Integrating Accessibility and Assistive Technology Tools with High School Completion Strategies

GEORGIA'S REIMAGINING EDUCATION CONFERENCE
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Carson Cochran
Program Manager, GIMC
Division for Special Education
Services and Supports
ccochran@doe.k12.ga.us

Ann Cross
Program Manager, GLRS
Division for Special Education
Services and Supports
leighann.cross@doe.k12.ga.us

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Session Logistics

- **Handouts:** Session handouts are available for download in the handouts section
  - ❖ Handouts are also available on our Events and Conferences webpage

- **Questions:** Enter questions/comments in the questions box

- **Feedback:** Please complete the pop-up survey at the close of the session

- **Certificate of Attendance:** A link to a certificate of attendance will be emailed in 24-hours
  - ❖ Must attend the entire live session

- **On Demand:** Session recordings will be available for on-demand access following the close of the conference on the Events and Conference webpage at http://www.gadoe.org/sdeevents
  - ❖ On-demand views are not eligible to receive a certificate of attendance

About Your Presenters

Carson Cochran has 22 years of experience working as an assistive technology specialist in the school systems. He came into education as a speech language pathologist with database management experience from the National Institutes of Health. Carson currently works for the GaDOE Georgia Instructional Materials Center where he consults with local districts on the improvement of delivery for accessible text for all students.

Leigh Ann Cross is a program manager with the Division for Special Education Services and Supports in the GLRS and SSIP Unit. She received her EdS in Leadership from Lincoln Memorial University and her Masters in Emotional Behavior Disorders and Learning Disabilities from the University of West Georgia. This is her 36th year in education.

Susan Brozovic is a program specialist with the Division for Special Education Services and Supports in the SSIP and GLRS Unit where her focus is on increasing graduation rates and decreasing dropout rates for students with disabilities. She received her Ph.D. in Special Education from Georgia State University.

Paula Gumpman is a program specialist with the Division for Special Education Services and Supports, in the Post School Outcomes unit focusing on Assistive Technology. She received her EdS. from Tennessee Technological University in Cookeville, Tennessee and her Master of Science degree from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Trace Vaughn is a program specialist with the Division for Special Education Services and Supports in the SSIP and GLRS Unit. His focus is on increasing graduation and dropout rates for students with disabilities. He received a Master of Arts in Rehabilitation Counseling from the University of South Florida.

Overview

- This presentation will demonstrate how assistive technology and accessible materials (visually impaired, print disabled or physically disabled) can support students to complete school and transition into positive post-secondary outcomes. Implementing an Early Warning System will be discussed as well as other School Completion Toolkit resources.

Session Goals

- I will be able to explain why accessible educational materials are important to students with print disabilities.

- I will be able to name three types of assistive technology for high incidence disabilities.

- I will be able to identify strategies, interventions or resources to help students with and without disabilities graduate with a high school diploma.
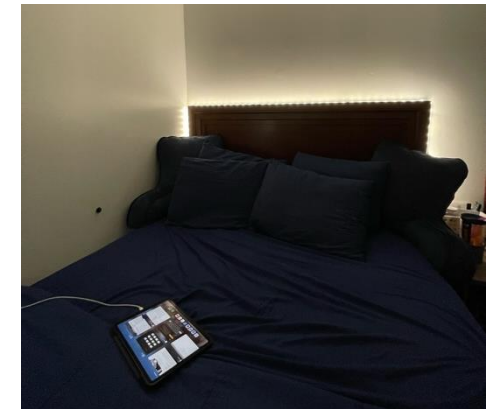
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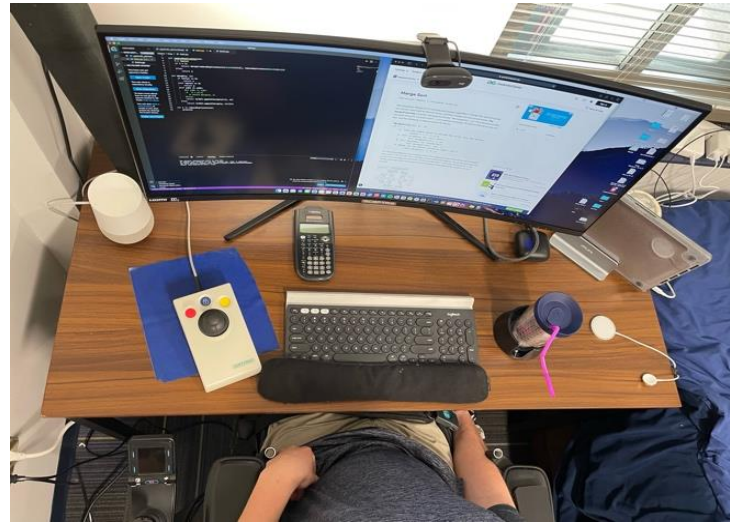
Workstation

