

RI Council on Assistive Technology
April 24, 2014 ~ 2:30 – 4:00 pm
Tech ACCESS of RI
110 Jefferson Blvd, Suite I, Warwick, RI

MINUTES

Attendees: Chair Michael Matraccia, James Litvack, Teresa O'Brien, Becky Wright

Guest: Pat Robert, Melanie Sbardella

Partners: Roberta Greene-Whittemore, ATAP Program Director; Lisa Labitt, EBEC; Allen Parent-Wetmore, PARI; Kelly Charlebois, TechACCESS.

Excused: Denise Corson, Margaret Hoyle, Daniel Pieroni, Colleen Poliselli, Bill Robinson, Leslee Shaffer, Ying Sun, Kim Wennermark,

Welcome: Meeting was called to order by Chair Michael Matraccia at 2:40 pm. Introductions were done by all attendees and everyone welcomed back Roberta Greene-Whittemore.

Approval of Minutes from October 24, 2013: Michael Matraccia made motion to approve minutes as is. Becky Wright seconded. Motion was passed unanimously.

New Business:

Contract Renewals: Roberta Greene-Whittemore stated that the partners are writing up work plans now. She still needs to meet with a couple of partners. It is expected that the Loan Library will be more used during this next contract period, as ORS wants individuals to loan a device before purchasing a device. At this time there are more significantly disabled people entering the system. Roberta Greene Whittemore has talked with Kelly in length about one particular thing she has been asking. What kind of devices should be in library? As the Loan Library should be updated. Younger folks hate the word "disabled" and "looking different". Staff people are changing all the time. Becky Wright asked what the decision making tools are used?

Roberta tells the counselors, “we are not clinicians and they need to consider AT not as an end product, but at the beginning to get a better idea of the functioning needs”. Michael Matraccia asked who would be doing the assessments? Roberta responded TechACCESS, EBEC, PARI.

Becky Wright asked who will it be hooked in with? Roberta clarified that she doesn't want to see the services duplicated but rather coordinated and not replaced. Extended evaluations, clear and convincing evidence, do not have outcome until several steps/assessments have gone through, limits are that device. Roberta noted that raised awareness 20 years ago when TTW came about. She continued by saying counselors shouldn't be asking “do they want to work?” but should be asking, “What do you want to do for work?”.

New Members Needed: Looking for seven new members. WIA – Carlos; Youth Center, will check to see; Should Outreach to DD Council; MH Group; NFB, Rob Pires; Program Directors.

ATEL: Roberta Greene Whittemore reported Denise Corson is trying to get legislation through to get wireless through for ATEL. Seven states have gone wireless. (ATEL report is attached)

PARI: Allen Parent-Wetmore reported everything running fine. News was received from Best Corporate Events, a corporate team building events coordinator, that 48 wheelchairs will be donated. Biogen will be holding a team building event on May 22nd. Teams will compete to earn parts to assemble a wheelchair. There is also a new PAAT flyer completed to include price list.

OSCIL: Lezlee Shaffer, OSCIL Program Director, was unable to attend meeting and sent a report in as well. (See attached.)

EBEC: Lisa Labbit commented that OSCIL is the only partner that does a hard copy newsletter still, and it is very well received. Twelve devices were loaned this past quarter. She at first thought number was low, but it is actually about the same.

Lisa spoke of an Employment Specialist working with kids who suffers with rheumatoid arthritis. Her major role is writing reports so Lisa loaned her several devices: voice recognition/dictation apps, keyboard, etc. West Bay is purchasing equipment for her, reading and writing software. Lisa also works with teachers with the software. E-readers vs tablet/ I pod, e-readers are basic with no games or other distractions

Total of 13 demonstrations this past quarter -- Lisa noted she is seeing fewer Special Education teachers coming to trainings, as it is not in their specific learning plan. Shift is changing - working more with families. RIPIN has been working with different target groups, TA's working with kids one on one and are going to more general educational technology trainings such as Highlander Institute, software math for skills development, UD items. Becky Wright discussed e-readers and the accessibility built in - some do font changes, speech, contrast. Becky Wright does some of that at TechACCESS. Roberta Greene Whittemore asked if it is reaching kids that have needs? Kelly Charlebois responded teachers are overwhelmed, and it hits about 80 percent of their kids. Need to do more training on something specific, as a refresher. Someone is already working with looking at marketing plan, putting out feelers. Melanie Sbardella suggested blind/low-vision targeted families. Roberta Greene-Whittemore noted there two components: 1) identify? and 2) how to get the message out?.

