Grant Parish School Board
Assistive Technology Policy and Procedures

I. Policy Statement

The emergence of Assistive Technology (AT) has become an integral part of the education program of students with disabilities. This importance has required School systems to meet certain requirements pertaining to Assistive Technology. This Policy and Procedures Manual attempts to guide the AT team in meeting These requirements and the AT needs of the students. In the policy are many questions and answers about AT and procedures to follow when considering AT during the IEP meeting. In addition, a set of forms is attached to assist the AT team in assuring the students receive the appropriate AT devices and services.

II. Questions and Answers Concerning Assistive Technology

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 a child with a disability.

An **assistive technology service** is any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.

Who benefits from assistive technology?

Any student with a disability from mild to severe may benefit from the use of assistive technology. There is assistive technology to help in individual with reading, writing, remembering, walking, sitting, seeing, hearing, and communicating. Any student who needs help with any of these life functions may benefit significantly from the use of assistive technology. Assistive technology has the powerful potential of impacting significantly upon a student with disabilities by contributing to his or her learning, independence, self-esteem, and quality of life.

How does a student receive assistive technology?

Depending on specific student needs this can occur:
- As part of a comprehensive evaluation
- During the IEP process (annual review)
- As an ongoing process after the IEP during the equipment trial period

What is the school district's responsibility in regard to assistive technology?

The school district is mandated by state and federal law (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) to provide assistive technology to all students with disabilities if it is required for them to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Idea requires local education agencies to ensure that assistive technology devices and/or services are made available to a student with a disability at no charge to the family of the student, if required as part of the student's special education program and/or related services or if needed for the student's access to the curriculum. Each IEP team must determine if assistive technology is needed by the student. If assistive technology is deemed necessary, it will be written into the student's Individualized Educational Program.

Does the school district have to buy the assistive technology?

The school district is required to "provide" the assistive technology. They may borrow or rent a device or seek donated funds to purchase it, in addition to school district funds. Some children receive Medical Assistance (MA) and MA may approve the purchase of some assistive technology. When MA purchases the technology, it is the property of the family.

Does the district have to send the assistive technology home?

The IEP team must decide if the assistive technology is needed at home. The law states: "On a case-by-case basis, the use of school-purchased assistive technology devices in a child's home or in other settings is required if the child's IEP team determines that the child needs access to those devices in order to receive FAPE. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1412(a)(12)(B)(i))

Who are the assistive technology team members?

Assistive technology is a broad field that encompasses a wide variety of devices from simple low-tech items to extremely complex computer based devices. It therefore crosses several disciplines, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, rehabilitation engineering, special education, and speech/language pathology. Individuals from as many of these disciplines as possible should be involved in the provision of assistive technology services. This list is not comprehensive and is intended to stimulate thought about the importance of having each discipline represented on school district teams making decisions about assistive technology and providing assistive technology services.

- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist

- Speech/Language Pathologist
- APE Teacher Special Education Teacher
- School Psychologist/Educational Diagnostician
- Parent and, when appropriate, the child
- General Education Teacher
- School District Representative

III. Procedures

All students **must** be considered for AT services as a part of their annual IEP but may be screened at any time during the school year as needs arise. There is a copy of the parish AT Consideration Form (IEP page) in the policies and procedures manual. The AT Consideration Form should be completed during the IEP meeting for every student. This form will serve as documentation that AT was considered.

If the special education teacher would like additional information about a student's AT needs prior to the IEP meeting, an AT Questionnaire Form may be completed. The Special education teacher should complete the top half of the form and give it to any teacher, aide, or service provider who has direct contact with the student during the school day. They should complete the bottom half of the form and return it to the special education teacher prior to the IEP meeting.

After the AT Consideration Form has been completed:

- Include the AT Consideration Form as page 2 of the IEP.
- If it is determined upon completion of the AT Consideration Form that additional information is necessary, complete the Referral Form and the Parent Permission Form. Send both forms to:
  Pupil Appraisal
  Attn. AT Coordinator
- The AT team will complete any necessary form and schedule an AT meeting.