

How do schools determine if a student needs AIM?

In Maine public schools, the process of identifying a student with a print disability, and therefore the need for AIM, is a collaborative process of a school-based team, such as the Individual Education Program (IEP) team, Section 504 team, or Response to Intervention (RTI) team. Within the team, a student's needs are determined and recommendations for accommodations, modifications, or interventions are made. One consideration for students who have difficulty with accessing standard print materials could be the existence of a print disability. See maine-aim.org for more information about this question.

How do schools know what kind of AIM a student needs?

The selection of AIM must be carefully matched to the needs and preferences of the student. In addition to the expertise of the school-based team, specialists and service providers can support the decision through consultations and assessments of the student's needs. See maine-aim.org for more information about this question.

How do schools acquire AIM for their students with print disabilities?

High quality AIM are acquired in diverse ways, including direct purchase from publishers or accessible media producers, from repositories of instructional materials (e.g., Maine's Instructional Materials Center, Bookshare, Learning Ally), through downloads of open source and copyright-free materials from the Internet, and through manual conversion of instructional materials by instructional staff. How the specialized format of a material is acquired depends on factors related to the student and the source of the material. See maine-aim.org for more information about this question.

What kind of instruction should be provided to students who received AIM?

Students will probably need instruction on how to access AIM using the appropriate assistive technology (AT) devices. It may be helpful to provide this same instruction to the students' teachers and family. It is also important to continue providing reading instruction so that students will be able to access print as they encounter it throughout their lives. See maine-aim.org for more information about this question.

Technical Assistance

ALLTech at Spurwink Services

Contact: 207-321-6080 x 114 or info@alltech-tsi.org

Mainely Access

Contact: 207-650-8151 or
mbwalsh@mainelyaccess.com

Pine Tree Society

Contact: (voice/tty) 207-443-3341 or
info@pinetreesociety.org

Places to Acquire AIM

Bookshare

www.bookshare.org or contact: 650-352-0198

Education Services for Blind and Visually Impaired Children (ESBVIC)

Nancy Moulton, Program Director - 207-282-1694

Maine State Library Outreach Program

Christopher Boynton, Director - 207-287-5653

Learning Ally (formerly RFB&D)

Pam Johnson, Library Services - 609-520-8028



Accessible Instructional Materials

Creating Equal Access for Maine
Students with Print Disabilities

Frequently Asked Questions About AIM

maine-aim.org

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires school districts to provide accessible versions of instructional materials (AIM) to students who have print disabilities. Students with disabilities must receive materials in “specialized formats” in a “timely manner”; the same time as their peers receive their instructional materials.

What are Accessible Instructional Materials and “specialized formats”?

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) are “specialized formats” of curricular content used with students who have a print disability. Each format addresses unique individual needs; some students will need more than one format. The “specialized formats” are: Braille, audio, digital text, and large print.

What is a Print Disability?

The Maine AIM Communities of Practice (CoP), recommends the following **functional definition** of print disability: A condition related to blindness, visual impairment, specific learning disability or other physical condition in which the student needs an alternative or specialized format (i.e., Braille, Large Print, Audio, Digital text) in order to access and gain information from conventional printed materials." All decisions regarding the identification of students and the selection and acquisition of instructional materials are made by the local school team.

What are the legal requirements for a school district?

Schools must ensure students with disabilities receive their instructional materials in an “accessible format” and in a “timely manner.” Schools are strongly encouraged to participate in the program offered at the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC) which will help to create more AIM. Maine School Administrative Units (SAUs) may choose to coordinate with the NIMAC each year through the Local Entitlement Application each summer. Regardless of whether districts coordinate with NIMAC, they are still obliged to provide AIM in a timely manner to their students with print disabilities.

What is a “timely manner?”

The Maine AIM Community of Practice has defined “timely manner” as: “at the same time as students without print disabilities.” Thus, SAUs must ensure that children with print disabilities have access to specialized instructional materials at the same time as students without print disabilities. In cases when a student with a print disability is newly identified or transfers schools, temporary accommodations must be provided while accessible specialized formats are being acquired.

Maine AIM Program

My name is Joseph. I am 16 and I'm a sophomore. Just recently, I used an audio (format) for a book called Gilgamesh. (Audio books) have really improved how I can understand how and what the book is about. It has also made it easier to visualize the events that happen.

-A Maine AIM user

