

The Monitor

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The 3rd Annual AT Across the Lifespan Conference will be held in early December, 2009. We'd like your input! Please take a moment to complete a brief survey on the conference. See page 5 for more information.

RESNA AT Certification Exam March 8, 2008

UW-Stevens Point

For more information: www.resna.org

From the Interim Director

From the Desk of the Interim Director

Happy New Year! How does that saying go, "Everything new is old?" This greeting comes to you from the new interim WATI director, but really I am not *that new*. Somehow I cannot make myself write "old." I have been with the project since it first began. We have seen so many changes in the assistive technology field since WATI's beginning in 1993: new technologies, new initiatives and a renewed vision that

environments can be created that provide what all students need to grow, learn and succeed.

This issue of the Monitor will focus on some new supports that address old and ongoing problems of access to education for the students and children we serve. We also wish to highlight our spring conference AT Across the Lifespan. The Schedule at a Glance has been included in this issue. The planning committee has done a fabulous job to provide

you with a wealth of workshop options. I hope to see many of you in March at the conference. If you need to contact me I can be reached at (608)758-6232 ex.340 or at jgierach@cesa2.k12.wi.us.

Now on to some supports for students that we feel are important!

Jill Gierach,

WATI Interim Director

NIMAS Procedures Available

One such long awaited support is the creation of the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) format procedures currently posted on the DPI website. [http://](http://dpi.wi.gov/sped/bul07-03.html)

dpi.wi.gov/sped/bul07-03.html You should have received this information in early January. This information is critically important to all districts. There is sample language listed that

needs to be on contracts and purchase orders of all textbooks ordered after July 19, 2006. Additionally, it is strongly suggested that districts order

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NIMAS Procedures (continued)

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textbooks by April 1. This will ensure that the vendor will have the NIMAS files to the NIMAC centers in a timely manner. The NIMAC centers cannot guarantee that they will have alternative formats ready for the following school year if they receive orders after May 1 of the previous school year. For more information please see the production website at: <http://www.wamp.k12.wi.us/>

Requests go to one of the three Authorized Users (AU) in the state:

David Cedarstrom-
david.cedarstrom@wcbvi.k12.wi.us

Julie Stroh-
julie.stroh@wcbvi.k12.wi.us

Vickie Warner-
vivkie.warner@wcbvi.k12.wi.us

All students with a print disability are eligible for these materials.

The designation of a print disability is not connected to a specific learning impairment, but is a determination made by the IEP team.

Again, please look at the eligibility criteria listed on the DPI website.

A very important

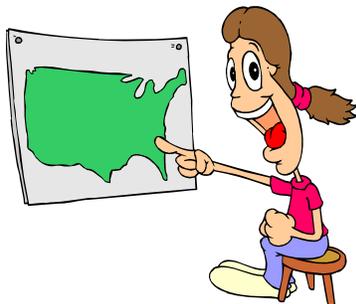
note: Some students may not meet the NIMAS eligibility criteria but still may need instructional materials in an accessible format. These students must receive those materials in a timely manner [300.172(e)(1)(i).] Timely manner is defined as receiving alternative

“The designation of a print disability is not connected to a specific learning impairment, but is a determination made by the IEP team.”

print format at the same time as non-print disabled peers receive their text.

Donations of Interactive Whiteboards

And yet another support: Here is a riddle, "What is flat, white and wanted all over?" An interactive whiteboard! WATI consultants will each have a traveling demonstration board and projection equipment to share with their regional partners thanks to a generous donation of the CESA Cooperative Purchasing Department and Tierney Brothers



Cooperation. Interactive whiteboards are a piece of technology soon to be in most Wisconsin schools. The software and interactive nature of the board promote the cooperative learning of groups of students with various skill levels. WATI intends to support the training currently provided to teachers with

additional training that encourages teachers to consider the needs of all students as they craft their interactive lessons. The software that runs the board can be used at students' home computers as well as the school computers. CESA Cooperative Purchasing has a statewide price for Wisconsin Schools. Check it out at <http://www.cesa2.k12.wi.us/site/uploads/pdfs/smart.pdf>

Color Anyone?

