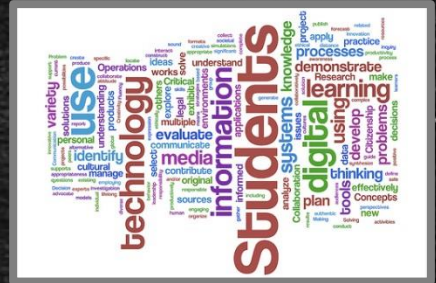


Where are you?



How well is my school doing with implementing effective High Tech Assistive Technology with Students with Disabilities ?



A



B



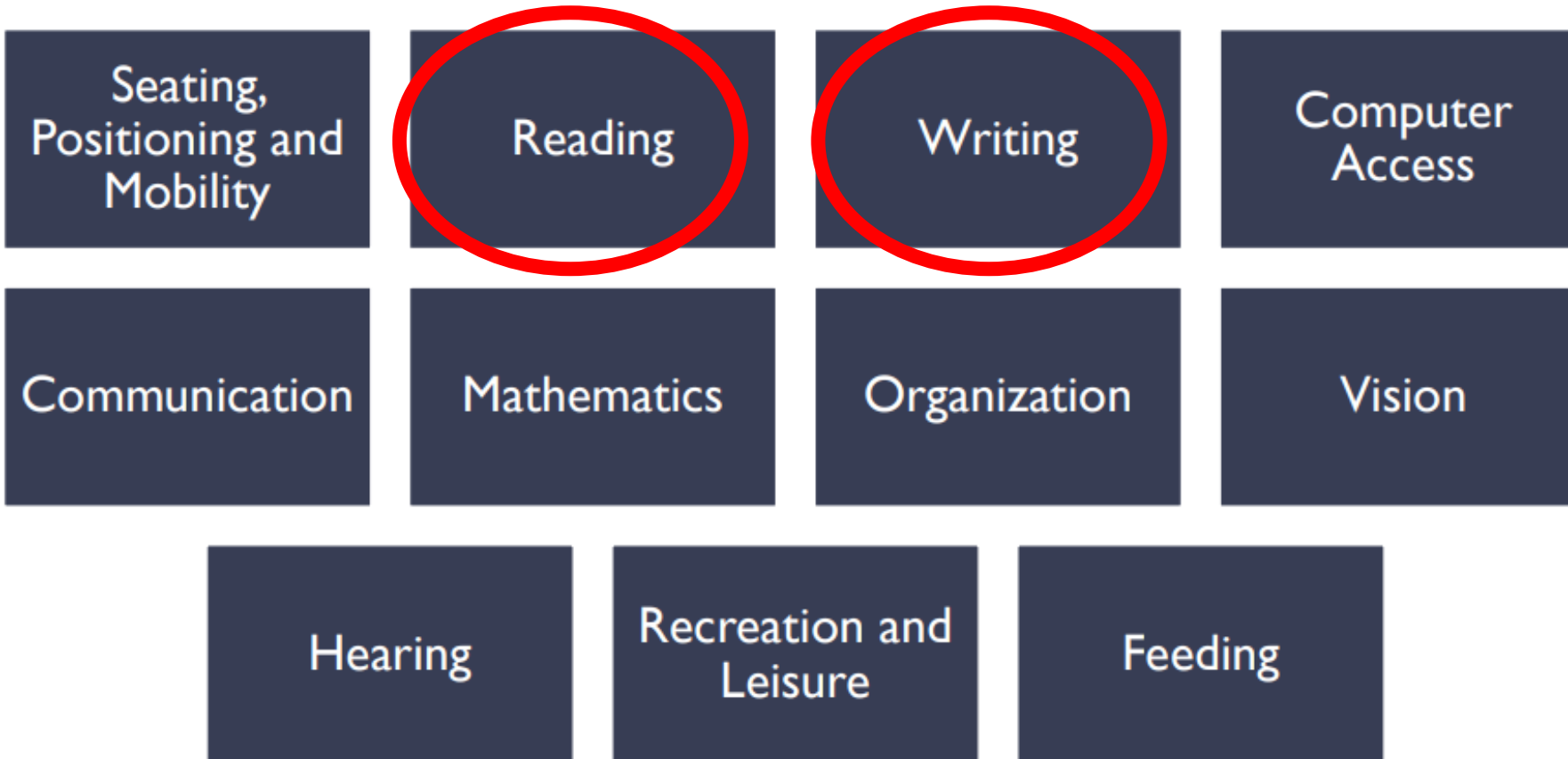
C

Session Objectives

- Recognize the benefits of Assistive Technology in meeting student's IEP identified needs.
- Identify possible hurdles/roadblocks to implementation.
- Begin to create a plan of strategic steps to build an effective Assistive Technology structure in your school.



What Educational Challenges Can Assistive Technology Address?



Assistive Tech Follow Up Plan



Use this organizer to keep track of /plan for tasks you need to do when you return to your district.

Action Step (describe)	Resources or Support Needed?	Target Completion Date
Items to Locate:		
Ask About:		
To Do:		
1.		
2.		
3.		



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
COORDINATOR SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Room 309 EB, 89 Washington Avenue • Albany, NY 12234
www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/

Telephone (518) 473-4818
Fax: (518) 473-5387

May 2016

SPECIAL EDUCATION FIELD ADVISORY

FROM: Patricia J. Geary

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia J. Geary".

SUBJECT: **Webcast on Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities**

For many students with disabilities, assistive technology provides a bridge to overcome barriers to participation and progress in school. Assistive technology facilitates success and independence for students with disabilities while they work toward their academic, social, communication, occupational and recreational goals. By addressing the student's unique needs, assistive technology can reduce barriers to learning; assist students in progressing in their educational program; provide equitable access to the State's learning standards; and provide students with independence as they participate and progress along with their peers in school and in post-school living, learning and working. Additionally, assistive technology supports increased social and environmental access and completion of everyday tasks.

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) is pleased to announce a webcast on Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities that provides an overview of policy, practices and resources related to assistive technology. This webcast was developed to assist school personnel in the consideration, assessment, recommendation and implementation of assistive technology that will effectively meet students' needs. This webcast can be accessed at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/2016-memos/assistive-technology-webinar.html>

Questions regarding assistive technology may be directed to the Office of Special Education Policy Unit at (518) 473-2878.



