"CONSIDERING AT IN THE IEP" WEBINAR

~ SEPTEMBER 26, 2012 ~

LIZ PERSAUD: ... or the Tools For Life program.

I've got the time at 2 o'clock, and that's our

starting time. So we're going to go ahead and get started.

We know that your time is precious, and we truly

appreciate you taking time out of your busy schedules --

because we know that we've all got a lot going on these

days, a lot of great things -- to join us on today's

webinar.

We have a great presentation lined up today, a very

focused topic that is focused on Considering Assistive

Technology in the IEP.

But before we get started, I wanted to go over a

few housekeeping rules and go over a few tools on the

webinar system just so all of you are familiar with it.

So over on the left-hand side we have the attendee

list. We've got the section for host, presenters, and for

participants. And underneath the participant list is

everyone that signed up today so you can see as folks are

joining us and as they are logging onto the system.

Over in the middle we've got the chat area where

our director, Carolyn Phillips, has welcomed everyone.

And I see that somebody said that they're not able

to hear. Can anyone just type in that they can hear me?

We just want to do a quick sound check and make sure that

everything is working well.

But you'll see that folks will hopefully be able to

respond -- wonderful. Thanks for responding, folks --

right there in the middle chat area. And that's a great

way to interact with us throughout the webinar today.

So you'll just type in your information, hit

"Enter," and it will pop up publically. So throughout the

webinar, if you have any comments or questions, that's a

wonderful way to interact with us today.

Over on the left-hand side is the presentation. So

we want to let you know that that's where it is. Hopefully

you can see it. And we'll be flipping through the slides

right over there on the left-hand side.

I also wanted to let folks know that we are

offering credits for today's webinar. We are offering CEUs

and CRCs specifically.

So the CEUs are administered through Georgia Tech

Professional Education. And CRCs are administered through

the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.

So in order for you to receive your credits, what I

need each of you to do is to send me an e-mail with your

name, your organization, your address, your date of birth,

and your e-mail address to my e-mail, which is

liz@gatfl.org.

And if you could also put in there the title of the

webinar and the date. I know many of you attend multiple

webinar sessions, and we conduct many different webinars.

So if you could just specify which webinar it is, send me

all of your contact information.

If you need CEUs, please definitely add your date

of birth. And that's so Georgia Tech can include you in

their database, and you're lined up to smoothly receive all

of your credits from that point forward.

So again, just send me your information if you need

credits.

I also wanted to let folks know that, at the end of

the webinar today -- and I'll put this link up towards the

end as well -- that we have an evaluation that we would

love for you to fill out.

We administer this evaluation through SurveyMonkey.

It's about five minutes or less. It's pretty brief. And

it just asks some basic information in regards to today's

webinar.

And we really appreciate those of you who have

filled this out in the past. This really helps us, as

we're organizing our training sessions and our webinars, to

know what topics that y'all want to hear.

And today's webinar, actually focused on AT in the

IEP, is one of those webinars that y'all wanted to hear.

So we're happy to be able to produce that today for you.

And again, I'll be putting this link up at the end

of today's webinar, at the end of today's session.

I also wanted to let you know that Kimberly Griffin

is on with us today.

Hello to Kimberly.

She's our transcriptionist. She is recording

today's webinar. And this webinar will be archived and

posted on the Tools For Life website on the webinar page.

So here is the link that you would just follow.

You can also just hop onto the Tools For Life website,

click on "Webinars," and you'll be able to see a history of

webinars that have been posted.

This recording will be up. This presentation will

be up. And if you give us about two to four weeks, we will

also have the written transcription up as well.

So, yes, thank you Kimberly for all your hard work

and for helping us. You continue to make our training and

our webinars truly accessible.

So please know that this will be up on the website

very soon. And also today's PowerPoint is already up there

as well too.

So I just wanted to delve into a little bit more

about the Tools For Life program. I see lots of familiar

faces, names up on the webinar today as well.

But for those of you who haven't accessed our

resources in a while or just need a refresher or are new to

the program and to our webinars, I just wanted to give a

brief, brief intro of the Tools For Life program.

So Tools For Life is Georgia's Assistive Technology

Act program. Every state in the country as well as the

territories has an Assistive Technology Act program.

They're known by many different names throughout the

country. But Tools For Life is what we're called here in

Georgia.

And we developed Georgia's plan for assistive

technology. And we did that from all of y'all from the

community and our peers helping us out.

We just wrapped up a series of town hall meetings

in Georgia. And we're actually going to be doing a few

more and looking also at doing a virtual town hall meeting.

But we traveled to Atlanta. We were in Cobb

County. We were in Augusta and also just wrapped up one in

Macon.

And overall we had over 200 people attend. And

those are just folks in the community that were served by

Tools For Life, that were peers with us, peer programs that

are our community partners. And they gave us information

on what we're doing well and what needs to be improved.

And we're happy to say that we combined with the

statewide Independent Living Council to go out and do the

tour of these town hall meetings.

And again, if you want more information, it's up on

our website. We're going to be posting some video about

that soon, getting the presentations up there as well.

But collectively I just wanted to let y'all know

that we listened to what our folks in Georgia really want

to hear from Tools For Life and definitely take that into

consideration when we're implementing all of our statewide

activities.

So we serve individuals of all ages and all

disabilities in Georgia. We're a statewide program. And

we directly interact with over 50,000 individuals through

our various activities annually throughout the year.