TechACCESS: Kelly Charlebois, most of what is going on is status quo. Increase in request for general access: Learn about tablet technology; looking at marketing manuals; professional development offerings; exhibiting at local and regional conferences including RIPIN, March of Dimes, and Autism Project, and CT's Achievement through Technology Conference. They continue to supported I & R calls. Because of newly developed IEPs, TechACCESS is getting more calls this time of year. She provided two AT overview presentations to URI Special Education graduate students and CCRI OT students. AT conference is scheduled for November 20th, 2014 at the Crowne Plaza, Warwick. The goal is to make it a more regional conference this year. They launched a new conference website (<http://www.assistivetechology>)

conference.com) and have created conference committee including members from MA and CT. Next meeting is Wednesday, April 30th @ 3:00 pm at TechACCESS. They have sent out an early call for presentations and received back nine very diverse proposals already. TechACCESS is continuing to seek out grants to support adults, and are currently working on an IMLS grant that integrates AT and digital literacy to under-served population in RI.

They continue to offer professional development, full-day workshops and summer professional development. Biggest thing is **marketing**. As part of the RIDE initiative, there is a program called **AT School Share**, which is an online tracking system currently being used in Massachusetts as an online tracking and sharing tool. There are 3-4 levels of security measures and only the administrator can change inventory. They are interested in doing a cost share. Kelly has a conference call scheduled next week. Kelly did a needs assessment, and each district has something different. Becky Wright's decision was to send out interns to districts to inventory items.

Lisa Labitt commented that devices purchased with IDEA funds tend to be housed in offices at schools.

Roberta Greene Whittemore inquired about the old equipment. What happens with it? Can a certain item be loaned? If item was purchased with child's medical monies then the item cannot be loaned. If item is donated, then it can be loaned. A foreseen problem is that people will become territorial. Lisa Labitt pointed out Alpha Smart is a key example of an older device that is still being used.

Roundtable: Becky Wright made two suggestions: 1) conference Pearson to discuss access features on an every day basis; and 2) reach out to the Department of Defense as a grant source for Adult Ed.

Next Meeting Date: July 24, 2014 from 2:30 – 4:00 p.m., Tech ACCESS of RI, 110 Jefferson Blvd, Suite 1, Warwick, RI

Adjournment: James Litvack made motion to adjourn at 4:00 pm. Seconded by Teresa O'Brien. Motion passed.

Attachments: Partner Report

ATEL Partner Report for 4/24/14 RICAT Meeting

Device Demonstrations

We did 165 device demonstrations and had 254 participants from 10/1/13 – 3/30/14.

Anecdote –

Hanh is unemployed and the father of two young children. He has severe binaural sensor neural hearing loss which made it almost impossible to communicate via the telephone. I demonstrated not only how the CapTel 840i could assist him with every day phone calls from his home, but also since he has a lap top, how he could use Web CapTel as well. Since he didn't have a smart phone, he could take his lap top with him to other people's homes or in some instances use this technology at work if he was to find employment.

Public Awareness/Information & Assistance

We did 6 Technology Demonstration programs on Technology and Communication Strategies for Persons with Hearing Loss: October 9th, November 13th, December 11th, January 8th, February 12th and March 9th.

Presentations and Expos/Conferences:

10/2/13- Scituate Vista Presentation

10/5/13- HLA-RI, Courtenay Petracca represented ATEL with, Flyers, Brochures, and display of our latest equipment.

10/9/13- I attended 2 Senior CARES networking meetings and I attended the Prime Time Expo at the Mall

10/15/13-Presentation at Charlesgate East

10/16/13 - Attended another networking meeting for Seniors RULE, for the central group.

10/18/13- Had a vendor table with Hamilton Relay for the RI Senior Agenda Coalition Conference

10/23/13- Attended and manned a table for ATAP for A Better Bottom Line: Employing People with Disabilities at the State House hosted by Gov Chafee.

