Self-Evaluation Matrices for the

Quality Indicators in

Assistive Technology Services

Introduction to the QIAT Self-Evaluation Matrices

The Quality Indicators in Assistive Technology (QIAT) Self-Evaluation Matrices were developed in response to formative evaluation data indicating a need for a model that could assist in the application of the Quality Indicators for Assistive Technology Services in Schools (Zabala, et. al, 2000). The QIAT Matrices are based on the idea that change does not happen immediately, but rather, moves toward the ideal in a series of steps that take place over time. The QIAT Matrices use the Innovation Configuration Matrix (ICM) developed by Hall and Hord (1985) as a structural model. The ICM provides descriptive steps ranging from the unacceptable to the ideal that can be used as benchmarks to determine the current status of practice related to a specific goal or objective and guide continuous improvement toward the ideal. It enables users to determine areas of strength that can be built upon as well as areas of challenge in need of improvement.

When the QIAT Matrices are used to guide a collaborative self-assessment conducted by a diverse group of stakeholders within an agency, the information gained can be used to plan for changes that lead to improvement throughout the organization in manageable and attainable steps. The QIAT Matrices can also be used to evaluate the level to which expected or planned-for changes have taken place by periodically analyzing changes in service delivery over time.

When completed by an individual or team, the results of the self-assessment can be used to measure areas of strength and plan for needed professional development, training, or support needed by the individual or team. When the QIAT Matrices are used by an individual or team, however, it is important to realize that the results can only reasonably reflect perceptions of the services in which that individual or team is involved and may not reflect the typical services within the organization. Since a primary goal of QIAT is to increase the quality and consistency of assistive technology (AT) services to all students throughout the organization, the perception that an individual or small group is working at the level of best practices may still indicate a need to increase the quality and consistency of services throughout the organization.

The descriptive steps included in the QIAT Matrices are meant to provide illustrative examples and may not be specifically appropriate, as written, for all environments. People using the QIAT Matrices may wish to revise the descriptive steps to align them more closely for specific environments. However, when doing this, care must be taken that the revised steps do not compromise the intent of the quality indictor to which they apply.

The QIAT Matrices document is a companion document to the list of Quality Indicators and Intent Statements. The original six indicator areas were validated by research in 2004 and revisions were made in 2005. For more information, please refer to the indicators and intent statements on the QIAT Web site at http://www.qiat.org. Before an item in the QIAT Matrices is discussed and rated, groups must read the entire item in the list of Quality Indicators and Intent Statements so that the intent of the item is clear.

References

Hall, G. E. and Hord, S. M. (1987) *Change in Schools: Facilitating the Process.* Ithaca: State University of New York Press

QIAT Consortium. (2005). Quality indicators for assistive technology services. Retrieved August 5, 2009 from http://www.qiat.org.

Zabala, J. S., Bowser, G., Blunt, M., Carl, D. F., Davis, S., Deterding, C., Foss, T., Korsten, J., Hamman, T., Hartsell, K., Marfilius, S. W., McCloskey-Dale, S., Nettleton, S. D., & Reed, P. (2000). Quality indicators for assistive technology services. *Journal of Special Education Technology, 15* (4), 25-36.

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.