

AIM Process #1: Determining Student Need for Accessible Instructional Materials

During each IEP meeting, a student’s team must determine whether the student needs alternate formats to achieve educational goals which require reading and, if so, which format is needed. The first step in the provision of accessible instructional materials is a review of the student’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance. This review will help the student’s IEP team think about the student’s need for specialized formats. The following guiding questions can assist the team in this discussion:

Does this student have difficulty accessing or gaining meaning from standard print-based curriculum materials that are used in the student’s instructional program?

If the answer to the previous question is “Yes”, then the team should discuss the student’s need for AIM.

Does this student require accessible, alternate format versions of printed textbooks and printed core materials that are written and published primarily for use in elementary and secondary school instruction and are required by a SEA or LEA for use by students in the classroom?

If a student with a print disability does need a specialized format, the IEP should specify the following:

- the specific format(s) to be provided (Braille, audio, e-text, large print, etc.)
- the services and/or assistive technology the student needs to use the specialized format
- the individual or individuals responsible for providing the specialized format, and
- whether or not the format is required to be used in the student’s home or in another setting in order for the student to receive a free appropriate public education.

At the beginning of the academic year, the teacher usually hands out the textbook to every child in the class. Past elementary school, the likelihood increases that children will receive *several* textbooks—one for science, one for English, one for math... Then, throughout the year, various other books may be distributed to children: grammar work books, spelling workbooks, a nightly homework assignment straight out of the teacher’s set of supplemental materials and designed to reinforce learning at home. We’ve all been there. We know how this goes.

But what if you can’t read or process printed material? You’re not going to get much out of that textbook. When a child is blind, that’s pretty obvious, so schools know it’s foolishness to hand the child a book unless it’s in Braille. Much *less* obvious is that literally tens of thousands of children have disabilities that severely impair their ability to read printed text.

(www.nichy.org, Retrieved May 13, 2009)

A student’s IEP team may find it helpful to use the chart on the following page to guide the team’s discussion about the student’s need for AIM.

AIM Process #2: Determining Student Eligibility for NIMAS files

This process should be used by the IEP team and a person whom an education agency has assigned to be the competent authority who completes the documentation for students who are eligible to receive NIMAS files.

When IEP teams determine that a student with a disability needs Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM), that student may be eligible to receive electronic files of their textbooks and other core instructional materials formatted according to the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS). If the student is certified as having a “print disability” as defined by the Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR 701.6(b)(1)), the student is eligible to have these digital files requested from the National Instructional Materials Center ([NIMAC](#)), (or from [Bookshare.org](#)). There is no cost for NIMAS files which are distributed to eligible students.

If a team believes that a student qualifies for electronic textbook files from the NIMAC or Bookshare.org, the school district’s *competent authority* must certify that qualification. *Competent authority is defined in 36 CFR 701.6(b) (2) as follows:*

(i) In cases of blindness, visual disability, or physical limitations, “competent authority” is defined to include doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy, ophthalmologists, optometrists, registered nurses, therapists, professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or welfare agencies (e.g., social workers, case workers, counselors, rehabilitation teachers, and superintendents).

(ii) In the case of a reading disability from organic dysfunction, competent authority is defined as doctors of medicine who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.

School districts must assign an individual to keep a record of their students’ eligibility for NIMAS materials. This is most often the person who is also assigned as the *competent authority* for students with blindness, visual disability or physical limitations. The *Verification of Eligibility to Use NIMAS Materials* (see reverse side of this document) is used to certify a student’s eligibility to receive NIMAS files. The school district must keep a record of all qualified students and the files that each student receives from the NIMAC.

If a student who requires AIM is not eligible for the resources through the NIMAC, the district must provide appropriate AIM through other means such as direct purchase of an alternate format from the textbook publisher.

The Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR 701.6(b) (1)) related to the Act to Provide Books for the Adult Blind (approved March 3, 1931, 2 U.S.C. 135a) provide that blind persons or other persons with print disabilities include:

- (i) Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses, or whose widest diameter if visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.*
- (ii) Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material.*
- (iii) Persons certified by **competent authority** as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.*
- (iv) Persons certified by **competent authority** as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner.*

