



Assistive Technology (AT) Forward December Update

Greetings Assistive Technology (AT) Forward Community of Practice Members! The AT Forward Update is a monthly publication, which provides information about the AT Forward Project, highlights the upcoming AT Forward Community of Practice (CoP) meetings, and includes additional AT resources and tips. We are now over 550 participants strong and growing.

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Exciting News: Introducing Micro-Credentials for Assistive Technology!

The Assistive Technology (AT) Forward is excited to provide free supported micro-credentials and macro-credentials assistive technology learning opportunities for the 2021-22 school year. Micro-credentialing is an opportunity for educators to learn on their own time, pace, and place. Through this process, you can earn a total of twelve badges for each completed micro-credentials. If you earn seven badges, you will qualify for a macro-

credential. The courses are self-paced and coaching support sessions are available to provide guidance and to answer questions. There are many topics from which you can choose and customize your own learning, including assessment, AAC, vision, transition, etc. If you would like to register for a micro-credential learning opportunity and join an AT learning community from across the state, please visit the [AT Forward Micro-Credentials Home Page](#).

Congratulations to Ann Barry!!!

Ann was the first person in the state to earn a Micro Credential. Here is what Ann has to say about the Micro Credentials. "I have been working for Racine Unified for about 40 years and my initial training on AT was all through WATI. I was part of 100 people from across the state who participated. When this opportunity came up, I thought how nice it would be to have my AT skills developed even further. The Micro Credential idea was very appealing to me. The topics are of high interest, and it is nice to get credit for the work. Thank you so much." Ann Barry

December CoP meetings

There will be two Community of Practice meetings in December:

December 1, 2021: [Behavior as Communication](#)

This one-hour session will focus on how students may utilize behavior in order to communicate wants and needs. Examples of behaviors demonstrated when students are struggling will be discussed and presenters will share resources for responding to student behaviors.

December 16, 2021: [Universal Design for Learning: Using Technology that Promotes Student Engagement for All](#)

Presenters will use the UDL framework to identify and demonstrate how technology can be used to engage all learners.

For the complete 2021-22 CoP meeting schedule, please scroll to the end of this document.

What is the Quality Indicator Spotlight for December?

Each month will highlight a Quality Indicator for Assistive Technology, which can easily be utilized to provide training for district staff. For December, the spotlight is [Indicator 8 AT Professional Development](#)

“This area defines the critical elements of quality professional development and training in assistive technology. Assistive technology professional development and training efforts should arise out of an ongoing, well-defined, sequential and comprehensive plan.”

Common Errors (QIAT)

1. The educational agency does not have a comprehensive plan for ongoing AT professional development and training.
2. The educational agency’s plan for professional development and training is not based on AT needs assessment and goals.
3. Outcomes for professional development are not clearly defined and effectiveness is not measured in terms of practice and student performance.
4. A continuum of ongoing professional development and training is not available.
5. Professional development and training focus on the tools and not the process related to determining student needs and integrating technology into the curriculum.
6. Professional development and training is provided for special educators but not for administrators, general educators and instructional technology staff.

Family Connections

Holidays can be very special for families, but they can also be very stressful for families who have children or adults that cannot access toys or other items right out of the box. A few suggestions for families are:

Look for toys that can be plugged to electricity then use a product like [Powerlink](#) from Albenet. By purchasing a switch and a Powerlink, multiple toys can be plugged in use without further adaptations.

Looking for help to switch adapted a toy? Try [RePlay For Kids](#) and look at their [tip sheets](#).

What is the Assessing Student’s Needs for Assistive Technology ([ASNAT](#))?

ASNAT is the acronym for the manual and process of assessment in the area of Assistive Technology. If your school district would benefit from a step-by-step AT assessment guide, this is the manual for you. This [link](#) will take you to the entire manual, but we suggest that you break it down into manageable sections. This month we will look at [Chapters 10 AT for Recreation and Leisure](#). “If, as Aristotle said, “The quality of life is determined by its activities,” then finding meaningful avenues for recreation and leisure is

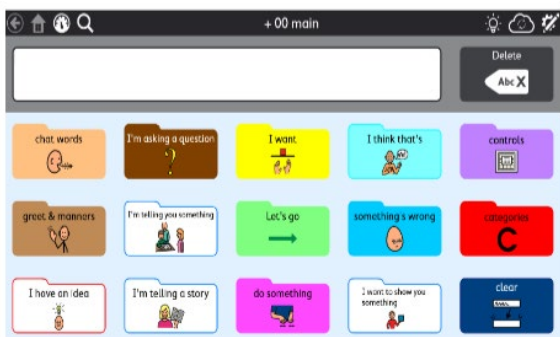
a key part of working toward the best life outcomes for students with disabilities.” As we enter into the holiday season it is important to think about access to all activities for everyone. Everyone deserves and needs to be a part of the process, from cooking to decorating to playing. Chapter 10 takes a closer look at “life” for individuals with disabilities. An interesting statistic in this chapter states that “ Not surprisingly, a 2004 National Organization on Disability survey found that people with disabilities were 27% less satisfied with life than those without disabilities.” Life needs to be more than access to computers and academic learning. Everyone needs to have hobbies and interests.