And the way we do this is through the Tools For

Life network. And that's through our Assistive Technology

Resource Centers that have lending libraries. So ways that

you can come into our centers, get equipment, borrow it for

a while, make sure it works in the setting that you're

interested in; and then get information on training,

demonstrations and how you can actually acquire that

equipment.

Our programs also focus on AT reuse. So we

definitely are interested in the environment and ways to

save money and ways to maximize all of that. So how can we

get equipment that somebody has, they no longer need

sanitize it, get it refurbished, and prepare it for

somebody who could benefit from it at a very minimal if not

free cost?

And then we also focus on funding, education,

assistance and resources.

This is just a screen shot of the homepage of the

Tools For Life website. So just wanted to give that to

y'all so you can become familiar with it.

But we've got a lot of great resources on there: a

learning disabilities guide; Dollars & Sense, which is a

funding guide; information on reuse; all of our webinars.

And then we have a great database that's focused on

apps for "i" devices and Android devices. It's called "Our

Favorite Apps," and it's a great way to find more

information on apps that work well for folks of all

different abilities.

And this is just to capture just an image to kind

of give you more information on how to access Tools For

Life network and where the programs are.

So up here we have an image of the State of

Georgia. And we've got Friends of Disabled Adults and

Children that serve the Atlanta area and statewide as well,

all over Georgia.

Center For Financial Independence and Innovation.

They house the Credit-Able program, which is a low-interest

loan program for assistive technology, vehicle and home

modification. And they are also in Atlanta, but they serve

statewide as well.

And then Disability Connections which is our

assistive technology resource center. They're also a

Center for Independent Living. They're located in Macon.

And then we've got Walton Options, which is a

Center for Independent Living. They're also an assistive

technology resource center. And that means that they have

a lending library where you can try out assistive

technology before you buy it. And they're in Augusta.

And we've got a lot of different statewide

activities that we do. Presentations, newsletters. We

definitely focus on assistive technology awareness.

So how can we work with all of y'all in the

community to let you know more about assistive technology,

how to access it, what's able out there, what's available

in the Tools For Life lending library.

So we can do that through presentations. We do

that through webinars. We have newsletters and

announcements that we're able to e-mail out and to get out

to folks as well too.

As I mentioned before, we do funding, education and

assistance. We have a wonderful fairly new member of the

Tools For Life team, Jackie Stapleton, who is our AT

funding and resource coordinator. And Jackie works with

folks just to help them know more about what resources are

available out there to help them with funding for assistive

technology.

And Jackie is on today's webinar. And we'll share

information on how you can get in touch with the Tools For

Life team at the end of today's webinar.

But we've got great resources like the Dollars &

Sense funding guide; gTRADE, which is an AT exchange, which

is similar to Craigslist, but it's focused on assistive

technology, and basically it's free. It is free. And you

can place an ad for something that you have that you want

to sell, that you want to donate or that you're in need of.

And then CFII, as I mentioned, they have the

Credit-Able program. They do lots of funding education.

And you can access all of that through our 1-800 number.

Again, do lots of trainings, AT demonstrations. We

have a page on our Tools For Life website that's called

"Training" that you can get a list of all the trainings

that we do, anything from assistive technology to support

and employment and school, presentations like today's

presentation.

We also do a lot with disability awareness, again,

funding. So lots of different things that you can take a

look at or just get in touch with us and let us know what

training we can create to help you. And then again monthly

webinars.

I wanted to let everyone know of a great upcoming

event that Tools For Life is a part of that we are

cosponsoring. This is an upcoming conference called GATE.

And it's Georgia Assistive Technology in Education, GATE.

And it's free to attend. And it's sponsored by the

Metro Atlanta Assistive Technology Consortium.

And I see that Katie Goldstein is on and Ben

Satterfield. They are two key players when it comes to

organizing this conference. But Tools For Life is

specifically working with the exhibit hall.

But we're really excited to let y'all know about

this event. It's a one-day event. It's Friday,

December 7th. It's in Atlanta at the Fulton County

Instructional Technology Center.

And basically this conference is open to anyone:

to families, educators, therapists, community members that

want to learn more about assistive technology.

Again, we're going to have an exhibit hall with

about 50 or so vendors from all over the country that will

focus on assistive technology, different products that are

going to be out there. So we're really excited about that.

But it's free to attend. So please, please, please

take advantage of it. There's the link to the

registration. It's gateseminar.eventbrite.com. You can

actually get more information on the Tools For Life website

as well too.

And Katie just typed in the chat room that it's

going to be wonderful. So we're really excited about this

event coming up very shortly in December. So know that you

can get in touch with us at Tools For Life to get more

information.

So with all that being said, I would like to go

ahead and introduce our speaker, Pat Satterfield. Pat is

with CREATE, the Center For Research and Expansion of

Assistive Technology Access. And she's going to be talking

more about assistive technology in the individualized

education plan.

Great resources for y'all. So it's a very focused

webinar that y'all have asked for. So I will go ahead and

turn the mic over to Pat.

Pat?

PAT SATTERFIELD: Hey, everybody. I hope you're

having a good day. Thank you for joining us today.

I'm going to ask you to bear with me a little bit

because my throat is a little out of sorts today, so I'm

going to try real hard to talk slowly and not start

coughing. But if I do, bear with me for just a minute.

I'll try to take a sip of water and be right back with you.

