



State of Wisconsin

Assistive Technology Advisory Council

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Assistive Technology Advisory Council Quarterly Meeting

May 7, 2026

9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

Join via [Zoom](#):

<https://dhs.wi.zoomgov.com/j/1604648323>

Join via Phone:

Phone: 1-669-254-5252

Meeting ID: 1604648323

A. Action Items

B. Motions Items

Motion Item 1: Motion made by Dawn Merth-Johnson to approve the May 7, 2026 ATAC Meeting Agenda. Motion seconded by Debra Rimmel. Motion carried.

Motion Item 2: Motion made by BJ Ermence to approve the February 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes. Motion seconded by Rick Ziller. Motion carried.

Motion Item 3: Motion made by Rick Ziller to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by BJ Ermence. Motion carried.

C. Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome, Introductions, Housekeeping, and Opening Question

Members Present: Debra Rimmel; Cassie Frost; Ashley Lien; Dawn Merth-Johnson; Mike Hipple; BJ Ermenc; Laurie Lane; Stacy Ellingen; Rick Ziller.

Guests Present: Dani Kaslow, Center for Deafblind Persons; Cassandra Potter; Cathi McCuthcan.

<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/atac/index.htm>

DHS Staff Present: Laura Plummer; Nichole Hysel; Jenna Sturgis; Amber Mullet

2. Review and Approve Quarterly Meeting May 7, 2026 Agenda

Motion made by Dawn Merth-Johnson to approve the May 7, 2026 ATAC Meeting Agenda. Motion seconded by Debra Remmel. Motion carried. **See Motion Item 1.**

3. Review and Approve February 12, 2026 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Motion made by BJ Ermence to approve the February 12, 2026 Meeting Minutes. Motion seconded by Rick Ziller. Motion carried. **See Motion Item 2.**

4. Public Comment on Issues Affecting Assistive Technology Users (9:10 A.M. – 9:20 A.M.) or on the State Plan on Assistive Technology, 2024-2026 (<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/atac/state-assistive-technology-plan.htm>)

- No public comment

5. Assistive Technology Program Partner Updates

- Laurie Lane from WisLoan reported that there are 57 current loans at just under \$900,000 in value. WisLoan will be at the Circles of Life Conference. The down payment assistance grant has almost all been used (51 people assisted over the grant period).
- Dawn Merth Johnson from DPI shared the following updates:
 - We have over 1870 members of the AT Forward Community of Practice
 - From August 2025-March 2026, 324 new AT Forward CoP members have joined. When compared to the same data point from last year (August 2024-March 2025, 166 members), we have almost doubled the number of participants this year during that same Aug-March time period.
 - We are working with CESA 2 to make the video library and other materials accessible; grateful that the DOJ pushed the ADA Title II web accessibility compliance deadline out by one year.
 - Microcredentials hit the 500 mark! We have now awarded 506. The area of AAC/Communication remains the largest. Other popular areas include: Academics, Device Access, Independent Living, Assessment and Organization/Executive Function
 - The final CoP meeting of the year was held yesterday on the topic of gaming
 - The ATLC is winding down for the school year. Everything must be returned by June 5. The number of loans from the Assistive Technology Lending Center through WisTech is down from this time last year
 - When we are able to edit DPI pages again (currently on a freeze), we plan to launch the pilot project AEM Learning Plan for all to access.
 - Wisconsin Bookshare data for 2026-27 will be collected at the end of May

- CESA 2 is considering hosting an AT conference in 2027
- Rick Ziller from ATR shared that their company has worked with DVR for many years and they have experienced a stark decline in AT referrals. He encouraged council members to reach out to state legislators about positive DVR experiences.
- Debra Rimmel from DVR shared that the wait list is at approximately at 7,000 people. They can still work with those who have an IPE and some for transition students under the Pre-Ets program.
- BJ – the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing will be meeting in June. The Wauwautosa Commission for Disabilities is working with a consultant on communication and planning for the advocates. At the 4th of July parade there will be a sensory zone and accessible areas for parking and parade viewing. BJ had the opportunity to attend the Center for Deafblind anniversary open house in April. She noted that there is a shortage of CART providers especially during evenings and weekends.
- Dani Kaslow from the Center for Deafblind shared about their open house. Referrals for the ICanConnect program have been down this year for new referrals. They are shifting focus on education to potential referral sources about combined hearing and vision loss.
- Mike Hipple shared that they are working on the summer AAC newsletter. BPPD five year plan is open for public comments. I do plan to keep attending these meetings and will be going to the Ability Expo in Chicago this summer. If anyone wants to ride along please let him know.
- Ashley Lien from Compass IL shared that their agency has a Dementia grant and they have been distributing devices out along with stories and pictures. Compass is having a resource fair on May 27th in Menomonie, WI. One staff member has obtained the Age Safe America certification. Another staff is taking the WisTech AT Course.

6. WisTech Program Updates

- The AT Certification course has had 100 applications with 63 individuals obtaining the WisTech AT Certification and 15 obtaining the WisTech Verified ATP certification. The next enrollment is for July 7th.
- The ADILN Conference is happening in September and the call for proposals closes on May 8th.
- Amber Mullet shared a brief update on the Expanding Technology efforts being led by Advancing States.
- The 2026 Webinars begin this month and information was shared to all AT Council members.
- WisTech provided technical assistance to the Wisconsin State Fair around hearing loss and communication access.

7. WisTech Data Collection discussion

- Laura Plummer reviewed the most recent quarterly data summary shared with council members.

8. Assistive Technology Advisory Council Member Officer Elections, Appointments, United Councils Workgroup Appointment, and Vacancies.

- Laura Plummer thanked Mike Hipple for his service on the AT Council with his term expiring this month.
- Debra Remmel made a motion to appoint the following individuals to a second term: Lindsey Kreitzman, Jennifer Seale, Julie Bergen, Stacy Ellingen, Courtney Zurowski, Jim Rau, and BJ Ermence. Motion seconded by Ashley Lien. Motion carried.

9. Adjourn

- Motion made by Rick Ziller to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by BJ Ermence. Motion carried. **See Motion Item 3.**

The purpose of this meeting is to conduct the governmental business outlined in the above agenda. The purpose of the Advisory Council is to provide advice and guidance to the WisTech Program and assure that it is in compliance with the provisions of the Assistive Technology Act (Tech Act) of 1998, as amended. Specifically, the Advisory Council will provide advice and guidance on the following:

- Submission of Wisconsin's State Plan for Assistive Technology (AT) to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Community Living (ACL);
- Monitoring the WisTech program according to the State Plan for AT;
- Developing and maintaining collaborations with other agencies, organizations, and bodies providing AT services and devices throughout the State; and
- Monitoring of program data and outcomes.

The Council is administratively attached to the Department of Health Services. If you need an interpreter, alternate formats, or other accommodations to participate, please contact Laura Plummer at 608-514-2513 or laura.plummer1@dhs.wisconsin.gov.

Phone: 1-669 254 5252

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