

# Richmond Community Schools District

## Assistive Technology District Plan

### (a) Introduction

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Richmond Community Schools District Assistive Technology plan is to ensure equal access to AT devices and services so that every student in need of assistive technology can achieve educational success.

#### **Components of the Manual:**

The manual is divided into eight sections. The sections include; (a) this introduction (b) description of the district's AT leaders, their roles and responsibilities (c) district procedures for obtaining AT devices and services (d) recommended language to use when documenting AT in the IEP (e) a district plan to provide all staff with quality professional development opportunities related to AT (f) a district manual to collaborate with other departments to ensure coordinated efforts (g) a strategy for evaluating the effectiveness of our district's AT program and finally (h) the plan for implementing the manual.

#### **Dissemination of District Manual**

It is the intention of Richmond Community Schools to share the AT plan with all district administrators and/or building principals. A copy of the plan will be available at each building in a place designated by the building principal. Additional copies are available from the Special Education office by request.

The plan will be revised annually and the dissemination plan followed each year. District administrators and/or building principals may request a meeting with the AT representative if further details are needed. Special Education staff members will be in serviced on the role of the AT representative(s) and how to address AT in an IEP.

#### **Mission Statement**

We recognize that assistive technology can eliminate barriers and enable individuals with disabilities to be participating and contributing members of society.

We believe that all individuals with disabilities are entitled to equal access to the technology needed to ensure opportunities for learning.

We accept the responsibility to provide assistive technology services, when appropriate, to directly assist a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.

The mission of Richmond Community Schools is to provide its staff with access to quality Assistive Technology training opportunities in order to build capacity to deliver quality assistive technology services.

## **Legal Definitions and Considerations regarding Assistive Technology**

### **Definition of Assistive Technology Devices**

*“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 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. (From the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 [IDEIA], § 300.5.)*

### **Definition of Assistive Technology Services**

*The term “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. Such 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 of 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 children with disabilities.*

*(From the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 [IDEIA] § 300.6.)*

## **Assistive Technology**

*Each public agency shall ensure that assistive technology devices or assistive technology services, or both, as those terms are defined in 300.5-300.6, are made available to a child with a disability if required as part of the child's: (a) special education; (b) related services; or (c) supplementary aids and services. 300.308*

Development of IEP 300.324 (v)

The IEP Team must consider whether the child needs assistive technology devices and services.

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) places a 1% cap on alternate assessment (MI-Access) at the state level. If AT can make the regular general assessment attainable to students this must be considered.

## **(b) Assistive Technology District Representatives**

### **Richmond Community Schools AT team makeup**

The district Assistive Technology Leader Team is composed of 2 assistive technology leaders. This includes a secondary AT Leader that is a self-contained teacher and the Lead AT Leader, that is the teacher consultant grades 4 through 12.

Requests for assistance should be directed to a member of the district's AT leader team via in-person request, phone conversation, or email message. An AT leader will work with the student's educational team to make an appropriate plan.

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### **Job Description**

The Assistive Technology Leaders in Richmond Community Schools have the following responsibilities:

- Act as a resource person to all staff regarding AT
- Support the teachers/teams as they use assistive technology in their classrooms
- Discuss student needs and various technologies that may help.
- Observe students and make suggestions
- Assist staff in identifying how AT would be implemented with the curriculum
- Assist staff in trying various AT devices
- Model the implementation of AT with specific curricular activities
- Provide support to IEP teams as they implement individual student or program level technology accommodations

- Borrow equipment from the MISD Assistive Technology Lending Library as needed
- Coordinate Assistive Technology staff training
- Seek out additional resources as needed
- Coordinate and facilitate district AT Evaluations
- Complete the initial and follow-up evaluation meeting(s) paperwork
- Act as liaison between Richmond Community Schools and the MISD AT Team as the need to share AT information arises
- Attend the tri-annual AT Leader meetings at the MISD
- Evaluate the district's assistive technology services annually
- Update the district AT manual and the annually
- Meet regularly with the director of special education
- Meet twice yearly with the technology and curriculum directors/representatives.

The Lead AT Leader will have the duties of the other AT team members with the addition of the following responsibilities:

- Keep track of equipment inventory,
- Process requests to borrow equipment,
- Maintain equipment,
- Place orders for new equipment, and
- Provide onsite trouble-shooting and modeling as needed when other AT representatives are unavailable.