We are going to have a very straightforward

seminar. I'm not going to try to be fancy at all. The

goal here today would be to get sort of the basic

information to folks.

And I have pulled from a couple of very reliable

resources that you all would want to know about.

Most of you all probably already know about QIAT,

which is the Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology.

These folks have done a marvelous work in laying out for

all of the practitioners in the United States and other

places in the world the kinds of -- what good assistive

technology practices should look like.

And so there's a listserv where you can follow

chats and questions that are thrown out and other people's

responses. I tend to follow it but not to jump in unless I

have something really important to say.

But I know there's a lot of people who do that.

They sort of just follow along to see what the new

resources are, what people are recommending for certain

situations. So the listserv is a great resource.

And then they also have a resource bank of

materials that you can access. So I've taken advantage of

that.

And I'm also going to pull today primarily from our

Georgia Project For Assistive Technology Resources, which

is our State Department of Education AT group.

They've done a phenomenal job over the last

probably 20 years in helping assistive technology to become

established in the K-12 environment.

There's a couple other resources that I'd like to

mention. One is a resource that GPAT had recommended to

districts who were trying to establish an assistive

technology team just to get something started. And that is

called ATSTAR, A-T-S-T-A-R. It's an organization where you

can actually go online as a group and work through some

modules that will help build background knowledge for

assistive technology team building. And that's something

that districts can go in and register their own people for

independently.

Initially I think GPAT had provided some of those

opportunities for some districts, but I'm not sure that

that's still available.

So at this point, I think if you are feeling like

you have maybe lost some of your team members and you're

needing to add team members to an assistive technology

team, or you're trying to build a team from scratch, that

might be a good place to start.

A couple of other resources that are out of state

are the Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative. WATI is

their website. And they have lots of resources.

And then another one that I like to draw from, and

I particularly like a lot of the actual paperwork that they

have on the Oregon Technology Access Program where they

actually have forms that can help IEP teams work through

the process of recommending assistive technology.

So we're going to talk a little bit more about this

as we go along today. But again, one of our primary

resources in Georgia is the Georgia Assistive Technology

Project.

And they have all of the explanations of what the

legal mandates are for consideration and documentation of

assistive technology in the IEP as well as narrative and

PowerPoint resources that individual school districts might

use to provide training for their staff.

The assistive technology consideration checklist is

something that many of you may be familiar with already.

And we're going to look at it again today. And then their

resource guide. So they have lots of good things that have

been developed over the years and lots of good resources.

So let's just build a little background knowledge

here. I know a lot of you may be involved in the K-12

environment. Some of you may not be. Let's just -- let's

just say that what we're going to talk about today in terms

of the individual education plan in the K-12 environment we

may also apply to the individual family service plan for

children who are birth to three because IDEA does also

cover that population.

And we also might want to think in terms of

individuals who are out of the school system and they have

an individual service plan as an adult with a disability.

Again, those -- all of those settings where a team

of people come together to look at the needs of an

individual regardless of their age, some of the things that

we're going to talk about today would be appropriate.

So I hope that, if you do not serve the K-12

population and you need to have some clarification on how a

particular point might apply to say an adult with a

disability, please feel free to type in the chat box, and

we'll see if we can answer some of those questions as we go

along.

In the K-12 environment of course we've got lots of

things going on. Besides the challenges of funding, which

has really impacted the provision of assistive technology

not just resources but services in the last few years just

because many people had to be drawn back into the classroom

to provide coverage or take back an entire caseload if they

were a speech language pathologist. Or an occupational

therapist that might have been serving on an assistive

technology team. They've now been drawn back into those

primary services.

And so those funding challenges and the

ramifications of that are a backdrop kind of to some of

these other things that are going on.

And you'll notice that we have common core

standards. Of course we've been, in Georgia, talking about

Georgia performance standards for a number of years. And

so what we've been trying to do in the classroom has

certainly been trying to help all students address

grade-level standards.

Common core standards are a little bit different,

maybe impacting certain classrooms more than others in

terms of instruction. But everybody's having to retool a

little bit probably to make sure they're complying with

those new standards.

Coteaching has been around for a long time.

Inclusion. Again, universal design for learning. All

three of those things I would say are moving kids in the

direction of general curriculum. If they can be included

with typical peers, they are being included.

All of those things are affecting the decisions

that we make about assistive technology because they affect

the kinds of things students are being asked to do in the

regular classroom.

There's also some other things. One-to-one

computing and then things like emerging technologies where

we're looking at a netbook or something for every student,

or we're taking advantage of the fact that everybody has an

iPhone or an iPad, and they could bring those things to

school and take advantage of those as well.

So all of that new technology that's just emerging,

the handheld technologies, we don't really know yet exactly

how that's going to impact what we do in terms of assistive

technology.

The whole topic of reuse. How are we reusing

resources that one student has finished using or does not

need any longer and has need for something different? How

are we reusing those things in the K-12 environment?

All of those things are important when we think

about how we're providing assistive technology services in

the K-12 setting. But none of these things change the

legal mandate to consider assistive technology for every

student that has an IEP as a part of their IEP process.

So here's the actual law -- the actual part of

IDEA -- you see the site at the bottom of the slide -- that

every IEP team must consider a student's need for assistive

technology in order to achieve their goals -- the goals

that the team has established.

So just in general we're going to be talking about,

as we go through the IEP process, we talk to -- we talk

about parental concerns; we talk about present levels of

performance; we get feedback from therapists that have been

working with the student; we get any evaluations that have

been done; testing results that might have been done. All

of those things come into play, and then we write goals for

the student.

