



**Assistive Technology:
“Beginning of the Year” &
“End of Year” Checklists**
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There are important considerations to remember when a new school year begins or as a school year draws to an end for students with Assistive Technology.

As you start the new school year, consider a few things to start the year right with students with AT:

- ✓ Prior to the beginning of school, be sure that any equipment and software that your child needs are available in your child’s new school/classroom and working properly. If the equipment has been in storage over the summer, make sure to replace the batteries or charge the device fully. If you are unable to do this prior to September, meet with your child’s teacher or team as quickly as possible to get the equipment ready for use in the classroom.
- ✓ It is important that common and realistic expectations are established early on. Parents and teachers should review the student’s IEP and past AT use/performance to determine how the technology and strategies previously used will integrate into the new classroom and tasks. It is also critical to insure that the hardware and software required by the student are compatible in the new educational setting and everyone knows how and when the equipment will be used.
- ✓ Identify a “go to” person to contact with any technology questions or concerns. This is important to do **BEFORE** something happens. Keep the devices, manuals and chargers together in a safe and accessible place.
- ✓ If you are unsure how to use any assistive technology device, seek out help. Begin with the student. If you need further assistance and the manual just isn’t helping, contact the company directly. In many cases, last year’s teachers and therapists may be available to help you. Specific or advanced training for the student, support staff and family can be written into the IEP as needed.
- ✓ For most children with learning differences, it helps to begin the year **ORGANIZED!** Help your child or student pick out backpacks/binders/agendas/calendars that can support their specific needs.

As the school year draws to an end, take time to insure that students and their AT devices transition to the next setting:

- ✓ Review next year’s environment, tasks and goals to determine if the assistive technology device is still appropriate for meeting the student’s needs. Check computer access in the new environment to be sure they are compatible with the student’s needs.
- ✓ Collect and pass along the technology device, materials and information (including manuals and charger), customized accessories, names of trained users, and technical support contacts with phone numbers, etc. to the receiving staff.
- ✓ Document the student’s use of AT, his/her level of independence, successfully used strategies, ideas for improved use, barriers that need to be addressed, etc.
- ✓ Be sure the receiving teacher has information about the student’s use of AT. Consider an end of year visit so that the receiving teacher can observe the student using the assistive technology in the classroom.
- ✓ Send out the device for routine maintenance, cleaning, repair or upgrade over the summer so it is working and ready to go in September. Make sure the appropriate department knows it is being returned over the summer so they are expecting it. Renew any maintenance plans, if necessary.
- ✓ Store the device properly over the summer (batteries removed) with instructions as to who should get the device in September. Remember most devices will need a 24-hour charge prior to use in September.
- ✓ Plan for training over the summer or provide access to the device over the summer to maintain or improve a student’s competency. Provide training for the receiving educational or therapeutic staff or plan for early September so they are comfortable with their knowledge of and competency with the device and strategies for use.
- ✓ Make sure that both parents and staff have the same understanding of the summer plan as well as the expectations for the fall, and that each knows who is accountable for the device and the summer plan.

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