### **Professional Development for AT Team**

An AT leader from Richmond Community School's AT Team will attend the initial four-day training at MISD. Subsequently they attend tri-annual meetings at MISD. They are also encouraged to attend workshops on specific topics related to AT as decided by the team. They will also attend conferences related to AT such as the #Talking AAC conference. These decisions will be based upon input from the director of special education. The AT team is encouraged to read journals and professional materials related to assistive technology

## **(c) District Procedures Related to AT Devices and Services**

### **AT Devices**

#### **District Owned**

##### **Procedures to make staff aware of availability**

- Distribute list of AT inventory at building staff meetings annually
- Distribute addendum periodically for new equipment purchased

##### **Procedures to access/borrow equipment**

- Requests are sent to the lead AT Leader
- Submit Equipment Request Form (see Appendix A)
- Arrange with lead AT Leader to obtain the device

- Equipment must be returned when the student is no longer using it or by May 25<sup>th</sup> for inventory, repair, and storage

#### **Procedures to purchase equipment for district inventory**

- Requests or suggestions can be forwarded to any AT team member. The AT team member will meet with the special education director to discuss possible purchases
- AT team members meet quarterly and/or more frequent to discuss possible purchases
- If requests exceed the budget agreed upon, the AT team meets with the director to discuss and decide on actions

#### **Procedures to purchase specific equipment for an individual student**

- Requests for individual students are preceded by team meeting and follow-up meeting / data review
- Requests are based on positive outcome data presented at the follow-up meeting
- Requests meeting these criteria will be presented to the director of special education for consideration

#### **MISD Collection**

##### **Procedures to access/borrow equipment**

- Staff will be provided a list of equipment available to borrow from the MISD upon request
- All staff may borrow from the MISD AT collection after determining that the item is not available through the district.
- If assistance is needed in determining the appropriate device to request, contact one of the AT team members. They will talk with the staff member about the needs and make suggestions. If needed the AT team member will contact the MISD AT team for further suggestions.

#### **Procedures Related to Service**

##### **Procedures for teachers/staff to get assistance**

District staff are encouraged to ask the AT Team members for assistance in implementing assistive technology with students on a program level or an individual basis. The AT team may:

- Discuss student needs and various technologies that may help
- Observe students and make suggestions
- Assist staff in identifying how AT would be implemented with the curriculum
- Assist staff in trying various AT devices
- Model the implementation of AT with specific curricular activities

### **Training**

AT Team members may provide or arrange for training on devices or software application for small and large groups. Request AT training via email or phone.

### **Problem-Solving**

AT team members work with staff on request to help determine appropriate tools to try or how to set up data collection. They assist in designing AT Trials when needed. After consultation the staff and AT Leader may decide to initiate an AT Evaluation. The AT Leader facilitates and documents this process.

## **(d) Documentation in the IEP**

### **When the team needs to explore AT with the student**

Include a statement under Supplementary Aids and Services that the student's assistive technology needs should be considered further and various assistive technology tools will be systematically assessed to support the student's progress toward meeting IEP goals and objectives.

### **When the team has considered AT carefully and it is not needed**

Include a statement under Supplementary Aids and Services that the student's assistive technology needs have been carefully considered, but AT is not necessary to support the student's goals and objectives at this time.

### **When AT is needed as evidenced by outcome measures**

Include a statement under Supplementary Aids and Services, in goals and objectives, or in the present level of academic and functional performance. The statement should directly reference an IEP goal and should identify equipment by generic description.

Under Supplementary Aids and Services

State what the student will do using assistive technology that references an IEP goal using generic names for equipment.

In goals and objectives

Name the generic equipment that the student will be using in order to complete a goal and objective

In present level of academic and functional performance

State how the student uses assistive technology to perform any activity or task being described.

### **When AT is needed on state-wide and/or district-wide assessments**

Include a statement in the Assessment - Participation and Provisions section of the IEP stating the accommodation(s) required for the student to participate in the assessment. Accommodations must be specific to the subsection of the assessment and listed separately. Assistive technology tools used in assessment must be the customary tools the student uses during instruction. For more information on state-wide and district-wide accommodations and Standard and Non-standard accommodations, please refer to the "AT in the IEP" section of the Macomb County AT guidebook.

### **(e) Professional Development**

Each year a professional development plan will be made based on an annual staff survey, the results of the annual AT quality indicators, and consensus of the AT Team and special education director. The professional development plan should incorporate both awareness of AT and AT practices.

### **(f) Coordination with Technology and Curriculum Departments**

The provision of assistive technology to support all students in the curriculum is dependent on the coordination of AT activities with the technology and curriculum departments. Therefore the following activities will happen annually, as well as ongoing efforts to integrate efforts in all three areas.

- The technology and special education directors will meet twice a year with the AT Leaders to coordinate ongoing technology and AT efforts (including the technology plan and budget).
- The curriculum and special education directors will meet twice a year with the AT Leaders to coordinate ongoing curriculum initiatives and AT efforts
- The school improvement team will meet as needed with AT leaders to coordinate efforts.

### **(g) Evaluation of District's AT Program**

The district AT team will reassess the AT program using Macomb County's Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology. After the assessment, the team will meet with the director of special education to update the district AT plan and set new goals.

### **(h) Next Steps**

1. Review district procedural lists to ensure that AT is referenced where needed
  - Technology Plan

**Richmond Community Schools District Assistive Technology District Plan**

- IEP process and Procedure
  - State-wide and district-wide assessment accommodations
2. Begin inventory of district owned AT equipment.
  3. Distribute AT plans to buildings and schedule staff meeting presentations.
  4. Assess staff training needs such as knowledge of how to consider AT prior to IEPs.
  5. Design and hold training entitled, "How to Consider AT prior to IEPs" on one of next years district professional development day.