

What is Assistive Technology?

An assistive technology device is 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 individuals with disabilities.

(20 U.S.C. Chapter 33, Section 1401 (25))

Examples of assistive technology include: an arm support for a student to access the keyboard, talking software for a student who cannot speak, and a portable word processor for a student who cannot write. The Individuals with Disabilities Education ACT (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require districts to provide necessary assistive devices that allow the student to access a free and appropriate public education and remain in the least restrictive environment as determined by the CSE or 504 Committee. Refer to the regulations or your school district for detailed information.

A Circle of Courage School

Because of our strong belief in the Circle of Courage, we do all we can to help students achieve a sense of Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity toward others. We believe that these skills build on each other and are necessary for success in school and in the world. We expect students to understand these goals and contribute toward their development by participating in classroom and group activities, setting and working toward their individual goals, helping to maintain a safe school environment and contributing what they can to the school community.



For more information:
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CAST Assistive Technology

*Consultation and
Support Team*



TST BOCES

TOMPKINS • SENECA • TIOGA

Department of Exceptional Education
Coser 320.00

What Does the Assistive Technology Team Have to Offer Students?

- The Assistive Technology Evaluation takes place in the school environment.
- The Assistive Technology Team considers the student, the tasks he/she needs to accomplish, and the environment, then identifies the assistive devices that best match these.
- Members of the student's family and educational team are involved in the evaluation.
- Reports are shared with all participants.
- Recommendations offer multiple options whenever possible.
- Recommendations may include activities, in addition to hardware and software, that contribute to the success of the student.

A variety of technology is available for the student to try out during the evaluation and some can be borrowed for a trial period to help identify the best solution.



A BOCES Assistive Technology Evaluation

Referrals should be made only after careful consideration of resources available in the student's home district and in consultation with the educational team. Not every student will need a BOCES evaluation.

1. Referrals for evaluation must be approved by the CSE along with parental permission for testing.
2. The referral form and relevant educational information such as current IEP and progress reports are sent to the Assistive Technology Coordinator.
3. Members of the educational team and family are contacted to provide information.
4. The evaluation session(s) are scheduled with the student.
5. Written reports are reviewed in a meeting with the educational team and family.
6. AT services are part of CAST services. Each component school district determines its level of participation needed for CAST services.
7. The findings of the AT team are recommendations only. The educational team, family, student, and CSE determine how to proceed.

Which students Need An Assistive Technology Evaluation?

Many assistive technology needs can be addressed by members of the student's team or by resources in the home school district. When personnel require additional information concerning technology solutions, are uncertain which direction to take, or need a multidisciplinary approach, a TST BOCES Assistive Technology Evaluation can prove helpful. Students who already use high technology solutions, such as complex computer or communication systems, may require periodic re-evaluations as their needs change.

Follow-Up

The AT Team is available for consultation and assistance after the evaluation to clarify findings, locate suppliers, loan equipment for trial use when possible and provide training in the use of Assistive Technology can be an ongoing process; the student's skills change, the classroom environment changes, technology advances, etc. Figuring out which technology to acquire is only the first step. Ongoing support, evaluation and upgrading of equipment is essential.

Assistive Tech. Team

The team is composed of an occupational therapist and a speech therapist who evaluate students ages 5-21 who may require Assistive Technology in BOCES' nine component school districts.

