Kurzweil 3000®

by Kurzweil EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS®

Implementation Tips

Below are helpful tips from school systems that are active users Kurzweil 3000 users to plan for and successfully implement Kurzweil 3000 into teaching and learning.

★ Chart your course

Start with a carefully thought out implementation plan that states your broader AT goals as well as the required steps and timeline to get there. It provides a way of thinking through the process of implementation as well as a vehicle for sharing goals with other stakeholders who need to support and promote it.

★ Identify a team

Establish clear lines of communication. Decide which departments and persons within the school system need to be involved in the plan and its implementation and whether mechanisms are in place for them to communicate on an ongoing basis around critical decisions such as upgrading hardware and software.

★ Position the program

Gain the interest and support of administrators as well as special and regular education staff by presenting Kurzweil 3000 as a tool for improving access to content across grades and the curriculum, in addition to being an accommodation for special education students.

★ Get stakeholder buy-in

Success depends on support both at the top and the bottom. Teachers and parents need to understand how Kurzweil 3000 can help address important student learning issues. Administrators such as the Special Education Director, department chairs, principals, and the IT staff also need to be informed and recognize the benefit to student in the district of a successful project

★ Establish a core group of experts

Start by training a group of technologically sophisticated teachers and support staff that can provide ongoing support for others as the implementation proceeds. Most school systems find that in addition to initial training, the majority of their teachers need regular access to staff that can troubleshoot, model use of the program with students, and offer additional training before the teachers start actively and effectively using Kurzweil 3000.

★ Choose a project leader and a project champion

Critical to the success of the project is choosing a person, or persons, to be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the project and maintaining interest and support in the wider community. The project leader regularly visits schools, maintains close contact with teachers, monitors the assessment process, and assures that the project is running smoothly. The champion, who may or may not be the project leader, keeps the various stakeholders informed and enthusiastic about the project.

★ Stock the cupboard

Providing teachers and students access to digital and scanned materials is critical to their successful use of Kurzweil 3000. The more digital and scanned texts available at the start of the project and on an ongoing basis, the more successful the project will be.

Kurzweil 3000 Implementation Tips (cont'd)

★ **Start small in the classroom**

Most successful projects start small and grow. Begin by selecting a small group of students to utilize the software or by selecting specific educational tasks to complete using the software; this allows staff to gain greater expertise with the software and iron out kinks during the initial implementation. Sharing your successes is also effective promotion. Word of mouth among teachers, parents and administrators is a great way to build interest and support for growing the project. Look for other ways to share your successes with all your stakeholders as well.

★ **Strategize sharing *firefly* access with students***

Kurzweil 3000 web license offers students and teachers additional access to documents via *firefly*. Attention to the types of documents and applications for this easy to access tool enable use of the tool quickly and anywhere there is an internet connection and a browser.

★ **Training is NOT optional**

Training is necessary for your project's success. Appropriate training should be available for all involved—including IT, teachers, parents and students. Be sure to provide numerous opportunities for training including, summer workshops, as well as early release day, late start day, after-school and weekend sessions.

★ **Make training relevant**

In addition to learning the mechanics of Kurzweil 3000, effective training includes assisting teachers with the planning and preparation of a lesson and providing in-class support to ensure that the lesson goes smoothly. The more teachers understand how the program can make curriculum accessible to a broad range of students, the more motivated they will be to use it in their classrooms.

★ **Carrots can help**

Providing incentives to teachers to attend training can be a good way to encourage initial interest in Kurzweil 3000. Incentives may include stipends, free software, CEUs/PDPs – even a laptop computer.

★ **Keep track of results**

Establish specific evaluation criteria—for students, teachers, school and district—to measure project success and collect the data accordingly. Review the results periodically and share student progress with all stakeholders to secure their ongoing support.

★ **Plan ahead**

When planning your budget, think beyond your first year of implementation. For example, software will need to be upgraded. Teachers will continue to need technical support and ongoing training. New teachers will need equipment and training, and more software will be needed to support additional grades, buildings and students as the implementation grows.

★ **Watch your project grow**

Change always takes time; however, with ongoing support and encouragement you will see results. Once teachers and students become active users, they will continue to find creative ways to expand the use of Kurzweil 3000.