Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology

The mission of QIAT is to guide the provision of quality AT services to improve educational achievement of students with disabilities.

QIAT activities for improvement of assistive technology services include:

- Developing descriptive indicators of effective practices
- Developing tools to evaluate services for continuous improvement
- Creating resources to guide planning and implementation
- Identifying and sharing information and resources
- Providing opportunities for communication and collaboration

The descriptors of effective assistive technology practices were created to help school districts evaluate and improve or develop their services. They consist of the specific indicators which are descriptive statements, descriptions of common errors that may occur, and self-evaluation matrices. They can be found at www.qiat.org.

Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology address:

- **Consideration** of the need for assistive technology during the IEP meeting
- **Assessment** of the need for assistive technology
- **Including** assistive technology **in the IEP**
- **Implementing** the use of assistive technology
- **Evaluating the effectiveness** of assistive technology use
- **Transitioning** with assistive technology
- **Administrative support** for assistive technology services
- **Professional development** and training in assistive technology

A brief history of QIAT:

- Quality indicators are a grass roots effort that began in 1998.
- A core group of 14 individuals began the work and since that time hundreds of service providers and consumers have had input into the wording through activities at national conferences and working meetings every year that include interested individuals from across the country.
- A email list was begun in 1999 and now includes over 1000 members. It is accessed through www.qiat.org.
- The indicators were validated by Joy Zabala's doctoral research in 2004.
- Current work revolves around identifying and developing resources that can help school districts improve their assistive technology services.
- The core group is the Quality Indicators Leadership Team which has national representation from multiple disciplines. See www.qiat.org for a list.

Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology are being used:

- Arizona, Minnesota and Texas are using the Quality Indicators as a statewide assessment tool to evaluate and guide statewide systems change.
- Florida and Arkansas are using Quality Indicators as an assessment tool to evaluate

and guide change on a regional basis.
- Oregon is using the Quality Indicators as the basis for developing district level AT teams.
- Georgia is using Quality Indicators in both teacher and administrator training.
- Iowa has used Quality Indicators as the stimulus to develop a modified set of quality indicators to guide systems change.
- Numerous districts across the country are using Quality Indicators to assess their AT services and move forward. For example Special School District of St. Louis County,

Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology have been published:

Bowser, G., Korsten, J., Reed, P., & Zabala, J. (1999). Quality indicators for effective assistive technology services. *TAM Connector, 11* (5), 1-5.

Breslin-Larson, J., Smith, M., Fields, J.L.S., & Hill, K. (2004). Quality indicators in action. *Closing the Gap, 23*, (3), 1-2.

Zabala, J., Bowser, G., Blunt, M., Hartsell, K., Carl, D., Korsten, J., Davis, S., Marfilius, S., Deterding, C., McCloskey-Dale, S., Foss, T., Nettleton, S., Hamman, T., & Reed, P. (2000). Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Services in School Settings. *Journal of Special Education Technology, 15* (4), 25-36.

Zabala, J.S. (2004). *Development and evaluation of quality indicators for assistive technology services.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Kentucky, Lexington.

Zabala, J.S., & Carl, D.F. (2005). Quality indicators for assistive technology services in schools. In D.L. Edyburn, K. Higgins, & R. Boone (Eds.), *The handbook of special education technology research and practice* (pp. 179-207). Whitefish Bay, WI: Knowledge by Design, Inc.

Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology have been cited:

Bowser, G. & Reed, P., (2004). *A School Administrator's Desktop Guide to Assistive Technology*, Arlington, VA: Technology and Media Division of the Council for Exceptional Children.

Castellani, J., Reed, P., Zabala, J., Dwyer, J., McPerhson, S., & Rein, J., (2004). *Considering the Need for Assistive Technology within the Individualized Education Program.* Arlington, VA: Technology and Media Division of the Council for Exceptional Children.

Parette, J.P. (2005). Introduction to the special issue on culture and diversity in assistive technology service delivery. *Journal of Special Education Technology, 20*, (4), 5-7.

Reed, P. & Bowser, G., (2005). Assistive technology in the IEP. In D.L. Edyburn, K. Higgins, & R. Boone (Eds.), *The handbook of special education technology research and practice* (pp. 61-77). Whitefish Bay, WI: Knowledge by Design, Inc.