

Partnering to Serve Students with Disabilities – Oklahoma's Story

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- Located on the campus of Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma
- Partners with private, public/state, and federal agencies/organizations receiving leveraged funds to expand services

Oklahoma ABLE Tech



OKLAHOMA'S PARTNERSHIP HISTORY



2004 - 2009

2004 - Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding to provide targeted support for 26 early intervention sites for Part C

2005 – Contract to provide alternative dispute resolution services for Parts B and C

2009 - Contract to provide Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) devices and services for Part B

2013 - 2018

2013 – Response for Proposal (RFP) awarded, and services expanded with AT and digital accessibility services for Part B

2018 – Contract expanded to include funding for Part C

2020 - Became an Accessible Education Materials (AEM) Cohort State

2024 - ...

Current – Annual, non-competitive contract provides leveraged funds for AT, AEM, and digital accessibility services for Parts B and C

Future: Anticipate responding to an RFP

Formerly

- Contracted service provider used an expert model
- ABLE Tech could only offer universal services (not much targeted/intensive assistance)

“Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”



Currently

- Supporting the SEA and operating as an extension of the SEA
- Helping build capacity at the local level
- At the foundation:
 - Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology (QIAT)
 - Student, Environments, Tasks, and Tools (SETT) Framework

- **Invited:**

- Gayl Bowser
- Joan Breslin-Larson
- Penny Reed
- Joy Zabala

- **Format:**

- In-person workshops
- Follow-up webinars
- TA guides and online resources (updating)

- **Topics:**

1. Consideration
2. Assessment
3. AT in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)
4. Implementation
5. Evaluation of Effectiveness
6. Transition
7. Administrative Support
8. Professional Development

Building Capacity in the Beginning

- **Invited:**

- ABLE Tech Staff

- **Format:**

- In-person workshops
- Self-paced courses and online modules
- TA guides and online resources (updating)

- **Bonus:**

- So much AT!!!

- **Topics:**

1. Consideration
2. Assessment
3. AT in the Individualized Education Program (IEP)
4. Implementation
5. Evaluation of Effectiveness
6. Transition
7. Administrative Support
8. Professional Development
9. AEM
10. Digital Accessibility

Building Capacity Now



HOW AT ACT PROGRAMS CAN WORK WITH SEAS

Primary State Level Activities

- Provide **demonstrations** and **short-term loans** of AT to Local Education Agency (LEA) personnel, parents, and other stakeholders – AT Act
- These activities assist LEAs in comprehensively considering and assessing students' needs for AT devices and services/auxiliary aids and services.
- Secondary activities include Device Reutilization and State Financing.

Device Demonstrations

- Device Demonstrations let people explore different types of AT. They can try out and compare various devices. They can see the similarities and differences between devices to assist them in making an informed decision before acquiring the needed device(s).
- AT Act Programs have an entire library of different categories of devices that trained staff can demonstrate for individuals to decide which ones work best for them.

State Level Activities: Device Demonstration Data Trends

- FFY 2014 OK Data: 200 Device Demonstrations reported education as the primary purpose for which AT is needed.
- FFY 2015 OK Data: 382 Device Demonstrations reported education as the primary purpose for which AT is needed.
- FFY 2022 National Data: 28 percent of AT demonstrated to consumers was used for education.
- FFY 2022 OK Data: 41 percent of AT demonstrated to consumers was used for education.
- FFY 2023 OK Data: 3,336 Device Demonstrations reported education as the primary purpose for which AT is needed.

Device Short-Term Loans

- Device Short-Term Loans let people borrow AT for a limited time. By borrowing a device, people see if it is a good fit for them in their customary environment. Loans let people “try before they buy” to use in any environment (i.e., education, employment, community living).
- Most programs have an online library where you can see what specific devices are available to borrow.
- While programs differ, individuals can typically borrow a device for 5-7 weeks.

State Level Activities: Device Short-Term Loan Data Trends

- FFY 2014 OK Data: 558 Device Loans reported education as the primary purpose for which AT is needed.
- FFY 2015 OK Data: 1,076 Device Loans reported education as the primary purpose for which AT is needed.
- FFY 2022 National Data: 35 percent of Device Loans were utilized for education.
- FFY 2022 OK Data: 56 percent of Device Loans were utilized for education.
- FFY 2023 OK Data: 1,188 Device Loans reported education as the primary purpose for which AT is needed

Device Reutilization

- Reutilization provides new homes for used AT and durable medical equipment (DME). When an original owner no longer needs AT/DME, the donated, gently used AT/DME is retrieved, repaired, refurbished, and reassigned to someone in need who cannot otherwise afford the needed equipment.
- Reutilization programs also provide for the exchange of AT devices. This program is a person-to-person exchange, which functions like a free classified online marketplace.
- Most programs have an online library of AT/DME available for reutilization.
- **FFY 2022 National Data: 3 percent of AT acquired through device reutilization programs was for education.**
- **FFY 2022 OK Data: 1 percent of AT acquired through device reutilization programs was for education.**

