

Envision the Possibilities - May 2018

Newsletter of the Assistive Technology Department, Miami-Dade County Public Schools

SHEILA MIGUEL APR 23, 2018 10:30AM



Welcome back to Envision the Possibilities...

This monthly newsletter is designed for Miami-Dade County Public Schools Assistive Technology Contacts (ATCs), district ESE staff, teachers, therapists, and support staff. We will keep you up-to-date with assistive technology news, tips, apps, professional development (PD) and more. Please feel free to share the link to this newsletter - <https://padlet.com/smiguel/8xk6o1rtpl0n>

Transition of AT Tools/Devices for the end of the school year 2017-2018

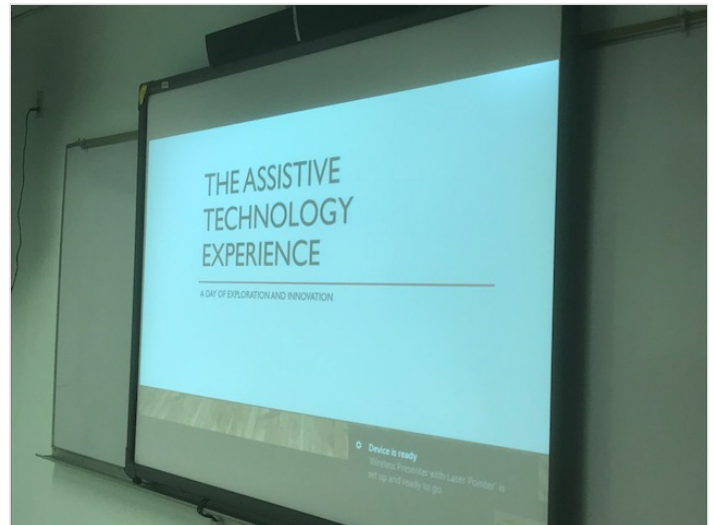
If you have a student who is using assistive technology to access IEP goals and/or the curriculum, **you will need to make arrangements for the smooth transition of the student's AT tool(s) to their educational environment for 2018-2019. (new classroom, new grade, new school, etc.)**

- For devices with a **Property Control (PC)** number, please let me know so our department can assist with the proper paperwork.
- Transfers of all other devices/tools (non-PC) need to be documented on FM 2380. Place a copy in the student's cumulative folder and please send a copy to: smiguel@dadeschools.net OR assistivetech@dadeschools.net.
- In addition, if a student is graduating or transitioning to a post secondary program, we, as a district, may consider releasing the device to the student/family/community agency. This **REQUIRES** involvement of our department.
- **The LATS team can assist with this process** - do not hesitate to email me - smiguel@dadeschools.net to ask for assistance with AT transition.

Thank you

MDCPS Professional Development "The AT Experience" - February 21, 2018

Participants in this professional development explored Low Tech Tools for Inclusive Education, aka "LOTTIE Kits", and learned more about the ATIP and the AT assessment process. See photos below.

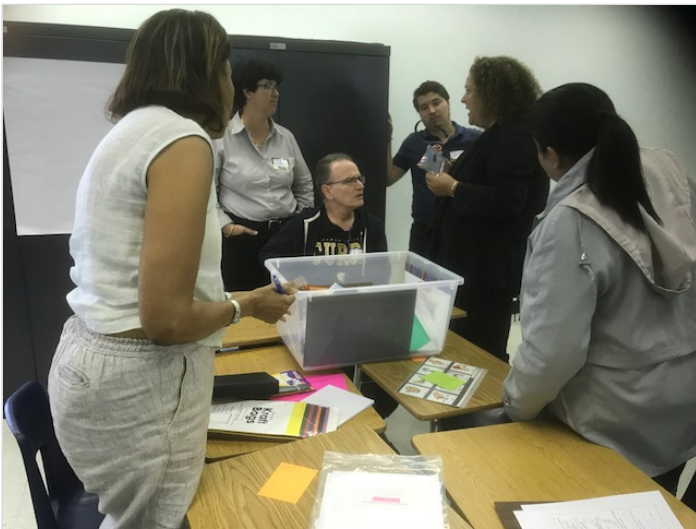




There's an App for That!

Not all apps need to be purchased from an app store. "App" is short for application and applications are used on many platforms - not just tablets or phones. Miami-Dade County Public Schools have made Microsoft Office applications available through the employee portal and the student portal. Microsoft offers many features that are extremely helpful in education. One of those is **"text-to-speech"**. TTS is an assistive technology that reads digital text aloud. It's sometimes called "read aloud". TTS is very helpful for kids who struggle with reading. This adds an extra layer of understanding by allowing students to access content using multiple senses. This can be a total game changer for struggling readers, and auditory learners. Below is a link that shows how to enable text to speech in Microsoft Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, and OneNote (applications that are available to ALL staff and students in M-DCPS).

<https://support.office.com/en-us/article/use-the-speak-text-to-speech-feature-to-read-text-aloud-459e7704-a76d-4fe2-ab48-189d6b83333c>





For more information, please contact Sheila Miguel, Dept. Chair for AT - smiguel@dadeschools.net

MEET YOUR DISTRICT LATS - Deanna Decario, M.S., Ed & Dearta

Deanna DeCario, Pre-K ESE teacher and Dearta Smith Speech Language Pathologist, (see photo below) are Local Assistive Technology Specialists (LATS) who support teachers of students in The Pre-Kindergarten Program for Children with Disabilities. Deanna and Dearta assist teachers with understanding the needs of their students, the specific tasks that will be addressed and the tools that their student(s) will use to have access to educational activities. Since play is the work of the young child, one of their favorite quotes is from Fred Rogers which states, "Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood."

Tips 4 ATIPs - Did you know that there are directions built in to the Assistive Technology Assessment and Implementation Plan (ATIP) - FM 7067?

The Assistive Technology Assessment and Implementation Plan is our district's form for initiating, completing and documenting assistive technology assessment for our students with disabilities that need AT support to meet their IEP goals and/or access their education. It is NOT a packet to be "filled out". **Rather, it is a document to guide school teams to find AT solutions for their struggling students.**

You will notice on each curriculum area page (Writing, Reading, Math, Learning Strategies and Communication, pages 2-6) that the form directs you, starting from the top of each page to the bottom, to:

BEGIN by describing difficulty the student is experiencing

NEXT Check off the student description

THEN Check a box and begin a trial of that tool

DURING the trial period, collect data on the use of the tool

CONCLUDE the trial period by describing the student's

performance using the tool

and finally, make a team

DECISION regarding the success of the AT tool.



See you next time :)