The [Assistive Technology Lending Center \(ATLC\)](#) is a lending library of high-end Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) equipment for trial purposes. [Please follow this link for more information](#) and registration. This month we are highlighting the [SC Tablet from Tobii Dynavox](#).

The SC Tablet is an iPad-based speech generating device. The tablet can be mounted on a wheelchair. It has powerful speakers and a durable protective case. A nice thing about the SC Table is that an iPad, which can be a comfortable device for parents and students. Additional AT can be added to the device like keyguards and switch ports.

A variety of language apps can be added to the SC Tablet including PODD. PODD stands for Pramtiac Organized Dynamic Display by Gayle Porter. PODD allows nonverbal individuals to use vocabulary that is organized into categories. PODD, like many other AAC products can be expanded as the learner becomes more and more efficient as a communicator.



To assist you with learning the Tobii Dynavox Products, check out their [Learning Hub](#) for on demand webinars. Webinars range from assistance in funding to implementation strategies.

Where can I turn if I have an Assistive Technology question?

The [QIAT Community](#) is a free AT resource, which includes a searchable question and answer support tool. If you are interested in learning about support, you can subscribe [here](#).

Recently someone wrote in and asked “I have an elementary school student who is currently having difficulty accurately clicking on items on his Chromebook. He has CP and is doing well with typing and using Sticky Keys but has difficulty accurately clicking on small icons. His teacher had asked if there was a way to make the icons in the toolbar bigger in Google Docs without making the entire screen bigger. Pinch to zoom doesn't work well for him because he has limited control in his hands. Any suggestions for a way to make icons larger in his Google Docs Toolbar?”

Responses from the group...

“The only info I found on this was to change the screen resolution cntrl+shift+'+/-" increase or decrease screen resolution (pressing three buttons at the same time is hard for many people, add some motor control struggles and it's a daunting task).”

“For my students with visual impairments who were using a Windows 10 device, I taught them to use the lens (as opposed to full page) magnification in Ease of Access. We adjusted the size of the lens to fit the Google docs ribbon. You can also invert the color within the lens so that really helps as well! Of course, magnification within the lens can be adjusted up or down as well”

“For a chrome book, go to the Google Chrome settings and you can customize the font size, style and zoom. This does help enlarge SOME of the icons. The Control +/- will enlarge them further.”

“To increase the toolbar size in Google Docs/ Chrome browser on a Chromebook, without increasing the Zoom:

Try pressing Ctrl/Shift/+ to increase the Chromebook Resolution size, enlarging the toolbar,

then press Ctrl/- to decrease the Zoom in Chrome browser window, to decrease to the needed size.

Attaching a large external touchscreen monitor to the Chromebook would enable one to further enlarge the Resolution while still being able to shrink the Zoom as much as needed.

Here is a little more display information:

"Resolution" Display Size for Chromebook:

Change Display size in Settings. (System Menu *Click the Time in lower right* > Settings > Displays)

Or, use a keyboard shortcut to adjust Resolution

Keyboard shortcuts

Ctrl+Shift++ (enlarge resolution)

Ctrl+Shift+- (reduce size of resolution)

Ctrl+Shift+0 (restore default resolution level)

"Zooming" or Enlarging in the Chrome Browser:

1. Keyboard shortcuts

Ctrl++ (zoom in)

Ctrl+- (zoom out)

Ctrl+0 (restore default zoom level)

2. Go to "More" (a.k.a. "Customize and Control") then click + to zoom the browser

3. Touchscreen Pinch gestures - fingers apart and together

4. Trackpad pinch gestures - fingers apart and pinch together

5. Ctrl/Alt/trackpad pinch gestures

Font Size (More > Settings > Appearance > Font Size)

Font Size Select

Mouse Size (System Menu > Settings > Advanced > Accessibility > Manage > Mouse and touchpad)

Show large mouse cursor

Highlight mouse cursor when moving

Open mouse and touchpad device settings (Adjust Touchpad Speed)”

Article Suggestions



Sometimes all we need to do is start a conversation! Take a minute to read about Kira. [Kira is a student at Howard-Suamico School District \(HSSD\)](#). Kira has Rett Syndrome and she is a member of the high school band. Read the article and start a conversation about inclusion and assistive technology! Scroll down the HSSD page and click on load more to find the article on Kira.

