



Greetings Assistive Technology (AT) Forward Community of Practice Members.

Welcome to the middle of May!

This will be our last full AT Forward monthly email for this school year but we may send a few short summer updates.

We need your help in planning for 2023-2024 by taking the following survey link below.

[Assistive Technology Forward End of Year Survey](#)

Your feedback will help us with planning to continue our support of the [AT Forward CoP meetings](#), [micro-credential program](#), [Assistive Technology Lending Center \(ATLC\)](#), [Wisconsin Accessible Educational Materials \(AEM\) Center](#), and maintaining the [Wisconsin Assistive Technology Resource Map](#), and will also assist us with planning some additional projects in 2023-2024.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to complete this end of year survey on behalf of Wisconsin DPI and CESA 2.

New to AT Forward or Want to Browse Past Email Updates?

Go to the Wisconsin DPI [AT Forward webpage](#) and click on [Previous AT Forward Monthly Updates](#).

What is AT Forward?

The Assistive Technology (AT) Forward Project works with educators, practitioners, caregivers, and families to increase student autonomy in utilizing Assistive Technology tools to support access, engagement, and progress in learning. The AT Forward Project provides a variety of resources and learning opportunities, including [Community of Practice \(CoP\) meetings](#), [micro-credentialing](#), and monthly email updates. Please help us grow our AT community in Wisconsin and refer others to the [AT Forward CoP](#), by visiting the [AT Forward Registration page](#). From AT beginner to expert, the AT Forward CoP welcomes all knowledge level backgrounds!

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Transitioning into the New School Year

As we dig into this month of transition, it is a great time to make notes on what Assistive Technology your student has used during the school year. Whether your student is going on to another school, or just another grade, keeping a historical record of what has been trialed can assist the next teacher in finding the right tool(s) for a student. If your student is graduating, think about writing a letter for that student that outlines the technology they have used. Translation can be difficult for people. Preparing students by providing them with a list of assistive technology they have been successful with is one less thing they need to think about. Assistive Technology can be in many parts of the IEP. When a student is graduating be sure and add AT to the Summary of Performance, and P-3 Notice of Graduation.

Upcoming Assistive Technology CoP Professional Learning Events

Closing the Gap Conference

Looking to attend a conference this fall? The [41st Annual Closing the Gap Conference](#) will be October 11-13 in Minneapolis.

2023 WisTech Virtual Trainings: WisTech has announced the following 2023 trainings, which are free for participants to attend and include the following learning opportunities:

- #1 Over the River and Through the Woods, Creating Accessible Outdoor Recreation: May 30, 2023: [Register for WisTech Training #1](#)
- #2 The Power of Sharing: Using Social Media to Highlight Assistive Technology and Accessibility: June 13, 2023: [Register for WisTech Training #2](#)
- #3 Supporting Transition Using Native iPhone Apps: August 22, 2023: [Register for WisTech Training #3](#)
- #4 “On the Fly” Accommodations: September 19, 2023: [Register for WisTech Training #4](#)
- #5 Love It or List It! Vetting Apps and Technology for Accessibility: September 26, 2023: [Registration for WisTech Training #5](#)

Micro-Credentials

The AT Forward is excited to provide free supported micro-credentials and macro-credentials for assistive technology learning opportunities. Micro-credentialing is an opportunity for educators to learn on their own time, pace, and place. Learning is structured in an online platform and is supported with email and video conference

communication to enable clarity and success. As participants complete their micro-credentials, they receive feedback to assist in clarifying their goals and earn a digital badge. Digital badges can be added to your email signature to show others your commitment to assistive technology. For the 2022-23 school year, we are excited to announce new learning opportunities around Accessible Educational Materials (AEM), Early Childhood, and AT for Administrators .

Micro Credential status:

We are pleased to announce the following celebrations:
240 badges have been awarded to date.

Congratulations to the following people who have earned one or more micro-credentials in Assistive Technology:

Elizabeth Kirsop	The Haase House	5 badges!
Anna Greben	CESA 2	1 badge
Jenny Sikora	School District of Janesville	3 badges
Lily Medeiros-Harris	Hortonville Area School District	1 badge

Assistive Technology Resource Suggestions

May can be a very busy time for teachers as they gather data and write that IEP for the next school year. If you have any questions on how to write AEM in the IEP, check out this [AEM in the IEP Resource from CAST](#), a resource comes from the National Center for Accessible Materials.

Artificial Intelligence is a huge topic. If you're wanting to learn more about this topic check out [How to use AI to do practical stuff: A new guide](#). SMART home technology can assist students with everyday tasks as well as being more independent as they translate to independent living, work environments and or higher education.

