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Technical Assistance Paper

Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities

Summary:

The purpose of this technical assistance paper (TAP) is to provide information regarding assistive technology as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004). This TAP also provides information based on the revision of section 1003.575, Florida Statutes, *Assistive technology devices; findings; interagency agreements*. This document offers guidance to school district staff for considering, determining the need for and providing assistive technology devices and services.

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FY 2004-11: *Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities*
FY 2006-6: *The Transfer of Assistive Technology to Home, Other Districts, Other Schools, and Other Agencies*

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A. Introduction and General Information

A-1. What is the purpose of this technical assistance paper (TAP)?

The purpose of this TAP is to clarify and provide information to school district staff regarding the provision of assistive technology for students with disabilities.

This technical assistance paper will help individual educational plan (IEP) teams:

- Consider assistive technologies
- Assist students in the selection, acquisition and use of assistive technologies
- Understand timelines regarding some assistive technology services
- Identify resources to support the use of assistive technologies to ensure the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE)
- Understand transition of assistive technology

B. Definitions

B-1. What is an assistive technology device?

The term “assistive technology device” is defined in Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(b), Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), as “any item, piece of equipment or product system – whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized – that is used to increase, maintain or improve the functional capabilities of a student with a disability. The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted or the replacement of that device.” This definition mirrors the definition found in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA 2004) section 300.5 of Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

The definition of the term “assistive technology device” is based on how the technology is used rather than specific types of technology. When asked to clarify whether or not certain types of technologies were assistive technology, the Federal Department of Education responded in the Major Changes in the Regulations section of 34 CFR as follows:

The definition of assistive technology device does not list specific devices, nor would it be practical or possible to include an exhaustive list of assistive technology devices. Whether an augmentative communication device, playback devices, or other devices could be considered an assistive technology device for a child depends on whether the device is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability, and whether the child’s individualized education program (IEP) Team determines that the child needs the device in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). (34 CFR 46547)*

* **Note:** The acronym IEP, as used here, reflects the federal definition; however, all other instances of the acronym “IEP” used in this TAP refer to the state definition (individual educational plan).

B-2. What is an assistive technology service?

The term “assistive technology service” is defined in Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(c), F.A.C., as any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition or use of an assistive technology device. The term includes, but is not limited to: (1) the evaluation of the needs of a student with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the child in the child’s customary environment; (2) purchasing, leasing or otherwise providing for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by students with disabilities; (3) selecting, designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing or replacing assistive technology devices; (4) coordinating and using other therapies, interventions or services with assistive technology devices, such as those associated with existing education and rehabilitation plans and programs; (5) training or technical assistance for a student with a disability or, if appropriate, that child’s family and (6) training or technical assistance for professionals (including individuals providing education or rehabilitation services), employers or other individuals who provide services to, employ or are otherwise substantially involved in the major life functions of the student. This definition mirrors the definition found in the IDEA 2004 (34 CFR §300.6). The Federal Department of Education provided clarification on the term “assistive technology service,” which stated the following:

We believe the definition is clear that an assistive technology service is any service that helps a student with a disability select an appropriate assistive technology device, obtain the device, or train the student to use the device. (34 CFR 46548)

The IEP team determines if a specific service is an assistive technology service and whether or not it is needed for a student to receive FAPE.

B-3. What is a range of assistive technology?

The definition of assistive technology device intentionally avoids the inclusion of specific types of technology, leaving it up to the IEP team to determine what is assistive technology for a student. As a result, many types of technologies have been identified as assistive technologies over the years by various IEP teams.

