

The Monitor

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From the Director

Happy holidays to everyone! 2007 is just around the corner and new assistive technology horizons are coming into view. If you make New Year resolutions, set a goal to know what NIMAS is and how it will affect your students with disabilities.

The National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard, or NIMAS, is a file format that can easily be converted into large print, braille, audio, or whatever format a student needs to gain access to the material. School districts are now required to obtain a NIMAS formatted file for eligible students, for all

core curriculum materials. There is a brief statement about state and school district responsibilities on the DPI website at <http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/vinimas.html>. Keep your ears open for more information, as NIMAS will be a hot topic for a while to come.

WATI is in the final stages of producing a new product. Last spring WATI hosted its Leadership Institute and presentations by about 60 of Wisconsin's AT leaders for the purpose of sharing information about what's working in their school district. These "Recipes" have been compiled in a book titled *Recipes for*

AT Success. Along with a description of the activities, implementation strategies are outlined, and in many cases, supporting materials used by these individuals are provided on a CD. Among the supporting materials you will find sample letters to administrators, event notices, and Microsoft® PowerPoint supporting files. *Recipes for AT Success* will be available for purchase from WATI in January. The cost will be \$15.00 for Wisconsin residents and \$20.00 for non-residents. You can find more information on the WATI website at <http://www.wati.org>.

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Special Buys

- **Boardmaker®**
\$269.10
regularly \$299
- **Pix Writer** \$120.60
regularly \$180
- **For more information visit**
www.wati.org/
then click on Special Buys

Early Childhood Literacy

Susan Loesl, Adaptive Art Specialist, MPS

Building literacy skills with children in Birth to 3 and Early Childhood Programs is vital to their overall academic development. At a MPS in-service, Lisa Barczak,

Occupational Therapist, Joan Staeven, Early Childhood Specialist and Diagnostic Teacher, and Sue Loesl, Adaptive Art Specialist presented numerous activities that supported the reading of the book, *Russell the*

Sheep, by Scott Coton. This book, beautifully illustrated and simply texted, was a perfect book to show how assistive technology can enhance the student's experience with a book.

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From the Director

(Continued from page 1)

After much deliberation, WATI has decided to suspend the Summer Institute this year. We are finding many other summer training opportunities across the state so the original need for a Summer Institute specific to assistive technology is not there. Many of the WATI consultants conduct workshops at their own CESA's. These will be announced on the WATI website as well, once the

information becomes available. If you don't feel that there are enough assistive technology training opportunities, please contact us at info@wati.org with suggestions.

This year WATI is co-sponsoring the first annual *AT Across the Lifespan Conference* with WisTech. There is program information elsewhere in this newsletter, as well as on the conference website (<http://www.wati.org/training/conference/at-lifespan.htm>). It will

be held in Stevens Point, March 22-23, 2007. I hope we see many of you there!

There are two mini-grant opportunities available from WATI. One is for preschool programs that include children with disabilities. The second is for Head Start and Child Care programs. Look for more information about these in this issue or email us at info@wati.org.

Have a great holiday break!

Early Childhood Literacy

(Continued from page 1)

Some of the supportive activities included the book being scanned into a Microsoft® PowerPoint presentation and read aloud, a Step by Step™ augmentative communication device was programmed with the story, and Boardmaker™ symbols were used to create a communication board about sheep and sleep. A BookWorm™ was also used as a reading support that the children could use independently to read and re-read the story aloud to themselves or with peers. By using a switch adapted sheep toy, students were able to make a sheep walk across the table. This particular book dealt with a sheep having difficulty falling asleep, which lead to many options to teach concepts such as counting (he tries to count stars and other sheep to fall asleep), shapes (the LONG stocking cap he wears is

used by the illustrator to make basic shapes around the text), and repetitive images such as his friend the frog. Each of these concepts was turned into an activity for the students to engage with while learning about the story. Other activities included a simple 3 piece puzzle created with REAL images of sheep (a colored photo was printed onto cardboard, laminated and cut into three pieces, with a black and white copy of the photo underneath to help support the matching of the puzzle pieces). Music was included by the singing of the song, "Baa Baa Black Sheep" with the children singing the song each time with a different color sheep, and then getting a different texture of white material to represent wool—real wool, felt fabric, stuffing, synthetic sheep fabric, cotton balls, yarn, etc. to help make the experience more tactile. Art included making

