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STAR and its partners are proud to offer free device demonstrations and device loans to Minnesotans statewide.



# Constellations

Fall 2011

## Students and AT Consideration

When the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) was reauthorized by Congress in 1997 and in subsequent reauthorizations, it included instructions to Individualized Education Program (IEP) planning teams to consider five special factors when developing an IEP for students. One of those considerations was the need to consider whether the student required the use of assistive technology (AT) to support meeting IEP goals.

What does it mean to consider AT? IEP teams need to determine whether the student is making adequate educational progress and whether AT is needed to support that progress. When the team considers the need for AT, what are the possible outcomes to that consideration? Penny Reed, PhD, the former director of the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative (WATI) has proposed four possible outcomes. The first possible outcome is that the student is making adequate progress towards achievement of goals, so nothing new needs to be added to the IEP.

The IEP team could come up with a second possible outcome that the student is making adequate educational progress with the use of strategies, including assistive technology. Consequently, the IEP team should continue to document that AT in the IEP and, of course, continue to provide the AT.

The third possible outcome is that the student, even with the use of AT devices, is not making adequate educational progress. In this case, additional steps need to be taken to help the student. Based on knowledge the IEP team members have, they could choose to conduct equipment trials or an assistive technology evaluation to determine what equipment might benefit the student in achieving his or her goals.

The fourth possible outcome is that the IEP team does not have the skills or knowledge to help them in considering the need for assistive technology. In this situation, the IEP team needs to bring in knowledgeable support to allow them to consider the need for AT.

Finally, how does the IEP team think about what types of AT might be needed? Too often, the solution is to try the latest and most exciting assistive technology device available. Instead, IEP teams are encouraged to use an effective strategy called the SETT Framework for consideration of AT. This framework, developed by Joy Zabala EdD, calls on the team to consider the needs and strengths of the student, all of the environments that make up the educational setting where the student is expected to be involved, the tasks that are part of being involved in that environment, and then, finally, after the Student, Environments and Tasks are considered, the IEP team should be able to select tools that will support the student in achieving tasks in those environments.

(Continued on page 3)



## STAR Spotlight

Discover what activities STAR and its partners are working on around the state.

### Partner News

Assistive technologies, including devices for school-related tasks, are available for free demonstration and short-term loan from STAR's statewide device loan program. To request a loan or for more information about assistive technology, contact STAR or its partners.

**Center for Independent Living** 218.262.6675, 800.390.3681, (Hibbing): AccessNorth Center for Independent Living of Northeastern Minnesota (CILNM) offers a variety of assistive technology devices for demonstration and loan to help students meet their educational goals. One such device is the Livescribe Smartpen. The Smartpen may be helpful to students who have difficulty with notetaking. The Smartpen has the ability to record audio, such as class lectures, and can also record notes and drawings written on specially designed dot paper. Users save their handwritten notes and audio recordings on their computer and can share them via email or by uploading the files to Livescribe's website. A built-in audio jack and ear buds allow for private review of audio recordings stored on the pen. CILNM has 2 Smartpens available for 30-day loan.

**PACER Center, Simon Technology Center** 952.838.9000, 800.537.2237 (Bloomington): The Boardmaker Activity Pad is part of STAR's statewide device loan inventory and is available for checkout with a free Simon Technology Center (STC) library membership. The Boardmaker Activity Pad extends interactive activities beyond the computer so students can learn and communicate in multiple environments. Using Boardmaker or Boardmaker Plus you can create and print an activity using 20 templates and 280 sample activities. The Boardmaker Activity Pad is lightweight and portable. Each side of a vinyl SmartPocket holds two separate activities so students can choose which activities they want to use and swap them as needed. Photos and magazine pages, recorded messages, and assigned buttons may be used to customize and enhance activities. Each SmartPocket includes four minutes of recording time that can be spread over 32 buttons on each side. [Additional devices, not part of the statewide loan inventory, are also available with a paid STC library membership.]

**Ability Building Center, People Achieving Change through Technology** 507.281.6262 (Rochester): PACTT recently added an HP Slate tablet to its device demonstration and loan inventory. The HP Slate runs Windows 7 Home Premium and comes with built-in USB ports that support compatible 3rd party peripherals such as switches, keyboards, mice, headsets, and speakers. Other features include Internet access, docking station with an HDMI port for larger monitor support, digitizer pen with handwriting recognition, and SD card slot to save files or install software. The HP Slate also comes with Windows accessibility features such as On-Screen Keyboard, Magnifier, Narrator, High Contrast, Sticky Keys, Mouse Keys. The Slate does not support popular iOS apps but will run Windows compatible applications and programs.

**UCP of Minnesota/MATLN program** 651.646.7588, 877.528.5678 (Saint Paul): MATLN now has Spanish language communication systems in its statewide device loan collection. The Vantage Lite by Prentke Romich, Inc. is a bilingual device that allows users to communicate in Spanish or English. Features include one key switch between languages and Spanish word prediction dictionary. This device includes male and female voices. Spanish is spoken with an American Southwest dialect. Another Spanish language device in MATLN's collection is the DV V or DV VMax by DynaVox Technologies, Inc. The communication program contains Spanish voices and language; tools and set up menus are in English.