Examples include:

- Simple or low technology (e.g. pencil grips, tactile rulers, light pens, page holders, highlighter tape, correction tape, paper communication systems, visual supports which increase independent functioning)
- Mid technology (e.g. timers, talking photo albums, digital recorders, calculators, spell checkers, switch-operated toys and appliances, single- and

multiple-message communication systems requiring simple training of no more than one or two sessions)

- High or complex technology (e.g. computers, mobile devices, alternative keyboards, switch-control systems for computers, communication devices, word processors, graphic organizer software, text-to-speech software, text scanners, devices requiring an expert to train the user to a proficient level over time)

These are only a few examples, but they illustrate the range of technologies and devices that an IEP team may consider and that may be assessed as part of device trials and selection.

B-4. Are wheelchairs or hearing aids for students considered assistive technology?

Items such as wheelchairs, hearing aids and eyeglasses may be considered to be assistive technology (*Letter to Seiler*, 20 IDELR 1216 [OSEP 1993], *Letter to Bachus*, 22 IDELR 629 [OSEP 1995]; *Letter to Galloway*, 22 IDELR 373 [OSEP 1994]; *Letter to Stohrer*, 213 IDELR 209 [OSEP 1989]). This would typically apply on a limited basis and under unique circumstances, since these items generally meet a medical need required outside the educational environment. However, in some circumstances, personally prescribed devices must be provided if they are required to receive FAPE.

B-5. What is an assistive technology evaluation?

The term “assistive technology evaluation” is used in 34 CFR §300.6 and Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(c), F.A.C., which define the term “assistive technology service.”

Assistive technology service is defined as “any service that directly assists a student with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device,” to include “the evaluation of the needs of a student with a disability, including a functional evaluation of the student in the student’s customary environment.”

There are no regulatory requirements for what constitutes an assistive technology evaluation. It is up to the IEP team to determine what specific processes, procedures and data may be needed to help the student in the appropriate selection of an assistive technology device.

C. IEP Considerations

C-1. How does the individual educational plan (IEP) team know if a student needs assistive technology?

All IEP teams must consider whether a student with a disability requires assistive technology devices and services (34 CFR §300.324(a)(2)(v) and Rule 6A-

6.03028(3)(g)10., F.A.C.). Questions that will assist the IEP team in addressing the requirement of consideration for assistive technology include:

- What is it we want the student to be able to do within the student's education program (writing, reading, communicating, seeing, hearing) that the student is not able to do because of the disability?
- Is the student currently able to complete tasks with special strategies or accommodations?
- Is there assistive technology (e.g. devices, tools, hardware or software) currently being used to address this task?
- Would assistive technology help the student perform this skill more easily or efficiently, perform it in the least restrictive environment or perform it successfully with less personal assistance?

To assist in answering these questions, the IEP team may use a locally developed screening tool. If the IEP team decides that further assessment for assistive technology is needed beyond these questions of consideration and a screening, then procedures for reevaluation must be followed. In accordance with section 1003.575, Florida Statutes (F.S.), such reevaluation must be completed within 60 school days.

C-2. What is consideration of assistive technology?

Consideration is a discussion that takes place during the IEP team meeting using known information and results to inform a decision regarding assistive technology already being used, trying different assistive technology or discontinuing assistive technology currently in place. An IEP team should make sure they have access to information about a full range of assistive technology options and have data-based evidence of the student's needs to be able to appropriately consider assistive technology.

C-3. What does the 60-school-day timeline mean in section 1003.575, Florida Statutes (F.S.)?

Section 1003.575, F.S., states that an assistive technology evaluation must be completed within 60 school days. The 60-school-day timeline begins when the IEP team makes the recommendation for such an evaluation. During an IEP team meeting, if the IEP team recommends an assistive technology evaluation, then the parent would be asked to sign consent to conduct the evaluation procedures.

Please note that the statute does not make any provision for the adjustment of the timeline due to student absences.

C-4. Are students with 504 plans included in the definition in section 1003.575, F.S.?

No. Section 1003.575, F.S., specifically refers to students with disabilities as defined in section 1003.01(3)(a), F.S.

C-5. Are Extended School Year (ESY) days counted as school days for the purposes of the assistive technology 60-day requirement?