Presenter for this Webinar Series:

KELLY FONNER, M.S.
Educational & Assistive Technology Consultant

With Thanks to Colleagues:
Kirk Behrke: <https://kirkatp.weebly.com/home>
Mike Cole: <https://www.useyourwordsspeech.com>
Mike Marotta: <https://mmatp.com>
Scott Marfilus: <https://www.scottmarfilus.com>

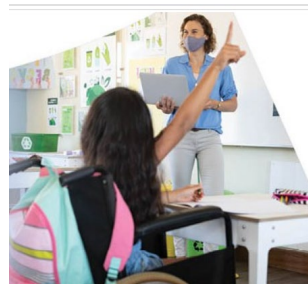
The resource of the month is the feature matching in AAC. During a recent CoP meeting Kelly Fonner offered this resource to all. [Feature Match Webinar Series](#). On Kelly's YouTube channel she offers series of 5 webinars that deal with finding the correct features for your students' needs. The series looks at AAC device feature match, as well as sorting through word prediction, reading supports, and a general overview of what is feature matching. When assessing a student it is essential to look at the features of tools and not just a specific tool to reduced tool abandonment and student frustration.

Additional AAC Links

The weather outside might look like winter, but we can always be thinking about Summer, and with summer comes summer camps! **Summer Camp Opportunity at UW-Whitewater for Students who use Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and Their Families**

UW-Whitewater is accepting applications for their Chatter Matters summer camp for kids who use AAC and their families. Through partnerships with a variety of children's charities in Wisconsin, up to 15 WI families will be able to receive scholarships to attend camp (an AAC user and up to two additional family members). For additional details, review the [flyer about this summer camp opportunity for students who use AAC](#).

Looking for more information on AAC? Try Mike Hipple AAC Network on [Facebook](#). Recently Mike shared his perspective on AAC in an article titled, "[PrAACtical Perspectives: AAC and Special Education](#)," which was posted on PrAACtical. In the article, Mike raises a great point about stating that, "There are many false facts about the augmentative alternative communication community that may interfere with students getting what they need. One AAC false fact that always bugs me as an AAC communicator is all AAC Communicators have a cognitive disability. Mmm, this couldn't be more wrong. Yes, some do but there is a large number like me that do not. Google says 5.7% of students in public schools during the 2018-19 school year had a cognitive disability. Sadly, when doing research for this paper, I couldn't find the percentage of students who use AAC in public schools."



[December 3rd is National Disability Awareness Day](#)

Sometimes all we need to do is start a conversation....

"International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3 is a day to help everyone become more compassionate and understanding of the challenges faced by people with disabilities. The day doesn't discriminate between mental and physical disabilities, and the

spirit of the day is to ensure that all people in the world have equal opportunities for work, play, health, and success.”

["On this International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#), I call on the entire international community to mobilize so that persons with disabilities may actively contribute to the response to the crisis and to the generation of new possibilities."

– Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities

Where can I find additional Assistive Technology resources?

If you are looking for general Assistive Technology information, please refer to the resources found on the [DPI Website](#).

What is the AT Forward?

The [Assistive Technology \(AT\) Forward Project](#) works with educators, practitioners, caregivers, and families to increase student autonomy in utilizing Assistive Technology tools to support access, engagement, and progress in learning. The Assistive Technology (AT) Forward provides a statewide Community of Practice (CoP), and by joining this CoP, members can attend [AT Forward CoP meetings](#), learn from experts in the field of AT, participate in micro-credential learning opportunities, and receive monthly email updates with AT information and resources. From AT beginner to expert, the AT Forward CoP welcomes all knowledge level backgrounds to [join the AT Forward CoP!](#)

Where can I find additional information about upcoming AT Forward CoP Meetings?
For additional AT CoP meeting registration information, links to last year’s AT Forward CoP presentations, and for a preview of the 2021-22 meetings, please visit our [AT Forward website](#). All AT Forward meetings will be held in a virtual format and will run from 4:00p.m.-5:00p.m. on their respective dates. In addition, all of the meetings will be recorded and published on the [AT Forward website](#).

Upcoming AT Forward CoP Meetings:

December 1, 2021: Behavior as Communication

December 16, 2021: Universal Design for Learning: Using Technology that Promotes Student Engagement for All

January 10, 2022: AT in the IEP: Using Data to Document Assistive Technology

January 18, 2022: How to Determine the Need for Technology Versus the Benefit

February 2, 2022: Accessing Grade Level Content

February 17, 2022: Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) Resources: Accessible Electronic Texts for Students with Visual Impairments or Print Disabilities

March 7, 2022: Low and No Cost Resources to Support Assistive Technology

April 26, 2022: Finding Tools to Fit the Needs of Today's Students

May 11, 2022: Non-Academic Activities: Engaging Students in Social and Leisure Activities

May 19, 2022: Supporting Students with Medical Complexities

Let's move AT Forward together this year!

If you have any questions or comments about the AT Forward Project, please contact Kathy White at Kathy.White@CESA2.org or Stacy Duffy at stacy.duffy@cesa2.org.