11/12/13-Had a table with Hamilton Relay for the RI Generations Conferences

11/20/13-Met with Senior Rule group to discuss ATEL Program and other service providers programs

12/9/13- Did a presentation with Hamilton Relay to the West Bay Retirement facility

12/11/13-Attending a networking meeting for senior services- Seniors RULE

12/17/13-Did information both at the East Providence Senior Center.

1/7/2014- Senior Provider Networking Meeting.

1/8/2014-Senior Rule Northern group Networking Meeting

1/14/14 -Washington County Elder Resource group at the South Bay Manor, South Kingstown, and Franklin Court Assisted Living Presentation

1/23/14 -Chimney Hill Assisted Living Presentation

1/27/14 -Met with the Coordinator of the RI/MA Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP) that distributes equipment to low-income individuals that are deaf-blind to enable access to telephone, advanced communications and information services.

1/29/14 -Presentation at a Spanish speaking complex, the Adelante Apts.

2/4/14- Presentation at eh Atria Lincoln place for elderly service representatives of Northern RI

2/10/14- Did a presentation at the Cumberland Senior Center

2/11/14- Did a presentation at South Kingstown Nursing and Rehab for 25 representatives of senior services in Washington County (WCRG).

2/12/14 -Senior's Rule Networking for elderly meeting for service providers in the East Bay area, presentation at the Bristol Senior Center and presentation at the Bristol Housing Authority.

2/24/14- Outreach activity to Atria in Portsmouth

2/26/14 -Seniors Rule networking service provider meeting for services for the elderly

3/4/14- Attended Monthly Seniors Networking Group at the Altria in Lincoln

3/5/14 -Did a presentation at the Johnston Senior Center

3/11/14 -Attended and presented at the WCRG (Washington County Resource Group) in South Kingstown
3/12/14 -Did a booth at the 9th Annual Partnership Conference for RIPN (Rhode Island Parent Information Network).
3/19/14 – Attended a monthly networking meeting for the northern senior providers - Seniors Rule
3/20/14 -Did a presentation at the North Providence Senior Center
3/21/14 -Did a booth at the Cumberland Senior Center!
3/26/14 -Did a presentation at Charlesgate Senior Living.
3/27/14 -Did a booth for the Alzheimer’s Association Caregiver’s Journey Conference.
3/29/14 - Did a booth at the RISHA (Rhode Island Speech and Hearing Association) Conference.

State Financing

We serviced 184 clients and issued 214 devices with a retail value of approximately \$50,904.

Anecdote –

Herbert was a client of ATEL for 6 years. His voice discrimination had declined over the past year or two, but since he had Verizon FIOS and no internet, we were unable to give him a Captel. He contacted our office because the amplified phone was no longer working for him, and he really needed the Captel. I explained to him that if he could get internet service to his home, even though he did not have a computer, and this would allow him to get the Captel 840i. The Verizon Company stated it would be an extra \$10 a month, but he was eligible for a \$100 gift card for purchasing phone, cable and internet. He was very excited to get his new Captel, and so was his daughter whom was having an extremely tough time communicating with him.

Other Activities

ATEL is trying to have legislation passed in the next session to allow wireless devices to be loaned in conjunction with landline telephone devices. The ATEL program has been monitoring the other states wireless programs for the last few years, and the biggest obstacle is the contract that goes with purchasing the device which involves a background check. The few other programs that had offered wireless phone were able to purchase the wireless smart phone for around \$200, but this was with a 2 year contract paid by the client. However, Teltex , which is one of the top distributors of equipment for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, is starting up a new program called the Teltex Wireless Technology Project which consisting of introducing Apple products to State Programs.

The Teltex program unlocked iPhones would be around \$700(plus apps, accessories...etc), but the client would not have to sign a contract; the client could decide on their own whether they want to purchase month to month, or sign a yearly contract. Teltex works with 28 different TED Programs providing sales and/or service. Currently they are working with 7 state programs (running their wireless program or helping them put things in place to roll out a program in 2014). They are also creating specialized telecommunication solutions for some other states to evaluate the possibility of moving forward with their own wireless program. Almost all of our 28 State TED Programs are wanting to implement some type of wireless program or modify their current wireless program (for those state that currently have a wireless program) to offer more equipment...such as iPad's or iPhone's. Over the last 3-5 years there has been a decrease in landline usage, and many state programs feel that in 5-6 years there programs will not be viable without wireless technology. Teltex wireless program consists of only Apple & iOS because of Teltex’s belief that Apple is the technology Leader, offers accessibility, variety of Apps, availability of accessories, high demand, uniformity & the ability of this product to give individuals with disabilities the sense of inclusion, since these products are mainstream. However, if ATEL was to add wireless, we would have a restricted release; thereby, not depleting the yearly funds on wireless only.

