

Accessible Instructional Materials – The Decision-making Process

The Instructional Materials Center (IMC), a part of the Iowa Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped at the Iowa Department for the Blind (IDB), is charged with providing accessible instructional materials (AIM) for students who have print-disabilities. The role of the IMC is discussed on the IDB website, here: <http://www.idbonline.org/library/student-resources>. A wealth of information on AIM, responsibilities, eligibility, and resources is available at: <http://trueaim.iowa.gov/>.

The following information outlines the IMC's decision-making process when accessible instructional materials are ordered for a student. IMC librarians have a variety of resources from which materials can be obtained, either through purchase or production. Because each student's abilities and needs are unique, the IMC endeavors to provide materials in the child's preferred format or medium. In some cases, issues of complexity of material, timeliness, or lack of production capacity or capability may affect the IMC's ability to obtain a given format. This document describes how the IMC librarians handle each request. For more information on acquisition of AIM, request processing, and tips to improve timeliness, see: http://trueaim.iowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4&Itemid=11.

1. Teachers, AEA personnel, or parents place orders for AIM, indicating first and second preference of media. Note that "second preference" means "I will accept this medium if my first choice is not available." The most efficient means of sending requests is to use the online order form: <http://www.idbonline.org/form/imc>.
2. Title is searched in all known possible sources, checking for medium of choice.
3. If title is located already produced from another source, several questions are asked:
 - a. Can it be purchased (or borrowed) in the preferred medium?
 - b. Is it available in the second choice?
 - c. Is it available in a medium the student *can read* (such as hard copy Braille), even though electronic might be preferred?
 - d. Is it available in an alternate medium (such as audio) or a different edition that might be acceptable? (Consult with teacher and student.)
4. If hard copy Braille is available for purchase and the source will not provide their electronic files, the IMC does not have the capacity to re-Braille the item just to provide it in electronic form.
5. If audio would be preferred over hard-copy Braille (if electronic Braille is not available), be sure to enter "audio" under second choice.
6. If audio is not already available, but the hard-copy Braille is, the student can choose between getting the Braille right away or having the Library produce the audio, which could take several months depending upon the material requested.
7. If the IMC can provide a format that is a secondary but fully accessible choice for the child, but the IEP team rejects the format because it is not the primary or preferred option, it is not the responsibility of the IMC to find or produce the preferred format.
8. If the IMC cannot find a text in either primary or secondary format, the IMC Librarian will work with the teacher to determine next steps, with the understanding that the production will take a certain amount of time. The Librarian will discuss possible formats and estimated time lines. (Note that the teacher will need to provide a print copy of the book.)
9. If NIMAS files are available, they can be converted to several different formats, including hard copy Braille, electronic Braille, Kurzweil, DAISY text, and ePub (a form of

HTML that can be read on an iPad, iPhone, or iPod Touch, or some other e-readers).
For a definition of NIMAS and further information on this topic, see:

http://trueaim.iowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=6&Itemid=6#nimas.

10. If an item is available from Bookshare, it can be obtained in either .brf (electronic Braille) or DAISY text. It can also be converted to HTML for use on an iPad by following instructions provided by Bookshare, or the IMC can convert the Bookshare files to ePub. The fastest way to receive an item from Bookshare is for the teacher to download it for the student. For information on Bookshare, see its website:
<http://www.bookshare.org/>.
11. Previously, it has been stated that the IMC could provide HTML, but the reality is that, if a book is not available from the NIMAC or Bookshare, it is not possible to produce it in HTML in a timely or efficient manner. The time and labor of scanning and coding entire books is beyond the scope of the production team's capacity.
12. The Department of Education will reimburse the Department for the Blind for items purchased or produced for preK-12 students. Educational or vocational items for library patrons (non-students, such as adult staff) will be produced at no charge to the patron. If the item is available for purchase from another source, and it is for the patron's job, it should be considered a reasonable accommodation and be purchased by the patron's employer.
13. The Library can produce items in Braille, large print, audio (on digital cartridges for the new NLS player), or in particular cases, in electronic formats, including .brf, Kurzweil, text-based DAISY, HTML (see above #9-11), and mp3.
14. Locally recorded items can be converted from digital files to mp3 on request, but the mp3 files cannot be protected. This is technically a violation of copyright, so it is extremely important that the mp3 files only be used by the eligible student. Also, mp3 files cannot be navigated easily, in the manner of digital books.