No. In *Letter to Cox* dated June 22, 2012, the USDOE, citing 34 CFR §300.11(c)(1), made clear that a school day is “any day, including a partial day, that children are in attendance at school for instructional purposes. School day has the same meaning for all children in school, including children with and without disabilities.” This is the same definition as in Rule 6A-6.03411, F.A.C. Thus, if a school operates a summer school program for students with and without disabilities, those days must be counted as “school days” for purposes of the 60-day timeline. Similarly, if a school provides only ESY services, those days are not counted as school days as they pertain only to students with disabilities.

C-6. Who can conduct evaluations for assistive technology?

All assistive technology services, including evaluations, are for the purpose of assisting the student to select, obtain and use assistive technology. It is up to the IEP team to determine what level of assistance is needed. For the purposes of an assistive technology evaluation, the IEP team may decide that the student and a teacher or therapist are able to complete the evaluation process or the IEP team may decide that additional expertise is needed. Each student’s assistive technology evaluation team should be unique and customized to reflect the student’s needs.

Assistive technology evaluation teams should start with the student and then include members of the IEP team, as they are the individuals directly working with the student. Additional support can be provided as recommended by the IEP team. In addition to the student, other possible team members include:

- Additional persons with personal knowledge of the student, such as a parent, other family member or guardian
- One or more persons knowledgeable in the area of curriculum, such as the general education teacher or special education teacher (or both)
- One or more persons knowledgeable in the area of language, usually a speech/language pathologist
- One or more persons knowledgeable in the area of motor skills, often an occupational or physical therapist

This is not an exhaustive list, and there can be any number of additional team members such as: an assistive technology specialist, an audiologist, a counselor, an instructional assistant, a physician, a social worker, a teacher of the visually impaired, a teacher of the deaf, an early intervention specialist, a nurse, a rehabilitation engineer or a vocational counselor.

As illustrated in B-3, there is a high degree of diversity in the technologies the IEP team may determine need to be assessed after identifying the student’s needs. The

team member composition is to be determined by the complexity or simplicity of the student's needs.

It is important for students with disabilities to become as proficient as possible in self-determination and self-selection of assistive technologies. This becomes particularly important as students move into a transition period prior to graduation.

C-7. How do school districts support the selection and provision of appropriate assistive technology devices and services?

All instructional personnel and related service providers who work with students with disabilities, including general education teachers, should have at least an awareness of what assistive technology is and what it does. These staff should know about the laws concerning assistive technology and assistive technology evaluations and how to initiate district procedures for obtaining assistive technology and assistive technology evaluations.

All administrators should have an understanding of the laws and rules related to assistive technology. They should expect assistive technology options to be available in all classrooms. Administrators should designate specific individuals at both the school and district level who will assume specific responsibilities related to assistive technology. Administrators should encourage and provide the necessary training, resources and support to staff to carry out those responsibilities.

District technology plans should include the provision and support of assistive technologies. This should include assistive technology embedded in the general curriculum (e.g., text-to-speech tools, alternative keyboards) and devices that are highly individualized (e.g., full-language communication systems).

C-8. Where should assistive technology be documented on the IEP?

The use of assistive technology should be integrated throughout the IEP. Assistive technology may be documented in the following sections of the IEP: measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives; special education and related services; supplementary aids and services or accommodations for state- and district-wide assessments. The present levels and needs of the student should determine where on the IEP the service or device will be documented.

C-9. How would assistive technology be included in a measurable annual goal?

The measurable goals and objectives regarding the use of assistive technology should relate to the present level of educational performance utilizing the assistive technology or service. Citing specific equipment or software in goals and objectives is not recommended. Rather, include the specific target skill in the goals, and note the assistive technology device attributes that are necessary for the student to succeed in the section of the IEP that addresses accommodations to be provided. It

is critical to relate the use of the technology to a functional outcome to avoid the mistake of focusing on the equipment as an end in itself rather than a means to an end. Assistive technology needs in the present level statement should also be reflected in classroom and assessment accommodations, if applicable.