Respectfully submitted:
Denise Corson



**OCEAN STATE CENTER FOR
INDEPENDENT LIVING**

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Report for April 24 RICAT Meeting

Highlights from Quarter: January - March 2014

• **Demonstrations**

Home visits and assessments continue. Funding for AT & minor home modifications through OSCIL's *Home Sweet Accessible Home & Increasing Independence for the Visually Impaired* projects is still available.

- **Public Awareness, Information & Assistance:** OSCIL participated in several outreach activities this quarter including presentations at a Mended Hearts Support Group meeting, the MS Dream Center, Westcott Terrace senior high rise, and several In-Sight Support Group meetings around the state. In addition, an informational mailing was sent to senior centers statewide to inform seniors about AT resources for maintaining safety and independence in the home.

The spring 2014 issue of OSCIL's quarterly newsletter, *Signs of Independence*, included articles on OSCIL's Home Access Program, updates on the Accessible Taxis program, a RIdE Program Overview, information on Liberty Mobility, ORS' Deaf and Hard of Hearing services and adaptive equipment funding through *OSCIL's Home Sweet Accessible Home & Increasing Independence for the Visually Impaired* projects.

- **Options Counseling:** Options *Counseling* training was offered in March to Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) I & R workers. Staff from The Point, 2-1-1 and other community service providers was also in attendance. The training provided information on services and resources for seniors & persons with disability who are currently residing in nursing facilities but desiring to transition back into the community or those in the community who are interested in long-term planning to maintain their independence in the community. Information on OSCIL's Home Access and SBVI's Independent Living for the Older Blind Program was included.
- **Transition Services:** During the last quarter OSCIL provided assistance to ten consumers who expressed interest in transitioning from nursing facilities back into the community. While no consumers transitioned this quarter, consumer one will be transitioning within a few weeks. Several other consumers are either awaiting completion of intake/assessment process or waiting for their names to come to the top of subsidized housing waiting lists. One consumer was provided with post-transition service -- acquisition of AT to increase independence in their home.

- **Reutilization.** During the quarter OSCIL was able to recycle several small pieces of AT (transfer benches, bath board and swing clear hinges) to enable consumers to address personal care and access issues, eliminating the necessity of their having to purchase these items new.

Case Study #1 - Consumer is a ninety two year old female residing alone in a subsidized apartment. She has arthritis and is severely hard of hearing. She contacted OSCIL because she was unable to hear the fire drill that the building conducted because she takes her hearing aids out at bedtime. The consumer was very concerned for her safety and asked for a device to alert her in the event of a real fire. We provided her with a Shake-Awake Smoke Detector that will vibrate when it detects smoke. The consumer sleeps in her recliner due to her arthritis and we had to figure out how to attach the vibrating disc to her recliner. The disc is traditionally placed underneath the mattress. We used industrial Velcro and hot glue to adhere the disc to the side of her chair level with her head. The consumer has reported feeling safer and more independent.

Case Study #2 - Consumer is a 47 year old male living in his own home with family support. He has a CNA once a week for showering assistance. His neurological disability caused an irreversible, quick onset of lower extremity weakness and neuropathy. He depends on a manual wheelchair in the home and is not able to stand or walk at all. Transfers are a lateral scoot. He has to go up/down the steps on his butt to enter/exit his home. OSCIL provided aluminum, modular ramp allowing the consumer safe, independent access to/ egress from his home.

Consumer's bathroom was very difficult to get into as the door was narrow. He had to wait for his home health aide to assist him with a dangerous transfer to get onto a small shower seat in the tub/shower. OSCIL provided a transfer bench and a hand held shower with wall mounted bracket, on /off water flow on shower head and a horizontal grab bar on the long wall of the tub/shower area. The door to the bathroom was widened and changed to a sliding, "barn door" style. Consumer is now able to safely get into the room and be more independent with his self care.