a group sheep out of paper-mache and packing peanuts, a large wall mural with sheep in a mountain and valley scene (using adaptive art tools), a sheep mask, and making a little sheep out of marshmallows, pretzels, frosting and little chocolate chips- that we then ate! There were many other activities that were created and demonstrated to the in-service attendees, and they all left with a copy of the book and the instructions for the supplemental activities. To support the ongoing use of the book, a tote bin was created that teachers could check out with many of the resources and support materials available to the teachers to create a unit using *Russell the Sheep*. We are working on another book for this year's in-service, *Play, Mozart, Play*, which will incorporate more music activities, as well as other activities in reading, writing, art and movement.

Recipes for AT Success

We are featuring some of our recipes from our Spring 2006 Leadership Institute. Perhaps the next two recipes can help with some of your own students.

Collegial Study Group for Clicker 4/5 Software

Beverly Bradford & Mary Helen Thomas, School District of Waukesha

bbradfor@waukesha.k12.wi.us

Twenty special and regular education teachers, occupational therapists, and speech/language pathologists met between the end of February and the middle of May for a self-directed study group. The group met for a total of 45

hours after scheduled work hours. The purpose was to learn the features of Clicker™ to develop curricular activities and collaborate on ways to integrate Clicker™ into the curriculum. This course was approved by the district's Instructional Services Supervisor.

Ingredients (Assistive Technology Used):

- Clicker™ 4 (upgraded to Clicker™ 5 during study) with PCS Symbols
- School district Internet access
- Data projectors

- Tutorials (commercially available or embedded in software)
- On-line resources

Instructions (Strategies and Results):

The School District of Waukesha has developed a partnership with a local college to provide an opportunity for professional staff to create collegial study courses for college credit. This method was effective for small group study around a specific topic. This model can be replicated by other

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Attention Community-Based Early Childhood Programs!

WATI has funds to support 24 programs in the use of assistive technology to improve the participation of children with disabilities in programs with their typical peers. Two types of mini-grant applications are being accepted until **January 19, 2007**.

As part of the Preschool IDEA Discretionary Grant, WATI plans to fund 12 mini-grants to community-based early childhood programs. We are looking for field-based strategies for facilitating meaningful inclusion of young children with disabilities in community-based preschool settings. Proposed project activities must focus on improving access to and participation in the typical activities of the preschool curriculum by children with disabilities through the use of

assistive technology. This might include child/child or child/adult communication, access to manipulatives, group play with children without disabilities, or other activities that improve a child's participation in the educational opportunities. Applicants need to determine what assistive technology is needed and provide a rationale for these items.

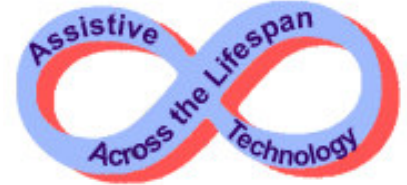
As part of the State Improvement Grant, WATI plans to fund up to 12 mini-grants to early childhood programs, especially targeting Head Start and Child Care programs. WATI is looking for field-based strategies for facilitating meaningful interactions between young children with disabilities and those without disabilities. Proposed project

activities must focus on the creation, installation, and daily use of picture and/or tactile-based communication and language boards that will support children in their environments. For each mini-grant awarded, WATI will purchase a desktop computer, printer, and Boardmaker® and provide training in the use of the technology and appropriate implementation of picture supported activities. Applicants need to describe how they would implement a picture supported environment using these materials.

More information and application forms for both mini-grants are available at <http://www.wati.org>. Click on "See what's new at WATI".