C-10. How is assistive technology included as a related service?

Under IDEA, related services are provided to enable a student with disabilities to benefit from curriculum (34 CFR §300.34). During the consideration of assistive technology at the IEP team meeting, the team can make the decision to include any services, as described in B-2, as a related service (34 CFR §300.6 and Rule 6A-6.03411(1)(c), F.A.C.).

C-11. What role does assistive technology play in supporting the student in the least restrictive environment?

IDEA has been clear in recognizing the important role of assistive technology in implementing the requirement that students be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE) to the maximum extent appropriate. When an assistive technology device or service is provided to support the student in the LRE, assistive technology can appear in the IEP under supplementary aids and services or program modifications.

C-12. When developing the IEP, can a parent, student or IEP team member bring an expert to explain the technology that would be useful in a postsecondary setting?

Yes. The determination of the knowledge or special expertise of any such individual shall be made by the party who invited the individual to be a member of the IEP team (Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(c)6., F.A.C.). Parents should not be discouraged from bringing an adult of the parent's choice to any meeting with school district personnel.

D. Selecting Assistive Technology

D-1. Who decides what the assistive technology is for a student?

In 34 CFR §300.6 and 6A-6.03411(1)(c), F.A.C., an assistive technology service means “any service that directly assists a student with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.” Whenever feasible, the student selects the assistive technology in conjunction with members of the IEP team. IEP teams, which may include the student, make final decisions based on the evaluations from team members. The team may make the decision to involve professionals with expertise in assistive technology, who are not on the IEP team, to assist with the process of selection. This additional expertise may come from

occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech and language pathologists, student services personnel, assistive technology specialists or special educators.

D-2. When and where does evaluation for assistive technology take place?

The assistive technology evaluation must be conducted within the student's customary environments (34 CFR §300.6(a) and 6A-6.03411(1)(c)1., F.A.C.) since the purpose of the evaluation determines the appropriateness of an assistive technology device(s) for the student's educational program. "Customary environments" means the environments in which the student receives his or her educational instruction. If the IEP team makes a recommendation for an assistive technology evaluation, it must be completed within 60 school days (section 1003.575, F.S.). Refer to C-3 for further information.

D-3. What is the role of parents in choosing assistive technology for their child?

Parents are equal members of the IEP team (Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(a), F.A.C.) and are involved in decisions related to assistive technology.

D-4. What is the general education teacher's role in this process?

The IEP team must include at least one general education teacher if the student is, or may be, participating in the general educational environment (34 CFR §300.321(a)(2)). The general education teacher shares information about the curriculum, tasks and demands in the general education setting and assists in determining the need for supplementary aids and services, appropriate accommodations and supports for school personnel to access education and implement the IEP.

D-5. What is the assistive technology range the school district is required to provide for a student?

The decisions as to what type of assistive technology is appropriate should be based on the evaluation for assistive technology and the IEP team decision. The school must provide appropriate technology for the student's needs to ensure FAPE. If a specific assistive technology is necessary to ensure FAPE for a student and no other assistive technology can meet the student's educational needs, the district must provide the required assistive technology. Ranges of assistive technology are described in B-3. If simple technology, older or less expensive assistive technology would accomplish the same goals, the school district is under no obligation to choose a complex technology, newer or more expensive option.

D-6. If the IEP team cannot come to consensus regarding an assistive technology device or service, what should occur?

The IEP team should work toward consensus, but the school district has ultimate responsibility to ensure that the IEP includes the supplementary aids and services that the student needs in order to receive FAPE. It is never appropriate to make IEP decisions based upon a majority “vote.” If the team cannot reach consensus, the school district must:

- inform the parents of the district’s proposals or refusals, or both, regarding the student’s IEP;
- provide the parents with a written copy of the IEP that includes not only those items upon which the parents and district agree, but also those items the district proposes as essential for the provision of FAPE;
- provide a notice of refusal regarding the student’s IEP and those items the district does not consider essential for the provision of FAPE (Rule 6A-6.0331(3)(b)3., F.A.C.); and
- advise the parents that they have a right to seek resolution of any disagreements through processes such as requesting formal mediation or initiating an impartial due process hearing.

