

Understanding Accessible Educational Materials (AEM)

Presented by:

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- Manages the WCBVI Assistive Technology Loan Library
- Available to teachers statewide for assistive technology consultation of students who are blind or visually Impaired.

Learning Outcomes

- I will develop an awareness of the legal requirements around Accessible Educational Materials (AEM).
- I will understand the IEP team decision making process for when a student qualifies for Accessible Educational Materials (AEM).
- I will learn about resources available to acquire Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) in a timely manner.
- I will understand where to find next steps learning opportunities around Accessible Educational Materials (AEM).

AEM Legal Requirements

What are Accessible Educational Materials?

- The National AEM Center defines Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) as:
- “Print- and technology-based educational materials, including printed and electronic textbooks and related core materials that are designed or enhanced in a way that makes them usable across the widest range of learner variability, regardless of format.”

Access to the Learning Goal



Goal: Identify key points



Robinson and Conway (1988) emphasized the need for significant improvement in subjects such as reading and basic academic skills. Reading comprehension, reading accuracy, and rate of reading. A later study by Wood (1987) evaluated the results of 11 months of 25 remedial high school students who matched control group. Significant improvement for the experimental group was noted for time needed to locate words on a printed page, timed reading scores, length of time for sustained reading, and span of focus as well as other perceptual tasks. Additionally, seven of the 25 experimental found employment, but none of the control group was employed by the end of the semester.

In contrast, Winans (1987) was unable to find differences in his study. Winans gave 25 elementary school children four minutes to locate and circle 66 examples of the letter "a" on three pages, each page of which contained 400 random letters in 20 lines of

Who is eligible to receive AEM?

An individual who, regardless of any other disability—

- is blind;
- has a visual impairment or perceptual or reading disability that cannot be improved to give visual function substantially equivalent to that of a person, who has no such impairment or disability and so is unable to read printed works to substantially the same degree as a person without an impairment or disability; or
- is otherwise unable, through physical disability, to hold or manipulate a book or to focus or move the eyes to the extent that would be normally acceptable for reading.

Intentional Decision-Making by IEP Teams Regarding AEM: AEM Considerations for IEP Teams:

DPI Special Factors Sample Form

5. Does the student need assistive technology services or devices?

Yes No

If yes, describe the student's assistive technology needs:

Document necessary services or devices in the Program Summary.

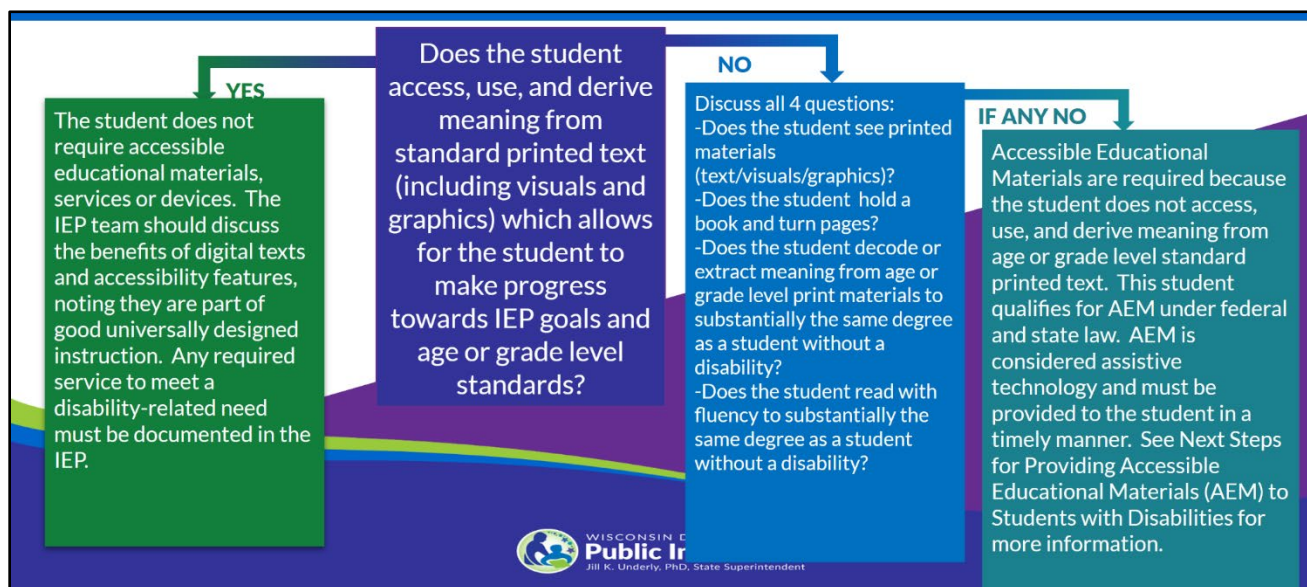
a. In addition to other needs that may require assistive technology, is the student able to access, use, and derive meaning from age or grade level standard printed text?

