Working with NCIP

Read Me First

"Working with NCIP" – a regular feature of NCIP Profiles – will acquaint you with NCIP's resources and provide you with information about how to use them. Once you've read this, review the other print and video profiles to learn more about integrating technology, media, and other materials into special education classrooms.

What's Inside

- **Meet the members of the NCIP community**

- **A profile about one special education administrator who:**

  - **incorporates NCIP resources in meetings**

  - **participates in NCIPnet discussions**

  - **uses NCIP resources to support professional development**

- **Suggestions for facilitating an NCIP workshop**
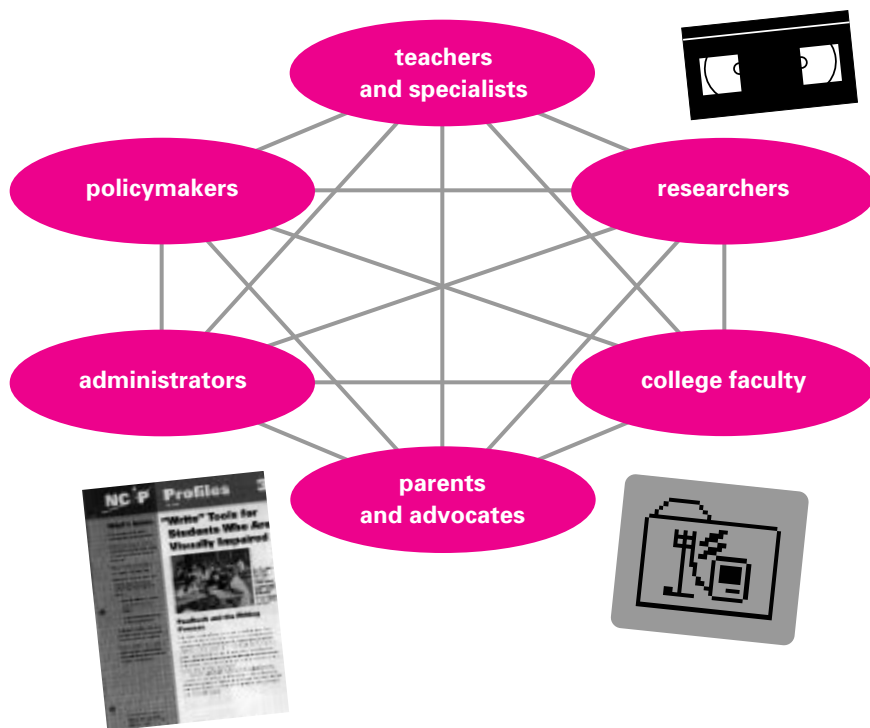
- **Sample postings from NCIP community members**

The NCIP community is made up of a variety of members including parents, teachers, administrators, college faculty, educational consultants, researchers, special education advocates, and policymakers. But no matter where these members live or work, they all have one thing in common – a dedication to finding ways that technology can meet the needs of students with disabilities.

You can easily meet and stay in touch with other NCIP community members around the country via NCIPnet, the center's telecommunications network. Consider using NCIPnet to: contact parents in advocacy groups, talk to people at a technology center about their work, ask a special education teacher about teaching strategies, take advantage of expert knowledge during an online event, or for any other purpose that will assist you in your important work.

NCIP Community

teachers and specialists

policymakers

researchers

administrators

college faculty

parents and advocates

Special Ed Administrator Finds Myriad Uses for NCIP Resources

Since October 1994, special education administrator Maryann Morran has widely used NCIP resources in her work with educators in the Concord, Massachusetts school district. Increasing her awareness about the kinds of materials available for special education teachers and students with disabilities, NCIP resources have also supported Maryann as a strong advocate for technology in the schools.

Using NCIP Video Profiles

During the fall meeting of Concord's Adaptive Technologies Study Group, Maryann showed The "Write" Tools for Angie, an NCIP video profile that features a high school student who is blind using Braille 'n Speak™ in regular-education classes. The group consisted of special-education and regular-education elementary school teachers who meet four to six times each year to become familiar with how to use various technologies in the classroom.

