



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY  
12234

OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES  
STATEWIDE COORDINATOR FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

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December 2009

To: District Superintendents  
Superintendents of Schools  
Presidents of Boards of Education  
Organizations, Parents and Individuals Concerned with Special Education  
Superintendents of State-Operated and State-Supported Schools  
Executive Directors of Approved Private Schools  
Directors of Approved Preschool Programs  
Principals of Public Schools  
Directors of Special Education  
Chairpersons of Committees on Special Education  
Chairpersons of Committees on Preschool Special Education  
Directors of Pupil Personnel Services  
Commissioner's Advisory Panel for Special Education Services  
Impartial Hearing Officers  
Community Dispute Resolution Centers  
Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers  
ECDC Project Directors and Coordinators  
State and Local Teacher Associations  
New York City Department of Education  
Colleges with Special Education and General Education Teacher Training

From: James P. DeLorenzo 

Subject: Accessible Instructional Materials

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance on obtaining Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) for students with disabilities. The New York State Education Department (NYSED) through the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) has been working to build New York's capacity in providing AIM to students with disabilities in a timely manner, as required by Part 200 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. VESID has prepared a website dedicated to AIM and created flowcharts outlining the process of obtaining AIM. In addition, the Regional Special Education Training Specialists are prepared to assist districts throughout the process.

Providing students with disabilities with AIM is a fairly complex process, involving multiple decision points along the way. Depending on the type of format required, many



students with disabilities are waiting much longer than other students to receive the textbooks required for use within the classroom. The VESID website was created to assist districts in their search for sources of AIM. It contains information on accessible formats, the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) and the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC), eligibility for accessing NIMAC and other district resources for AIM. Districts can access this website at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/aim/>.

In addition to the website, attached to this memo are flowcharts that provide specific guidance on obtaining AIM. One flowchart focuses on the process for obtaining Braille and large print instructional materials, and the second focuses on audio and digital instructional materials. It is important to note that there are links embedded within each flowchart. These links, established at various decision-making points, provide further guidance on steps of the process, and include other resources for obtaining instructional materials.

The Regional Special Education Training Specialists, part of the Regional Special Education Technical Assistance Support Centers (RSE-TASC), are prepared to provide professional development and technical assistance to school districts around the State in support of this initiative. They can provide assistance to school districts and individuals as they review the material contained within the flowcharts and the AIM website. In particular, the Regional Special Education Training Specialists are able to assist districts with the decision-making process regarding which students could benefit from AIM and from which sources certain students are able to obtain AIM. It is highly recommended that districts send representatives to regional AIM training sessions. Contact information for the Regional Special Education Training Specialists is included in this memorandum.

School districts are reminded that they should include language in their contracts with publishers to create a NIMAS file to be submitted to NIMAC when they order textbooks and related supplemental materials. This would help to build upon the nationwide effort to get textbooks and related supplemental materials into NIMAC. School districts should refer to the VESID memo dated November 2006 at <http://www.vesid.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/persprep/nimas.htm>. Samples of contract language are available on the VESID website as a link within the flowcharts and from the Regional Special Education Training Specialists.

In addition to NIMAC, there are other excellent sources of textbooks and related supplemental materials, including Bookshare ([www.bookshare.org](http://www.bookshare.org)) and Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D). Bookshare offers more than 45,000 digital books, textbooks, teacher-recommended reading, periodicals and assistive technology tools for use with adaptive technology. RFB&D ([www.rfbd.org](http://www.rfbd.org)) is a resource for recorded audio textbooks, and they have more than 533,000 titles in every subject and grade level. The United States Department of Education (USDOE) awarded funds to Bookshare and RFB&D, and both offer students with qualifying disabilities free membership; please see their websites for details. Both Bookshare and RFB&D have been made Authorized Users of NIMAC. School districts can contact Bookshare and RFB&D directly to obtain textbooks and related

supplemental materials, further facilitating the provision of AIM to students with disabilities in timely manner.

For more information or assistance with obtaining AIM, please contact the following:

**Regional Special Education Training Specialists**

Long Island:	631-218-4197
Hudson Valley:	914-248-2289
Mid-Hudson:	845-486-4840, ext. 3019
Capital District/North Country:	518-464-3938
Central:	315-361-5554
Mid-State:	315-431-8574
Mid-South:	607-335-1340
Mid-West:	585-249-7022
West:	716-821-7544 or 716-821-7507
New York City:	212-802-1548

**Resource Center at the New York State School for the Blind**

Ordering Information:	Lisa DeSantis	585-343-5384, ext 207
Training Information:	Judi Piscitello	585-343-5384, ext 427
General Information:	Erin Fairben	585-343-5384, ext 205

For other questions relating to the content of this memorandum, please contact Sophie McDermott of the VESID, Special Education Office at 518-486-7462.

Please share this memorandum with appropriate staff, including Directors of Special Education, Chairpersons of Committees on Special Education (CSE) and Committees on Preschool Special Education (CPSE), Directors of Pupil Personnel Service, and Principals.

Attachments