Yes No

If no, document necessary accessible education materials (AEM) services or devices in the Program Summary.

- [AEM Decision Tree for IEP Teams](#)

Does a Student with an IEP Need Access to Educational Materials in a Format Other Than Standard Printed Text?



Does a Student with an IEP Need Access to Educational Materials in a Format Other Than Standard Printed Text?

Main Question:

Is the student able to access, use, and derive meaning from standard printed text (including visuals and graphics) which allows for the student to make progress towards IEP goals and age or grade level standards?

Follow Up Main Question:

If the answer to the Main Question is “no”, discuss all 4 questions below:

- 1) Is the student able to see printed materials (text/visuals/graphics)?
- 2) Is the student able to hold a book and turn pages?
- 3) Is the student able to decode or extract meaning from age or grade level print materials to substantially the same degree as a student without a disability?
- 4) Is the student able to read with fluency to substantially the same degree as a student without a disability?

Conclusion One:

If the answers to any of the four follow up questions are “No”, Accessible Educational Materials are required because the student is not able to access, use, and derive meaning from age or grade level standard printed text. This student qualifies for AEM under federal and state law. AEM is considered assistive technology and must be provided to the student in a timely manner. See Next Steps for Providing Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) to Students with Disabilities for more information.

Conclusion Two:

If the answer to the Main Question is “Yes,” the student does not require accessible educational materials, services or devices. The IEP team should discuss the benefits of digital texts and accessibility features, noting they are part of good universally designed instruction. Any required service to meet a disability-related need must be documented in the IEP.

The Student Qualifies for AEM; What Now?

IDEA AEM Requirements

When an IEP team determines there is a print disability, then:

- IDEA Requires:
 - timely manner (at the same time as provided to peers)
 - accessible format (usable)
 - instruction for use
 - training for staff and families

Accessible Formats

- An alternative manner or form that gives an eligible person access to the work when the copy or phonorecord in the accessible format is used exclusively by the eligible person to permit the individual to have access as feasibly and comfortably as a person without such disability.
- [National AEM Center: About Accessible Formats](#)

Acquiring AEM

School districts can acquire AEM through:

1. Non-profit Accessible Media Producers (Bookshare, Learning Ally, and Louis Database) that operate in the U.S. under a copyright exemption and are able to make books available to individuals with print disabilities.
2. Directly from publishers
3. Through the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center (NIMAC):
 - a. Contact the [Wisconsin AEM Center](#) or [WCBVI AEM Center](#) for assistance

Bookshare Overview

- Bookshare books are usually text files or DAISY text files, though some have recently become available as audio files read by human readers.
- Books are navigable by page, chapter and section in DAISY format.
- Qualifying students can be added to an organization or can apply for their own free individual membership.
 - This membership remains free as long as the individual is enrolled as a student, whether at a K-12 or post-secondary institution.
- Bookshare has a variety of titles ranging from pleasure reading to textbooks.

Bookshare Eligibility

- The student must have a documented print disability, which may include but not be limited to blindness, a learning disability, or have physical limitations that make holding a physical book impractical/impossible.
- Students may have two accounts, one through their school district or CESA and a personal account (see previous slide)
- It is recommended that students who may wish to continue on to post-secondary programs acquire a personal account at some point in high school or perhaps sooner. This will allow them to practice downloading their own books and recreational reading outside of school

Accessing Bookshare Content - Bookshare Reader

Bookshare books are accessible across multiple devices and various formats including braille files, text only files, Word files and even on Alexa-enabled devices. The newest method is Bookshare Reader, which can be accessed on multiple platforms, including its own dedicated iOS and Android App!

