



Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Special Education
Back-to-School Meeting
September 9, 2022



The NEAT Center LEA Membership and Subscription

New England Assistive Technology (NEAT), an Oak Hill Center, provides assistive technology (AT) resources, services, supports, and adaptive equipment to individuals of all ages and abilities. The Bureau of Special Education (BSE) has renewed and expanded the way in which Local Education Agencies (LEAs) can engage with NEAT during the 2022-2025 school years. *All LEAs* will have continuous access to unique benefits for CT students with Individualized Education Programs (IEP) through **NEAT Membership at no cost**, and on an annual rotating basis all *LEA Cohort members* will also have additional supports through the expanded **NEAT Subscription AT Services at no cost**.

The LEA Cohort list and information may be found on the NEAT website at: <https://assistivetechology.oakhillct.org/sde-subscription/>. An overview of NEAT Membership for all LEAs is described below while the NEAT Membership Subscription (for LEA Cohort C members) regarding expanded AT services and supports is on page 2.

NEAT Membership for CT School Districts

All LEAs are currently eligible for the following benefits:

Pop-up Consultations: a monthly availability calendar is presented to NEAT Members so that they can sign up for one-hour virtual AT consultations with AT Specialists with unique areas of expertise (i.e., Blind/Low Vision, executive functioning, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), communication disorders, Autism, SLD/Dyslexia, etc.). “Pop-ups” can be flexible (supporting the need for quick access to information or troubleshooting); offer a low time commitment (pick a convenient date/time); receive immediate support with minimal paperwork (unless a more formal request is warranted for later support); and meet the individual/team’s needs.

Lending Library: the NEAT Lending Library provides short-term loans (30 days) of AT devices (such as iPads and iOS apps, Chromebooks with Chrome extensions, alternative keyboards, eye gaze technology, and so much more). These devices can be borrowed to support the decision-making process of a team (“try before you buy”), serve as a short-term loan while a device is purchased (on back order) or being repaired/fixed, support staff professional growth (incorporate into PD demonstrations), and/or assist in school-led evaluation trials.

Exclusive Webinars and Professional Development (PD): the NEAT Center hosts an extensive list of online webinars delivered by nationally recognized AT Specialists. The educational webinars and professional development (PD) demonstrate the most important trends and the latest educational technology (Ed Tech) for all aspects of living, learning and ability such as: grade level supports, addressing specific disability challenges, AAC tools, AT continuum, and environmental solutions. NEAT Members are given access to live sessions (develop specific AT skills), as well as archived, recorded webinars that could be accessed for self-paced learning through archived webinars with the *password: TeachMeAT* at <https://assistivetechology.oakhillct.org/learn-from-neat/>.

AT Information and Resources: on the NEAT website and directed events can provide guidance with a quick turnaround for the delivery of AT and Ed Tech supportive services.

NEAT Membership Subscription: Expanded Menu for AT services and supports for CT Students with IEPs

LEAs identified in *Cohort C* will have access to the NEAT Membership plus the following Subscription benefits for the 2022-2023 school year:

Evaluation: completely individualized, including a review of records, history, learning modalities, personal preferences, and differentiating patterns of strengths and challenges/concerns. A team approach is utilized, and the process includes an initial meeting, environmental observations, and trials with various Ed Tech and AT. Based on the needs identified by the team, a NEAT AT Specialist submits a written report addressing supports for targeted skill sets, specific implementation strategies throughout environments for meaningful access and participation, and comprehensive recommendations on appropriate technology geared for success.

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Consultation: is a semi-formal meeting (between NEAT Specialists, educators, families, and/or individuals with disabilities) results in a set of suggested tools and/or strategies to be implemented. It can also be used to learn more about how to effectively use available technologies or as technical support and troubleshooting for current technology. A written summary is not included but could be requested.

Training & Coaching: specialized learning opportunities are customized to meet unique needs of a student and/or team. The focus is to identify AT and Ed Tech needs and drive personal training sessions towards those goals such as creating, following, and executing an implementation plan for recently recommended AT tools/devices. The personalized time provided in this service type allows the team to absorb the content at their own pace, troubleshoot throughout the process, and navigate through questions and inter-team/school nuances.

Kickstart: a combination of services (includes a 2-hour consultation, a written summary, and 2 hours of implementation training), which allows teams to work closely with the AT Specialists throughout the entirety of the consideration and implementation process. Scaffolding services allows the student to feel supported, and teachers have time needed to learn ways to effectively understand the AT and Ed Tech to encourage use of devices and applications, as well as to problem solve challenges in order to garner success across various environments.

Professional Development: specialized professional development (PD) and capacity building around the LEA's AT needs and unique areas such as augmentative and alternative communication (AAC).

Learn More About Your NEAT Benefits

NEAT advocates that sustainable, impactful AT quality assurance plans are ones that grow organically within the LEA. To support this growth, below are PD events geared specifically towards the needs of school-based teams, and recent NEAT offerings/information that reinforce concepts to build sustainable LEA AT & Ed Tech capacity. *Select one:*

Cohort C LEAs:

Wednesday, September 14, 2022 | 10:00 – 11:30 am

Live Webinar on Zoom

Register today at: <https://oakhillct.wufoo.com/forms/z12hfwrk0ovm4nt/>

Friday, October 21, 2022 | 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

In-Person Learning & Networking

Location: 33 Coventry St. Hartford, CT

Register today at: <https://oakhillct.wufoo.com/forms/z1xr7tao0t9d7xx/>

Cohort A & B LEAs:

Wednesday, September 14, 2022 | 8:30 – 9:30 am

Live Webinar on Zoom

Register today at: <https://oakhillct.wufoo.com/forms/zdoiu7j1jaokpj/>

All new and returning Members can get started by **signing up today:** <https://oakhillct.wufoo.com/forms/z822i6f1p2blak/>
Ensure that updated LEA contact information is shared with NEAT so future information can be accessed and delivered.

Stay Connected and Look for Upcoming PD: <https://assistivetechology.oakhillct.org/>

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Your NEAT Membership and NEAT Membership Expanded Subscription has been generously sponsored by the CT State Department of Education / Bureau of Special Education.



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