April 2017

TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Public Schools
Public School Administrators
Charter School Administrators
Superintendents of State-Operated and State-Supported Schools
Executive Directors of Approved Private Schools
Nonpublic School Administrators
Directors of Special Education
Directors of Pupil Personnel Services
Chairpersons of Committees on Special Education
Organizations, Parents and Individuals Concerned with Special Education

FROM: Christopher Suriano 

SUBJECT: Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities

This memorandum is to inform school districts of the new policy brief, *Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities*, developed by the New York State Education Department (NYSED) to assist school personnel in the consideration, assessment, recommendation, and implementation of assistive technology for students with disabilities. This policy brief should be used in conjunction with the guidance provided in NYSED's webcast on assistive technology for students with disabilities in New York State and the *Assistive Technology Consideration Checklist*, released in May 2016. This webcast and the consideration checklist can be found on NYSED's website at: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/2016-memos/assistive-technology-webinar.html>.

The goal of assistive technology is to facilitate success and independence for students with disabilities while they work toward their academic, social, communication, occupational, and recreational goals. By addressing the students' unique needs, assistive technology can reduce barriers to learning; assist students in progressing in their educational program; provide equitable access to the State's learning standards; and provide students with independence as they participate and progress along with their peers while in school and during post-school living, learning and working. Additionally, assistive technology supports increased social and environmental access, completion of everyday tasks and can enhance an individual's overall quality of life.

Questions regarding this memorandum may be directed to the Special Education Policy Unit at (518) 473-2878 or to speced@nysed.gov.

Attachment: *Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities*

NYSED Definition:

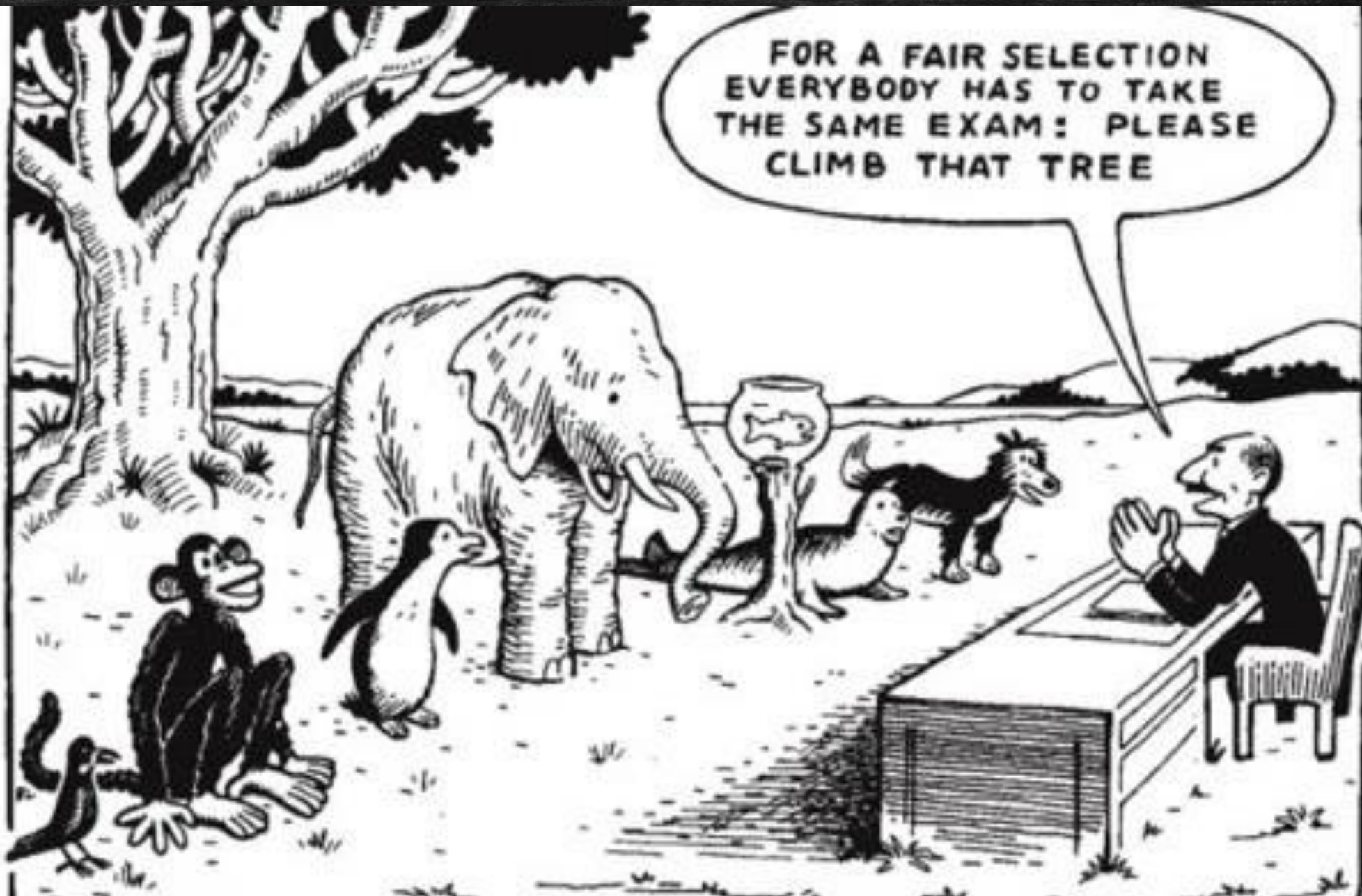


What is the goal of assistive technology?

The goal of assistive technology is to facilitate success and independence for students with disabilities while they work toward their academic, social, communication, occupational and recreational goals. By addressing the students' unique needs, assistive technology can reduce barriers to learning; assist students in progressing in their educational program; provide equitable access to the State's learning standards; and provide students with independence as they participate and progress along with their peers while in school and during post-school living, learning and working. Additionally, assistive technology supports increase social and environmental access, completion of everyday tasks and can enhance an individual's overall quality of life.



