



July 25, 2008

TO: Designated Division Digital Rights Managers  
Special Education Directors

FROM: Accessible Instructional Materials Center of Virginia (AIM-VA)

SUBJECT: **AIM-VA Offers School Divisions Free Assistive Technology**

The Accessible Instructional Materials Center of Virginia is excited to announce a recent agreement made between George Mason University and Don Johnston Incorporated, to provide *Read: OutLoud Universal Access* program, a digital text reader, to support all students with IEPs. This statewide whole-school license program is available to you -- at no cost -- by being a registered Digital Rights Manager with AIM-VA.

Virginia education administrators, special educators and families will be particularly interested in the *Read: OutLoud Universal Access* program because of its ability to provide print disabled students with access to a variety of digital alternate formats that can be customized to meet a student's individualized needs.

This initiative is intended to help support the use of materials that will be provided by AIM-VA and its partners. The whole-school license will enable your division the greatest amount of flexibility in providing reading related accommodations to your students at school and at home.

Some of the unique features of the *Read: OutLoud Universal Access* software program are:

- Providing access to general curriculum materials for all special needs students with IEPs
- Complying with the 2004 IDEA regulations to provide accessible materials
- Opening and reading documents or files in common formats including: PDF, NIMAS, DAISY, txt, rtf, html, xml, rich text and Bookshare.org

- Converting NIMAS (National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard) files instantly to eliminate the need for scanning documents, a huge time-saver for teachers.
- Offering take-home rights for these students to access learning materials at home
- Tapping into a variety of reading comprehension strategies to support learning across the curriculum.

**FAQ's** - Please read the FAQ's to further understand this VA state-wide assistive technology license program. The first shipment of *Read:OutLoud Universal Access* will be to all School Divisions who have registered Digital Rights Managers (DRMS) by the end of July, 2008. A second shipment will occur when the remaining divisions assign DRMs.

## Frequently-Asked Questions

### **VA Statewide License Agreement of Read:OutLoud™ Assistive Technology Text Reader**

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- Q. For what students and what timeframe can we use this Read:OutLoud Universal Access whole-school site license?
- A. Schools can install ReadOutLoud on any or all computers in their buildings. ReadOutLoud can be used by any student with an IEP. Virginia's Universal Access Statewide License is a 2-year unlimited subscription to Read:OutLoud. This license covers any upgrades to the program during this timeframe.
- Q. Which students are best served by a text reader?
- A. This program is designed to meet the needs of the struggling readers who are served through IEPs.
- Q. What type of reading supports does Read:OutLoud have?
- A. Read:OutLoud starts by providing audio support so that students can listen to the text and get help with words they cannot decode or pronounce. Read:OutLoud includes The Franklin Dictionary to provide for vocabulary support for struggling readers. A unique feature of Read:OutLoud is its embedded reading comprehension strategies recommended by the National Reading Panel and Reading NEXT.
- A: Read:OutLoud is also effective for students with physical disabilities who cannot turn pages of their textbook. Keyboard

equivalents can be mapped into a student's access device (alternate keyboard or switch scanning system) to allow them to move through the text effectively and with better control.

Q. Can Read:OutLoud be used on IEP students' home computers?

A. Yes, the Virginia Universal Access License for Read:OutLoud includes Take Home Rights.

Q. What hardware do I need to use Read:OutLoud?

A. **Macintosh**: OS: 10.2+, Ram: 256 MB, CPU: G3, Disk: 100 MB, Sound: Yes, Media: CD

**Windows**: OS: XP, 2000, VISTA, Ram: 256 MB, CPU: Pentium III, Disk: 90 MB, Sound: Yes, Media: CD

Q. What formats do VA curriculum materials need to be in to utilize Read:OutLoud?

A: NIMAS, Daisy, PDF, RTF, TXT, HTML . Read:OutLoud can also read text on the web.

Q. Will the software come on CD or do we download it?

A. CD's will be sent to each VA Division. The quantity of CD's will be based on the number of schools in your division. A division that has 10 schools, will receive 10 CD's. These CD's will be sent to the Superintendent once they have registered their DRM for their division.

Q. Will Read:OutLoud work with books provided by Bookshare.org and/or RFB&D?

A. Today, Read:OutLoud will work with books provided by Bookshare.org. Books provided by RFB&D are not yet supported. We are working with RFB&D to address their digital rights management.

Q. What if we already have a site license of Read:OutLoud now?

A. Chances are you may have Read:OutLoud on a limited number of computers now and do not have any Take Home Rights for students. With this license, you can expand your usage to provide to ANY student with an IEP student in ANY building.

Q. Where do I get more information or training?

A. A Quick Start Tutorial is included with Read:OutLoud. Watch the AIM Virginia Website <http://kihd.gmu.edu/aim> for additional materials for professional development. And, Don Johnston's website also holds extensive materials and information about this program. Visit [www.donjohnston.com](http://www.donjohnston.com)

B. You can also request a virtual coaching session or an on-site training for a modest fee to cover expenses and travel. Call 1-800-999-4660. Ask for the professional development department  
[http://www.donjohnston.com/prof\\_services/About\\_PD.html](http://www.donjohnston.com/prof_services/About_PD.html))