



Greetings Assistive Technology (AT) Forward Community of Practice Members.

Wishing you a month of learning and sharing information with students, families, educators, and community organizations during autism awareness month.

Spring is officially here and the end of the school year is in sight. Now is a great time to think about transitional services your student might need. For example, is your student going on to a different level of schooling (middle, high or beyond public school)? If so, who needs to know what technology the student is using? Take a minute and write down the assistive technology your student has used and think about including links to vendors. Are there textbooks or novels that need to be ordered for next year or summer school to make sure things arrive in a timely manner, e.g. [Accessible Educational Materials](#) (AEM)?

Springtime is also a great time to progress monitor any technology your student has been using to assist with getting ready for ESY (Extended School Year) services. If you need progress monitoring ideas see [AEM #4 on Progress Monitoring](#).

Below is the April Update for the [Wisconsin Assistive Technology \(AT\) Forward Project](#).

Through exciting learning opportunities, the AT Forward Project continues to move Wisconsin forward in the area of Assistive Technology!

New to AT Forward or Want to Browse Past Email Updates?

Go to the Wisconsin DPI [AT Forward webpage](#) and click on [Previous AT Forward Monthly Updates](#).

What is 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 AT Forward Project provides a variety of resources and learning opportunities, including [Community of Practice \(CoP\) meetings](#), [micro-credentialing](#), and monthly email updates. Please help us grow our AT community in Wisconsin and refer others to the [AT Forward CoP](#), by visiting the [AT Forward Registration page](#).

From AT beginner to expert, the AT Forward CoP welcomes all knowledge level backgrounds!

Table of Contents

[Reminder AT Lending Center Survey](#)

[Assistive Technology Professional Learning Events](#)

[Micro-Credentials](#)

[Resource Suggestions](#)

[Sometimes All We Need To Do Is Start A Conversation....](#)

[AAC Corner](#)

[QIAT question](#)

[What is a feature match? Feature Match- Executive Functioning](#)

Reminder: AT Lending Center Survey

Wisconsin DPI is finalizing an additional investment into the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Lending Center to purchase additional low and mid-tech assistive technology (AT) equipment. This investment can address any type of AT need (e.g. communication, physical, social and emotional, etc). DPI and AT Forward would like your input on how you think this funding should be used (i.e. what equipment to purchase for the lending center). The Assistive Technology Lending Center (ATLC) is a lending library that currently only includes high-end Alternative and Augmentative Communication(AAC) equipment for trial purposes. The ATLC provides these high-end AAC devices costing \$4000.00 or more for loan to Wisconsin LEA public school licensed professional educators for trial with children ages 3 to 18 who have IEPs and are enrolled in public schools or students age 19-21 who are enrolled in a Wisconsin LEA school program and have an IEP.

For more information about AT Lending Centers including information on the Wisconsin ATLC and a statewide lending center resource map= go to the Wisconsin DPI [AT Lending Centers webpage](#). Thank you for helping us think about what types of low and mid-tech AT equipment could enhance the ATLC.

Please take this survey by April 15.

[Link to ATLC Survey](#)

Assistive Technology Professional Learning Events

Upcoming Assistive Technology CoP Meetings

Please mark your calendars for the upcoming AT Forward CoP meetings:

April 18th, 2023, 4:00pm-5:00pm [AT Assessment—Where Do I Start?](#)

This session will be presented by Dr. Penny Reed. This session will present a team-based system for completing an assistive technology assessment. It will begin with a brief overview of the laws related to the provision of assistive technology assessments in schools and best practice implementing them. The session will also include the explanation of an AT assessment process accompanied by easy to follow forms. It is not required, but this session will benefit potential or existing AT Teams.

April 26th, 2023, 4:00pm-5:00pm [AT and Postsecondary Education: University of Wisconsin-McBurney Disability Resource Center](#) presented by Gwynette Hall.

Have you wondered about what assistive/adaptive technology resources are available at the postsecondary education level? Join Gwynette Hall and Todd Schwanke from the University of Wisconsin-Madison-McBurney Disability Resource Center for this session. The session will include information on how IEP teams can help support the transition from high school to postsecondary education, including what assistive/adaptive technology may look like at the university/postsecondary level and how it is different from secondary education.

May 11, 2023, 4:00pm-5:00pm [An Introduction to DPI's AT Guidance Resource](#) presented by Anna Cliff OTR.

Join us to learn about the upcoming AT Guidance to be published by the Wisconsin Department of Instruction (DPI). Wisconsin DPI is developing additional resources to help assess and math AT needs to individual learners, document AT in the IEP, and systems for implementing assistive technology.

Other AT Professional Learning Events

If you know of a learning event, please share it with others by emailing Kathy White at kathy.white@CESA2.org with the details.

[ECHO](#)® ([Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes](#)) will hold sessions on the following dates: April 5th and May 3rd.

The sessions will be from 3:30pm - 5:00pm. The April 5th session is called "From School to Home." Ways to include ALL!"

This presentation will look at ways to assist families, people in the community and ALL school personnel in learning how to support an AAC learner. We will discuss ways in which a school system can leverage their time and resources to help everyone.

The **Waisman Center** is excited to announce a professional learning opportunity for early childhood professionals on including learners with disabilities in early childhood programs. [This 5-session ECHO series](#) will be offered in April of 2023. The sessions will be for early childhood teachers, administrators, paraeducators, and specialists who want to enhance their understanding of inclusive practices.

Project ECHO® is a lifelong learning and guided practice model that is designed to build capacity of individuals around the state to provide evidence-based services. The heart of the [ECHO](#) model is its hub-and-spoke knowledge-sharing networks. Hub teams (specialists and family members) and spokes (ECHO participants) create knowledge-sharing networks in a learning loop.

[5 Day PODD Training - Pragmatic Organization Dynamic Display](#)

June 26-30th in Chicago Illinois with Gayle Porter! If you have completed a 2 or 3 day PODD training you are eligible to attend this training. Gayle Porter does not often get to the United States so don't miss this great opportunity for training!

Micro-Credentials

The AT Forward is excited to provide free supported micro-credentials and macro-credentials for assistive technology learning opportunities. Micro-credentialing is an opportunity for educators to learn on their own time, pace, and place. Learning is structured in an online platform and is supported with email and video conference communication to enable clarity and success. As participants complete their micro-credentials, they receive feedback to assist in clarifying their goals and earn a digital badge. Digital badges can be added to your email signature to show others your commitment to assistive technology. For the 2022-23 school year, we are excited to announce new learning opportunities around Accessible Educational Materials (AEM), Early Childhood, and AT for Administrators .

Micro Credential Status

We are pleased to announce the following celebrations:

231 badges have been awarded to date.

24% of the badges earned have been in the area of independent living.

Congratulations to the following people who have earned one or more micro-credentials in Assistive Technology:

Abigail Bauer School District of Milton 3 badges

Sarah Kraus Fond du Lac School District 1 badge
Kim Bell Clinton Community School District 1 badge
Angela Van Heesch Hartford JT1 School District 2 badges
Tiffany Hacker Manitowoc School District 2 badges
Mysie Sabin Muskego Norway School District 5 badges
Marie Yakes Milton School District 6 badges
Terri Oliver Milton School District 11 badges
Frank Devereaux CESA 2 1 badge
RoxAnne Monk Clinton Community School District 1 badge
Courtney Dorner University of Wisconsin- Oshkosh 2 badges
Leanne Ludwig Waterford Union High School 1 badge
Jeremy Trautlein Eau Claire Area School District 2 badges

Resource Suggestions For Families

Assistive Technology can be very expensive and often families carry a great deal of that burden. In the state of Wisconsin there are a few programs designed to assist families with monetary loans.

- [WisLoan](#)
- [Wisconsin Caregiver](#)
- This is for hearing aids only [Financial Assistance for Hearing Aids and Hearing Assistive Technology for Adults who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf-Blind](#)
- The [WISHES](#) program through UW-Madison and partially supported by WisTech can provide hearing aids for youth ages 0-18 on a temporary basis while awaiting coverage to obtain their own.
- The Affordable Connectivity Program for the FCC assists families who are financially eligible, with the cost of broadband internet services. [FCC ACP Program.](#)

Sometimes All We Need To Do Is Start A Conversation....

In April this year there are many opportunities to start a conversation around various disability areas. Just take a minute or two and click on one of the bullets below. By exploring a disability area we can all work towards understanding the barriers and then work towards creating a more inclusive society. Support and advocacy start with understanding and open conversations.

- [World Autism Awareness Day](#) – April 2
- [World Bohring-Opitz Syndrome Awareness Day](#) – April 6
- [Cushing's Disease Awareness Day](#) – April 8

- [World Parkinson's Day \(UK\)](#) – April 11
- [Parkinson's Awareness Month](#) – April
- [Autism Acceptance Month](#) – April

AAC Corner

As a reminder, the Assistive Technology Lending Center(ATLC) library website has been changed to <https://wisconsinat4all.com/>. After you are registered, login and click on Speech Communication; the program field should fill in as ATLC. All devices will show up or you can search for a specific device. If you have any questions, please contact Donna Hudson at CESA 2 donna.hutson@cesa2.org or call 262.473.1449.

AAC

A student may spend 8 hours a day at school, but the other 16 hours are spent at home or in the community. So how can we as professionals assist families in learning how to use an AAC device in the home and school? Here is one simple piece of practical advice.

Encourage families to have extra batteries for their device and a regular charging schedule. Nothing is more frustrating for a student who uses AAC than to have a device that is not charged. We don't want students to lose out on communication exchanges so look for times during the day when the device could be plugged in such as during a table activity where an outlet is available. Having a set place in the home for charging is essential to making it a habit (like just before bed time). As a school, think about having a few extra chargers available in a lending library. Parents are busy being parents and packing up a child with special needs requires a lot of work. Keeping an extra charger in the child's backpack can be one less thing that requires extra thought Monday through Friday. To assist a student with this responsibility, think about creating a visual checklist to provide a cognitive scaffold for daily readiness of their AAC device.

QIAT Question

Have you ever wished there was a place where you could ask a question and get real people who use technology to answer you? Then Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology (qiat.org) is the place for you! QIAT is a nationwide organization of parents, users, and professionals in the field of Assistive Technology. It is a free to join organization that is always accepting new members.

Question: "Hello QIAT team!

"I am looking for any information on the Ipad. Benefits of learning with IPad."

QIAT community, help me out!

Answers from the group:

- The iPad has many accessibility features. It can be used relatively easily with Braille displays, switches, etc, and can be useful for people with hearing issues. Also the gestures can be transferable to iPhones.
- The accessibility features can be found on [Apple's User Guide](#):
- The British education thought leader, Daisy Christodoulous, wrote a really interesting book called "Teachers vs Tech? The case for an ed tech revolution." It is not specific to iPads, but it's a very thoughtful exploration of good teaching, and the role of mobile technology in improving teaching, learning, and assessment.
- For more on iPads specific with AT, I recommend [Chris Bugaj's book, "The New AT: Make Learning Awesome for All!"](#)
- [Joan Green's book](#), "Assistive Technology in Special Education: Resources to Support Literacy, Communication, and Learning Differences"

What is a Feature Match?

Feature matching occurs when you look systematically at what a student needs and the features of various programs. Below is an example of feature matching as it relates to students who display difficulties in the area of executive functioning.

When completing an evaluation, it is important to look at the student's disability-related educational needs. To further assist with this process, explore this resource on the DPI site that looks at the six areas of academic and functional skill. "Specifically, they are intended to serve as a guide for developing, reflecting on, and organizing developmentally and educationally relevant questions when planning and conducting a comprehensive special education evaluation aimed at accurately identifying a student's pattern of strengths and disability-related needs." *Comprehensive Special Education Evaluation: Six Areas of Academic and Functional Skill* | Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (2022). Dpi.Wi.Gov. <https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/ccr-ieps/comp-eval/six-areas>

When conducting an IEP and having the conversation about "whether the student needs assistive technology services or devices," consider the following questions.

Area of Student Concern- Executive Functioning	Potential Solution Feature Match
Are there accessible supports in place to manage larger tasks like research papers or other large projects?	Consider programs such as graphic organizers or outlining programs Get Ready, Do, Done! by Sarah Ward
Are there accessible supports in place to assist with managing time or time related concepts?	Consider items such as Visual Timer Smart Watch Low tech reminders like adding sticky notes to a students desk area to warn about upcoming schedule changes or events like fire drills
Are there accessible supports in place to assist with self management - like anger, stress or emotional regulation?	Consider a self checklist or program such as <i>How does your Engine Run</i> Social Stories Video Modeling Apps like Calm , or Go Noodle
Are there accessible supports in place to help the student follow a schedule?	Consider Google Calendar Check In and out system with an adult Smart tech like Alexis Reminders or Smart Watch Reminders Visual or Picture Schedule First Then App or board Setting alarms on iPads
Are there accessible supports in place to assist with listening and taking notes?	Consider outlines, teacher or peer student created notes Using the camera feature on a phone or Ipad to take pictures of the board Livescribe Pens
Are there accessible supports in place to assist with elapsed time?	Consider a stop watch so the student can “see” time elapsing Time Timers or visual timers /apps

Are there accessible supports in place to keep papers organized ?	Consider keeping things digital Teach the student to use a system like Google Drive or Keep
Are there accessible supports in place to assist with following verbal multiple step directions?	Consider written directions and / or an auditory text to speech program that read written directions Picture directions (LessonPix)
Are there accessible supports in place to assist with writing in an organized manner?	Consider outlines or graphic organizers

Potential resources/suggestions to assist students with Executive Functioning Skills
Outline programs like the one in [Snap&Read](#), or [Inspiration 10](#)

- [Visual Timers](#)
- [How to use Google Calendar with Students](#)
- [First Then App](#)

If you are looking for more information on Executive Functioning, take a look at the following free resources. These resources were brought to us by Paige Buckingham who recently presented to our Community of Practice on the subject of Executive Functioning.

- [EF works library](#) The Executive Skills Profile- free
- Based on Dawson and Guare information
- [ADDitude](#)- Free checklist with your email address
- [BiLinguistics](#)- Free Checklist for different levels

[Cognitive Connections](#) has many free resources to help teachers in the area of Executive Functioning. Their site has articles, examples, worksheets, tips and tricks, and more.

Together we can move AT Forward!!

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.