E. Funding of Assistive Technology

E-1. How will the school district pay for assistive technology for a student who is served in exceptional student education and needs assistive technology?

If a student with a disability who is eligible under IDEA requires assistive technology in order to receive FAPE, the school must provide the appropriate assistive technology devices and services at no cost to the parents (34 CFR §300.154 and Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(q), F.A.C.).

School districts should be proactive in coordinating efforts to secure supplemental funding. Districts may use any of the following funds to purchase assistive technology devices and services:

- State education funds
- District education funds
- Federal funds provided under IDEA for eligible students with disabilities
- Other available sources, such as donations, private insurance and Medicaid

When equipment is purchased with state education funds, district education funds, state special education funds or IDEA funds, the equipment becomes the property of the school and the school is responsible for maintenance, repair and insurance.

E-2. Is the school district required to provide assistive technology for a student who has a 504 plan and needs assistive technology?

Yes. If a student not receiving special education services requires assistive technology to fully participate in school activities, services defined by Section 504

of the Rehabilitation Act may be appropriate. Section 504 does not provide any financial assistance to the school district. These funds come from the school district's general budget and would be used to provide the device, training needed to use the device, repairs and maintenance.

E-3. Is the school district required to provide assistive technology for students with disabilities attending private school?

Possibly. The specific types of services to be provided are based on information obtained during the school district's consultation with representatives of private schools and parents of students with disabilities. The school district makes the final decision with respect to services provided (34 CRF §300.137). Please refer to the technical assistance paper entitled *Students with Disabilities Enrolled by Their Parents in Private Schools*, <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6084/dps-2011-23.pdf>.

E-4. Can a school district decline to provide assistive technology services and equipment because of lack of funds?

No. While cost may be a factor in providing FAPE, it cannot be the controlling factor, particularly when choosing assistive technology. The only time cost can be considered is when two equal alternatives are available. Not including assistive technology costs in the district technology budget does not relieve school districts of their obligations to make FAPE available.

E-5. Can a family be required to use their private insurance to cover the cost of assistive technology?

No (34 CFR §300.154 and Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(q), F.A.C.). The family cannot be required to use private insurance or to incur financial responsibility. If the family chooses, they may use their private insurance. The use of private insurance may include co-pay or deductible, annual or lifetime cap or frequency of coverage restriction for an item. While the school district may pay the costs for deductible or co-pay, for example, they also have the responsibility to inform parents of the implications. If a parent does not give consent, provision of special education and related services remains the obligation of the school district.

E-6. Can Medicaid be used to pay for the cost of assistive technology?

Yes with signed parent permission. Medicaid will pay for certain equipment through the Medicaid Durable Medical Equipment (DME) and Medical Supply Services Program. Equipment covered under the DME program includes items such as augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. Some therapy services related to AACs – such as AAC evaluations, training, fittings and adjustments – are covered by the Medicaid Certified School Match Program.

Medicaid will reimburse only for systems and services that are deemed medically necessary.

If equipment is purchased through Medicaid funds or a family's insurance, the equipment becomes the property of the family and the family is generally responsible for maintenance, repair and insurance. If the parents or a third party pays for a portion of a device and the school pays for a portion of a device, it is advisable to create a written agreement between the school and the parents or third party regarding ownership and repairs.

E-7. Can the parents choose to purchase a device for the child to use? Does the school have any responsibility for the device in this situation?