Submitted by: Susan Loesl, ATR-BC, Milwaukee Public Schools

As an adaptive art specialist working in assistive technology, color is one of my favorite aspects of art making. Color can have emotional appeal (or repulsion), draw our eyes, or cause us to react in specific ways (as in stopping at a red light while driving). Color in assistive technology is an interesting concept with many strategies to consider for reading text.

According to Marie Carbo of the National Reading Styles Institute (NRSI) "persons with severe visual perception problems have reported that the correct colored overlay on a page of print helped to stop letters from moving, doubling or reversing. Good readers have told of marked improvement in letter clarity, less fatigue, eye strain and fewer headaches". In an additional study by Helen Irlen of the Irlen Institute it was found that the ability to copy also increased with the use of color overlays/filters. (In a string ensemble that I play in, a viola player who has dyslexia used a green colored transparency over her sheet music "to stop the notes from jumping around." This simple adaptation allowed her to participate in more music activities- as previously she

had to memorize all the music in order to play with the group and oftentimes there was too much music to memorize for concerts.)

In 2004, Judith Sweeney of Onion Mountain Technology, Inc., created a seminar handout entitled "Brain Based Learning and Assistive Technology", in which the chapter on "Using Color" is a must read for anyone interested in low and high assistive technology applications with color. It is full of strategies using color for persons with specific disabilities, as well as research about color.

Color overlays/filters can take on many forms since the basic full 8 ½"x11" colored transparency days. Be aware that the glare from them may be an undesired challenge for some visual issues. The least expensive and most versatile is a simple home made clear transparency with highlighter tape. This version of a color overlay allows you to choose the size of the highlighted line for the reading task.

Another tool is a Reading Helper or E.Z.C. Reader. Judy Sweeney



Eye Lighter

states, "Reading helpers look like flexible bookmarks.

They show only one line of text at a time with a gray plastic strip above and below this line. They immediately help with on-line tracking, and when used over a column on a math problem, they help students move their eyes

down one column at a time." (Reading Helpers and highlighter tape available at Beacon-Ridge, Onion Mountain Technology and Really Good Stuff). Heads Up Frames come in two sizes-one about the size of ¼ page of text and the other in a 4" square- perfect to cover a math problem that is being copied from book or paper. The Eye Lighter from Beacon-Ridge, is a sturdy 6" transparent tinted ruler-like device with two beveled edges-one for small print and the other for larger print. These and other strategies for color overlays and filters are also called "Contrast Aids" if you choose to "Google™" to find more examples of color tools.

In conclusion, one of the most interesting aspects of choosing the "correct color" has very little to do with one's "favorite color". Do

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Presentation Schedule at a Glance

	Harvest	Frontier	Woodland	Trillium
8:30 — 9:30	Useful adaptations and AT for Infants and Toddlers and their Families <i>Campbell</i>	What's the Latest in Computer Keyboards and Mice <i>Schwartz</i>	AgrAbility: Serving Farmers and Farm Families With Disabilities <i>Ehle</i>	Walmart May Have Dropping Prices but the Best Stuff is Free on the Web <i>Leonard</i>
9:45 — 10:45	Getting Started With Data Collection in Assistive Technology <i>Fonner</i>	Wisconsin Telecommunication Relay System <i>Riggio</i>	Universal and Barrier Free Design and Technology for Today's Home <i>Vogelman</i>	Advocacy and Assistive Technology - Strategies and Resources <i>Nedden-Durst</i>
11:00 — 12:00	Sorting Through Accessible Testing Software <i>Fonner, Marfilius</i>	Low-Tech Visual Supports <i>Trute</i>	Danielle's Journey <i>Stewart, VanDenEng, Rathsack, Phelps</i>	TEPP 101 - Telecommunications Equipment Purchase Program - Cover the Basics <i>Plummer</i>
1:00 — 2:00	Creating Accommodation in Science <i>Fonner, Marfilius</i>	Beyond Hearing Aids: Tools for Better Living with Hearing Loss <i>Malak</i>	Job Accommodations You Didn't Know You Already Had <i>Pichler</i>	Who, What, Where? Assistive Technology Resources in Wisconsin <i>Plummer</i>