State Financing Activities

- State Financing Activities help people procure AT. Through non-AT Act Program dollars, grants, or cash loans, people can get the AT they need. In some instances, people get AT for free (i.e., 3D printing, AT fabrication).
- Most AT Act Programs provide lower interest financial loans to purchase needed AT for vehicle modifications or home modifications. AT Act Programs are aware of other types of funding and free services to help individuals get needed equipment.
- **FFY 2022 National Data: 11 percent of AT acquired through state financing activities was used for education.**
- **FFY 2022 OK Data: 2 percent of AT acquired through state financing activities was used for education.**

Primary State Leadership Activities

- Provide **information and assistance** (including consultations), **education**/professional development, and **technical assistance** to Local Education Agency (LEA) personnel, parents, and other stakeholders
- These activities assist LEAs in systematically and comprehensively considering students' needs for AT devices and services.
- These activities also assist LEAs with the selection, acquisition, and use of AT devices, documenting AT in the IEP, transitioning AT with the student, and more.

State-Leadership Activities: Information & Assistance (I&A)

- Information and assistance (I&A) activities are those in which AT Act Programs respond to requests for information or put individuals in contact with other entities.
- These other entities can provide individuals with information and intensive assistance on AT devices/services or AT funding.
- **FFY 2022 National Data: A total of 248,878 individuals received I&A – Out of those 16 percent were representatives of education.**
- **FFY 2022 OK Data: A total of 399 individuals received I&A – Out of those 3 percent were representatives of education. NOTE: Other individuals helping/serving students may be captured in other categories (family member/caregiver, health/allied health, etc.)**

State-Leadership Activities: Education/Training

- Training activities are instructional events for a specific purpose or audience that are designed to increase participants' knowledge, skills, and competencies around AT. Examples include large or small group classes, workshops, and presentations, and training can be delivered in person or via a variety of distance education mechanisms (ED, 2011). f

State Leadership Activities: Education/Training Data Trends

- FFY 2013 OK Data: 135 representatives of education.
- FFY 2014 OK Data: 2,394 representatives of education.
- FFY 2022 National Data: Out of 90,201 trainees, 24% were representatives of education.
- FFY 2022 OK Data: Out of 3,597 trainees, 31% were representatives of education. NOTE: Other individuals helping/serving students may be captured in other categories (family member/caregiver, health/allied health, etc.)

State-Leadership Activities: Technical Assistance

- Technical assistance (TA) is provided by AT Act Programs to help public agencies and other organizations improve their, policies, programs and outcomes. As a result of TA and other activities, some AT Act Programs report improved outcomes with policy, practices, or procedures that resulted in increased access to and acquisition of AT in the state/territory.
- **FFY 2022 National Data: The 56 grantees reported providing a TA for education agencies (30 percent).**
- **FFY 2022 OK Data: Oklahoma ABLE Tech reported providing a TA for education agencies (46 percent).**



Additional Partnerships to Support Students with Disabilities

AT Act Programs partner with many different types of agencies and organizations to synergize resources and increase quality AT services to students with disabilities.

Oklahoma ABLE Tech partners with the following:

- The Department of Rehabilitation Services - Expands transition services and digital accessibility supports
- The National AEM Center (CAST) – Expands AEM services
- The Medicaid Agency – Provides additional support for acquiring needed AT and DME
- And more!



Examples of SEA Contracts with AT Act Program

- Contracted to provide services related to Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) – Part B
- Contract to provide AT and Information Services (including AEM and digital accessibility) – Part B
- Contract to include services for Part C

SEA Benefits

Increased participation and expertise synergized in targeted areas – extension of (not duplication of) services:

- Assessment
- Data
- Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC)
- Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- Transition Council
- Procurement and Textbook Adoption
- IDEA Panel B
- State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP)
- Pathways to Partnership Grant
- And more!

LEA Benefits

Targeted supports focused on the Quality Indicators for AT (QIAT) Service Delivery in the Schools:

- Consideration of AT Needs
- Assessment of AT Needs
- AT in the IEP
- AT Implementation
- Evaluation of Effectiveness of AT
- AT in Transition
- Administrative Support for AT
- AT Professional Development

LEA Benefits (cont.)

- Targeted supports focused on the Quality Indicators for provision of AEM and Technology in the Schools:
 - A Coordinated System
 - Timely Manner
 - Written Guidelines
 - Comprehensive Learning Opportunities
 - Data Collection
 - Data Use
 - Allocation of Resources

AT Act Program Benefits

Contractual deliverables perfectly align to AT Act Program activities:

- State Level
- State Leadership
- Collaboration Initiatives

More students, school personnel, families, and other service providers are served in a comprehensive way working at both the systemic level (SEA) and the local level (LEA).



Partnerships Enhance Supports

- Through partnerships and contracts, AT Act Programs can more fully support SEAs and LEAs in meeting legal requirements for serving students with disabilities.
- When students have needed devices and services, they function more independently and participate more fully – making progress towards academic standards and working towards competitive, integrated employment.

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