Yes. Parents may purchase a device for their child to use at school. If this device is identified on the IEP, the school district is responsible for such a device if the utilization of the device is noted in the student's IEP as a supplemental aid. It is advisable to create written documentation of the assistive technology the school was offering and a statement as to why the parentally purchased device is being used. School districts have a responsibility to ensure delivery of all devices and services needed for FAPE, even if external funding is used (34 CFR §300.154 and Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(q), F.A.C.).

F. Implementing Assistive Technology

F-1. In addition to the student, who else should receive training on how to use an assistive technology device or service?

Anyone with whom the student may use the device should receive training. This includes parents, general education teachers, special education teachers, bus staff, paraprofessionals, lunchroom staff, relevant peers and others. It is the district's responsibility to train appropriate staff members in proper use of the technology. Each teacher and provider involved with the student must be informed of the specific accommodations, modifications and supports that must be provided for the student in accordance with the IEP.

F-2. What kinds of training and technical assistance should be provided to families, peers, and professionals?

Depending on the technology and the involvement of the family, peers and professionals with the student, training and technical assistance should include, but not be limited to, providing information and training about:

- The explicit function/purpose the device/software serves for the student and how it works;
- Programming and setting up the device/software;
- Recognizing and fixing minor problems;

- Integrating the device/software into the student's life at home;
- Integrating the device/software into the student's education goals and objectives;
- Maintenance of the device/software and
- Resources within the local community for repair services.

F-3. What if the student does not use the assistive technology device after it has been purchased?

An IEP team should return to the process of considering assistive technology and determine if different assistive technology is required to meet the student's needs.

G. Use of Assistive Technology outside the School Setting

G-1. Can a student take an assistive technology device home?

Possibly (*Letter to Anonymous*, 18 IDELR 627 [OSEP 1991]). This is determined on an individual basis and specified on the IEP. If the student requires assistive technology to complete homework assignments or practice skills that require the device such as communication or socialization, it should be written into the IEP. Not all assistive technology may be required for home use.

G-2. Can a student use the assistive technology device over the summer?

Possibly. This is determined on an individual basis and specified on the IEP. Whether assistive technology is considered as special education or a related service, it can be provided as ESY program services if included in the IEP.

G-3. Is the parent responsible if the district device is lost or damaged?

No. When assistive technology is specified on the student's IEP, the family cannot be required to incur any financial responsibilities (34 CFR §300.154 and Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(q), F.A.C.). Districts' insurance policies regarding loss or damage should be consulted. Loss does not relieve the school of its responsibility to ensure the student's access to a device. However, if a student loses or breaks the same device more than once, the IEP team may need to consider whether it is an appropriate device and determine if there are other devices that better meet the student's needs.

G-4. Does the student keep the same assistive technology until graduation?

Consideration and provision of assistive technology is an ongoing process. The IEP team must continue to assess the assistive technology goals and determine if the device will meet the student's needs (34 CFR §300.324,(a)(2)(v) and Rule 6A-6.03028,(3)(g)10., F.A.C.). If goals are being met, the student should keep the same assistive technology. However, the team should also anticipate further academic demands and determine how well the device will meet future needs.

H. Transition of Assistive Technology

H-1. How does section 1003.575, F.S., guide the transfer of assistive technology between agencies?

Section 1003.575, F.S., requires an interagency agreement to ensure the proper transition of assistive technology devices. The law requires the following entities to outline the assistive technology transition procedures to be used by the participating agencies:

- The Florida Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention Program of the Department of Health
- The Division of Blind Services of the Florida Department of Education
- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Florida Department of Education
- The Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program of the Florida Department of Education and the Agency for Workforce Innovation
- The Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services of the Florida Department of Education

The agreement provides the framework for ensuring that students with disabilities, their families, educators and postsecondary support agencies coordinate services. In addition, the agreement ensures that all agencies are informed about the needed assistive technology and the postsecondary support required to meet the student's transition goals.

Further information regarding the Florida Interagency Agreement for the Transfer of Assistive Technology can be found at <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-3967/k12-06-131.pdf>. Sample forms for transfer of assistive technology are located at the end of the document, which may be used by parents and agencies to track assistive technology requests and outcomes.