And there's nothing that's going to happen with

assistive technology up to this point until those goals are

written, because assistive technology devices and services

are going to be put into place to help that student achieve

their goals.

Now, why would IDEA be so adamant about an IEP team

being needed to make these kinds of assistive technology

decisions? Well, first of all, this team that's around the

student knows that student the best. They are best

qualified to be making decisions on what could be the best

solutions for the student, how they might best achieve

their goals.

They also bring, as a team, lots of expertise to

the plan of the student. So these people work with the

student; they bring expertise in different areas, all of

those things we need to bring to bear on decisions that are

made.

There's also an increased likelihood that assistive

technology will be successfully implemented if we have a

team approach because there's lots of people who have

buy-in now to the decisions that have been made for this

student and want to see this implementation of assistive

technology be successful.

This is not to say that an assistive technology

specialist in the school district might not be of great

value.

And we'll probably talk about this as we go along,

but what we would -- in best practices, what we would like

to see happen is that there does not come in from the

outside a quote/unquote expert in assistive technology that

makes some decision and then leaves again, because we want

the team to be part of that decision. We want the team to

own it, if you will.

And we can bring an assistive technology specialist

in to help where we don't have the expertise that we might

need as a team, but we certainly want to make sure that all

the team members have input.

So all of these assistive technology devices or

services that might be documented in the IEP should be

reflective of these team decisions.

Okay. So let's just make sure we're all on the

same page as far as definitions of assistive technology.

Again, this is the IDEA definition.

Any item, piece of equipment or product system,

whether acquired commercially, off the shelf, modified,

customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve

the functional capabilities of individuals with

disabilities.

So this does not include surgically implanted

things like a cochlear implant, something like that.

School systems would not be responsible for surgically

implanted devices.

But my point that I would like to make about this

particular slide is I think -- I run across a lot of

teachers who are using something in the classroom. And

it's not high-tech, if you will. It's not got batteries.

It doesn't plug into the wall. It's not a computer. It's

not a high-tech communication device.

They don't realize what they're doing is assistive

technology. And they think that they are missing the boat

somehow or that the child doesn't need assistive

technology.

And it's not documented in their IEP because they

don't see this low-tech kind of tool or accommodation as

something that is really assistive technology or needling

to be documented.

So we're using a very broad definition for

assistive technology and probably including everything from

an adapted ruler or special paper or a pencil grip -- very

low-tech -- all the way up to a fully functioning computer

or high-tech communication device, motorized wheelchair.

So you got a huge range of things that you're considering

as far as assistive technology devices.

And then in terms of services, there's a number of

services that would be necessary to support a child in the

selection, an acquisition or the use of an assistive

technology device.

First of all, we might need someone to help with an

evaluation. So what is the child in their customary

environment needing to do, and what is it they're having

trouble with? What kinds of things might we decide would

be appropriate to try with this student?

So we might do some actual trials of assistive

technology. And then, when we have settled on some things

that seem like they might be good solutions, we would do

the purchasing and the acquisition of the technology.

There might be some customization that's needed for

something to work more appropriately for a student.

There's also the coordination between the classroom, other

people who are providing services to this individual with

disability; and if there's rehabilitation or other programs

that are involved, coordinating with those as well.

There probably will be, with most assistive

technology, some level of training for the child, for the

student, or sometimes for the child's family as well.

We do know that IDEA provides for the fact that, if

a student needs assistive technology to meet their goals,

and if the child needs to do some of those same things in

their home, that it is appropriate in some cases for the

child to have the same technology available to them at

home.

For example, if it was a communication device, you

certainly wouldn't want them to just speak at school. You

would want them to be able to do that at home. If you had

a student with a learning disability and they needed some

tool to complete written assignments or reading

assignments, that might be necessary to do homework as

well.

So training for the child or for the child's family

would be appropriate. Also any professional that's working

with the child. Again, here if you had an older person

that was actually employed that needed to have that

technology provided in their employment area, you would

definitely want to make sure that there was training for

anyone that was working with that individual in whatever

setting they were planning to use it.

Okay. So let's talk a little bit, before we move

on, about what some of the barriers might be to considering

assistive technology, to documenting it in the IEP

appropriately.

I've put a few down here. I could be off base, but

y'all let me know. I'd love to have you tell me, give me

some feedback on these suggestions or some other ones if

you have some others that aren't here.

We definitely know that a lot of team --

well-intentioned IEP team members think that they have

considered assistive technology but they have too little

information to really have a very thorough consideration of

what this student needs.

They know they don't have the knowledge of the

specific tools or what's available. And so many IEP team

members feel like they need to have an assistive technology

specialist come in from the outside to help advise them

because they really don't feel like they have the knowledge

that they need.

There's also, among some teachers, concern about

what would be implemented. They feel like there's a lot of

resistance to implementation, either by the student or by

staff. And there's concern for recommending things that

then don't become implemented, and then that becomes an

issue.

There's also -- I'm not sure where we are with

this. This may be a couple years old. But there's also a

fear of the district not being able to provide. If I

recommended some assistive technology as an IEP team

member, and it was documented in the IEP, and then for some

reason that wasn't able to be funded, then we have a whole

'nother problem that we have to deal with in terms of why

isn't this being provided, and where do we come up with the

money for that, and who is going to provide these services

we've documented.

