

Acquiring Accessible Education Materials* (AEM) for Students

Definition of AEM: AEM (previously called AIM) are materials that are designed or converted in a way that make them usable across the widest range of student variability. AEM is the exact same content presented in formats other than print. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) requires state and local education agencies to *provide printed instructional materials in specialized formats in a timely manner to elementary and secondary school students with disabilities who need them.* Students with learning disabilities (SLD) and working in the general education environment may need AEM. Students without IEPs may be more academically successful and/or independent when given a choice of an alternative format. Providing AEM to all students from the beginning of lesson planning is a proactive approach to provide alternative ways for all students to access grade level print materials.

Step by Step Guide to Acquisition

- Step 1: Identify students that are unable to read traditional grade-level print educational materials, or are unable to read at a rate with comprehension to complete academic tasks with success, or are unable to do it independently across environments.
- Step 2: Complete [AEM Navigator](#) to determine if AEM is appropriate. If AEM is appropriate, then the team or individual teacher can work with the student to determine in what environments AEM is needed. To better understand student preferences, the teacher and student can complete the [AIM Explorer](#). The AIM Explorer will help you identify what features of accessible materials are most helpful to the student. The decision of what device and software you need begins here.
- Step 3: To acquire textbooks, first contact the publisher to see if an accessible format is available. If it is not available from the publisher, students with IEPs and a print disability that is documented by a medical doctor may obtain the textbook through Bookshare or Learning Ally.

Documentation of AEM should be embedded throughout the IEP. Guidance for this can be found at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/osp/accessiblematerials.html>.

For students without IEPs, districts must purchase accessible textbooks directly from the publisher. This content may contribute to the type of device and software you will use.

- Step 4: For non-textbook materials, all students with a print disability can obtain materials through Bookshare or Learning Ally and of course, through any open resources available. Examples of these open resources include accessibility features in the hardware, Chrome apps and all the other numerous accessible materials and software available on the Internet. Please note that if implementing Universal Design for Learning, all students, including those without disabilities, should have access to these tools.

See the WVDE [AIM Guidance Document](#) for complete details on this process.