H-2. What if the student moves to another school within the district?

The requirements of the student's IEP must be met by the school the student attends (34 CFR §300.323(e)). If assistive technology is required in the IEP, it must be provided at the new school (34 CFR §300.323(e)). The same device does not need to necessarily follow the student, but since students often profit from continued use of the same device, this transfer of assistive devices from school to school is encouraged.

H-3. What if the student moves to another district?

As stated in 34 CFR §80.32(c)(2), agencies or districts can make equipment available for use in other districts. While assistive technology purchased by the district is the property of the district, transfer of dedicated assistive technology to other districts is encouraged.

H-4. What if the student still needs the assistive technology after graduation?

The IDEA 2004 specifically notes the school's responsibility for transition services (34 CFR §300.320(b)). Transition planning must begin by age 14 or eighth grade, whichever occurs first (Rule 6A-6.03028(3)(b)4., F.A.C.). The IEP should include a statement of assistive technology needed under transition services, including a statement indicating agency responsibilities and linkages, if appropriate. Various agencies may be involved, and the decision regarding which agency is responsible for providing assistive technology services should be determined during the IEP process.

H-5. Who is responsible for providing the assistive technology determined necessary by the IEP team for postsecondary transition?

It remains the school district's responsibility to provide a plan for the transition of assistive technology as the student prepares for postsecondary education, vocational placement, independent living and community experiences. If the student will benefit from continued use of the same device, the transition of technology from school to the post-school setting is encouraged. The IEP team must "invite a representative of any participating agency that is likely to be responsible for providing or paying for transition services" (34 CFR §300.321(b)(3)) such as assistive technology services and devices. According to section 1003.575, F.S., and the signed Florida Interagency Agreement for the Transfer of Assistive Technology memorandum, <http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-3967/k12-06-131.pdf>, this might be a participating agency providing the assistive technology. However, if the participating agency fails to provide the transition services and assistive technology defined in the IEP, the school district shall reconvene the team to identify alternative strategies to meet the transition objectives.

H-6. Can students take assistive technology with them when they graduate?

In accordance with section 1003.575, F.S., upon parental or student request, the district may transfer assistive technology to the postsecondary setting. The transfer must follow the appropriate interagency agreement procedures, with the receiving agency documenting support of the equipment. If the family or another funding source purchases the device for the student, it is the property of the student and may be used by the student for post-graduation activities.

H-7. What is the responsibility of the IEP team for the transition of assistive technology devices and services to the postsecondary setting?

If assistive technology devices and services are needed by a student to benefit from a secondary educational program, it is likely devices and services will be needed for postsecondary education, training, employment and other postsecondary activities. In order to ensure the transition of assistive technology devices and services upon graduation, it is important to facilitate a successful transition. The following information provides guidance to IEP teams:

At age 14: Independence in using and understanding technology is a key factor in successful transition upon graduation. Therefore, training the student to use the technology independently may need to be addressed as early as the student's age 14 or eighth grade IEP, whichever occurs first, in order to meet the student's transition service needs. Additionally, self-advocacy training may begin at this time to help the student learn how to advocate for needed technology devices and services, both in secondary educational environments and ultimately in postsecondary settings.

At age 16: For a student with technology needs, the IEP should include a statement of needed assistive technology transition services for the student, including the provision of assistive technology by agencies and/or supports, responsibilities and service linkages. The needed assistive technology transition services for the student could be the replacement of current technology, continued support for current technology or funding of new technology to support additional postsecondary responsibilities.

H-8. How can the student be an effective self-advocate for post-graduation assistive technology support?

Training on self-determination and self-advocacy is intended to assist the student in acquiring these skills. The student should also have a complete understanding of the assistive technology services needed and be prepared to use the technology as independently as possible. IEP goals may address those skills needed for self-advocacy and independence in selection and use of assistive technology.