Apple Watch

Google Chair

Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA)

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states and districts to support and improve the quality of low-performing high schools. States must set long-term high school graduation rate goals for all student groups and identify and intervene in those schools that graduate fewer than two-thirds of their students.

2019-2020 Georgia Dropout Statistics

gosa.ga.gov

14,500
Georgia Students
dropped out

2,744
Georgia Students with Disabilities dropped out

"The implications of dropping out are high for students, families, communities, and society. Therefore, it is pivotal that we bridge the gaps for students at-risk of dropping out by utilizing effective interventions and identifying students early."

Wilkins & Bost, 2015

Practices Influencing Dropout

Pull-Out

Outside influences, circumstances, and situations that pull students out

Push-Out

Policies, practices, and factors within the school that push students out

Pull-In

Organizations, opportunities, and people that pull students back into school

Check and Connect

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Poll Question

Which one of these indicators is an example of a Push-out factor?

A. Check and Connect

B. Caring for a sick family member

C. Out of school suspension

Top 10 Drop-out Reasons

<u>Failing too many classes</u>: 28%

<u>Bored</u>: 26%

<u>School wasn't relevant</u> to my life: 19%

Support my family: 19%

<u>No one cared:</u> 18%

<u>Retained</u>: 14%

Drugs: 12%

Pregnancy: 4%

Gang: 4%

 Physical or mental problems: 3%

Check and Connect.umn.edu

AT and AEM Impacts Student Engagement

Failing too many classes: 28%

Students with high incidence disabilities that understand the content and are unable to share their knowledge (Google Drive with voice recorded comments and voice typing, Microsoft Immersive Reader supports for reading and dictation for writing)

Bored: 26%

Teachers need training on how to use assistive technology to support instruction and improve content. Technology use in the classroom to accommodate different learning styles can help with active engagement by the use of graphic organizers, to increase engagement.

AT and AEM Impacts Student Engagement

School wasn't relevant to my life: 19%

Student does not see relevance or does not engage in the curriculum. Text to Speech and Speech to Text options can provide relevance.

No one cared: 18%

No sense of belonging and connection to school and availability of quality support from parents, teachers, and peers (accessible educational materials in a digital format, tablets and laptops for access to digital material and the ability to use text to speech for access to curriculum and to show what they know)

Retained: 14%

Couldn't get to school on time, high rate of absenteeism. (learn how to use alarms, routines and smart phone reminders, and organize for the day with to do lists, timers and organizers to increase on task behavior)

Early Warning System (EWS)

Early warning systems (EWS) are an important strategy to monitor and intervene with students who may be at-risk for dropping out.

Early warning systems are based on established indicators that predict whether a student is off-track

for graduation.

Early Warning System Recording Link

STEP 1 Identify Need | STEP 2 Select Intervention | STEP 3 Plan for Implementation | STEP 4 Implement the Plan | STEP 5 Examine Progress

School Completion Toolkit

The School Completion Toolkit provides links to state and national resources, as well as successful practices from LEAs across the state aimed at improving outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities. It is a great source of information for districts and schools to increase graduation rates and dropout prevention.

School Completion Toolkit

Interventions in Secondary Schools

- Increase reading comprehension or **vocabulary skills**
- Learn *strategy* **to access content** of text with limited reading ability
- Learn *strategy* **to complete homework** independently
- Learn to use different **assistive technologies** (e.g., screen readers, organizational tools)
- Increase **student engagement**

American Institute for Research (AIR)

Why focus on Assistive Technology (AT)?

