



**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA  
Department of Education**

**DATE:** March 16, 2018  
**TO:** Division Superintendents  
**FROM:** Steven M. Constantino, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent of Public Instruction  
**SUBJECT: Revisions to AIM-VA Resources for Students with Print Disabilities**

On January 9, 2015, the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) issued [Superintendent's Memo #004-15](#) to clarify the requirements for students to be eligible to receive free alternate formats of textbooks and other instructional materials from the Accessible Instructional Materials Center of Virginia (AIM-VA). The VDOE is providing additional information to clarify recent revisions to the eligibility criteria for students with print disabilities to receive free accessible instructional materials through AIM-VA, which became effective on January 31, 2018.

Students with disabilities in Virginia in grades kindergarten through 12 may be eligible to receive free instructional materials provided in alternate formats (e.g. audio, braille, large print, and digital text) through AIM-VA. Students must have a current Individualized Education Program (IEP) that indicates the need for using alternative print materials for reading, as confirmed by a competent authority, due to one or more of the following:

### **Low Vision/Blindness**

*A student who is blind or has low vision and who is unable to read standard print is eligible for AIM-VA if a competent authority confirms that the student is legally blind or has a significant problem accessing standard text. Examples of competent authorities include:*

- *Teacher of the Visually Impaired;*
- *Special Education Teacher;*
- *Family Doctor;*
- *Ophthalmologist;*
- *Optometrist; or*
- *National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, or similar government body outside of the United States.*

### **Physical Disabilities**

*A student with a physical disability who is unable to access standard print is eligible for AIM-VA resources if a competent authority confirms that the disability significantly interferes with reading. Examples of competent authorities include:*

- *Resource Specialist;*
- *Special Education Teacher;*
- *Physical/Occupational Therapist; or*
- *Family Doctor or other Medical Professional.*

### **Other Disabilities**

*A student with a disability other than low vision/blindness or a physical disability is eligible for AIM-VA resources if a competent authority confirms that the disability significantly interferes with reading. Examples of competent authorities include:*

- *Special Education Teacher;*
- *Licensed Specialist;*
- *School Psychologist;*
- *Clinical Psychologist;*
- *Family Doctor;*
- *Psychiatrist; or*
- *Neurologist.*

Students who receive special education services provided through a Virginia public school division while attending a private school, homebound instruction, or home schooling may receive resources through AIM-VA according to the current eligibility criteria. The need for alternative print materials for reading must be specified in the students' IEP or a Services Plan developed by a Virginia public school division, as appropriate. The alternative print materials may be ordered through AIM-VA by a Virginia public school Digital Rights Manager.

The AIM-VA collaborates with partnering organizations such as Learning Ally, Bookshare and Don Johnston to provide free accessible instructional materials to eligible students. School divisions are reminded that they are required to provide accessible instructional materials for students who are determined to need them even if students are not eligible for services and resources through AIM-VA.

Information for teachers, parents and students is available at the [AIM-VA website at www.aimva.org](http://www.aimva.org). Please share this information with your Directors of Special Education and AIM-VA Division Administrators. If you have questions, please contact Wanda Council, Education Specialist, VDOE, by phone at (804) 371-4059 or by email at [Wanda.Council@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Wanda.Council@doe.virginia.gov) or the AIM-VA Help Desk, by phone at (866) 926-1879 or by email at [AIMVA@gmu.edu](mailto:AIMVA@gmu.edu).

SMC/WC