So the last thing that I particularly have heard

from people is that there's not really a clear policy about

AT consideration in a district, and that many times we have

some teams who have specific members doing it really well

and other team members -- other teams not as informed and

not probably doing as good a job as some other teams. So

there's a great disparity between some teams and others,

which is frustrating to parents.

Anyway, can you type into the chat window. Do you

all have other things that you feel like impact, become

barriers to assistive technology being appropriately

considered or documented?

Well, I don't see anything coming up. So I'm going

to assume that maybe I got some of the big ones. But I'll

watch for some things to show up in the chat window.

Please feel free to chime in.

Talking about district policy, I think this is a

good place to start. It's a good place as far as QIAT is

concerned with the QIAT guidelines.

District policy is important. What are the

expectations of the local educational agency as far as

assistive technology; and what have they provided to their

IEP teams, to their teachers, to their assistive technology

providers in terms of consistency across the district?

The intent of this policy guideline is that any

local educational agency would be able to provide specific

guidance to IEP teams on how that they want things

documented and where in the IEP they should be documented

so that there's consistency across the district in what's

being done.

Now, some of the questions. Does your school

district have written guidelines?

Can I get people just to hit the little guy with

the hand raised just to give me an idea if your school

district has specific guidelines they provide to IEP teams?

Okay. I see one. No? Okay. Anybody else? All

right.

Are the guidelines systematically disseminated to

the IEP teams? So is there a place where everybody has

access to those guidelines? And does every IEP team have a

working knowledge, not just "I know there are some," but

have they had some professional development about what the

guidelines mean and how they're to be applied to the

process? And I think this may be one of those places that

there's a little bit of breakdown, but maybe not.

Is there a designated person that -- it could be an

AT specialist, could be someone else -- that provides

support to IEP teams?

Kelly, I see that you guys are in good shape.

Are these guidelines consistently implemented, and

how would you check that? Well, I guess you'd probably

have to look through the documentation for the IEPs to make

sure there's some consistency.

Okay. So what we want to see happen as far as

district policy is that the process should be the same for

all students, all types of disabilities, all ability

levels, all ages and that it should include an analysis of

the instructional and the access areas that are relevant to

the student.

So there should not be anything that disqualifies a

student from having assistive technology considered.

Also, do we have a chance to review educationally

relevant tasks? What is the student going to be asked to

do, related to their goals and related to their placement,

that would need some attention as far as how assistive

technology might be applied?

And then what are the different environments? So

again, what are the tasks; what are the environments? This

is -- we're going to go back to this when we talk about how

we consider assistive technology and talk a little bit more

about the SETT framework.

The process should include a review of what's in

place as far as standard classroom tools in every

classroom.

You might also want -- now that we're moving more

toward universal design for learning, we tend to think of

what are district-wide tools that are available to all

students?

For example, I'm not going to choose a particular

tool, but if you had a district-wide screen reading tool or

you had a district-wide writing support tool, do people all

know how to use that? Is that going to be their default?

You know, "Oh, we have this, so it covers all the students'

needs."

What we don't want to see in terms of universal

design for learning is that it becomes a replacement for

consideration.

But we do want to look at standard tools, what

kinds of accommodations and modifications are already being

done in the classroom; is that enough? If the student is

being successful, great. If the student is not, then what

kinds of other tools do we want to see implemented? And

then, again, what other tools need to be considered?

So that district policy I think is really

important, as a district policy for technology and

assistive technology intersecting is important, also is a

district policy for consideration and documentation

important.

The next guideline that I'd like to look at is the

fact that assistive technology is considered a tool to

support achievement of goals and make progress in the

general curriculum.

Okay. So most goals are created prior to

considering assistive technology. There may be a few

specific goals that are related to the use of AT, and those

could be included under special factors. We're going to

talk about that a little bit more. But most assistive

technology consideration is really going to be goal driven.

Okay. So some key questions that QIAT suggests

that we think about are -- and this I think is the biggest

question for me -- would another person who picks up this

IEP be able to determine what assistive technology this

student needs, not by the name of a product but by the type

of a tool that's being recommended and the services that

are needed to support that decision based on the

documentation in the IEP?

Would you be able -- if a student came into your

school district from another school district, could you

pick up that IEP, know what the student needed, how they

arrived at that decision, and how that student was going to

need to be supported so that you wouldn't have to go back

to square one and evaluate the student for six weeks and

basically lose the instructional time that that

re-evaluation would take?

Is the assistive technology discussed identified --

does it relate to identified educational needs? So again,

if it's connected to goals, that would be true.

Does the use of assistive technology help the

student achieve their goals? Well, one of the things that

we want to look at is, how do we actually measure whether

this assistive technology is being helpful or not? So

we'll talk about that a little bit more as well.

And what barriers to accessing the general

curriculum can assistive technology help to remove?

Okay. So let's go on. Let's make this a little

easier, put it sort of in everyday language. And this is

kind of where the Georgia Project helps us a little bit.

They're a little bit more straightforward.

What is it we want the student to be able to do in

the classroom? Let's make it down to brass tacks. Can

they do it independently with standard tools? If not, if

we add accommodations and modifications, strategies and

modifications is that going to be enough? If that's not

enough, then what other kinds of things are going to be

needed?

Now in Georgia, GPAT has helped us a lot by

developing the assistive technology consideration

checklist. And I'm sure, if you are familiar with this at

all, you'll see that a lot of the things we've already

touched on are here in the tool.