- Using Bookshare Reader (was Web Reader)
 - [What's New in Bookshare Reader and How is it Different than Web Reader?](#)
 - [How to Use Bookshare Reader on a Web Browser](#)
 - [How to Use Bookshare Reader on a Smart Speaker](#)
 - [How to Use Bookshare Reader on Mobile Devices](#)

Accessing Bookshare Content - Other Ways to Read

- Access on a Tablet or Smartphone:
 - [Bookshare Reader Information](#)
 - [Getting started with Capti Voice](#)
 - [Getting Started with Voice Dream Reader](#)
 - [Getting Started with Dolphin Easy Reader](#)
 - [Getting Started with Go Read \(Android Only\)](#)
- Access on an Alexa-Enabled Device (note that an individual membership is required to use this option)
 - [Using Alexa-Enabled Devices to Access Bookshare](#)

Getting Started with Bookshare

- General Resources
 - [Training Resources Library](#)
 - [Find a Reading Tool](#)
- For Educators
 - [Educators: Everything You Need to Know in 10 Minutes! \(Video\)](#)
 - [ABCs of Bookshare for Educators](#)
 - [How to get individual memberships for students](#)
- Individual Memberships
 - [Individual Membership Application](#)
 - [Submitting Proof of Disability FAQs](#)
 - [Submitting Proof of Disability Remotely](#)

Learning Ally Overview

- Books are read by live readers, though some books may also have a text component that allows the user to read along.
 - Live readers may be paid readers or volunteers.
 - For longer textbooks, there may be more than one reader. Students sometimes get confused by this, so informing them of this possibility can help.
- Books are navigable by page, chapter and section in DAISY format.
- The Learning Ally Library includes mostly textbooks and academic titles as well as classic novels and books that are often read in English and
- Language Arts classes.

Learning Ally Eligibility

- The student must have a documented print disability, which may include but not be limited to blindness, a learning disability, or have physical limitations that make holding a physical book impractical/impossible.
- Unlike Bookshare, Learning Ally has a cost associated with membership for both institutions and individuals. Please see their website for details.
- Some organizations have institutional memberships, allowing them to add all students with a qualifying disability.

Accessing Learning Ally Content

Learning Ally books are accessible and available across multiple Devices/Platforms.

Unlike Bookshare, Learning Ally has a dedicated app for each platform (iOS, Android, Windows, Chrome, and Mac). It is not available on e-readers such as Kindle.

- On an iPad or Tablet:
 - [Android/Google Play \(Link to App in Play Store\)](#)
 - [iOS \(Link to App in iTunes Store\)](#)
- On a Mac, PC, or Chromebook:
 - [Windows \(Link to Software Download\)](#)
 - [Learning Ally Link: Getting Started PDF](#)
 - [Mac App Store \(Link to Mac App Store\)](#)
 - [Chrome Web Store \(Link to Chrome Extension\)](#)

Getting Started with Learning Ally for Individuals and Families

- General Resources
 - [Learning Ally - Who Qualifies and How do I Sign up?](#)
 - [Learning Ally Link: Getting Started \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Learning Ally: Getting Started FAQ](#)
- For Individuals and Families
 - [Learning Ally Overview for Individuals and Families](#)
 - [Getting Started \(for individuals and families\)](#)
 - [Learning Ally Individual Membership Application](#)
 - [Certification of Eligibility form](#)

Getting Started with an Organizational Membership

- Teacher Ally and Organizational Membership
 - [Getting Started with Teacher Ally](#)
 - [Teacher Ally Quick Guide \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Teacher Ally User Notes \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Eligibility Guide and FAQ \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Learning Ally Link Mobile Guide \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Learning Ally Desktop Guide \(PDF\)](#)
 - [How to get individual memberships for students in Teacher Ally \(PDF\)](#)
 - [Educator Webinars](#)

Louis Database

From the Louis Database Main Page (<https://louis.aph.org/>)

“Louis contains information on accessible materials produced by over 75 organizations throughout the United States and Canada. These materials include educational materials in braille, large print, audio, and electronic file format.

Our aim is to provide maximum visibility to accessible educational materials and to meet that goal, the Louis search also includes information from these national repositories.”

Louis Database Search Features

- Search by ISBN, title, author, or keyword
- Narrow your results by:
 - Collection (APH, NIMAC, Recreational Reading)
 - Type (braille, large print, efile)
 - Format Detail (braille only - EBAE, UEB, Single sided, single or double spaced, etc)
 - Publisher
 - Location (Bookshare, Learning Ally, NIMAC)

Louis Database Results

Each record in the results of a Louis Database search includes:

- AMP (Accessible Media Producer): the agency that has made the book available
- Accessible format (braille, large print, audio recording, etc)
- ISBN and publisher information
- Reading level
- Contact information for the agency providing the material
 - This is especially important if the user is looking for braille

Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library (WTBBL)

[The Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library](#) provides material to individuals who have any physical, organic, or processing disability that limits access to a standard print book.