FOR A FAIR SELECTION
EVERYBODY HAS TO TAKE
THE SAME EXAM: PLEASE
CLIMB THAT TREE

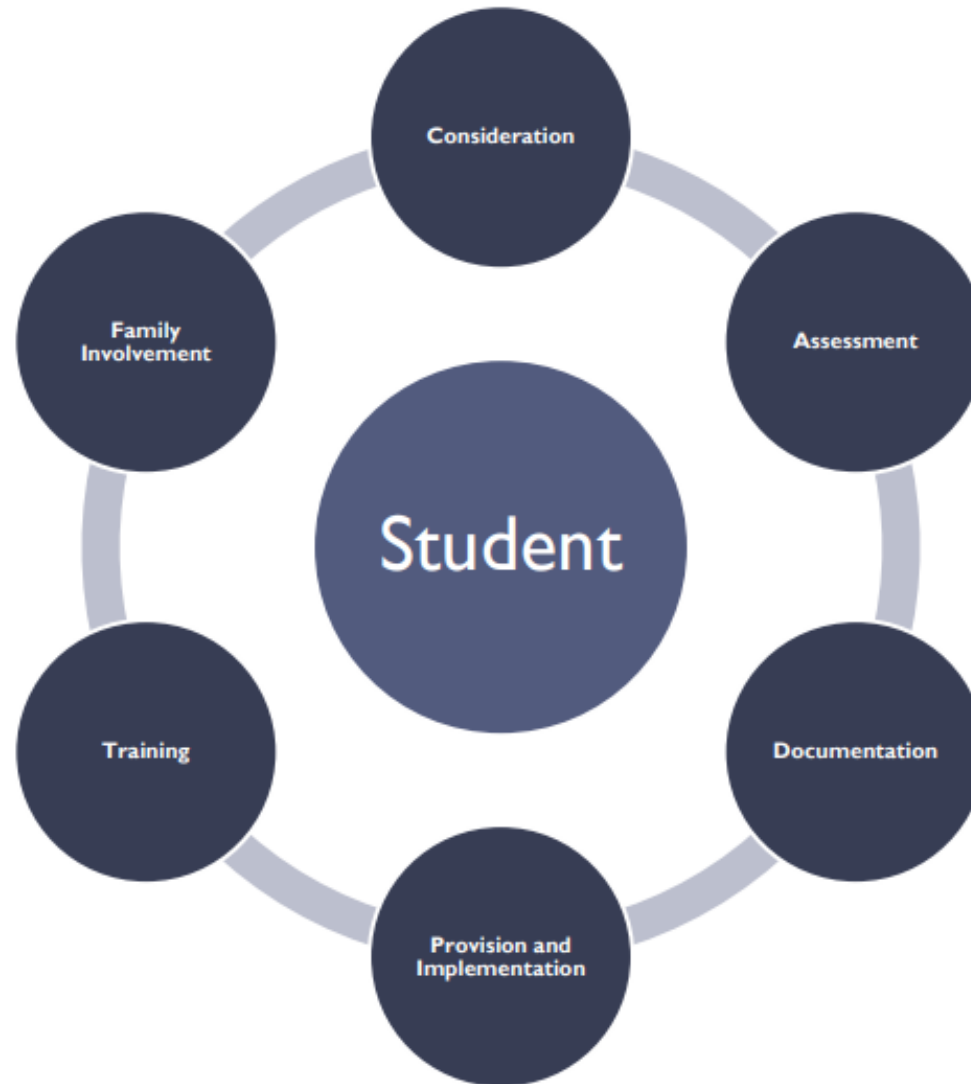


NYSED Definition:

Assistive technology devices range on a continuum from low technology (low tech) devices to high technology (high tech) devices:

- Low tech assistive technology devices can be homemade or purchased items that are not very sophisticated. They can also include simple modifications made to a student's existing equipment. Examples of low tech devices include (but are not limited to): wrist stabilizers, adapted pencil grips, pictures or icons attached to objects with Velcro®, crutches, walkers, nonmotorized wheelchairs, book holders, grab rails, and adapted paper.
- Mid tech assistive technology devices require more sophisticated technology in their creation and/or use and can include some battery-powered devices. Examples of devices that fall into the mid tech range of assistive technology include (but are not limited to): battery-operated word processors, visual timers, automatic page turners, adaptive switches, voice-output (speaking) devices using picture icons, and talking calculators.
- High tech assistive technology devices are advanced in design and typically digital in nature. Examples of high tech devices include (but are not limited to): mobile devices, motorized wheelchairs, screen enlargement applications, eye-gaze interfaces, voice-output (speaking) devices with touch screens and dynamic displays, and text-to-speech software programs/applications.

The Assistive Technology Process: Essential Components



Assistive Technology is a



Process

But who does it?

How do you ensure it happens?

Ensuring Access:

Creating the

“Boots on the ground”

implementation of Assistive Technology.



Ensuring Access:

Top Five challenges:

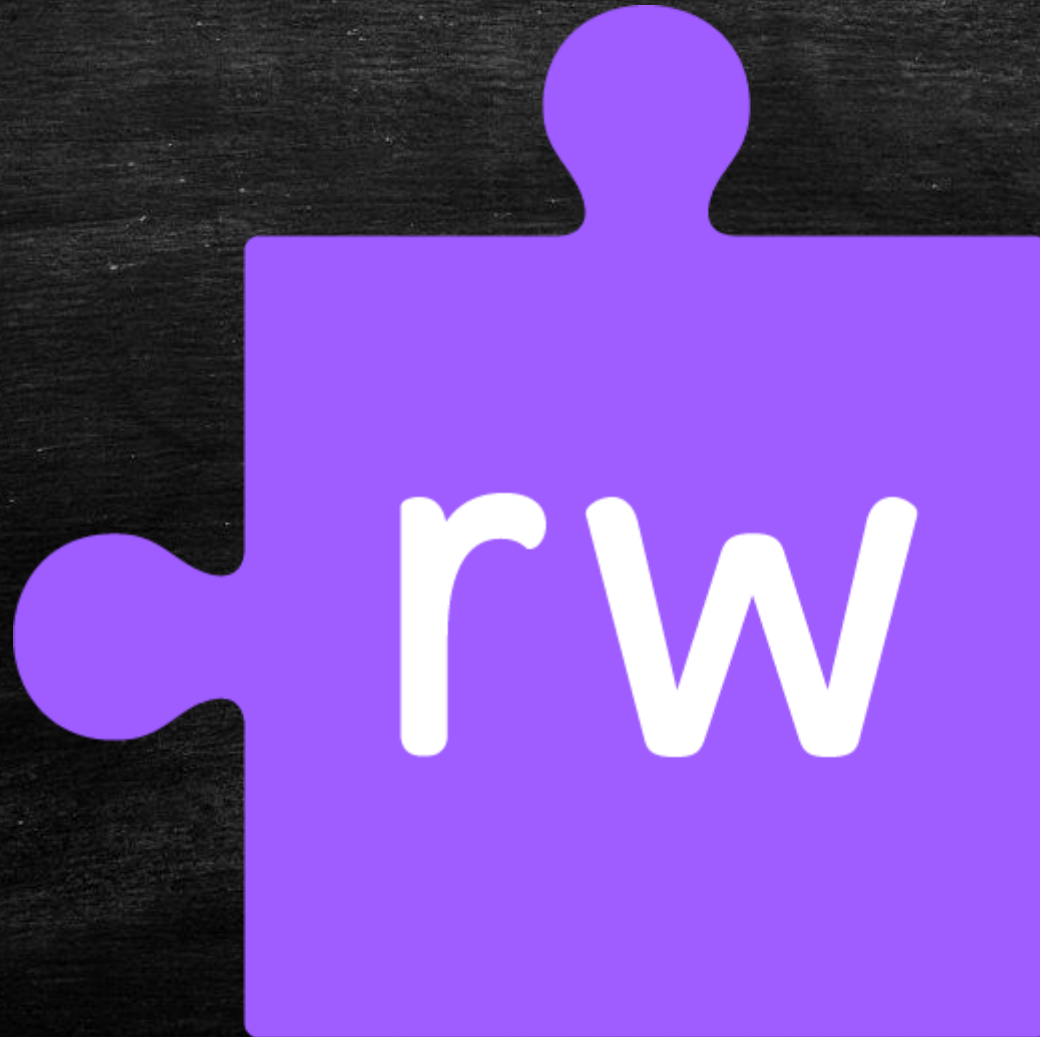


1. Create/ Find an “A Team”

Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Teacher of the Deaf, Interested Special Education Teachers Technology Teachers.

Think Outside the box.

READ and WRITE CHROME



3. Train Staff & Students.



Special Education/General Education Staff:

- **Closing the Gap Conference**
- **Local/Regional AT Conferences**
- **Google Classroom**
- **Webinars**

All Students: General Education & Special Education

- **3rd and 4th Grade Read and Write.**
- **Google Suite/Classroom.**
- **Email.**
- **Device capabilities.**

4. Find a person(s) who serves as your primary AT Student/Teacher/Administrator Consultant.

Troubleshooter

Organizer

Implementer

Cheerleader

Explorer

Coordinator

1. Create an “A Team”
2. Identify/ create an AT platform that serves all
3. Train People
4. Find a person or person(s) to champion the cause.
5. Identify Need Perform Assessments