Conference Co-Sponsors

Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative and WisTech

Presentation Schedule at a Glance

Stonefield	Evergreen	Spruce	Sands
<p>Augmentative Communication: Updates on Current Technology and Funding</p> <p><i>Dunning</i></p>	<p>Increasing Communication Literacy in the Everyday Classroom</p> <p><i>White</i></p>	<p>AT Tools to Support Struggling Writers</p> <p><i>Leynse-Harpold, Higgins</i></p>	<p>Software for Assistive Technology from Birth to Adulthood</p> <p><i>Mark Larson</i></p>
<p>Affordable, Low-Tech Activities for Severe/ Profound Populations</p> <p><i>Dunham, West</i></p>	<p>Boardmaker® Does It All</p> <p><i>Schneider, Lee</i></p>	<p>ASNAT for Reading: Using SETT to Identify Reading Tools</p> <p><i>Cumley</i></p>	<p>A.T. Service Express</p> <p><i>Sheets</i></p>
<p>We've Bought Software...Now What? Training and Implementing Considerations</p> <p><i>Baldwin</i></p>	<p>Detection of Congenital Hearing Loss, It's Never too Early</p> <p><i>Seeliger</i></p>	<p>Building Learning Communities Through Multi-Faceted Online Resources</p> <p><i>Steffan</i></p>	<p>Financing AT with WisLoan and Telework Loans</p> <p><i>Kraemer, Altman</i></p>
<p>Cognitive Support Technologies: The Missing Link</p> <p><i>Herold, Cunningham</i></p>	<p>Recipe for Assistive Technology Success</p> <p><i>Nankee, Gierach</i></p>	<p>BUGS: Boardmaker Users Group and Support</p> <p><i>Bartman</i></p>	<p>Assistive Technology Pointers For Students, Parents and Educators</p> <p><i>Skadah</i></p>

The AT Across the Lifespan planning committee would like your input on future conferences. Please take a moment to complete a four question survey.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=mMZf8QFoVCjN7zKhNsxRKQ_3d_3d

Color Anyone? (continued)

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not be surprised if it is discovered that disappointingly the “favorite color” doesn’t work, but how exciting it is for the reader to be able to read independently with the right color tool!



E.C.Z. Reader

Resources:

Beacon-Ridge

(www.beacon-ridge.com)

Georgia Project for Assistive Technology

(www.gpat.org)

Heads Up Frames

(<http://www.headsupnow.com/>)

Irlen Institute (www.irlen.com)

National Reading Styles Institute

(www.dyslexiacure.com)

Sweeney, J. 2004. Brain based learning and assistive technology.

(<http://www.onionmountaintech.com/>)

Really Good Reading Stuff

(www.reallygoodstuffreading.com)

Assistive Technology a Critical Piece in the RTI Model

Another support under development at WATI is the creation of a support to guide teachers as they consider the use of technology within the REACH model. WATI has been meeting with REACH coordinators to discuss how uses of technology

can assist students to make AYP. The concept of universal design for learning is critical for the success of students. The <http://lessonbuilder.cast.org/> site has lesson planning



guides that focus on the brain systems necessary for students to engage in lessons, work with tasks, and feel successful in their school experiences. Check out the site for these supports.

Lending Library News

Submitted by: Sharon Rhode
Lending Library Manager

Listed below are the new items in the state lending library available for checkout. Please visit our on-line catalog for descriptions.

1.0.2.3.a MagicTouch Touch Screen Win (19"-21")

2.2.2.1.a-s Clicker 5 CD Rom Mac/Win

4.1.3.2.e-s ClozePro CD Rom Mac/Win

5.0.4.0.a-s Clicker Paint CD Rom Mac/Win

4.1.3.1.x-s Planet Wobble CD Rom Mac/Win

2.2.2.1.m-s Find Out & Write About Dinosaurs CD Rom Mac/Win

2.2.2.1.n-s Find Out & Write About Ancient Egyptians CD Rom Mac/Win

2.2.2.1.o-s Find Out & Write About Explorers CD Rom Mac/Win

10.0.2.0.a Clicker 5 Training Toolkit

5.0.1.0.b Carnival Tube

5.0.1.0.g The Twinkler

5.0.1.0.h Peek-a-Boo Mirror Switch

1.0.1.3.c KinderBoard

3.0.2.3.ad TalkAble II

3.0.2.3.ae TalkAble III

Free return postage is now available for items checked out after January 1, 2008!

