

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.
Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Provision of Instructional Materials for Students with Print Disabilities

On May 12, 2008, the Accessible Instructional Materials Center of Virginia (AIM-VA) located at George Mason University (GMU) will be available to take orders for textbooks and core instructional materials that need to be converted into alternate formats (Braille, Large Print, Electronic Text, and Audio) for students with print disabilities for the 2008-2009 school year. The overall mission of AIM-VA is to develop and implement a statewide library system that is capable of producing and distributing accessible educational materials, consistent with the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standards (NIMAS) under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This requirement assures students with print disabilities have available to them accessible instructional materials in accordance with their IEP in a timely manner.

AIM-VA replaces the traditional process of ordering instructional materials for students with disabilities in Virginia, including students with visual impairments who need large print and Braille. All materials traditionally ordered from the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired as well as Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic Regional Unit of the Virginias and Carolinas will now go through AIM-VA.

AIM-VA will provide services to all Virginia school divisions, private schools, regional and state operated programs. Home schooled students will also be eligible for AIM-VA services.

To inform Local Education Agencies in detail about AIM-VA, the Division of Special Education & Student Services has prepared an implementation manual "Accessible Instructional Materials for Students with Disabilities" that addresses the new policies and procedures for ordering alternate formats of textbooks and core instructional materials. Please consult the section of the manual on eligibility and the role of the IEP to assist in the determination of who qualifies for services. The implementation manual offers background information, technical support, and links to related resources. It may be found at www.aimva.org under "Training Tools". The same section of the Website offers a number of instructional materials that serve as training tools.

Before a school can request and receive materials from AIM-VA, the division superintendent must designate a staff person(s) to be a Digital Rights Manager (DRM). The DRM is a local school level staff person deemed by the superintendent to be responsible for monitoring and documenting copyright compliance within the school. Larger school divisions may elect to appoint multiple DRMs. The DRM must request,

receive, and track the usage of copyrighted accessible instructional materials for students with print disabilities. The instructions to designate and register the DRMs are in attachment A.

Efforts are underway to educate parents, teachers, and administrators about the new resource. AIM-VA will be working directly with schools to ensure continuity in instructional resources for students with print disabilities. AIM-VA and its collaborating partners will participate in presentations to educate Digital Rights Managers about accessing alternate formats and technology used by students with print disabilities. The AIM-VA team will be presenting further training through regional sessions in the fall of 2008 to clarify the process and help students, parents, and administrators access the resources.

Additional information may be found at www.aimva.org. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the following individuals:

Questions about AIM-VA:

Joyce Sharp – (540) 948-6938 E-mail: jsharp1@gmu.edu

Questions about placing orders online and registering Digital Rights Manager(s):

Jackie Petersen – 1-866-926-1879 E-mail: jpetersk@gmu.edu

General Questions:

John Eisenberg - (804) 225-2711 E-mail: john.eisenberg@doe.virginia.gov

Attachment A:

The superintendent will need to register by going to (www.aimva.org) and click on superintendent login. To register, a superintendent will input their email address (i.e. John.Eisenberg@doe.virginia.gov) and then enter a password. The password is the first part of the email address (i.e. John.Eisenberg.) Upon logging in, you will be asked to change your password and submit updated mailing information prior to registering DRMs. The database is limited to registering 5 DRMs at a time; therefore it may be necessary for you to log in several times. When registering DRMs, you will need the DRM's name, email address, and phone number for each DRM you wish to register. Upon completion of registration, the DRM will receive an email message confirming their registration and providing a randomly selected secure password for them to log in. Those having trouble accessing this application should contact AIM-VA by e-mail (aimva@gmu.edu) or call 866-926-1879.

The DRMs will receive an e-mail notification of their appointment. Upon completion of the registration of a DRM, appropriate rights to access the AIM-VA library will be granted. The DRM can then use the "Request Materials" section to indicate which texts and accessible formats are needed.