

**June 23, 2009**

## **Quick guide to NIMAS/NIMAC and the Colorado process**

Colorado does have a process for securing NIMAC sourced alternative format instructional materials for students who are blind/visually impaired, physically limited, or print disabled per NIMAS requirements. Here are “just the facts” to get you started downloading and using specialized format books and materials for your students. Links are provided to additional information.

More info at:

CDE NIMAS/NIMAC website

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/NIMAS.asp>

IDEA 2004 limits eligibility to students who have an IEP and are "blind or other persons with print disabilities" as defined in the Chafee Amendment (Copyright law). Free NIMAC sourced materials are only available for student with disabilities in grade K-12 US public schools.

More info at:

[http://nimas.cast.org/about/resources/who\\_qualifies.html](http://nimas.cast.org/about/resources/who_qualifies.html)

Because implementing NIMAS and NIMAC is a very complex process, is developmental in nature, and involves the integration of two Federal laws (IDEA Parts B and D, and the Chafee Amendment of 1996 to section 121 of the Copyright Act), the Office of Special Education Programs, OSEP, has funded two national centers, the NIMAS Development Center and the NIMAS Technical Assistance (TA) Center, to help facilitate the timely implementation of NIMAS by State and Local Education Associations (SEA and LEA).

OSEP NIMAS Regulations Summary

[http://nimas.cast.org/about/regulations/osep\\_summary](http://nimas.cast.org/about/regulations/osep_summary)

### **What is the NIMAS?**

NIMAS is the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard, established under sections 612(a)(23)(A) and 674(e)(4) of the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA. The standard is a file set that includes all information typically prepared for publishing, including metadata, images and text, and is used to produce accessible instructional materials for students who are blind or who have other print disabilities.

More info at:

<http://nimas.cast.org/about/idea2004>

<http://nimas.cast.org/about/nimas>

<http://nimas.cast.org/about/faq>

NIMAS News

<http://nimas.cast.org/about/news>

NIMAS RESOURCES

<http://nimas.cast.org/about/resources>

## What is the NIMAC?

The National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center, NIMAC, is a central repository that contains NIMAS source files. These files can be used to produce accessible formats on behalf of eligible print disabled students in grades K-12. Publishers deposit NIMAS files to the repository. The NIMAS files are checked to confirm that they are valid NIMAS, and are cataloged into a web-based database. Anyone is welcome to search the database, <http://nimac.privatereserve.com/>. Authorized Users (AUs) can assign files for download to Accessible Media Producers (AMPs) who have registered with NIMAC.

More info at:

<http://www.nimac.us/>

[http://www.nimac.us/faq\\_general.html](http://www.nimac.us/faq_general.html)

## Who is the NIMAS/NIMAC Coordinator for Colorado?

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## Who determines if a student qualifies for NIMAS instructional materials?

The IEP Team determines the instructional program, modifications, and accommodations needed for students with disabilities, including the need for accessible instructional materials. However, according to the Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR §701.6(b)), only a competent authority can certify students eligible to use instructional materials produced in specialized formats from NIMAS files. In the case of a reading disability from organic dysfunction, these regulations define a competent authority as doctors of medicine who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines. In the case of an individual who is blind, has a visual disability, or has physical limitations, other medical professionals and school officials are included among those who are competent authorities. To qualify for NIMAC-sourced textbooks, a K-12 U.S. student must have an IEP and be Chafee –qualified by a “competent authority”.

## Blind or other persons with print disabilities

- Blind persons whose visual acuity is 20/200 or less
- Persons with visual disability prevents the reading of standard printed material
- Persons as a result of physical limitations
  - *are unable to read or*
  - *use standard printed material*
- Persons with a reading disability that
  - *results from organic dysfunction and*
  - *prevents reading printed material in a normal manner.*
- For blindness, visual disabilities or physical limitations, competent authority is defined to include doctors of medicine, doctors of osteopathy, ophthalmologists, optometrists, registered nurses, therapists, professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or welfare agencies.
- For reading disability from an organic dysfunction, competent authority is defined as doctors of medicine who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.