The RESCUE Project- Accessible Text Information

**Submitted by: Kim Swenson,
CESA 11 WATI AT Consultant**

The RESCUE Project is a consortium of Intermediate School Districts in Michigan who are actively creating and distributing accessible curriculum materials. Most accessible materials are scanned and distributed in .pdf format, while some are created using audio MP3s. The RESCUE Project's, Reading E-text Scanned for Universal Education, purpose is to provide alternative format of printed curriculum materials (textbooks, novels, etc.) to students with disabilities, specifically electronic text. The Project's premise is that by providing curriculum materials in

electronic format to school districts, students with disabilities can use various technologies to assist them with reading. In this way, all students will be able to access their school's curriculum to acquire knowledge. The Book DIRECTORY is listed here <http://web.inghamisd.org/etext/main/> and will help you discover what books are available and in what format.

To obtain the book archive you will need to:

- Send an external USB hard drive with minimum 100G capacity
- Send a \$10 check or money order for shipping and

handling

- Send a signed form certifying your legitimate interest in alt-format materials and your understanding of how they may be used
- Have policies and procedures in place to ensure district understanding of compliance in the use of the materials

For more information go to <http://rescue.wikispaces.com/Misc> or for assistance in obtaining the collection of works for your district contact Mark Dennis, Eaton ISD - mark.dennis@eaton.k12.mi.us or Jim Kauppila, Muskegon Area ISD - jkauppil@muskegonisd.org.

Special Buys

WATI and LAB Resources are pleased to offer these bulk buys for Wisconsin Schools. Along with current buy of Boardmaker®, there are three different sets of tutorials for this product and for trainers she has Workshop in a Box. This set includes agendas, handouts, Microsoft® Powerpoint files, speaker notes, a Time Timer®, coupon and much more. It has everything you need to provide hands-on training on Boardmaker®. If you want some support as you

use the product, she has a new IPOD video with a narrated power point.

In addition to the Boardmaker buy, there is now a Dragon Naturally Speaking buy being offered. Software, training and lessons are available. View the special buys at <http://www.wati.org/buys/buys.html>



To celebrate it's 25th anniversary, Inspiration Software has expanded its "Teacher Scholarships for Visual Learning" program (www.inspiration.com/scholarship). Twenty-five educators who are using visual learning strategies in their classrooms will receive \$1000 each for use for professional development or to purchase classroom technology.

2007-2008 Monitor Schedule

October 15
December 15
February 15
April 15

Articles are due the 15th of the prior month.

Monitor Editor

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We're on the web!

<http://www.wati.org>

Our Mission ...



WATI assists school districts and Birth to Three programs in their responsibility to ensure that every child in Wisconsin who may need assistive technology (AT) has equal and timely access to appropriate assessment and the provision and implementation of needed AT devices and services.



The Mission of the Milwaukee Public Schools is to ensure that maximum educational opportunities are provided for all students to reach their highest potential so that:

1. Students achieve their educational and employment goals, and
2. Parents choose the Milwaukee Public Schools to educate their children.

Help Wanted!



WATI is gathering data that will assist us in determining and developing services and supports to meet the needs of Wisconsin children and the staff and parents who work with them. To do this, we are asking you to complete brief surveys that will let us know what we are doing well and what we might need to consider for the future. We

need to know how our services helped students and young children in Wisconsin to be successful. We have identified three areas of service and two ways to give us feedback:

Lending library Services Please take the time to complete surveys that are enclosed in your lending library materials. These need to be returned along with your library items.

Workshops/Trainings, and Technical Assistance

You may have received training by a WATI consultant, attended a WATI workshop, or have been provided technical assistance by

email or phone consultation from a WATI consultant. Please give us feedback on that training, workshop or technical assistance. Do this by going to <http://www.wati.org> then click on the training link, then follow the survey directions.

How is our technology project meeting your needs to provide students with quality assistive technology services and tools? We want to know.

Thank you!