
Augmentative and alternative communication (picture boards, voice output communication devices, communication software, etc.)	53.33%	8
Cognition aids/Instructional aids (book holders, adapted pencils, visual schedules, software/apps, etc.)	20.00%	3
Mobility aids (walkers, canes, scooters, etc.)	6.67%	1
Positioning (adjustable chairs, tables, standers, wedges, etc.)	6.67%	1
Recreation and leisure aids (adapted toys, bicycles, etc.)	20.00%	3
Vision aids (large-print books, audio books, magnifiers, talking computer software, talkers, etc.)	0.00%	0
I'm not sure	6.67%	1
Other device(s)	33.33%	5

11. Does the assistive technology device(s) included in your child's IEP/IFSP meet your child's need(s) to participate and make progress in his/her educational program?

Value	Percentage	Count
It does not meet my child's need(s)	6.67%	1
It meets my child's need(s) a moderate amount	53.33%	8
It meets my child's need(s) very well	20.00%	3
I'm not sure	20.00%	3
Totals	100.00%	15

12. If your child's IEP/IFSP does not include any assistive technology devices, please check which response below best matches:

Value	Percentage	Count
My child's IEP/IFSP does not include any assistive technology devices, but I think it should.	60.00%	3
My child's IEP/IFSP does not include any assistive technology devices, but I am not sure that these types of devices would be helpful or necessary for my child.	40.00%	2
Totals	100.00%	5

13. Have you experienced any barriers to including assistive technology in your child's IEP/IFSP?

Value	Percentage	Count
Yes	40.00%	6
No	60.00%	9
Totals	100.00%	15

14. What (if any) improvements would you recommend to how your child's IEP/IFSP team makes decisions about assistive technology for your child?

Value	Count
Answered	10
Skipped	7

15. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Value	Count
Answered	7
Skipped	10

District Survey Responses

1) Survey response statistics

Response	Count	Percent
Complete	45	81.80%
Partial	10	18.20%
Disqualified	0	0.00%
Totals	55	100%

2) What is your job title?

Value	Percent	Count
Special Education Director	60.40%	32
Special Education Coordinator	5.70%	3
Special Education Supervisor	3.80%	2
Other	30.20%	16
Totals	100%	53

3) These numbers are estimated

Value	Percent	Count
Yes	96.40%	53
No	3.60%	2
Total	100 %	55

8-10) Number of IEPs and IFSPs

Response	IEP	IFSP
Total number of IEP/IFSP reported	8923	1108
Number of IEP/IFSP where AT was considered	6529	734
Number of IEP/IFSP with an AT component	2686	306

11) How do you track assistive technology purchases? (Check all that apply)

Value	Percent	Count
We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 406: Instructional Software License Agreements	38.60%	17
We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 430: Supplies and Materials - Non-Individualized Instruction	13.60%	6
We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 433: Supplies and Materials - Individualized Instruction	50.00%	22
We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 466: Instructional Technology Devices	36.40%	16
We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 506: Capitalized Instructional Technology Software	13.60%	6
We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 533: Other Equipment Purchased for Special Education Direct Instruction	31.80%	14
We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using code 556: Capitalized Instructional Technology Hardware	20.50%	9
We track using the standard MDE fiscal software using this other code:	6.80%	3
We track using our own fiscal software	9.10%	4
We track using a spreadsheet	36.40%	16
We track some other way:	11.40%	5
We don't track purchases like this	4.50%	2
I don't know	27.30%	12

12) Please select the specialist(s) your district has utilized. (Check all that apply)

Value	Percent	Count
Assistive Technology Specialist (ATP)	56.50%	26
Audiologist	73.90%	34
Teacher of the Blind or Visually Impaired (BVI)	73.90%	34
Teacher of the Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH)	82.60%	38
Developmental Disabilities Teacher	54.30%	25
Early Childhood Special Education Teacher (ECSE)	78.30%	36
Physical and Health Disabilities Teacher (PHD)	69.60%	32
Developmental Adaptive Physical Education Teacher (DAPE)	65.20%	30
Physical Therapist (PT)	76.10%	35
Occupational Therapist (OT)	95.70%	44
Orientation and Mobility Specialist (O&M)	56.50%	26
Speech and Language Pathologist (SLP)	95.70%	44
Teacher for Emotional Behavioral Disorder (EBD)	65.20%	30
Academic and Behavioral Specialist (ABS)	47.80%	22
Teacher for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)	78.30%	36
Learning Disabilities Teacher (LD)	71.70%	33
Oral/Aural Deaf Teacher	8.70%	4
General Education Teacher	37.00%	17
Social Worker	41.30%	19
Developmental Cognitive Delay Teacher (DCD)	78.30%	36
Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant (COTA)	28.30%	13
Speech Language Pathologist Assistant (SLPA)	10.90%	5
Other - Please describe the other type of individual who can recommend assistive	19.60%	9