Accessible Educational Materials (AEM)

We want to thank all of our AT Forward CoP members who attended the AEM webinar series. If you are looking for additional AEM learning opportunities or resources, we encourage you to visit the following websites/resources:

- [AT Forward Micro-Credentials](#): If you are interested in earning a free micro-credential in the area of AEM, then visit the AT Forward Micro-Credential website.
- [AT Forward Video Resource Library by Topic](#): The recordings of the AEM webinar series can be found in the AT Forward Video Resource Library.
- [DPI Update Bulletin 20.02](#): This bulletin provides the updated legal requirements around AEM.
- [AEM Decision Tree for IEP Teams](#): The AEM Decision Tree is a great resource for IEP teams to help determine the need for AEM.
- [AEM Next Steps Guidance Document](#): The AEM Next Steps Guidance provides information to support identifying the type of AEM needed, acquiring AEM,

training staff, families, students, and caregivers, and progress monitoring around AEM.

- Wisconsin AEM Center: The WI AEM Center is a point-of-contact for educators to seek support in acquiring Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) in digital formats.
- Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI): The WCBVI AEM Center is a point-of-contact for educators to seek support in acquiring Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) in braille or large print formats.

Sometimes All We Need To Do Is Start A Conversation....

Global Accessibility Awareness Day - Thursday, May 18, 2023, will be the 12th Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD)! "The purpose of GAAD is to get everyone talking, thinking and learning about digital access and inclusion, and the more than One Billion people with disabilities/impairments."

Mental Health Awareness Month - Today more than ever, our students struggle with mental health challenges. Take a minute and talk about some of the resources available to students such as video doctor appointments, SMART tech to monitor medication needs, reminders and noise canceling tech. Sometimes just knowing the tech is out there can make a huge difference in the life of an individual with mental health challenges.

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Corner

With summer right around the corner many parents are thinking about summer camps and other resources available for their child with special needs. Below is a list of camps - residential and day, that specialize in assisting those with AAC needs.

Family Voices

"Family Voices of Wisconsin promotes a system of comprehensive health and community supports based on fundamental principles that assure the health and well-being of children and youth with special health care needs and/or disabilities and their families. Our role is to advocate for the inclusion of these principles in the design, implementation and delivery of supports and services throughout Wisconsin."

Northern Regional Center

Northern Regional Center offers a variety of services to parents of children with special needs. Their current website has a list of camps that are available within our state. (Be sure and scroll down to view the list of camps on their website.)

Easterseals Camps

"Easterseals of Wisconsin provides Summer Respite Camp programs for children, teens, and young adults ages 7-21 with or without disabilities and an Adult Summer Day Camp to serve ages 18 and over. Trained staff provide a safe and supportive environment for all of our campers. At camp, participants have opportunities to build social skills, explore

their individual interests and talents, make friends, and experience being a part of the community. All camps are Monday-Friday and are available in 2-week sessions. “

Variety the Children's Charity of Wisconsin

Variety the Children's Charity of Wisconsin, through our partnership with graduate speech pathology students and other student volunteers and instructors host this overnight camp for children with special needs who use assistive communication devices and their immediate family members. Link to [Variety the Children's Charity webpage](#).

Chatter Matters

What makes Chatter Matters unique is that it's just like a traditional summer camp, but the activities are fully adapted for AAC users ages 5- 15. Through activities like arts & crafts, adaptive sports, games, bowling, a dance party, and a talent show, children learn to improve use of their communication device use. By allowing parents and siblings to attend, families have fun, create lasting memories, and bond with other families of children with special needs.”

Thursday, June 15- Sunday, June 18, 2023

Limited to 30 families. Max 6 immediate members per family. Check in is scheduled tentatively for 12:00 pm. Residence is scheduled tentatively for Ma'iingan Hall. [Click on this Chatter Matters website link to apply](#)

Authentic Voices of America AVA Camp

[Authentic Voices of America AVA Camp](#) provides young people who have severe speech impairments the opportunity to enhance their community participation by developing communication skills using augmentative devices. This week-long residential camp, held at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, offers participants the chance to gain a greater awareness of their abilities and to build their independence and self-confidence, while having fun. Camp activities are designed to “unlock” the unique voice within each participant. The overarching goal of this camp is to offer participants an opportunity to have fun, gain greater awareness of their abilities, and build their independence and self-confidence. One of the unique aspects of Authentic Voices of America is that its founder and Director, Jon Feucht, also uses a communication device, due to his Cerebral Palsy.

QIAT community, help me out!

Question: “Hello QIAT team!

My 10 year old non-speaking student just scored low average on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary test and district is looking for an expressive language score.

He's using TD snap and mostly talks in words on his device, word approximations verbally, and gestures. Does anyone have any ideas on how to assess his expressive language through standardized testing?