Lezlee Shaffer
OSCIL Program Director



RICAT Meeting Thursday, April 24th 2014
ATAP Partner Reporting – PARI PAAT Program
Data Reporting Period October 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013

Device Recycling and Exchange (Reutilization):

The PAAT program provides DME (durable medical equipment) assistive technology equipment to people thru two primary methods, device recycling and device exchange.

76 recycled devices were sold to consumer and their families at an **estimated cost savings of over \$10, 769.00 dollars**. This equipment consists of durable medical equipment used in daily living and mobility activities.

1 exchanged device was provided utilizing an exchange database maintained by PARI through which devices are exchanged at no cost to the consumer. The only financial obligations of the recipients are installation charges, if applicable. This equipment consists of stair glides, vehicle modifications and electric hospital beds providing an **estimated cost savings this period to consumers of over \$400.00 dollars**.

Device Loan:

The PAAT program provides two types of device loans, short term accommodations and very short time loans of durable medical equipment for the purposes of evaluation.

Accommodation Loans:

The objective of this loan service is to provide a short term accommodation while an individual's own equipment is being repaired or are if they are in need of equipment which might be prohibitive to purchase for short term use, such as a portable ramp, electric wheelchair, scooter, transport wheelchair or patient lift. The loan is provided with a \$10.00 charge for each week with an average loan term length of two weeks. Instructions on proper usage and care of the equipment are provided as well as follow-up assessment of the loan.

3 accommodation loans were provided this period.

Evaluation Loans:

The objective of this loan service is to provide the consumer or therapist with the opportunity to bring an assistive device to evaluate in their home environment. Often equipment designed for a particular use does not work in every environment or with every consumer. The ability to simply take one or two types of equipment home and try them prior to purchase rather than accessing all of one's concerns in the showroom and making an immediate decision promotes the right choices being made regarding assistive technology equipment.

9 loans for evaluation were provided this period.

Device Demonstration Center

The PAAT program operates a demonstration center within our sales area, attempting to provide at least one example of all the durable medical equipment that is available through recycling or exchange. Consumers, families and service professionals are able to compare and gain an understanding of the choices available concerning assistive technology equipment.

31 demonstrations of equipment were provided this period, often to families who were for the first time facing the need of assistive equipment. As an example of one of the benefits we provide, after having determined Flora T. did need crutches and properly fitting her we sat at the computer to watch instructional videos of the proper techniques for walking as well as ascending/descending stairs until she felt comfortable.

Information and Referral

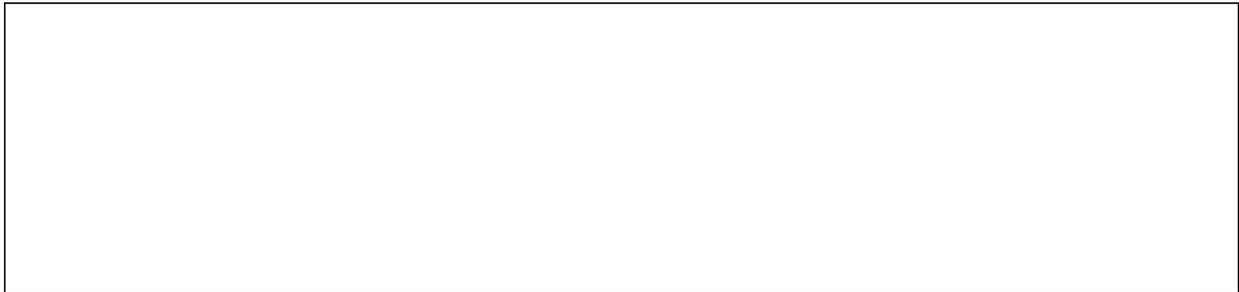
Often, quite often actually, people call PARI in need of equipment or services that aren't available nor provided by PARI. In those instances the PAAT program will provide *any* information possible, including referrals to appropriate agencies, searching for the lowest price on a specialty tub transfer chair, calling a therapist to clarify a consumer's needs or simply providing a Denise's number at ATEL to obtain an assistive telephone. Many of the phone calls we receive require just listening to and asking questions of the consumer or family member, determining what their needs are and trying to help as much as possible.

85 I/R's provided this period.

Currently

We have just gotten great news from Best Corporate Events, a national corporate team building events coordinator, that the PAAT program will be the recipient of 48 brand new wheelchairs on May 22nd.