You'll notice that there -- where are the areas:

reading, writing, daily living, spelling, listening,

communication? What areas is the student struggling with,

having some difficulty? And then what are the relevant

tasks related to those areas that this student is

struggling with, and in what settings are we going to be

addressing those tasks?

So if you look at the boxes at the bottom of this

form, you'll see that it says GEC, SEC, COM, HOM: general

education classroom, special education classroom, the

community, or home.

So again, we're going to look at what is the

student struggling with; what task is it they're being

asked to do; and in what environment?

And then as we move from left to right across those

boxes, we'll see that is the student who is struggling in

this particular area, if we use the standards classroom

tools, are they independent in doing that task or not?

If they're not, let's go to the next set of boxes.

If we add accommodations or modifications, then are they

independent in doing that task? If not -- if we have tried

some assistive technology solutions or we already have some

things in place, did that solve the problem?

If it did not, then we would definitely want to go

on to that last box and have some additional solutions that

we may want to try if these ones that we've considered so

far aren't working.

So we may have some assistive technology that we're

trying already, and it's working great. Or we may have a

situation where we've tried some things, the student is

still not independent -- and that is what we're working for

is independence -- and then we're going to have some

suggestions for some other things that may need to be

tried.

So the consideration checklist was actually

developed by Joy Zabala, who is one of the prime movers in

QIAT. It's a framework for gathering and organizing data

so that we make good assistive technology decisions.

And the goal is that we're going to match the

technology well to the individual's ability, their needs

and the kind of support that they need.

So in the SETT framework, we have the student. And

"SETT" stands for Student, Environment, Tasks and Tools.

And you'll notice that, with this SETT framework -- and

again, this is the basis for that consideration checklist.

In this framework we're going to look at the

student's strengths and their needs, what settings are they

in, what are they asked to be -- what are they doing in

those settings.

If they're in a general ed setting, their support

level is going to be different, their tasks are going to be

different than if they're in a special education classroom.

What are the tasks specifically that they're being

asked to do? And then what kinds of support does the

student need?

So we don't get down to the tools or the assistive

technology until we actually get all the way through that

process.

I'm afraid that many times people will jump

straight to the tools because they know that we have access

to certain tools, and they say, "Oh, here. We have this.

Let's try this," when, in fact, we really need to not short

circuit that process of considering who that student is and

what they're being asked to do.

And then of course we know that assistive

technology consideration is on ongoing process. People

don't stay the same throughout their -- they're growing and

changing through their school experience or into their

adult experience. They're constantly -- their needs are

changing, and we need to revisit this process.

And again, this is a great reason for it to be part

of the IEP process so that we do review annually, and we

make sure we still have good decisions.

So we've talked a little bit about AT devices and

what AT services are. But are those AT services documented

in the IEP? And where should they be documented in the

IEP?

So provision of those services is critical to the

effectiveness of assistive technology. We don't just hand

someone a communication device or any other tool and say,

"There you go. Now you're good to go."

We have to help them become familiar with it. And

in many cases we have to help the staff become familiar

with it so that they will integrate it into the classroom

setting too.

So let's look at the places where we would document

assistive technology in the IEP. And I do want to say,

lest you all become overwhelmed with this, that we just

have to be thorough.

We don't have to be redundant. We don't have to

have AT in every single one of these areas if it's not

needed. We just need to make sure we have a complete

picture, if someone read through the whole IEP, they would

get the whole picture.

So one of the main places we would see assistive

technology is connected to a goal. For example, a goal

might be written that Billy will create a three-paragraph

paper with the use of a talking word processer.

Now, the student may have had a handwriting issue,

or they may need the auditory feedback from a talking word

processor; some of the other features, talking dictionary,

whatever might be needed for that student.

But the good thing about including assistive

technology connected to a goal is that, when we collect

data on the goal, we're also going to be able to collect

some data on the assistive technology and how it's

impacting the student's success toward achieving that goal.

In related services, for example, the example that

I have here is that usually there's a time and a frequency

of services that's included.

For example, if the speech therapist is going to be

working with a student on using a communication device,

then we would want to include that assistive technology

being included in that service provision of related

services.

Under supplementary aids and services, we may want

to have -- an example would be something like the student

needed to take notes in a number of different environments.

There may not be a specific provider that's identified but

just that it's recommended that the student have access to

a particular tool or a particular kind of strategy for

addressing this particular need.

One of the biggest things that comes up in the

spring is of course what kinds of assistive technology

might be available or allowed for high-stakes testing.

And students who use assistive technology -- for

example, screen-reading technology to help them read their

assignments or some other kinds of tools -- and again, I

would temper what I'm saying by saying that you would have

to check to make sure any assistive technology that you

would like to use for a student is an acceptable

accommodation as far as the DOE is concerned.

But if they're using assistive technology daily --

like this isn't just something that we came up with for

this test; this is something that this student uses on a

regular basis, and they would need the same technology in

order to access this assessment -- then it would probably

be allowed.

The other place we would want to see AT documented

in the IEP is that, if school staff need to receive

training or support, that should be documented.

Okay. So in your IEP minimal compliance for

everybody is, does the student require assistive technology

devices or services? That's the shorthand for saying the

team spent some time thinking about this, and they decided,

yes or no, this student needs AT. That is minimal because

that really doesn't tell us anything.