Because the meeting focused on strategies for promoting successful inclusion, Angie's story was of particu-lar relevance to the teachers, some of whom have students with varying levels of visual impairment. In the post-viewing discussion about inclusion, teachers were impressed with Angie's ability to use technology to keep pace with the other students. The elementary-school teachers recommended that Maryann show the video at the regional high school because it clearly demonstrated how technology combined with good teaching can allow students with significant disabilities to partake in a rigorous program. Maryann is taking their advice and at an upcoming meeting plans to pair The "Write" Tools for Angie with Multimedia and More, an NCIP video about how multimedia tools in a high school English class benefit a student with a learning disability and attention deficit disorder.

Using NCIPnet

Maryann takes NCIPnet with her to meetings, either by bringing the disk with the program and demonstrating how to use the network, or by taking along relevant documents downloaded from the network. After viewing the Angie video with teachers in the Adaptive Technologies Study Group, for example, she logged on to the network and showed teachers how to gather information and resources about students who are visually impaired.

Maryann has also found that NCIPnet discussion folders – which include postings about a variety of issues and subjects – are a rich source of current information. When teachers in her district have asked her about general topics like inclusion, or specific issues such as whether to teach keyboarding to a second grader, Maryann logged on to NCIPnet. On the network she found discussion folders on keyboarding and inclusion and downloaded relevant materials.

At Concord, NCIPnet also has become a gateway for access to the Internet discussion forums about special education issues. For example, to gather information for the school's speech and language therapists who are interested in cochlear implants, Maryann accessed Internet through NCIPnet and retrieved the DEAF.L Internet list. From the list, she downloaded several entries by parents of deaf children about how they dealt with the issues involving cochlear implants and the use of sign language. Using the Internet, she also discovered reprints of the National Association of the Deaf's position papers which she later disseminated.

NCIP and Professional Development

As part of Maryann's job as a change agent, she is responsible for disseminating information and identifying other teachers who can also act as change agents in their local schools. One reason she demonstrates NCIPnet at meetings is to encourage the "next generation" of change agents to contact NCIP and obtain their own accounts on the network.

Maryann has also found that NCIPnet supports her own professional development. Providing a neutral arena for discussing issues involving technology cost and effectiveness, the network is a safe place to get feedback from

During meetings with educators in her school district, Concord special education administrator Maryann Morran (far right) often uses NCIP resources when discussing issues concerning students with disabilities.

parents outside her district. In contrast, however, when talking to parents in her own district, Maryann reflects, "You have to weigh everything you say. Technology can be so expensive and you want to make the right decision."

Communicating with parents across the country also offers Maryann the opportunity to gather information that helps her set better short- and long-term goals for students with severe disabilities, such as Downs Syndrome. "The best evidence for learning about how effective public schools can be for children is by hearing from the children who have completed school and their parents. NCIPnet really helps with this," Maryann said.

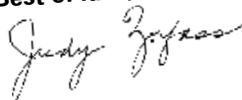If you have any questions or comments for Maryann, you can reach her on NCIPnet.

Facilitating an NCIP Workshop

Dear Change Agents,

Last fall, NCIP conducted a "Get to Know NCIP" night at EDCO, an education collaborative linking 22 Massachusetts districts. Attendants included 30 regular education and special education teachers. During the program, I facilitated a short workshop for 10 teachers about how to use materials from the Fall edition of NCIP Profiles. Below is a summary of the session that you may find helpful if you decide to run an NCIP workshop, demo, or training.

Best of luck,

Judy Zorfass

Judy Zorfass

NCIP Workshop Summary

I. Setting a Context (approximately 10 minutes)

- The session began with a review of NCIP Print Profile 3, *The "Write" Tools for Students Who Are Visually Impaired.*

- We first took a look at the information on the first page that introduced the importance of feedback in the writing process. Then we reviewed the glossary on the back page of the profile and discussed any terms that were unfamiliar.