AT Across the Lifespan Conference Schedule

Thursday, March 22, 2007



8:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Preconference Workshop

Now I "See" It! Dan Herlihy, Connective Technology Solutions, Inc.,
Fee:\$100

3:00 - 7:30 p.m. Conference Registration

3:30 - 6:30 p.m. Vendor Hall and Opening Reception

6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Keynote Address: An Ever Changing World: Technology Convergence and New Solutions for Access, Dan Herlihy, Connective Technology Solutions, Inc.

Accessible technology has become an embedded part of a whole new world of hardware, software, and connections that bridge them. Are you standing at the edges peering in? Is there something there for you? Absolutely! Learn how the pieces of the AT puzzle fit together providing solutions for access to information, communication, and self expression for everyone. On the fly solutions for the classroom teacher, daily solutions for the work environment as well as for your leisure time! See what remarkable solutions lie not as dreams beyond the horizon, but are accessible to us today.

Friday, March 23, 2007

8:00 - 8:45 a.m. Continental Breakfast in Vendor Hall

8:30 - 9:45 a.m. Session 1

Low Tech, You Bet! Susan Loesl, Mary Beth Werner, and Valeria Hoehnke, Milwaukee Public Schools

A Paraprofessional's Guide to the AT Universe Marcia Obukowicz, CESA 9

Creating Writing Adventures for Students Dan Herlihy, Connective Technology Solutions

Smart Technology for Aging, Disability, & Independence Janet Peters, Great lakes ADA & Accessible IT Center

Boardmaker®: It's Not Just For Special Education. Anymore! Dave Moehn, Krista Koller, & Heather Cain, West Bend School District

Adaptive Transportation James Hubbard, UW Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute

Secrets of Microsoft® Word Kathy White and Lara Polk, Janesville School District

10:00 - 11:15 a.m. Session 2

Integrating Visual Supports into the Educational Environment for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder Peggy Bartman, CESA 6

OCR (Optical Character Recognition) Solutions for Blind and Visually Impaired Individuals Phil Dellegrazio, Adaptive Technology Resources, Inc.

AT on a Shoestring Marcia Obukowicz, CESA 9

Fundamentals of Effective Assistive Technology Services - District Wide Julie Lukosaitis, Cottage Grove School District/Monona Grove School District

Conference Schedule (continued)

Introduction to Services and Technology for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Infants Stacie Heckendorf, Educational Audiology Consultant 3

Adaptive Mobility James Hubbard, UW Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute

Access Throughout the Day for High- & Low Incidence Students Dan Herlihy, Connective Technology Solutions

March 22-23, 2007

Holiday Inn Convention & Expo Center, Stevens Point, WI

Visit: <http://www.wati.org/training/conference/at-lifespan.htm>

11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Round Table Conversations

Round table discussion topics include: Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Low Tech AAC, WisLoan, UDL/NIMAS, Transition Portfolio, Test Accommodations, How to Get Funding, Loan Closets, AT in the IEP, WATI Library, Recreational AT, & Conversations with Dan Herlihy

12:15 - 1:30 p.m. Session 3

Handwriting Instruction for Students with Autism or Fine Motor/Visual Motor Karen Stindt, CESA 6

Making Word Study Work for ALL Students Kathy White, Janesville School District

NIMAS, Shelly Weingarten, CESA 1

How to Make Books Accessible to Your Students with Reading Impairments Joe Mielczark, Northcentral Technical College

Forum on Recycling of AT Equipment Ralph Pelky, WisTech Optimizing Speech Recognition Paul Schwartz, UW Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute

Creating Accessible Quizzes, Test preparation & Alternative Assessment Dan Herlihy, Connective Technology Solutions

1:45 - 3:00 p.m. Session 4

Accessibility in Microsoft® Windows XP Chris Hudson, WI Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Speech-to-Text and Text-to-Speech Solution for Individuals with Learning Disabilities Nick Hanford, Adaptive Technology Resources, Inc.

Creating Access on the Fly: Right Before Your Eyes Dan Herlihy, Connective Technology Solutions

The 3 Deadly Accommodations-Offered in School, But Not at Work Cindi Pichler, Independence First

Safety, Security, Access in the Home Environment Ken Hagman, Opportunities, Inc.