Verification of Eligibility to Use NIMAS Materials

Student Name		
<u>Last Name:</u>	<u>First Name:</u>	<u>MI:</u>
<u>Student Testing Identifier (STI):</u>		
Address		
<u>Street:</u>	<u>Apartment:</u>	
<u>City:</u>	<u>State:</u>	
	<u>Zip Code:</u>	
	<u>Date:</u>	
<p>From Federal Register 34 CFR Parts 300 and 301, p. 46621, published August 14, 2006: (1931 Copyright Law as amended -Chafee Amendment)</p> <p>The Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR 701.6(b)(1)) related to the Act to Provide Books for the Adult Blind (approved March 3, 1931, 2 U.S.C. 135a) provide that blind persons or other persons with print disabilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) <i>Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses, or whose widest diameter if visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.</i> (ii) <i>Persons whose visual disability, with correction and regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material.</i> (iii) <i>Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.</i> (iv) <i>Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner.</i> 		
To Be Completed By Competent Authority:		
<u>Name:</u>	<u>Title:</u>	
<u>Address:</u>		
<u>City & State:</u>	<u>Zip Code:</u>	
I certify that the student listed above is unable to read or use standard printed material for the following reason:		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 45%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Blindness, visual impairment, or physical impairment. </div> <div style="width: 45%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reading disability from organic dysfunction. </div> </div>		
<u>Signature:</u>	<u>Date:</u>	

AIM Process #3: Obtaining NIMAS Materials for Eligible Students in Oregon

This process should be used by a person whom an education agency has assigned to be the competent authority or the person who is assigned to acquire accessible instructional materials from an authorized media producer.

When the IEP team has determined that a student needs Accessible Instructional Materials and which format(s) the student will use for each instructional activity, a competent authority must certify that the student is eligible for electronic files of textbooks and core instructional materials from the NIMAC. Once the student is certified as eligible, school districts follow a process to acquire the electronic files and convert them to student ready files.

If the student needs accessible materials because of a vision impairment or blindness, the school district contacts the student’s Regional Programs teacher of the vision impaired (TVI). The TVI will work directly with the Oregon Textbook and Media Center (OTMC) at Willamette Education Service District (ESD) to acquire the textbooks and core instructional materials that the student needs and provide them to the student in the appropriate format (e.g. Braille, large print or audio files).

Sources of Student-Ready Accessible Instructional Materials

- Bookshare.org
- CD-ROM or audio files from the vendor
- Oregon Textbook and Media Center (students with vision impairments)
- Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic
- Teacher-Created Electronic Files

If the student needs accessible materials because of a physical disability or a print disability caused by an organic dysfunction, the school district can acquire the textbooks and core instructional materials the student needs directly from Bookshare.org, Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic or any other Accessible Media Producer (AMP). School districts contact the AMP of their choice to determine whether the needed textbook file is available from that source. If the file is available, the district acquires the file using the AMP’s process for materials requests.

When needed files are not available from an AMP, the district may contact one of Oregon’s Authorized Users (AU) and ask the agency to request the textbook from the NIMAC. Only Authorized Users may contact the NIMAC directly to request textbook files. Once the file is available through the NIMAC, the AU notifies the school district of the file’s availability and the district can acquire the file from an AMP using the AMP’s process for materials requests.

There are Three Authorized Users in Oregon. They are listed in the table below.

Oregon Contacts for Obtaining NIMAS Files	
For students who are blind or visually impaired	For students with physical or organic print disabilities
<p>Oregon Textbook and Media Center (OTMC) Bob Disher, Manager Phone: 503.540.2940 or 503.540.2941 Fax: 503.385.4716 http://www.wesd.org/sp/services/spec_svcs_otmc.asp</p>	<p>Oregon Technology Access Program (OTAP) Diana Roberts, Coordinator 1817 NE Stephens Roseburg, OR 97470 diana.roberts@douglasesd.k12.or.us www.otap-oregon.org</p>
	<p>Bookshare - Online at bookshare.org</p>

School District Process for Obtaining AIM Alternate Formats

Question	Evidence	Date Completed
1. Has the IEP team determined that AIM is needed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of need for AIM in the IEP • List of textbooks and other core instructional materials that the student needs 	
2. Is the student eligible to receive files from the NIMAC or Bookshare.org? (see AIM Process #2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Verification of Eligibility to Use NIMAS Materials</i> form in the student's file • Eligibility record kept by District's <i>Competent Authority</i>. 	
3. Are the textbooks and core instructional materials that the student needs available from the Accessible Media Producer (AMP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Oregon Textbook and Media Center (OTMC) <input type="checkbox"/> Bookshare at Bookshare.org <input type="checkbox"/> Other AMP, e.g. Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) 	
4. Does the student have a secure identifier that can be submitted to the AMP?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> District student number <input type="checkbox"/> SSID <input type="checkbox"/> AIM Identifier created by the district 	
If available, request file.		
If not available, contact Authorized User	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Oregon Textbook and Media Center (OTMC) <input type="checkbox"/> Bookshare.org <input type="checkbox"/> Oregon Technology Access Program (OTAP) 	
Authorized User requests file(s) from the NIMAC and notifies district when available.		