



Local School District NIMAS Textbook Adoption/Purchase Order Guidance

Last Updated October 2, 2013

The 2004 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) included a requirement that students with print disabilities receive their textbooks and core instructional materials in specialized formats at the same time as their non-disabled peers.

The 2006 regulations implementing the 2004 IDEA include directions on how states and local districts are to respond to this legislation. The two sections of this legislation are the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS) and the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center (NIMAC). Providing accessible formats in a timely manner is not a new requirement. **No statutory requirement is placed on publishers.** The new NIMAS process will improve this process for the students covered under these regulations.

The NIMAS establishes standards to be used by textbook publishers to prepare electronic files of textbooks, which can be converted to specialized formats. Specialized formats means Braille, Audio, Large Print, Text to Speech or Digital Text, which can be used by students who are blind, vision impaired, physically disabled, and have a reading disability based on an organic dysfunction. The NIMAC's duties are to receive and maintain a catalog of these electronic files from the publishers.

A critical step in the whole process is the request from local school districts to submit NIMAS filesets to the NIMAC when a textbook is purchased. (Note that when local districts select not to implement such procedures, they remain fully responsible for ensuring that accessible instructional materials are provided to students with print disabilities in a timely manner.)

Find below the statement which districts should use in their Textbook Adoption/Purchase agreement which requires publishers to send a NIMAS fileset to the NIMAC. Districts may check to see if the publisher complied with this request by: 1) contacting the publisher to see if the publisher sent the filesets to the NIMAC or 2) search the NIMAC database to see if the fileset is in the NIMAC (<http://www.nimac.us/>)

Local school districts must require publishers to send NIMAS filesets to the NIMAC. Note that there is no additional charge to the local school districts. The following paragraph should be inserted in textbook purchasing contracts.

By agreeing to deliver the materials marked with "NIMAS" on this contract or purchase order, the publisher agrees to prepare and submit, on or before ___/___/___ a NIMAS fileset to the NIMAC that complies with the terms and procedures set forth by the NIMAC. Should the vendor be a distributor of the materials and not the publisher, the distributor agrees to immediately notify the publisher of its obligation to submit NIMAS filesets of the purchased products to the NIMAC. The files will be used for the production of specialized formats as permitted under the law for students with print disabilities. Please note that the delivery of print versions should not be delayed in cases where the NIMAS fileset has yet to be validated and cataloged by the NIMAC.

*For additional information about NIMAS, please refer to <http://aim.cast.org>.
For additional information about the NIMAC, refer to <http://nimac.us>*

We would also be interested in learning about accessible versions of your instructional materials that may be available for purchase to support students with print disabilities who do not qualify for specialized formats created with files available from the NIMAC.

Questions LEAs should ask publishers before purchasing textbooks:

Local Education Agencies are also required to ensure that students with print disabilities who may not qualify for specialized formats are provided with accessible instructional materials. **Preference should be given to publishers that are able to provide instructional materials in both print and accessible digital formats to include all of the materials text and images.** Ask publishers to respond to the following questions when purchasing textbooks and core related instructional materials.

1. Are you able to provide fully accessible* digital formats for purchase?
2. Do these digital formats include all of the images that appear in the textbooks?
3. Which digital formats are available for purchase (e.g. html, tagged PDF, etc.)?
4. How are the digital formats delivered (on CD, by download, by Web access, etc.)?
5. Do any of the accessible formats include additional learner supports **?
6. Do you recommend a player for your digital formats?
7. Is the user interface of the player accessible?
8. If the instructional materials are not available as accessible digital formats, do you provide permission for LEAs to create their own accessible versions for students with print disabilities?

*** What is meant by “fully accessible”?**

- All text is digital and can be read with text-to-speech, modified with regard to font size and navigated by unit, chapter, section and page number (or other appropriate segments).
- Images include alternate text and long descriptions when appropriate.
- Math equations are provided as images with alt text or in the content file using MathML
- Content reading order, levels and headings are determined by publisher tagging.

**** What is meant by “additional learner supports”?**

- Table of contents with links to appropriate location with the body of the text
- Vocabulary supports with links to a glossary.
- Comprehension supports such as prompts and scaffolds for applying reading strategies.
- Optional highlighting of critical features such as big ideas within the content.
- Opportunities to interact with the content.
- Embedded prompts, hints and models to support responding by learners.

References

True AIM

http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2563&Itemid=4628

NIMAS and NIMAC Language within the IDEA 2004 Statute

<http://aim.cast.org/learn/policy/federal/idea2004>

NIMAS Technical Standard

http://aim.cast.org/learn/policy/federal/what_is_nimas