If you picked up an IEP of a student that was

coming to your classroom for the first time, and somebody

just said yes, but there was nothing else written in the

IEP, you'd be in pretty big trouble. You'd be starting

from scratch trying to figure out what it was and when they

needed it and how it was used and how often it was used and

all of those things.

But I think talking to lots of school districts at

this point, we have lots of districts moving to the fact

that there needs to be some explanation -- whether it's a

yes or a no, there needs to be some explanation of the

process the team went through to decide that.

So if it's yes, we're going to describe what the

tool is, the kind of tool, not a specific brand name. But

the student needs a talking word processor to help support

writing assignments; the tool will give the student access

to auditory feedback as well as talking dictionary. That

kind of thing.

It's very short, couple of sentences. But it would

give somebody the idea of what kind of tool they needed and

when they would be using it.

The other thing that's come up more often is that

we really need to also document why we decided no. Because

if a student has a documented disability of a certain type,

and we say, "No, they don't need assistive technology,"

then how is it they're going to overcome this disability

and be successful toward achieving their goals?

So we need to find out, if it's no, what other

things are going to be put in place? You know, are

standard classroom tools enough for this student? Are

accommodations that we're making enough?

If they are, just say, "The student is using this

standard classroom tool. The student is being successful

using this accommodation that's being provided by the

classroom teacher."

And that's all we need to know. We don't have to

have lots of explanation. But of course it's always nice

to have -- again, this is minimal compliance.

Okay. Any questions up to this point? Like I

said. I'm not straying too far, I don't think, from the

pretty straightforward guidance of those who are best

practice gurus.

Our next guideline from QIAT is that our assistive

technology consideration and documentation be clear and

complete.

So again, have we included assistive technology in

the IEP in a manner that provides a clear written

description of what the student's needs are and what we

expect the results to be. What achievement do we expect

the results to be by using this technology?

One of the things that we haven't talked about so

far -- hang on. Let me hold that for just a second. We'll

go through these questions first, and then we'll talk about

it again.

But let's think about, when we start down this road

to document, thinking about what the student is currently

using; and, again, helping teachers identify things that

they're already doing that they may not be considering as

assistive technology; and identifying those things, and

documenting them; and then finding else might be needed.

We want to make sure that we're making progress in

the general curriculum. That's the goal. That's the goal

for IDEA. And that's the goal of having assistive

technology included.

Is the assistive technology effective? Okay. This

is one of those things that we -- this has been kind of

hard to pin down for lots of IEP teams: How are we going

to know if the assistive technology is effective?

And many times we will consider assistive

technology. We will say we're going to try this thing with

a student for a certain period of time. But the IEP team

has not made a decision of who's tracking data on this AT

tool that we're trying; when is the team going to come back

together again to make sure that this assistive technology

is making a difference for the student, is helping them

complete their tasks, is helping them get closer to

achieving their goals.

So what we want to make sure is how are we going to

measure the effectiveness of this assistive technology?

So again, if it's connected to a goal, it becomes a

little easier to track that progress because we're tracking

progress toward the goal anyway.

But we may want to say -- we certainly don't want

to get to a year down the road and find out that the tool

that we were going to try last year didn't work, and it's a

year later, and we haven't tried anything else.

So we want to make sure that we document -- and I'm

going to suggest to you that it would probably be in the

minutes of the meeting -- what we're going to try with the

student; when we're going to come back together and look at

data; who's collecting the data.

And so that we get maybe two months down the road

or maybe three months down the road, and we know we have a

good solution for this student. If we don't, then we need

to backtrack and consider something else.

We want to make sure that the student has access to

this assistive technology in any environment in which it's

needed. We don't want the student just to have access to

their communication device in speech with their SLP. We

want them to have access to their communication device in

all environments.

If the student needs the assistive technology for

writing in one class, chances are they're going to have to

write in another class, and they're going to need it in

that class as well.

What kinds of services are provided? And how are

we tracking those services? Are we going to come back

together as an IEP team and say, "Has the training been

provided for the student? Has the training been provided

for the parent? Has the training been provided for the

teacher, for the resource teacher?

Who are we -- is this a good assistive technology

implementation? Have we covered all our bases in terms of

everybody getting the training that they needed?

What other tasks is the student struggling with

that they might need some help with? I'm going to give you

an example of a student that someone was working with, and

just in listening to the information about that student, I

just asked a question about, "Well, have you thought about

does this student need assistive technology for this other

task?" And that had not really even been addressed.

So we can ask ourselves, especially as a team, keep

ourselves accountable that we're covering all of the areas

where assistive technology might be needed.

And then again, data.

So in the minutes of the meeting, again, you've

probably documented that you've considered assistive

technology in some of those other areas and the goals and

related services and supplementary aids and services.

But in the minutes you might reflect the discussion

that you had about what areas of AT were needed -- I mean

what tasks called for what kinds of assistive technology;

why you reached a decision on a certain tool versus another

tool to try with the student; what your plan was in terms

of trials with the student; and when you would come back

together again.

All of that is best probably documented in the

minutes so that you can have more of a narrative of your

discussion.

The other thing that we want to talk about, in

terms of your assistive technology being documented in your

IEP, is the transition.

Having a son who is in his last year of the K-12

environment who has a disability, I certainly am tuned in

to transition right now and want to make sure that, as a

student moves from the school environment out into the work

environment or they go on to another level of education,

either technical school or to college, have they received

the training in the kinds of assistive technology that

they're going to need in the future; what kind of services

might be needed in those new environments; and are there AT

providers that would support assistive technology in those

environments?