WTBBL is a part of the National Library Service. Every state has a library similar to WTBBL.

- [Application and eligibility information](#)
- [Information on services provided](#)
- [Access to the online catalog](#)

Please note that WTBBL is not a registered AMP and does not show up in the Louis Plus Database search. When searching for material, please use the site listed above.

WTBBL Overview

- Books are performed by live readers. Many books are commercial audiobooks that have been professionally recorded.
- The majority of books are recreational reading or classic novels. There are few, if any, textbooks.
- Books may be read on desktop machines or with braille displays on loan from the library. Content may also be downloaded in the BARD app on iOS and Android devices
- Content is available in audio format or in electronic braille.
- Users may request that books be sent to them via US mail and they may be returned in the same way.
- Membership and services are free to all library patrons.

Important Eligibility Information about WTBBL

The National Library Service (NLS) expanded its eligibility categories and certifying authorities in January of 2021. Now individuals whose disability is caused by processing disorders rather than only organic and physical disorders qualify for membership.

Qualifying disabilities include:

- Visual impairment or legal blindness
- Physical disability
- Reading disability

WCBVI AEM Center

- Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (WCBVI) AEM Center
 - Many AEM services are available to public, private, home schools, and agencies providing educational programs for prekindergarten through 12th grade children and students who are blind or visually impaired.
 - Services provided include:
 - Central depository of braille and large print textbooks and specialized educational aids
 - K-12 textbooks and educational materials for qualifying children and students through funds provided by the American Printing House (APH) Federal Quota Program
 - Textbook research, information, and referral

IMPORTANT ORDERING INFORMATION

As soon as you know what classes your student is taking, you should be starting your textbook journey. **A new braille transcription can take a year to finish, and a new large print can take a month.** If you wait, you will not meet FAPE!

Textbooks Available from APH using Quota Funds

If the vendor is APH and the student is on the APH Census, the textbook can be purchased with quota funds.

“Quota funds are distributed through information gathered by the Federal Quota Census. The funds are made available to students in an educational program learning at less than a college level.” Materials are found at APH.

Fill out and submit the [Textbook Research Request Form](#) and the APH textbook will be loaned to you for the upcoming school year.

Tips for ordering Textbooks from WCBVI

The following applies to vendors other than APH or for students not on the current APH Quota Registry:

- Once your textbook request is complete, you will receive contact information for all vendors listed in the Louis Database that carry the text you requested. Please arrange procurement and payment with vendors directly.
- WCBVI’s AEM Center is a resource only and does not order the textbook or process your payment.
- Please see the [textbook request process document on the WCBVI website](#)

Recreational Reading Options at WCBVI

- WCBVI's AEM Center can assist with finding vendors for textbooks, but if your student needs/wants recreational reading materials, please contact the WCBVI Media Center via email at michelle.rueckert@wcbvi.k12.wi.us or to browse our collection, [click here to access the WCBVI online catalog](#).
- There are many braille and large print books available to check out.
- When borrowing materials from the Media Center, please do not request books or materials meant to meet FAPE requirements.

Wisconsin AEM Center

- [Wisconsin AEM Center](#): A point-of-contact for educators to seek support in acquiring Accessible Educational Materials (AEM) in digital formats.
- [Submit a Request](#)
 - "How to Submit a Request" Support Video on Website
- Contact:
 - Donna Hutson
 - Email: donna.hutson@cesa2.org

Next Steps Learning:

AEM Resources

- [AEM Decision Tree for IEP Teams](#)
- [AEM Next Steps Guidance Document](#)
- [Assistive Technology \(AT\) Forward](#)
 - [AT Forward Micro-Credentials](#): AEM Micro-Credential
 - [AT Forward Video Resource Guide](#): Recordings of the Four-Part AEM Webinar Series
- [DPI Update Bulletin 20.02](#)
- [Wisconsin AEM Center](#)
- [WCBVI AEM Center](#)

Thank you!

Questions?

Contact:

- Stacy Duffy: stacy.duffy@cesa2.org
- Amy Snow: amy.snow@wcbvi.k12.wi.us