Wisconsin's Assistive Technology Resources Al Noll, UW Stout Vocational Rehabilitation Institute and Ralph Pelky, WisTech

Adapting Stories and Songs for Students with Severe Cognitive Disabilities Kim Cline, Sheboygan Area School District

Featured Recipes for AT Success

(Continued from page 3)

professionals. Professional staff appreciated the flexibility of applying practical knowledge to their classrooms and obtaining college credit or credit hours for their license renewal. A course syllabus was developed. Participants met eight times in a large group. At these sessions, current users of Clicker™ demonstrated the features listed on the course syllabus. Each participant used a laptop with Clicker™ installed, and was able to apply what was being demonstrated or taught. Each participant had access to their personal district server to store their data. Between scheduled large group meetings, participants would meet in self-selected small groups (school teams, discipline-specific groups, etc.) to create materials using features presented in the large group. For example, following the large group presentation of how to set up individual student profiles on Clicker™, participants with the support of their small group began to set up student profiles. At the beginning of each large group meeting, participants shared what they had learned or tried, before learning new information. When the course was completed, participants met with the supervisor to answer the question studied, and to present how this was integrated into the curriculum. The participants also were available to share their excitement and awareness of this tool with other professionals in their building and/or department.

Outcomes:

A core of staff know features of Clicker™ software and began to use this as a curriculum tool, where appropriate

Staff have an additional tool to use to build literacy skills in students

Staff know other Clicker™ users, and are able to network and share resources.

Scanner and Paperport Software to Complete Classroom Worksheets

Deb Donley, Verona School District
deb.donley@verona.k12.wi.us

The Visioneer® scanner with Paperport software allows a worksheet or packet of worksheets to be scanned and completed on the computer. This technique works best with worksheets that have fill-in-the-blank, short answers, labeling a diagram/map, multiple choice or drawing lines. If typed responses are longer than a sentence, then a different writing tool should be used (e.g., Microsoft® Word, Write:Outloud®, Co:Writer®, WYNN software, etc.)

Ingredients (Assistive Technology Used):

- Visioneer® Scanner with Paperport software
- Computer
- Printer

Instructions (Strategies and Results):

Classroom materials were used with this process. The goal was to have the page(s) scanned by the student, however sometimes a paraprofessional or teacher would do the scanning ahead of time. The

files can be used immediately or saved for future use. When completing the page(s), the writing tools that were used most often in the Paperport software include magnification, text writing, highlighting, drawing (pencil) and the line tool. The scanned image is treated like a picture and the tools "write" over the picture. When a student wants to write in a specific location, they select the text tool and click on the spot that they want to type. When a student wants to highlight, they select the highlighting tool. To choose a specific color highlighter, the student just needs to right click and choose a color from those shown. To increase the size of the images on the document, the student selects the magnifying glass with the + sign. When a student's work is completed, it can be printed and turned in to their teacher. This technique has been highly successful with students with autism, learning disabilities, and with some students who have cognitive disabilities. These students were able to complete the same work as their peers, but on the computer rather than with a pencil. The downside to using the scanner and software is that there is no integrated text reading or word prediction available. The software does have an option to scan and convert the page to a Microsoft® Word document. though. This text file could then be read by a text reading program. This is not done as frequently however, since there are often errors that need to be fixed in the conversion process.