So the transition plan should address the use of

assistive technology as the student transitions to those

new environments.

And fortunately I'm at the end here. I need to ask

for questions. And I'm going to take a second, while you

maybe think of a question or two, and get another sip of

water --

LIZ PERSAUD: Thank you, Pat. That was absolutely

wonderful and extremely helpful.

Does anybody have any questions for Pat? I know

this was a very focused webinar topic today that went into

some great detail.

Anybody need any clarifications? Or are there any

helpful tools and resources that folks out there can offer

up that we can share with anyone else as well too?

Pat did a wonderful job at explaining the processes

of the IEP and what would be helpful.

It looks like we have a question from Laura. And

Laura asks: "Do you have any recommendations for data

collection? Many people have trouble with this aspect of

how assistive technology can be supported."

PAT SATTERFIELD: That's really a great question.

I would refer you -- some of the best forms that I have

seen are on that Oregon site that I mentioned. It's the

Oregon Technology Access Project or Program -- I can't

remember -- OTAP.

Gosh, I have the website written right here, but I

think if you just do "OTAP," you'll probably come up with

it. It's OTAP, I believe. I could be wrong, but I think

that's right. It's Oregon Technology Access Project, I

think.

But they have an actual -- they call it AT Model

Operating Guidelines. It's about a 73-page document that

has lots of forms included. And I'm going to guess that,

of all the things I've seen, it probably has the guidance

for teams of anything that I have seen.

If you're using a -- oh, thank you very much.

If you're using a communication device, many

devices actually have built -in data collection within the

device, at least the higher-tech devices.

Now, as we move more and more towards communication

applications on handheld devices, we lose some of that

traction that we had on data collection.

But I think you probably could come up with a form.

And again, this is one of those district-level-guideline

kinds of things that would be very helpful to everybody if

you either find one or create one where you can say: This

is the task; this is the baseline that the student was

operating at when we started using the assistive

technology; this is their increase in words per minute or

increase in number of paragraphs typed or increase in --

whatever it was that you were looking to help support them

over time.

And I would say the minimum length of time that you

would want to collect data would be somewhere between six

weeks and two months, just to give anything that you were

going to -- I mean there's some things you could probably

throw out the day the kid's just not going to use it. They

just dug their heels in and said they're not going to do

it.

But as far as a form, I would check with OTAP. But

again, I think this is one of those things where the

district-level decisions can really help those individual

IEP teams.

If they're given help on framing the kinds of

questions that would lead to good assistive technology

decisions and the forms that might actually walk them

through the process of is this tool actually helpful, that

would help all of the people in the district. And it

would, again, lead to greater consistency across the

district.

I'm sorry I don't have a specific tool that I can

just hand to you. But, Laura, if you want to contact me,

my e-mail is going to come up here at the end. If you want

to contact me off, I'd be happy to go out and look through

that -- I've got that Oregon document downloaded. I'll be

happy to look through that and see if I can find a form

that would help you with data collection.

Any other questions? I see that Ben has put up

that OTAP link for us. Thank you, Ben.

LIZ PERSAUD: Thank you, Pat.

And Ben did put up the link. I just wanted to read

it out for folks. It's www.otap-Oregon.org. And Ben

Satterfield is with the Tools For Life program.

And CREATE also made another valuable point. And

he said, "I would think the tool would depend on what issue

and what AT was suggested. No one size fits all."

So --

PAT SATTERFIELD: That's a really good point. So a

form for data collection might look different for

communication than it would for a writing activity or a

listening activity.

So again, I'll see if I can do some investigating

on that. I'm curious about that too. Now that you've

asked about a specific form, I'll see if we can find one.

Any other questions?

LIZ PERSAUD: All right. Thank you, Pat. Thank

you, guys. I really appreciate the wonderful information

and appreciate y'all taking time today to join us.

If you have any questions for Pat, please type them

into the chat area. We'll definitely take a look at that

and answer your questions. Or you can get in touch with

any one of us at the Tools For Life program afterwards.

We have the evaluation. Here's the link that goes

straight to SurveyMonkey. If you could just take a few

moments and fill out that evaluation, we'd really

appreciate that, and we use that as a guide as we are fine

tuning our work, services and looking at our trainings and

webinars.

And again, I just wanted to put up the contact

information up here for Pat. So it's Pat Satterfield with

CREATE and her e-mail address is

pat@center4atexcellence.com. Note that the four is a

number "4." So pat@center4atexcellence.com.

And I also have my e-mail address up here. I'm Liz

with the Tools For Life program. And it's liz@gatfl.org.

You can definitely jump on the Tools For Life

website to get any one of our team members' information to

contact any one of us if you guys need help with anything

at all, need resources.

This presentation is up on the Tools For Life

website on the webinar page. So again, just know that you

can access that. The archive will be up there shortly. It

will have the written transcription up in about two to four

weeks as well too.

So next month we're looking at a webinar that's

focused on all things apps for a bunch of different

categories and looking at accessibility of iPads and iPod

Touches and iPhones.

So if y'all are interested in that, check back on

the Tools For Life website to get that information. And we

look forward to hopefully seeing all of y'all next month

for that.

So thank y'all. Have a wonderful afternoon. And

feel free to get in touch with us any time. Thank you.

Take care. Bye-bye.