**UCP of Central MN** 320.253.0765, 888.616.3726 (Saint Cloud): UCP of Central Minnesota has several AAC devices in its device demonstration and loan program. In addition, UCP of Central Minnesota has an iPad with an application called Verbally (<http://www.verballyapp.com>) that is available for free download from the iTunes App store. This communication app has customizable layouts and a choice of male or female voices. Other features are core word and core phrase grids that cut in half the number of keystrokes needed to create conversational sentences.

**STARTE**  
Reusing Assistive Technology!  
[www.mnstarte.org](http://www.mnstarte.org)

## AT Consideration (continued from page 1)

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has developed a DVD featuring interviews with Dr. Zabala that shares information on the SETT Framework. These DVDs can be obtained from MDE. Please contact state AT specialist Kursten Dubbels ([kursten.dubbels@state.mn.us](mailto:kursten.dubbels@state.mn.us)) to request a copy of the DVD. Or, you can read more about Dr. Zabala and her work, including the SETT Framework at <http://joyzabala.com>.

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## State & Regional Updates

The **Simon Technology Center's** annual open house focusing on Accessible Instructional Material will be held at PACER Center on Saturday October 29th from 10 - 2. Participants, including children, teens, young adults, parents, professionals and consumers, can explore hands-on technology and talk with assistive technology vendors.

Consider a visit to the STC lending and demonstration library and meet with assistive technology specialists to discuss assistive technology options that may help you or your child. Teens and young adults will be able to explore technology to help them access high school and college materials. Registration is requested but not required. To register visit [www.pacer.org/workshops](http://www.pacer.org/workshops)

**Computers Go Round**, a program of UCP of Central Minnesota, continues to provide people with disabilities an opportunity to own their own computer with very little financial investment. The program provides access training and general PC training by request. A pilot program to provide further training to people with disabilities is in progress. Those interested in learning more are encouraged to contact UCP of Central Minnesota at [tech@ucpcentralmn.org](mailto:tech@ucpcentralmn.org).

## STAR Statistics

During the period October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010, STAR partners demonstrated a variety of devices. The percentage and types of devices demonstrated during this time period are as follows: speech communication devices (33%); devices for learning, cognition, and development (27%); computers and related devices (20%); and, devices for vision, hearing, daily living, environment, mobility and recreation sports and leisure (20%).



## Mark Your Calendar

### October

*St. Louis County Health & Human Service Conference* (October 10-11), Duluth, MN

[www.stlouiscountymn.gov/hhsconference](http://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/hhsconference)

*Closing the Gap* (October 12-14), Minneapolis, MN [www.closingthegap.com](http://www.closingthegap.com) - Note: The Exhibit Hall is open to the public at no charge on Friday, October 14, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

### November

*Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA) 2011 Chicago Conference* (November 3-5), Chicago, IL

[www.atia.org](http://www.atia.org)

*The Arc Minnesota State Convention* (November 4-5), Breezy Point in Brainerd, MN [www.arcmn.org](http://www.arcmn.org)

*Minnesota Occupational Therapist Association (MOTA) Annual Conference* (November 4-5), Minneapolis, MN

[www.motafunctionfirst.org](http://www.motafunctionfirst.org)

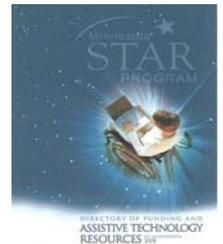


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## Stay Informed!

- Check out the online edition of STAR's Funding and Assistive Technology Directory
- Subscribe to STAR Point and receive emails on assistive technology news and events
- Subscribe to Constellations, our newsletter
- Visit our Web site [www.starprogram.state.mn.us](http://www.starprogram.state.mn.us)
- Become a registered user of STAR Technology Exchange at [www.mnstarte.org](http://www.mnstarte.org)



For more information, contact STAR by calling 651.201.2640, 888.234.1267 (toll-free) or send an email to [star.program@state.mn.us](mailto:star.program@state.mn.us). Minnesotans with a hearing or speech disability may call us through the Minnesota Relay Service at 711 or 800.627.3529.

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When you are done reading this newsletter, please share with others or recycle. Thank you!

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## All STAR materials are available in alternative formats

This document can be made available in alternative formats, such as large print, Braille, audio tape or disk by calling 651.201.2640 or 888.234.1267 (toll free). Consumers with a hearing or speech disability may call us through the Minnesota Relay Service at 711 or 800.627.3529, or by sending an email to [star.program@state.mn.us](mailto:star.program@state.mn.us).

¡FOLLETOS EN ESPAÑOL! STAR ha empezado traducir folletos en Inglés a Español. Actualmente, STAR tiene dos folletos en Español: "Directorio de Recursos de Financiamiento para Tecnología Asistiva en Minnesota" y "El Programa STAR: Un Sistema de Tecnología para Lograr Resultados."

The System of Technology to Achieve Results (STAR) program is Minnesota's Assistive Technology Act Program, located within the Minnesota Department of Administration. STAR receives funds from the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended. The contents of this newsletter are educational in nature. It should not be assumed that the identification of any product, individual, or agency implies endorsement by the State of Minnesota, STAR, or the U.S. Department of Education. This newsletter was financed with federal money.