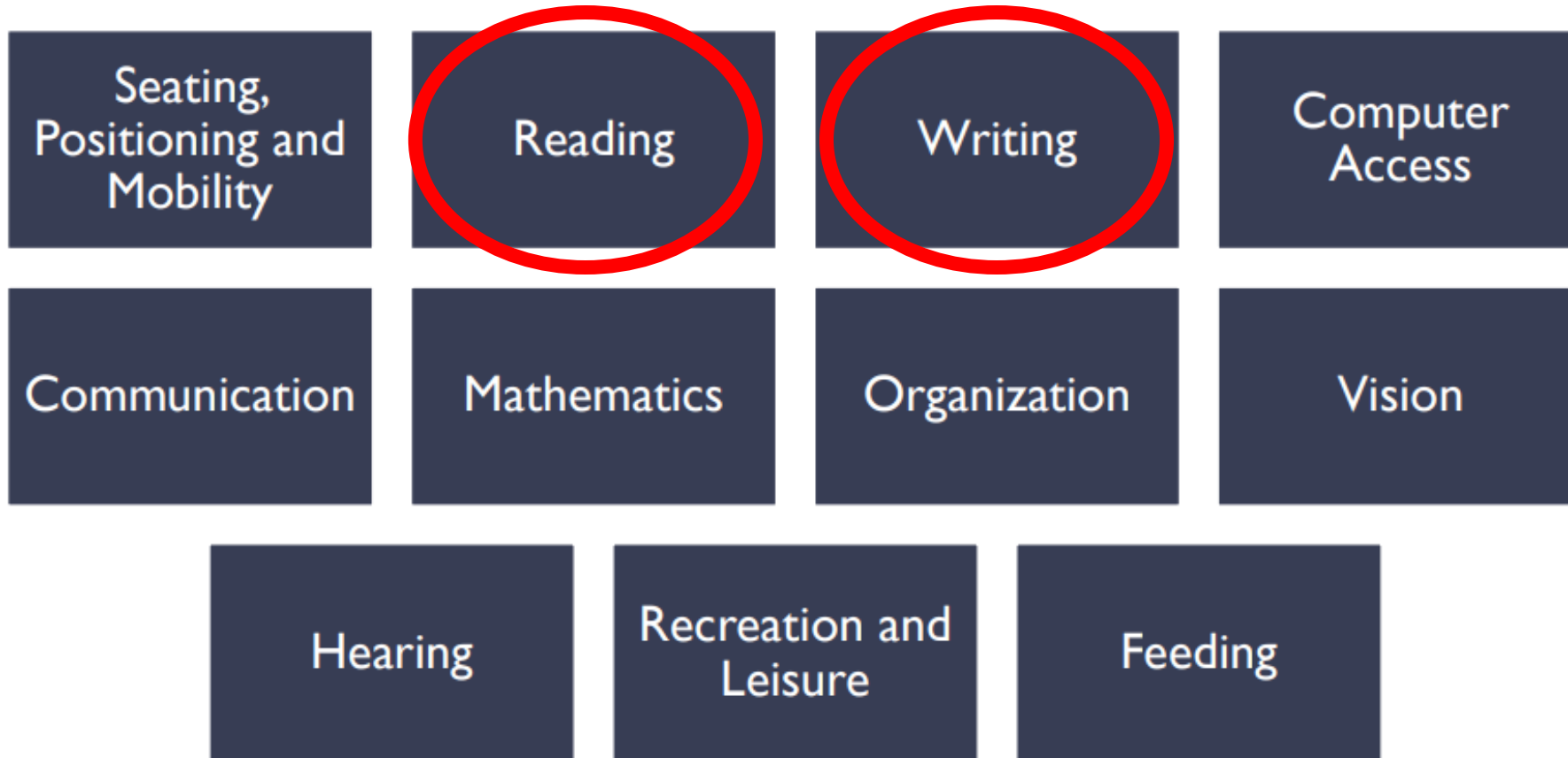


Walk And
Talk Activity

Task: What
area is your
strength?

What area do
you need to grow
in ?

What Educational Challenges Can Assistive Technology Address?



Assistive Technology Evaluations

Reading supports (Braille, digital, audio)



- Access and Use of Educational Materials is the key to this evaluation.
- Use the Technology tools that your district is already using if possible *and then* be prepared to look beyond to meet the needs of some students.
- Be systematic and document everything that you tried in a manner that affirms or eliminates the need for technology as a reading support for each student

Assistive Technology Evaluations (Con't)



Reading supports evaluation (Braille, digital, audio)

- Determine the student's present independent reading level.
- Use available data points to support your recommendation.
- Progress Monitor applications with student to ensure AT accommodations being used are effective.

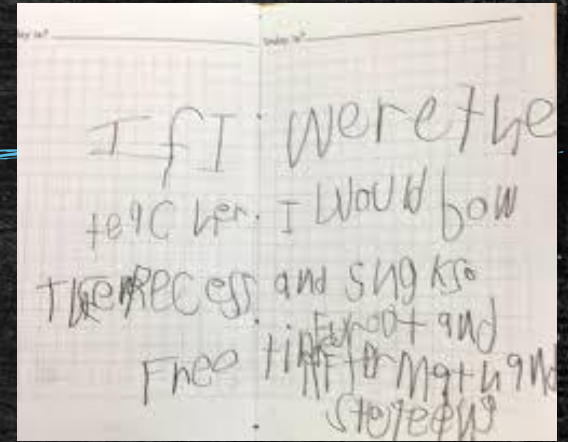
Assistive Technology Evaluations (Con't)

Writing supports evaluation

Have an OTR as lead on this if possible

Must identify reason to evaluate to tailor process to student's needs.

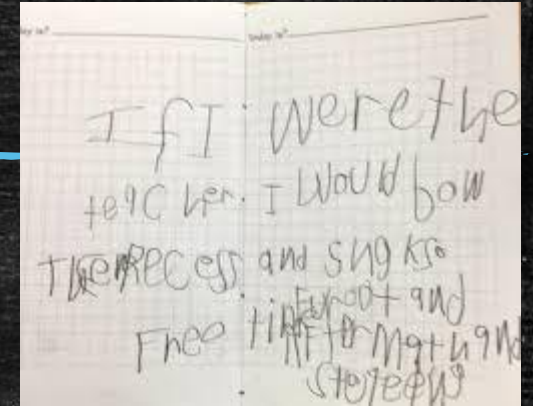
- poor penmanship
- poor spelling
- poor writing productivity for grade level
- over-arching disability that affects writing ability



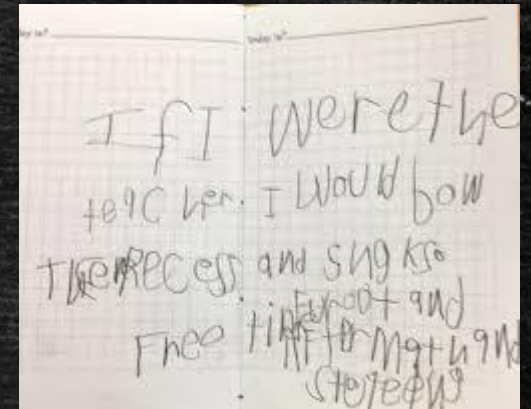
Assistive Technology Evaluations (Con't)

The “HOW” of it:

- Set aside 30 – 60 minutes
- Find out student interests in advance
- Prepare writing prompts to use when eliciting each writing sample with each condition



Writing supports evaluation



Observe and document characteristics of the student using each tool attempted:

- word processing
- spell prediction
- speech-to-text

Include number of self-corrections, skills with keyboard, number of words typed and duration of each attempt.

“High Tech” programing for
Reading Accomodations.

NYSED TESTS READ Decision-Making Tool

Is there evidence that the student's access to and/or performance on print-based tasks improves when information is presented to the student in auditory formats (by way of human reader or the use of assistive technology)?

Does the student use read-aloud accommodations during instruction and/or classroom testing (by way of human reader or the use of assistive technology)?

Is the student provided instructional materials in auditory formats?