13) Please select which of these are available to students in your district. (Check all that apply)

Value	Percent	Count
Alternative input devices (switches, touch screens, etc.)	87.00%	40
Assistive listening devices (hearing aids, amplifiers, captions on media/video, etc.)	91.30%	42
Vision aids (large-print books, books on tape, magnifiers, talking computer software, Braillers, etc.)	82.60%	38
Cognition aids/Instructional aids (book holders, adapted pencils, visual schedules, software/apps, etc.)	91.30%	42
Mobility aids (walkers, canes, scooters, etc.)	76.10%	35
Recreational and leisure aids (adapted toys, bicycles, etc.)	78.30%	36
Aids for daily living (adapted utensils, plates and cups, non-skid surfaces, and specially designed toilet seats, etc.)	78.30%	36
Augmentative and alternative communication (picture boards, voice output communication devices, communication software, etc.)	82.60%	38
Positioning (adjustable chairs, tables, standers, wedges, etc.)	84.80%	39
Access and environmental controls (electronic controls, switches, special keyboards or mice, remote controls, etc.)	73.90%	34
Other - Please describe:	13.00%	6

14) Which of these sources do you use to acquire/provide assistive technology? (Check all that apply)

Value	Percent	Count
Waivered Services Funding	15.20%	7
Third Party Billing	67.40%	31
District Funds	67.40%	31
IDEA Special Education Funding	80.40%	37
Lending Libraries & Other Loan Systems	69.60%	32
Student Owned Devices	76.10%	35
Build New or Modify Existing	41.30%	19
Other - Please Describe	6.50%	3
I Don't Know	4.30%	2

16) Of these, which do you use most frequently?

Value	Percent	Count
I Don't Know	22.70%	10
Third Party Billing	6.80%	3
District Funds	20.50%	9
IDEA Special Education Funding	50.00%	22
Totals	100%	44

17) This list highlights some ways that special education coordinators might talk to parents about assistive technology. Please check the most prevalent choice for your district:

Value	Percent	Count
When we talk about student supports, we use the term "assistive technology" to	86.70%	39
When we talk about student supports, we DO NOT use the term "assistive	6.70%	3
We only talk about assistive technology for students who qualify for special education	6.70%	3
Totals	100%	45

18) In the previous question, you indicated that your district tends to only talk about assistive technology for students who qualify for special education in specific categories. Please check the categories that apply to this statement:

Value	Percent	Count
Autism	33.30%	1
Blind or Visually Impaired	33.30%	1
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	66.70%	2
Developmental Cognitive Delay	66.70%	2
Learning Disability	66.70%	2
Physical Health Disability	66.70%	2
Other Health Disability	33.30%	1
Traumatic Brain Injury	33.30%	1
Early Childhood Special	33.30%	1

20) Which of the following methods does your district use to train staff about considering and using assistive technology?

Value	Percent	Count
Hands-on training with devices	78.30%	36
Video training	47.80%	22
Online training	52.20%	24
Webinars	45.70%	21
Group training sessions	67.40%	31
Assistive technology teams project sponsored by MDE	37.00%	17
Regional AT networks	58.70%	27
Regional workshops	50.00%	23
Attend conferences such as Closing the Gap, Charting the Cs or ATIA	76.10%	35
Other - Please Describe	17.40%	8
We do not provide training to staff	2.20%	1

21) Which of the following methods does your district use to inform staff about district policies and procedures for identifying the need for, selection, acquisition, and use of assistive technology? (Check all that apply)

Value	Percent	Count
Email from district leadership	55.60%	25
Formal policy in a manual with other district policies	22.20%	10
Position description	8.90%	4
Ongoing professional development	68.90%	31
Performance reviews	13.30%	6
Instructions in IEP/IFSP documentation	66.70%	30
Checklist in IEP/IFSP documentation	42.20%	19
Use MDE or other guidelines (WATI, GPAT, QIAT, etc.)	35.60%	16
Other - Please Describe	17.80%	8
We do not have district guidelines for considering and using assistive technology	4.40%	2
We have guidelines, but we have not communicated them	4.40%	2