- Assistive technology tends to be underutilized by students with high-incidence disabilities like LD and ADHD.

- Many students are left to needlessly struggle in the classroom. However, when students have access to needed AT devices and services, they typically experience better academic outcomes.

- An analysis of 56 research studies on the effectiveness of different types of AT indicates that **AT can lead to improved academic outcomes as well as increased satisfaction with learning** for students with disabilities. However, to be effective, the AT must be individualized to meet the student's unique needs. *(Perelmutter, McGregor, & Gordon, 2017)*

High Incidence Disabilities and AT

Received Assistive Technology

* 99.8% Graduate
  80.9% Attend Post Secondary

DID NOT Receive Assistive Technology

* 79.6% Graduate
  40.1% Attend Post Secondary

* Bouck,E., Maeda Y., & Flanagan, S.(2013) Assistive Technology and Students with High-Incidence Disabilities: Understanding the Relationship Through NLTS2. *Remedial and Special Education*,33(5) 298-308.

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Why are Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) important to students with print disabilities ?

Accessible educational materials (AEM) are print- and technology-based educational materials, including printed and electronic textbooks and related core materials that are designed or enhanced in a way that makes them usable across the widest range of learner variability, regardless of format (e.g., print, digital, graphic, audio, video).

CAST.org

Poll Question

What would be an assistive technology solution for a student who is <u>failing to many classes</u>?

A. Use of smart phone/electronic devices alarms, timers, etc.

B. Text to Speech to increase curriculum knowledge and skills

C. Graphic organizers, visual schedules, or to do lists

D. Accessible Educational Materials

E. All of the above

Assistive Technology and Accessible Educational Materials Can…

- Give access to the general curriculum

- Ease frustration and break down barriers to learning

- Increase motivation and engagement

- Foster a sense of peer acceptance

- Improve productivity in the classroom and at home

IDEA states that assistive technology must be considered in developing individualized educational plans.

Assistive Technology (AT)

- **Audiobooks and digital TTS books**
  - BookShare and Audio Books
  - Learning Alley and Audio Books

- **Text-to-speech** (TTS)
  - Using Text to Speech (4minute and 33 second video)

- **Speech to Text (Dictate)**
  - Using Speech to Text (3 min 46 second video)

- **Graphic organizers**
  - Using Graphic Organizers (2 minute and 53 seconds)

Kai Owens

- Bulloch County Schools Valedictorian

- Will be attending UGA

- AEM and AT use:
  - Screen Readers(JAWS, VoiceOver)
  - Braille

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Resources

- [Assistive Technology Resource Guide](#)
- [Early Warning Systems Summary Series: Five Core Components of Implementing an EWS (gadoe.org)](#)
- [American Institute for Research Early Warning System Video Series](#)
- [GaDOE Early Warning System Fidelity Checklist](#)
- [15 Effective Strategies to Prevent Dropouts](#)

Resources

- [Attendance Works](#)
- [GaDOE High Leverage Practices](#)
- [Assistive Technology and the IEP: Tips for General Ed Teachers](#)
- [Preventing Dropouts in Secondary Schools](#)
- [Georgia Instructional Materials Center (gadoe.org)](#)
- [Special Education Services and Supports - Assistive Technology (gadoe.org)](#)

Next Steps

- Review Assistive Technology videos (Assistive Technology webpage).

- Watch "AIM Simply Said" at GIMC.org.

- Complete Early Warning Modules in School Completion Toolkit Step 1

- Find out who in your district or school is the AT and/or AEM lead.

- Assess the professional learning your district or school needs in reference to AT, AEM and Early Warning Systems.

Session Feedback

Thank you for attending our session!

- Please take a moment to provide your feedback on the pop-up survey at the close of the session.
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Susan Brozovic, Program Specialist
Sbrozovic@doe.k12.ga.us

Paula Gumpman, Program Specialist
pgumpman@doe.k12.ga.us

Trace Vaughn, Program Specialist
James.Vaughn@doe.k12.ga.us

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