Attachment

Testing Accommodation Decision-Making Tool for "Tests Read"

The chart below may be used by school personnel to facilitate collaborative decision-making related to the recommendation of "tests read" (via human reader or technology) as a testing accommodation for students with disabilities in grades 3 through 8. The questions in this tool should be considered each time a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodations Plan (504 Plan) is reviewed to determine the appropriateness of this accommodation. After completing the chart, check the box below indicating the recommended testing accommodation for the Committee on Special Education (CSE) or Section 504 Committee to review and consider when developing the student's IEP/504 Plan. This tool is for local use, only. Do not submit this form to the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

Student: _____ Date: _____

Persons Involved in Decision-Making: _____

Questions	YES	NO	N/A	Comments/Evidence
Is there evaluative information indicating that, even after explicit and systematic reading instruction, the student's disability precludes or severely limits the student's ability to decode print?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Has the student been provided systematic, explicit, research-based reading intervention(s) to improve decoding skills?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If the student is blind or visually impaired, is he or she learning to read braille?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If the student is blind or visually impaired, has it been determined that his or her disability precludes or severely limits the ability to access and/or develop proficiency in braille?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
If the student is deaf or hard of hearing, is there evidence demonstrating that the student's disability precludes or severely limits his or her ability to decode printed text (possibly due to other co-occurring disabilities or long-term language deprivation in early childhood)?*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there evidence that the student's access to and/or performance on print-based tasks improves when information is presented to the student in auditory formats (by way of human reader or the use of assistive technology)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the student use read-aloud accommodations during instruction and/or classroom testing (by way of human reader or the use of assistive technology)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the student provided instructional materials in auditory formats?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Has the student provided input to inform specific recommendations related to the "tests read" testing accommodation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there additional considerations for recommending "tests read" for this student, specific to his or her unique disability-related needs? If so, explain in the space below:				

*If the answer to this question is "YES", and the student also understands sign language, the CSE may consider recommending a sign language interpreter to translate text if appropriate to the needs and skills of the student.

- Check the recommendation that is most appropriate in meeting the needs of this student:
- "Tests read" is not an appropriate testing accommodation for this student.**
 - "Tests read" should be recommended for this student on State and local tests, **except** tests of reading comprehension.**
 - "Tests read" should be recommended for this student on all State and local tests, **including** tests of reading comprehension.

**These recommendations indicate that the Grades 3-8 ELA Assessments will not be read to the student.

Universal Protocols for *Accommodations in Reading* uPAR (available through Don Johnston)



So what is uPAR and
how does it work?

The quick answer?
A tool for

Smarter, Faster
Decision-Making

<http://donjohnston.com/upar/>

Relying on subjective judgement, teachers are no better than chance at determining whether a student needs a read aloud accommodation (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2001; Helwig & Tindal, 2003). What happens when students get the wrong accommodations?

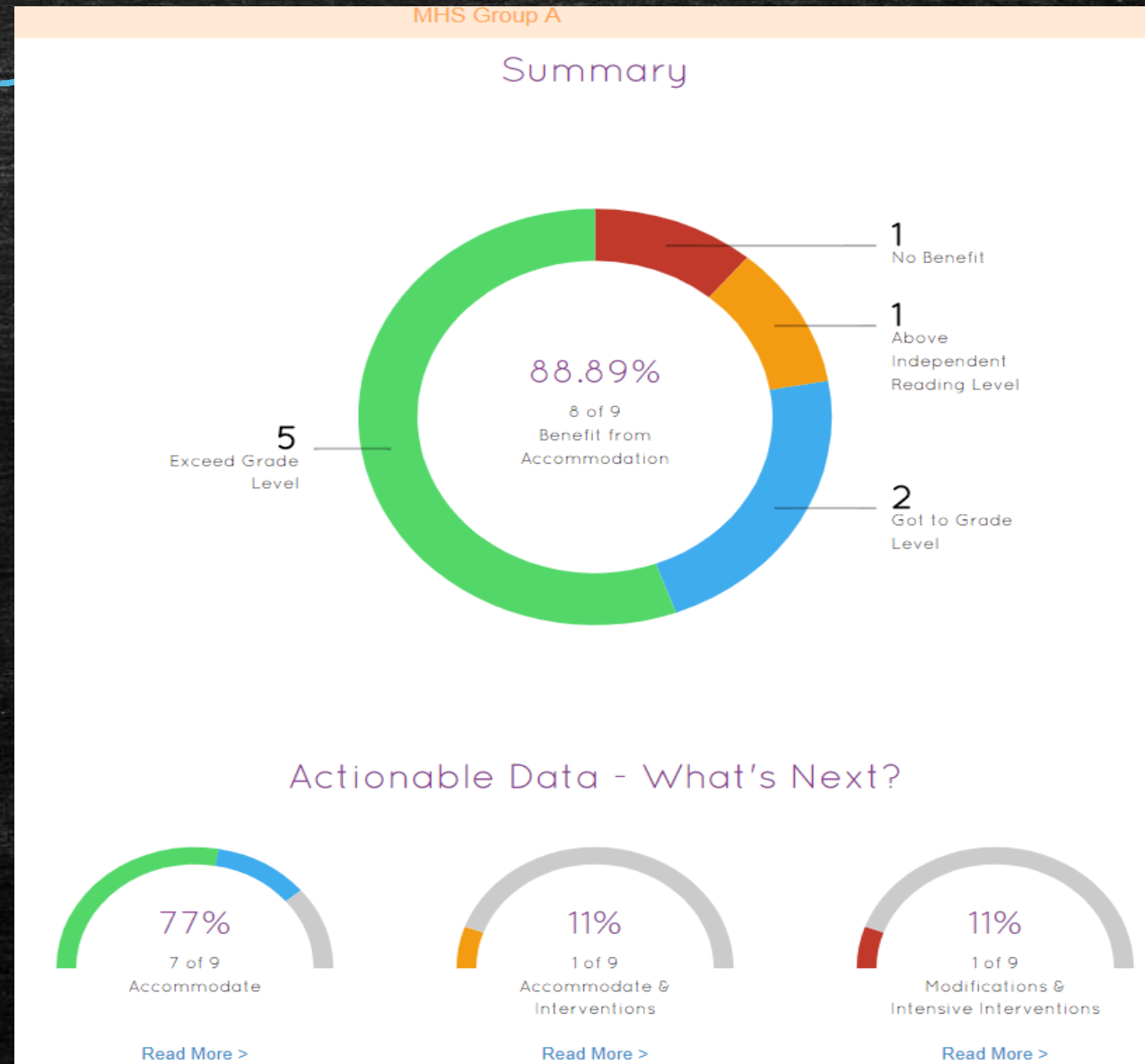
- They don't perform as well as they should
- They don't use their accommodations because they have the wrong ones
- Teachers and parents don't agree about which accommodation the student needs

uPAR turns this subjective decision-making into a data-driven diagnostic process that anyone on the IEP team can implement.

