

University of North Carolina Wilmington
Watson School of Education
Assistive Technology Demonstration and Lending Site
Advisory Board Summary
February 2, 2009

Advisory Board Members Present:

Cathy Barlow, Cindy Booth, Jeff Ertzberger, Cindy Hancock, Julie Kagy (via phone), Becky McGee Hudson, Linda Mechling, Ja Medlicott, Amy Moody, Michelle Ross, Kari Siko, Johnnie Sexton, Mirella Timms, Ron Vetter

Dean Barlow explained the background and purpose of the Assistive Technology Demonstration and Lending Site. Money provided by US Department of Education to create a regional site for demonstration and lending of assistive technologies. Purpose of the Advisory Board is to guide the Site in its direction.

Needs in Assistive Technology Community:

- Training
 - Device training for parents, teachers and users
 - How do devices work, what to put on devices, integration of technology into instruction (Two level of training 1) basic and 2) integration
 - How to adapt instructional materials
 - Best practices in assistive technology
 - Need to identify experts to facilitate training on devices
 - Create “Quick and Easy” guides
- Auditory Impairment Devices
 - Need to invest in up-to-date devices
- Freeware/Shareware
 - Need list of effective freeware/shareware available
 - Possible paring with education students to “test” different freeware/shareware with various populations
 - Work with IT’s in school districts to get approved to up on networked computers in schools and/or have non-networked computers set up with software for students to use
 - Creation of strategies for informing teachers what is available
- Interactive Whiteboards
 - Work with persons with hearing and/or vision impairments
 - Need to support programs
 - Possible use of Wii and pen as makeshift interactive whiteboard

Important to Remember:

- Assistive Technology is a tool, not a skill
- Must understand learner and the needs of the learner
- Cannot just show “bells and whistles” – must assess learner’s needs

- SETT Process
- IEP important – work with school liaisons
- Function of devices key – not just “cool” device
- Must train parents on functions of devices

Mentors

- Mentoring key to Site
- Needed to help teachers from other counties
- Mentor teachers - experts on devices to help ‘teach’ others

Education Students

- Have students to create “best practices” for various devices
- Do research on devices and keep data
- Train teachers/others to use devices

Workshops to be offered

- Make and Take workshops for teachers
- Offer workshops across region

What is exciting about Site?

- So much out there – need place to see it
 - Visual, auditory and independent living aids
- Work with non-educationally relevant issues (schools can only assist with educational issues – this is a place for extra support)
- UNCW students to go out into schools
- Non-fee based resources for educators
- “Neutral” site – share data with all organizations
- Collaboration
- Professional development – teachers, therapists, etc.
- Work with technology departments in counties and begin to form relationships with schools
- Positive impact on hearing challenges

Who is missing from Advisory Board?

- Parents
- Physical Therapists/Occupational Therapists
- Psychologists
- Rural Communities
- EC Directors/School Administration
- Self-advocates

Next Steps

- Create needs list and prioritize as group
- Work on future lending aspect
 - Terms and conditions for borrowing items

- Process for lending and returning items
- What happens when devices are broken, keeping warranties in mind
- Technicians to assist in repair of items out of warranty
- Online Forum for interaction among Advisory Board Members

Next Advisory Board Meeting:

Monday, March 30, 2009

3:00 – 5:00pm

207 New Centre