Biogen (IDEC), a major pharmaceutical manufacturer is having a team building event at the Marriott in Newport. Biogen (IDEC) teams will solve puzzles and challenges together, earning the parts required to assemble wheelchairs. At the end of the event, we will spend a small amount of time with the participants, expressing our thanks and detailing the impact of their generous efforts.



Best Corporate Events

www.bestcorporateevents.com

We also have finalized our new PAAT program brochure; unfortunately I don't have printed brochures to distribute to the council yet, but soon.

RICAT MEETING
Thursday, April 24, 2014
ATAP Partner Reporting: TechACCESS of RI

Highlights from Quarter: January – March 2014

Demonstrations

We continue to offer monthly Technology Demonstrations, with a focus on Technology for those with Blindness/Low Vision, Alternate Computer Access, and Tablet Technologies.

Public Awareness, Information & Assistance

- We have developed new brochures and marketing materials.
- We have been exhibiting at local and regional conferences, including The RI Parent Information Network Partnership Conference, a March of Dimes sponsored program at RI Hospital, The Autism Project and Connecticut's Achievement Through Technology Conference.
- We continue to support I&R calls received at TechACCESS as well as the Equipment Loan Program.
- We provided two AT Overview Presentations: to URI Special Education Graduate Students and to CCRI (Newport Campus) Occupational Therapy students

Updates

- We will be having our Assistive Technology conference on November 20th at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick. Our focus is on making this a more regional conference.
 - We have launched the new conference website:
<http://www.assistivetechconference.com/>
 - We have created a Conference Committee that includes ATAP partners, school therapists, representatives from adult agencies and representatives from Massachusetts and Connecticut agencies and school districts.
 - We sent out a Call for Presentations and have already received 9 proposals.
 - We currently have 6 paid exhibitors.
- We continue to seek out and apply for grants that will support our programs (adult and children).
- We are currently working on a grant received by the IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Science) called ALLAccess, which focuses on the potential for integrating library, digital literacy, technology access, adult education, and workforce services through the library, with a focus on the needs of the underserved in RI (including those with disabilities).
- We continue to offer Professional Development to educators, therapists and families. We are determining what types of workshops we should run over the summer months.
- As an initiative from the RI Department of Education, we are exploring the use of a program called AT School Share, which is currently used in Massachusetts. This is an online tracking and device sharing tool that we developed as part of the state's AT initiative (called MassMATCH).
<http://www.atschoolshare.org/>

Respectfully Submitted: Kelly Charlebois



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RICAT Meeting: April 24, 2014 EBEC quarterly summary

The ATAP Children and Youth Resource Center located at East Bay Educational Collaborative provides a Lending Library of Assistive Technology Devices and a Demonstration Center for school age children, educators and families.

Device Loan: Number of devices borrowed this quarter: **12**

Anecdote: An Employment Specialist was able to loan several devices; voice recognition/ dictation Apps, on screen keyboard and ergonomic keyboard & ipad. This loan allowed her to continue working and providing vocational services to young adults with disabilities. Her disability was Rheumatoid Arthritis which prevented her report writing, a major aspect of her job. Her employer will be procuring her various technology tools.

Device Demonstration: **13**

Anecdote: Demonstration to Special Education Teachers to utilize low vision hand held magnifiers for multiple students. Providing these low tech tools allowed access to the science curriculum during experiments and inquiry learning strategies in the classroom.

Device Training: **7**

Number of Participants: **51**

- I PAD Accessibility for students and educators
- Healthy Transitions Student Fair
- Text help Read and Write Gold Screen Reading Software
- I pad Low Vision Access Training
- E readers and matching device features to learners

Technical Assistance:

1. RIVESP Advisory Team member Rhode Island Vision Educator Services - continue working with school districts to best meet the needs of students with vision impairment. On going.
2. RIDE Grant submission for "BTB Building the Bridge" with accessible technology between classrooms and State Assessments for students with disabilities. Main Components of this Grant:
 - Students and teachers learn technologies that make learning accessible.
 - Students are fluent in their use of technologies tools to demonstrate what they know.
 - Teachers are fluent in their technology use of tools providing learning scaffolding in class environments.
 - Students seamlessly apply these accessible technology skills in State Assessments

Respectfully submitted: Lisa Labitt 4/23/14