- After discussing terms, we looked at the stories and photos on pages 2 and 3 about students with visual impairment who use technology in mainstream classes.

- Finally, we reviewed the information on page 2 about the importance of family support, and the group members discussed some of their own experiences while working with families.

II. Showing the Video (approximately 15 minutes)

- Before showing *The "Write" Tools for Angie* – the video accompanying NCIP Print Profile 3 – participants were asked consider the following question when viewing: *What can you extract from this video that is relevant to your work?*

- Participants screened *The "Write" Tools for Angie,* which ran approximately 8 minutes.

- After watching the video, the group discussed their answers to the preview question. One teacher summarized many of the teachers' remarks this way: "The Angie vignette highlighted issues of independence, organization, and self-esteem which are relevant to all students with disabilities."

III. Follow-Up Discussion (5 minutes)

- During the last part of the session, we discussed ways in which the participants could disseminate the print and video profiles. One teacher suggested she might show the video to students. Another planned to show it at a parents meeting.

At an NCIP workshop, educators viewed *The "Write" Tools for Angie,* a video featuring Angie Bourdeau (pictured), a high school sophomore who is visually impaired.

The Community Talks

Excerpts from messages posted on NCIPnet in the *Working with NCIP* folder

Margaret Brandt

Thursday, November 10, 1994
Working with NCIP Item
From: Margaret Brandt
Subject: How I Use NCIPnet
To: Working with NCIP

I am the parent of a son with LD who has ADHD. He's part of an inclusion program. I've created a three-ring binder of information downloaded from NCIPnet about appropriate technology, learning styles, ADD, inclusion, laptops and just about anything that interests me. I give all the inclusion materials to my son's teacher.... I pass out information at Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings. Other parents ask me to find out specific information and pass it on to them.... When I went to an ADD support group meeting, people stayed around until after 10:00 p.m. just to get a look at my downloaded conversations and informational articles on ADD, technology, software, and, especially, behavior management.... People come to the house just to browse though my binder. Teachers have asked to take it home for the weekend just to get a chance to look at it more carefully. It has become a resource for many parents and educators in my area.

At Parent Advisory Coucil meetings, Margaret Brandt (left) shares information with other parents that she downloads from NCIPnet.

Shirley Brown

Monday, December 19,1994
Working with NCIP Item
From: Shirley Brown
Subject: AlphaSmarts
To: Working with NCIP

While browsing the Profiles Resource Library (under laptops), I read about AlphaSmarts™ and was impressed by its affordability. I printed all of the information for the principal (who also serves as sped director) and the technology coordinator. Now we're considering writing a grant to purchase this tool. Also, a special needs teacher was encouraging a parent of a fifth grade student with reading problems to try some repeated reading strategies at home. I downloaded the discussion on repeated reading and sent this home to parents with other information.

Lori DiGisi

Wednesday, November 23,1994
Working with NCIP Item
From: Lori DiGisi
Subject: Using Profiles with College Students
To: Working with NCIP

I currently teach two courses in Special Education at Boston University. In an effort to help my students see that if they think creatively, there are ways that they can help students with disabilities learn their "mainstream" subject matter, I showed them the vignettes on the NCIP profiles video.... Angie did what all my stories, experiences, and cases could not, she showed them what a person with a disability (that they see as very debilitating) could do. Both classes were so impressed and I think relieved. They could now envision possibilities for a person with a disability in their mainstream classrooms....thank you for capturing such a poignant picture of how students with exceptionalities can succeed and excel if teachers provide them with the right tools!

Talk Back

We are interested in hearing your honest reactions to our print and video materials so that we may improve them. You can share your candid opinions in "Working with NCIP" (a discussion folder on NCIP), by phone, fax, or "snail" mail (anonymously if you'd like).

Photo Credit
page 2: Sarah Putnam