What the Overall Data tells us about our read-to accomodations?

This is the summary page for the 8/11 students that completed uPAR.

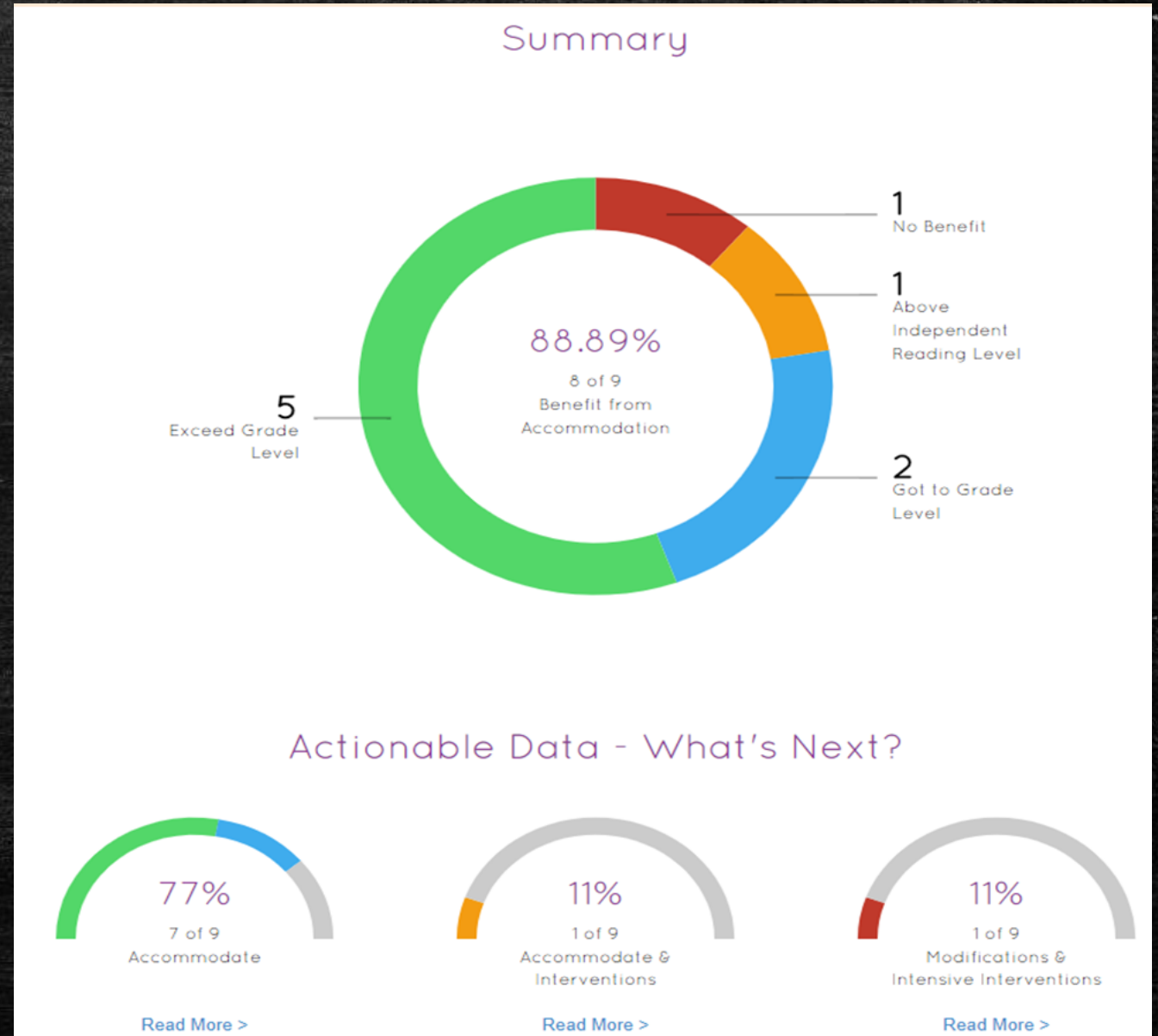
Three students have not completed the assessment due to time factors and will be able to finish it soon.



What does the Overall Data tells us about our read-to accomodations?

This is the summary page for the 8/11 students that completed uPAR.

Three students have not completed the assessment due to time factors and will be able to finish it soon.



Student # 1 Grade 9

Student specific report and recommendation generated at the completion of each student's test.

Completed Date: 2018-02-15

Recommendation: Read-Aloud Accommodation

Grade Level	Silent Read	Human Audio	Text Reader
12		38%	
11		83%	58%
10		83%	
9 🧑		75%	92%
8			
7			
6			
5			
4			
3 📖	100%		
2			
1			

Story Type: Informational

- 🧑 Grade Level
- 📖 Independent Reading Level
- 🟩 Upper Quartile
- 🟨 Middle Two Quartiles
- 🟪 Bottom Quartile
- 🟫 Incomplete

Student # 2 Grade 9



Background:

This student has used reading and writing accommodations/supports since 4th grade.





Z S

Completed Date: 2018-02-15

Recommendation: Read-Aloud Accommodation

Grade Level	Silent Read	Human Audio	Text Reader
12			
11			
10			67%
9 		58%	75%
8		75%	
7			
6			
5			
4			
3			
2 	100%		
1			

Story Type: Informational

-  Grade Level
-  Independent Reading Level
-  Upper Quartile
-  Middle Two Quartiles


Student # 3

Grade 11


S J


Completed Date: 2018-03-06


Recommendation: Read-Aloud Accommodation

Grade Level	Silent Read	Human Audio	Text Reader
12		92%	83%
11 		92%	83%
10			
9			
8 	83%		
7			
6			
5			
4			
3			
2			
1			

Story Type: Informational

 Grade Level

 Independent Reading Level



 Upper Quartile

Student #4 Grade 9





B S

Completed Date: 2018-02-15

Recommendation: Read-Aloud Accommodation

Grade Level	Silent Read	Human Audio	Text Reader
12			
11			
10			
9 		50%	67%
8		100%	75%
7			
6			
5			
4			
3			
2 	75%		
1			

Story Type: Informational



-  Grade Level
-  Independent Reading Level
-  Upper Quartile
-  Middle Two Quartiles

The 1st group administration of uPAR revealed that speakers on several of the computers were not working.





