



Assistive Technology (AT) Libraries – Organizing, Inventory, and Repair

Budgeting for AT inventory

Giving special educators increased access to a variety of technology is a good way to help them make decisions about AT. Access allows educators to try AT with students, promotes learning, and makes it easier for students to gain AT. This is an important part of the consideration process. Different school programs will have different technology needs, so it is important to have input from a variety of staff regarding the AT selection. Important first steps include having a regular yearly budget for AT, and allocating adequate staff time to manage it.

Leveraging external lending resources

Budget constraints may limit the amount and quality of a district's AT inventory. Check for available local and state resources to expand the ability to get technology into the hands of educators and students. Every state has an AT program that provides funding for technology loans, demonstration, training, and more. Find your state program here <https://www.at3center.net/stateprogram>. In addition, consider national programs such as PACER Center's Simon Technology Center [PACER.org/stc](https://www.pacer.org/stc). Memberships are available for families, consumers, professionals, and organizations, both in Minnesota and nationally.

Organizing and advertising AT inventory

Once a district has committed to maintaining an AT library, the next step is developing policies including who will maintain the inventory and handle ordering, returns, repairs, etc. Communicating the availability of this inventory to staff is also important. Consider advertising the AT library during staff development, including information in staff newsletters, and putting information about the inventory in the school's AT policy. It is key that staff know the location and availability of AT, and the protocols for using it.

Utilizing professional retirees as volunteers

Retired professionals (engineers, information technology consultants, electricians, etc.) make great volunteers to wire, make switches, and do repairs. Consider using volunteers to help with building and maintaining the AT inventory and initiatives. Many retirees would enjoy the opportunity to use their skills in helping students build with 3D printers, make and wire switches, rewire children's cars for mobility projects, or to repair a district or school's AT.

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