

# Inclusive Education

## Conversation Guide for the video: *Using Assistive Technology to Support Learning*

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Assistive technology for learning (ATL) helps students work around learning challenges and build on their strengths.



### Key understandings

- Some educational technologies (such as word prediction, text-to-speech or speech recognition) are available for everyone as part of everyday life.
- A small number of students will need additional assistive technologies and specialized supports to more fully participate in learning.
- The SETT framework (Student – Environment – Task – Tools) provides key questions to help make decisions about which specialized tools and related strategies will make a difference for a student's learning.
- A trial use of selected technology by the student is an opportunity to collect information on its effectiveness and fit for the student's strengths, needs and preferences.
- The long-term success of the chosen assistive technology will depend on sufficient training and support, meaningful integration into learning activities, student willingness and motivation to use the

technology and a commitment by the school team to support the use of technology for a sustained period of time.

- Assistive learning technology choices and use will evolve throughout a student's school career and beyond.

### Questions for discussion

- The SETT framework is intended as a guide for an information gathering process. What are some ways school teams might collect this information?
- How can we ensure that students have continued access to the learning technologies and supports they need as they move from classroom to classroom or from school to school?

### Research

Abbott, C., Brown, D., Evett, L., Standen, P., & Wright, J. (2011). Learning difference and digital technologies: a literature review of research involving children and young people using assistive technologies 2007–2010. In

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Learn more about inclusive education: <https://education.alberta.ca/inclusive-education>

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ESRC Seminar Series: Researching Assistive Technologies.

*“For people without disabilities technology makes things easier. For people with disabilities, technology makes things possible.”*

National Council on Disability

## Taking the Pulse at the School and Authority Level



- How is data being used to inform the selection, implementation and evaluation of assistive technology for learning at the classroom, school and authority level?
- What expertise and resources are available to support implementation of assistive technology for learning?
- How is your school authority supporting professional development needs of staff related to ATL?

*Adapted from A Guide to Support Implementation: Essential Conditions* ([www.essentialconditions.ca](http://www.essentialconditions.ca))

## For more information

- [Learning Technologies: Information for Teachers](#) provides information on how technologies can provide support and flexibility in how students access content, demonstrate learning and overcome barriers to learning.
- [Making a Difference: Meeting Diverse Learning Needs with Differentiated Instruction](#) - This Alberta Education resource provides information on selecting and using assistive technology.

- [Joy Zabala](#), developer of the *SETT framework*, provides information and making decisions about the selection of ATLL.
- The [Wisconsin Assistive Technology Initiative](#) (WATI) offers a downloadable student handbook for choosing and using assistive technology.
- [Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology](#) (QIAT) offers resources to support the use of ATL for student success.

*“The success of technology has more to do with people than machines.”*

Berkeley, S. & Linstrom, L.H. (2011). Technology for the struggling reader: Free and easily accessible resources. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 48(4), 48-55.

## Alberta Examples

The following Alberta school authorities are among those who have developed staff resources on assistive technology for learning:

- Chinook’s Edge School Division—[This webpage](#) offers ATL philosophy and FAQs, SETT framework links, apps and technology tutorials.
- Golden Hills School Division—This comprehensive webpage provides many [ideas for ATL](#) based on a student's specific area of need.
- Wolf Creek Public Schools—This webpage defines ATL, provides information on [decision making and best practices](#), and offers many links to other sources of ideas.