Library

Adapted Toys by Sharon Rhode		5.0.1.0.q	Glitter Roll Music Box/Switch		Doo & The Disappearing Donuts
Choosing the perfect toy can be a daunting experience. To assist you in making a decision whether to purchase, WATI has a variety of adapted toys for check-out. Descriptions of the toys listed below, can be found on-line (www.wati.org) in the searchable database, under loan library.		5.0.1.0.n	Leap Frog: Alphabet Adventures	5.0.1.0.j	Leap Frog: Tad Goes Shopping
Items can be checked out for 35 days with a possible 30 day renewal, if nobody is waiting to check out the item.		5.0.1.0.l	Leap Frog: Birthday Surprise	5.0.1.0.ab	Lighted Sensory Plate Switch
Item #	Name	5.0.1.0.h	Leap Frog: Count & Learn Math Desk	5.0.1.0.z	Mini Bubble Blower
5.0.1.0.a	All-Turn-It Spinner Kit	5.0.1.0.o	Leap Frog: Games & Activities: Learning Letters & Sounds- Kindergarten level	5.0.1.0.f	Mini Shooting Stars
5.0.1.0.aa	Battery Device Adapters	5.0.1.0.u	Leap Frog: I Know My Short Vowels	5.0.1.0.y	Multisensory Motivational Center
5.0.1.0.s	Deluxe Razzle Dazzle Bead Chain Switch	5.0.1.0.c	Leap Frog: Leap Pad Learning Center	5.0.1.0.x	Music Machine
5.0.1.0.r	Dome Alone w/ Switch	5.0.1.0.g	Leap Frog: Learn to Read Phonics Desk	5.0.1.0.t	Musical Bead Chain Switch
5.0.1.0.p	Fashion Plate (Dress-Up Doll)	5.0.1.0.i	Leap Frog: My First LeapPad	5.0.1.0.e	Musical Carousel
		5.0.1.0.m	Leap Frog: Pooh's Honey Tree	5.0.1.0.w	Space-A-Tron
		5.0.1.0.k	Leap Frog: Scooby-	5.0.1.0.d	Spin 'N Spell Activity Set
				5.0.1.0.v	Talking Bead Chain w/ Lights.
				5.0.1.0.b	Talking Dice

Vendor Donations

A special thanks to the following companies that recently donated items to the WATI Lending Library:

- Adaptivation
- Barker Creek
- Califone
- Independent Living Aids
- Judy Lynn Software, Inc.
- Kurzweil Educational Systems
- Laureate Learning Systems
- LaZee Tek

- Lekotek of Georgia
- Marblesoft
- Mayer-Johnson
- National Reading Styles Institute
- Office On The Go
- PCI
- Sensitrac
- The Learning Studio
- Time Timer, LLC



2006-2007 Monitor Schedule

October 15
December 15
February 15
April 15

Articles are due the 15th of the prior month.

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We're on the web!
<http://www.wati.org>
<http://www.milwaukee.k12.wi.us>

Our Mission ...



WATI assists school districts and Birth to Three programs in their responsibility to ensure that every child in Wisconsin who may need assistive technology (AT) has equal and timely access to appropriate assessment and the provision and implementation of needed AT devices and services.



The mission of the Milwaukee Public Schools is to ensure that maximum educational opportunities are provided for all students to reach their highest potential so that:

1. Students achieve their educational and employment goals, and
2. Parents choose the Milwaukee Public Schools to educate their children.

Books to Ponder

Assistive Technology Teams: Many Ways to Do it Well

DeCoste, D. C., Reed, P. R., & Kaplan, M. W. (2005). Roseburg, OR: National Assistive Technology in Education Network.

The National Assistive Technology in Education Network is a new organization formed to support individuals from a broad array of disciplines who provide assistive technology services in schools (see <http://natenetwork.buffalo.edu/index.htm>). One method of supporting AT service providers is through sharing of expertise in the form of written monographs. *Assistive Technology Teams: Many Ways to Do it Well* is one such publication.

The authors conducted a survey of 55 AT teams from 22 states and share their findings here. The demographics of these teams may not be surprising. Team makeup was 29% teachers, 26% SLPs, 16% OTs, 8% Administrators, 4% PTs, and 9% everyone else. But the percentage of time the teams reported conducting student assessments (18-35%), consultation to staff (41-49%), and staff training (16-30%) is informative. This may guide how you set up team responsibilities in your own district.

The monograph continues to report the impetus behind team formation, issues and challenges these teams faced, and how they were addressed. These findings

are organized by size of district, an understandably important factor in how a team functions. The authors also look at the differences between serving low incidence and high incidence populations.

The monograph concludes with tips on building successful AT teams and how to make them more effective. One resource in the appendix is a team self-assessment tool that can be used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a team.

Assistive Technology Teams: Many Ways to Do it Well can be purchased through their website, but a PDF of the entire document is also available as a free download.