

FILE: IGBAC

MEDFORD AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

DATE ADOPTED: June 15, 2006 FILE SECTOR: INSTRUCTION
DATE REVISED: May 17, 2007 POLICY TITLE: TECHNOLOGY CONCERNS FOR
DATE REVISED: August 15, 2013 STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Medford Area Public School District shall provide special education and related services designed to meet the unique needs of each student with a disability, based on his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP), as required by law.

The term “related services” means transportation and such development, corrective and other supportive services as required for the student with a disability to benefit from special education. “Assistive technology devices and services” are a functional part of the services defined. An “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 students with disabilities. “Assistive technology service” means any service that directly assists a student with a disability in the selection, acquisition or use of an assistive technology device. The term includes:

1. Evaluation of needs of a student with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the student’s customary environment;
2. Purchasing, leasing, or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices for use by students with disabilities;
3. Coordinating and using other therapies, interventions, or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs;
4. Training or technical assistance for a student with a disability or, if appropriate, that student’s family; and
5. Training or technical assistance for professionals, employers, or others who provide services to, employ, or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of students with disabilities.

The district has a Core Assistive Technology Team (CATT) who has a purpose to provide resources, evaluations, and training in assistive technology for students with disabilities and school staff. A student’s need for assistive technology shall be determined on a case by case basis by CATT. Students with an IEP or Section 504 plan may have such a need for services. Assistive technology may be provided as special education, related services, or supplemental aids and service for students with disabilities or those with a Section 504 plan.

CROSS REFERENCE: Core Assistive Technology Team, EDCB, & IGBAC-R
LEGAL REFERENCE: Wis. Stats. Chapter 115, Subchapter V, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997, No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Americans with Disabilities Act, & Section 504

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Under special education law a team that develops an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for a student must consider whether the student requires assistive technology devices and services. Assistive technology may be provided as special education, related services, or supplemental aids and services for students with disabilities. There are incidences where a student with a Section 504 plan may also have a need for assistive technology.

The district has a Core Assistive Technology Team (CATT) who has a purpose to provide resources, evaluations, and training in assistive technology for students with special needs and school staff. Any student may be referred to CATT for an evaluation in this area. Those student populations could include, but not limited to English Language Learners, regular education students with communication or physical difficulties, Gifted and Talented, At-Risk, etc.

When evaluating a student, CATT uses an “abilities driven process approach” rather than a “device driven product approach.” In other words the goal of the evaluation is to identify a student’s abilities and then match these skills to appropriate technology. This approach is in contrast with an evaluation model that selects a device and then seeks to teach the student the skills and abilities needed in order to use the selected equipment.

Referrals to CATT for evaluation can be made by staff. Based on data collected through the evaluation, the CATT case manager will write a report summarizing the need for technology; the specifications required by the student; and the technology that best addresses the needs and specifications.

IEP teams will utilize CATT to help determine if a student requires assistive technology devices and services. Assistive technology needs will be written into the student’s Individualized Education Plan. Students with special needs who have a Section 504 plan must also utilize CATT to determine if assistive technology devices or services are needed for the student in regular education setting.