

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REQUESTING ELECTRONIC FILES FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT OR OTHER DISABILITIES

Instructional materials adopted by the State Board of Education are available in certain electronic formats to accommodate students with visual impairments and other disabilities. Instructional materials adopted prior to November 2007 are available in one of the following formats: braille ready files (BRF), rich text format (RTF), extensible markup language (XML), text (TXT), Microsoft word (Word), or the International Committee for Accessible Document Design (ICADD) file sets. Instructional materials adopted since November 2007 are available in NIMAS compliant file sets. The NIMAS file sets may require additional markup by school districts to convert the files into a student-ready format. Instructional materials adopted during or after 2010 are available in student-ready DAISY 3 DTB format.

Before requesting electronic files, school districts or open-enrollment charter schools must coordinate with the Assistive Technology staff at their district, school, or regional education service center (ESC) to determine the appropriate accessible medium and for assistance with converting the files into an accessible format. The district or open-enrollment charter school will need to determine if the student is best served by print, text-to-speech, text only, or audio materials. The type of accessibility application will help determine the best process for converting the electronic files into a student-ready format. The file sets do not include images or diagrams and would therefore need to be augmented with appropriate representations of images or diagrams. Braille-ready files are available for use with a refreshable braille device or other appropriate software.

Requesting Electronic Files of State Adopted Instructional Materials

1. The Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) Committee or 504 Committee must identify the appropriate requirement and update the students Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Action Plan (IAP) to include the modification requiring electronic files.
2. The school district or open-enrollment charter schools special education department should provide the local instructional material coordinator with a list of instructional materials required by the student, indicating the specific accessible format needed.
3. The instructional material coordinator should send an email to tammy.torres@tea.state.tx.us requesting the electronic files and listing the specific instructional material titles.
4. IMET staff will send an encrypted email to the instructional material coordinator requesting the student's name, date of the last ARD or 504 Committee meeting, grade level, the type of file requested (NIMAS, DAISY 3 DTB, RTF, etc.), and a statement confirming that the student is visually impaired or has other disabilities and is eligible for accessible instructional materials. Additionally, the textbook coordinator must agree to certain procedures to protect copyright laws. Briefly, the procedures require the following:
 - a. The electronic files are to be ordered for a specific student and not used for an entire classroom or library. They are not be duplicated, copied or downloaded.
 - b. All electronic files will be returned to the IMET Division upon the student's completion of the course.
 - c. School districts are financially responsible for replacing missing, lost, or damaged electronic files.
 - d. A district that violates these conditions may forfeit its right to receive future electronic files from TEA. Additionally, the publishing company may take appropriate legal action against the school for any copyright violations.
 - e. The instructional material coordinator must sign the letter indicating his or her understanding and agreement with the conditions listed.
5. Upon receipt of the signed letter, IMET staff will submit an order for the electronic files to the appropriate accessible instructional materials producer(s). The accessible instructional materials producer(s) will ship a copy of the file (CD-ROM) and a packing list directly to the instructional material coordinator. The instructional material coordinator will sign the packing list indicating receipt of the files and send it to the IMET Division located at 1701 North Congress, Austin, Texas 78701.

Additional Resource: Through an award from the U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), Bookshare offers free memberships to U.S. schools and qualifying U.S. students. Bookshare members can download textbooks in a compressed, encrypted file. The student can use adaptive technology to read the book aloud (text-to-speech) and/or display the text of the book on a computer screen. For more information, please visit the Bookshare at <http://www.bookshare.org/>.