QIAT community, help me out!

Answers from the group:

- I am wondering if you can count the words that he says through his communication device as spoken words.
- If you are looking for data to guide intervention, then I would take Dr. Cathy Binger’s advice and match intervention to the student’s receptive language, not expressive. Any expressive language measure will conflate the student’s skills with symbol recognition, operational competence, and linguistic competence such as vocabulary. For example, poor syntax or grammar may have nothing to do with the student’s linguistic skills and may have everything to do with the motor/operational demands or limitations of his AAC. Poor syntax or lack of morphological markers can be a strategic way to speed up message construction, or can simply reflect what he’s learned to select in his AAC vs what he knows about syntax and grammar. All of this needs to be carefully unpacked to help the student develop fluent AAC use. The student’s receptive language, however, will help you plan instruction and makes it much more likely you are targeting instruction to his areas of need and not teaching him things he knows but simply can’t fluently select and express in AAC.

What is a feature match?

Feature matching occurs when you look systematically at what a student needs and the features of various programs. Below is an example of feature matching as it relates to students who display difficulties in the area of executive functioning.

When completing an evaluation, it is important to look at the student's disability-related educational needs. To further assist with this process, explore this resource on the DPI site that looks at the six areas of academic and functional skill. “Specifically, they are intended to serve as a guide for developing, reflecting on, and organizing developmentally and educationally relevant questions when planning and conducting a comprehensive special education evaluation aimed at accurately identifying a student's pattern of strengths and disability-related needs.” *Comprehensive Special Education Evaluation: Six Areas of Academic and Functional Skill | Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (2022).* [Dpi.Wi.Gov. https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/ccr-ieps/comp-eval/six-areas](https://dpi.wi.gov/sped/ccr-ieps/comp-eval/six-areas)

When conducting an IEP and having the conversation about “whether the student needs assistive technology services or devices,” consider the following questions in the area of **vision**.

✓	Area of Student Concern- Vision	Potential Solution Feature Match
	Are there accessible supports in place to assist a student who cannot see or locate a pointer on the screen?	Consider built in accessible feature to enlarge the cursor, change the cursors shape, or give it a visual “tail” <u>Windows</u> <u>Chrome</u>

✓	Area of Student Concern- Vision	Potential Solution Feature Match
	Are there accessible supports in place to assist a student who cannot see the print on the screen because it is too small?	Consider enlarging the text or using a built-in magnifier <u>Windows Chromebook iPad</u> , or teaching a keyboard shortcut, <u>Zoom features on ipad</u>
	Are there accessible supports in place to assist a student who may be light sensitive or has difficulty seeing text on a white background?	Issues with glare are very common for students with visual impairments. Consider setting a high contrast theme or changing to a dark theme <u>Windows Chrome iPad</u>
	Are there accessible supports in place to assist a student who experiences eye fatigue and needs to have content on the screen read to them?	Consider utilizing screen reading solutions. Note these are not full screen readers and only read text content. They are not meant for totally blind users <u>Windows Chromebook iPad</u>
	Are there accessible supports in place to assist a student who has difficulty using or remembering keyboard commands?	Consider a trial with a touchscreen device and or use gestures for access <u>Windows iPad Chrome</u>
	Are there accessible supports in place to assist a student who has difficulties copying information from a board or other note taking task?	Consider allowing the student to use their phone to take a picture of the note. Consider a peer to peer note taking strategy Consider supplying the student with notes and teaching them to use a highlighter to stay engaged Consider technology such as a note taking pen (audio recorder like <u>Livescribe Pen</u>)
	Are there accessible supports in place to assist a student who has difficulties finding their place on the screen when creating written content?	Consider changing the thickness, and or color of the mouse pointer (<u>Custom Cursor for Chrome</u>)
	Are there accessible supports in place to assist a student who finds it difficult to find their place with electronic documents?	Consider teaching the student the "Control F" command to file find a page number, quote or other piece of needed information
	Are there accessible supports in place to assist a student who has difficulties with reading large amounts of text?	Consider etext such as <u>Bookshare</u> or <u>Learning Ally</u>

✓	Area of Student Concern- Vision	Potential Solution Feature Match
	Are there accessible supports in place to assist a student who has difficulties with filling out worksheets with small spaces?	Consider annotation programs such as <u>Kami</u> , <u>Google Classroom</u> or <u>Snap&Read</u>

A special thank you to Amy Snow for her assistance in completing the Feature Match for the area of Vision.

Together we can move AT Forward!!

If you have any questions or comments about the AT Forward Project, please contact Kathy White at Kathy.White@CESA2.org or Stacy Duffy at stacy.duffy@cesa2.org.