Colorado Procedures:

*School-age learners who will qualify as having a print disability or a physical disability which affects one's ability to read print such as inability to hold a book or turn pages, do not follow a strict ECEA designated "disability label" – the determination of alternative format needs of instructional materials for a student with a print disability will be made by an IEP team based on the evaluations of certified professionals and the individual needs of the student, but must also be verified by an appropriate medical doctor or certifying professional.*

*Eligibility as a school-aged learner who is "visually disabled" in Colorado is outlined in the December 2007 Rules for the Administration of the Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA).*

**Rules for the Exceptional Children's Education Act (1 CCR 301-8)  
Effective December 30, 2007**

2.08 (2) A child with a vision disability shall have a deficiency in visual acuity and/or visual field performance where, even with the use of lenses or corrective devices, he/she is prevented from receiving reasonable educational benefit from regular education.

2.08 (2) (a) A vision disability shall be one or more of the following:

2.08 (2) (a) (i) Visual acuity of no better than 20/70 in the better eye after correction

2.08 (2) (a) (ii) Visual field restriction to 20 degrees or less.

2.08 (2) (1) (iii) A physical condition of visual system which cannot be medically corrected and as such affects visual functioning to the extent that specially designed instruction is needed. These criteria are reserved for special situations such as, but not restricted to, oculomotor apraxia, cortical visual impairment, and/or a progressive visual loss where field and acuity deficits alone may not meet the aforementioned criteria.

The term "visual disability" does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual perceptual and/or visual motor difficulties.

2.08 (2) (b) Criteria for a vision disability preventing the child from receiving reasonable educational benefit from regular education shall include:

2.08 (2) (b) (i) Requirement for Braille and/or adaptation of educational material, or

2.08 (2) (b) (ii) Requirement of specialized methods, aids, and/or equipment for learning, literacy, and/or mobility.

More info:

Colorado ECEA Rules 2008 Rules (for the) Administration of the Exceptional Children's Educational Act  
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/lawsregs.asp>

Copyright Law of the United States, Title 17, Circular 92, as amended in 2004 (Chafee)  
<http://www.copyright.gov/title17/92chap1.html#106>

[http://nimas.cast.org/about/resources/who\\_qualifies.html](http://nimas.cast.org/about/resources/who_qualifies.html)

<http://www.bookshare/web/CopyrightLaw.html>

### **Who is an Authorized User (AU)?**

Authorized Users (AUs) are agencies or organizations, assigned by the state coordinator, to follow up on NIMAC sourced requests from public educators. The AU assigns files for download from NIMAC to an Accessible Media Producers (AMPs). It's the AMP that provides the file set in a usable format for the student. More Info at:

<http://www.nimac.us/authorized.html>

*Colorado Procedures: As of July 2009, the State of Colorado has three designated authorized users: (1) The Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC), (2) Bookshare, and (3) Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D). The three entities are the only designated Authorized Users of the NIMAC for Colorado. As such, the CIMC, Bookshare and RFB&D can download the NIMAS files housed with NIMAC. These files will then be used to prepare large print, braille, digitized text, and audio books.*

### **Who is an Accessible Media Producer (AMP)?**

Accessible Media Producers turn NIMAC sourced file sets into usable digital files for student use. Accessible Media Producers can be assigned by an Authorized User to provide NIMAC sourced text. A change in January 2009 allows state coordinators to assign Accessible Media Producers (AMP) as an AU. In July of 2009, Tanni Anthony the State NIMAS Coordinator for Colorado, assigned Bookshare and RFB&D as Authorized Users for Colorado in addition to the Colorado Instructional Materials Center, CIMC. This makes it possible for school district staff to directly contact these agencies for NIMAC sourced materials. Colorado educators are asked to contact the appropriate source based on the type of specialized format needed.

More info at:

<http://www.nimac.us/accessible.html>

The CDE NIMAS/NIMAC website provides links to CIMC, RFB&D, and Bookshare

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/NIMAS.asp>

### **Colorado Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired (CIMC)**

The Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC) provides braille and large print textbooks as well as instructional aides to students who are blind or visually impaired in Colorado schools at less than college level. The CIMC maintains an annual registration of Colorado students with visual impairments and registers those students who are legally blind with the American Printing House for the Blind (APH). The CIMC is able to purchase books through funds provided by the Colorado Department of Education, Colorado school districts, and the APH Federal Quota Registry.