Student KR completed the whole thing without audio support. She did not inform the proctor even though the proctor checked in with her, she chose to continue the process without the audio.

How would you interpret this?



K R NO AUDIO - computer malfunction
Completed Date: 2018-02-15
Recommendation: Read-Aloud Accommodation

Grade Level	Silent Read	Human Audio	Text Reader
12		67%	83%
11 		83%	83%
10			
9			
8			
7			
6 	75%		
5			
4			
3			
2			
1			





Story Type: Informational

-  Grade Level
-  Independent Reading Level
-  Upper Quartile
-  Middle Two Quartiles

T L Completed in 2 sessions
 Completed Date: 2018-03-06 due to speaker
 Recommendation: Read-Aloud Accommodation malfunction

Grade Level	Silent Read	Human Audio	Text Reader
12			
11		67%	
10		75%	
9 		83%	50%
8			100%
7			
6			
5			
4			
3 	88%		
2			
1			

Story Type: Informational

-  Grade Level
-  Independent Reading Level
-  Upper Quartile
-  Middle Two Quartiles

uPAR allows you to set up students to read informational, narrative or all text types.

I chose informational text for all students since that mirrors the academic setting.

TL stated *“I learned a lot while I was taking this and I liked the computer text reader.”*

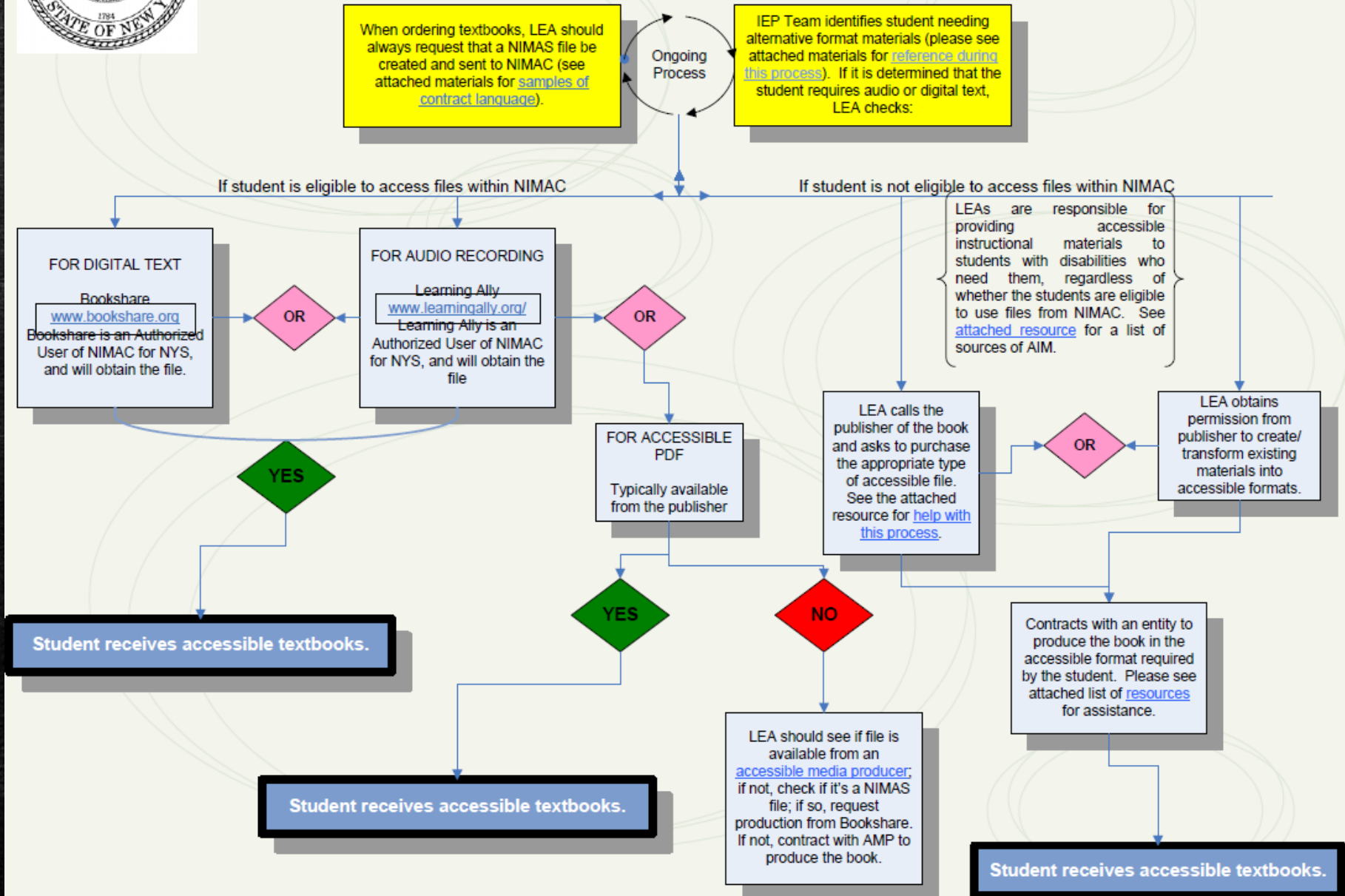
National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS)

Created by IDEA 2004, NIMAC is a federally funded, online file repository of source files in the NIMAS format. Here, authorized users can access more than 48,000 K-12 NIMAS files that can be used in the production of accessible formats for students with disabilities.



New York AIM Process

Accessible Instructional Materials
Audio and Digital Text




NEW YORK **AIM** PROCESS

Accessible Instructional Materials

Audio and Digital Text

When ordering textbooks, LEA should always request that a NIMAS file be created and sent to NIMAC (see attached materials for [samples of contract language](#)).

Ongoing
Process



going
process

IEP Team identifies student needing alternative format materials (please see attached materials for [reference during this process](#)). If it is determined that the student requires audio or digital text, LEA checks:

