



How can districts get accessible materials?

In Massachusetts, several providers are available to help schools obtain materials. These organizations access files from the NIMAC and make them available in accessible formats, often at no cost to the school:

Massachusetts Accessible Instructional Materials Library

Formats: Braille and large print

Web site: <http://www.mavisionlib.org/>

Contact: 781-575-1843, 800-827-7772, or cbrasier@mavisionlib.org

Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic

Formats: audiobooks (CDs and downloadable audio)

National web site: <http://www.rfbd.org/>

Contact: custserv@rfbd.org or 800-221-4792

Local web site: http://www.rfbd.org/Boston_Unit.htm

Local contact: 617-500-2706

Bookshare

Formats: digital text (used with text-to-speech software or Braille devices)

Web site: <http://www.bookshare.org/>

Contact: Use the online form at

<http://www.bookshare.org/contactUs>

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please refer to the Department's web page on accessible instructional materials (<http://www.doe.mass.edu/edtech/assistive/nimas.html>). This page also provides links to additional sources of information.

If you have questions, write to edtech@doe.mass.edu



The AIM Consortium, supported by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education programs (OSEP), works with 15 States to improve the timely delivery of high quality accessible education materials to students with print disabilities. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent the Department of Education's position or policy.



Massachusetts Department of
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION

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Accessible Instructional Materials



**Providing Equal Access
for Students with
Print-Based Disabilities**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires school districts to provide accessible versions of instructional materials to students who are blind or otherwise unable to use printed materials. Students with disabilities should receive materials in accessible formats at the same time as their peers receive their textbooks.



What are accessible formats? Accessible formats include Braille, large print, audio, and digital text. Digital text can be used with text-to-speech software, magnification software, and Braille devices.

What is the NIMAC? The National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC), established in 2006, makes it easier to obtain materials for students with disabilities. Publishers send electronic files to the NIMAC. These files are then used to produce Braille, large print, digital text, and audiobooks.

What kinds of materials does the NIMAC collect? The NIMAC collects publishers' files for printed textbooks and related printed core materials published primarily for use in elementary and secondary school instruction and required by state or local educational agencies.



What is NIMAS? The National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) is a technical specification that publishers must use in preparing files for the NIMAC.

How can districts participate? When purchasing new textbooks, school districts should require publishers to send NIMAS files to the NIMAC. This does not add to the cost of the purchase order, and it will help build a national library of electronic files. Most publishers have experience with this process.

Which students are eligible to use these materials? Because the NIMAC relies on an exemption to copyright law, materials are available only to elementary and secondary students who are blind, visually impaired, have a physical disability, or have a reading disability resulting from an organic dysfunction. In addition, students need to have an Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Are students eligible if they have a 504 plan and not an IEP? A student who does not have an IEP is not eligible to use NIMAS-derived materials. However, a student with a qualified disability is eligible to use materials that were not produced using NIMAS files. The providers in this brochure may have non-NIMAS versions, especially for books published before 2006.

What if a student is not eligible to use NIMAS-derived materials?

School districts are responsible for providing accessible instructional materials to students with disabilities who need them, regardless of whether the students are eligible to use NIMAS-derived materials. Schools can investigate purchasing accessible materials directly from publishers, using scanners to create digital versions of books (using copyright exemptions or obtaining publisher permission), or working with materials that are in the public domain (and thus free of copyright restrictions).

Do students need special instruction on the use of these materials? Students may need instruction on using the materials and the associated technologies. It is helpful to provide this same instruction to the students' teachers and parents. It is also important to continue providing reading instruction (including Braille instruction, if appropriate) so that students will be able to access print as they encounter it throughout their lives.