CIMC

1015 East High Street

Colorado Springs, CO 80903-3599

Local Telephone: (719) 578-2196

Jim Olson, Coordinator, [jolson@csdb.org](mailto:jolson@csdb.org)

**Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D)**, a national nonprofit, volunteer organization, has been the leading accessible audiobook library for students with disabilities such as visual impairment or dyslexia that make reading standard print difficult or impossible for the last 60 years. With titles available in every subject area and grade level, RFB&D's digitally recorded audio textbooks on CD and downloadable audio textbooks help students challenged by the printed page. RFB&D currently has over 43,000 digital audio books available for use by its members. They are currently completing work on a conversion tool that will allow them to quickly create a Digital Talking Book with text and text-to-speech capabilities for mid-elementary level and above from NIMAS filesets. The plan is to continue developing high-quality, voice-recorded audio versions for learners in the lower elementary grades and to create digital audio books for higher grade levels. Their audio versions require human voice recording and are likely to take three to six months to complete. To ensure that RFB&D members have access to K–12 textbooks and related core print instructional materials derived from NIMAS filesets, it is essential that Educational Agencies assign titles to them via the NIMAC. RFB&D offers both hardware- and software-based reading tools for its AudioPlus digitally recorded CDs. Membership is fee-based and is supported, in part, with annual funding provided through OSEP. Both individual and group memberships are available.

More info at: [www.rfbd.org](http://www.rfbd.org)

**Bookshare** subscriptions are now free to *qualified* U.S. students, in K-12 Education programs. Benetech was awarded OSEP funding for 5 years to develop and implement Bookshare for Education (B4E). As of October 1, 2007, Bookshare no longer charges a membership fee to students with print disabilities. Those membership fees are completely funded by an award from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) in the Department of Education. Bookshare expects to greatly expand their textbook offerings as part of the Bookshare for Education program. Bookshare plans to span the entire range of print content that you might find in a public or school library: textbooks, literature, recommended reading material, leisure reading, reference material, newspapers and magazines. School or group accounts can be established as well as individual subscriptions. Bookshare continues to provide a fee subscription membership for those who do not qualify for the free membership but still must have a certified print disability. To ensure that members have access to K–12 textbooks and core related print instructional materials derived from NIMAS filesets, it is essential that Education Agencies assign titles to them via the NIMAC. Bookshare has a quick turn-around time and is developing a special area for school members interested in specialized formats created from files obtained from the NIMAC. Bookshare also offers a free versions of Victor Reader software and Don Johnston Read:OutLoud as part of its free membership. Bookshare also plans to provide images with its DAISY books and will include alternative text for those images later in 2009. Bookshare already offers over 50,000 books and is growing its NIMAS-based textbook conversions at a rapid rate. The Bookshare library is expected to increase to over 100,000 books by 2012 with publisher and university contributions augmenting the books from the extended volunteer and nonprofit network.

More info at: [www.Bookshare.org](http://www.Bookshare.org)

Colorado Procedures:

- *The CIMC is the only Colorado designated authorized user of NIMAS files for braille textbooks for students who are visually disabled. Colorado has a long and established history of ordering braille textbooks for students who have a visual disability. Teachers certified in the area of visual impairment order the needed books from the CIMC in the spring of each school year for the following school year. Orders can be made throughout the school year as new students are enrolled or new books are needed.*
- *Costs to secure and produce braille textbooks are built into the annual CIMC budget, which is co-funded by CDE, the APH Quota Funds, and Colorado Administrative Units, and State Operated Programs who have learners with visual disabilities. The latter funding source is completed through an annual assessment fee to Colorado Administrative Units and State Operated programs.*

*Special note: Only certified teachers of students with visual impairments can order braille textbooks on behalf of the Colorado Instructional Materials Center.*

- *The RFB&D is the only Colorado designated authorized user of NIMAS for human-recorded audio books for students who are blind/visually impaired or print disabled.*
- *Costs for human-recorded audio books will be determined by individual student / Administrative Unit / State Operated Program membership fees with the Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic.*
- *Bookshare is the only Colorado designated authorized user of NIMAS files for digitized textbooks for students who are print disabled. The books can be read aloud on a computer using text-to-speech while words are highlighted at the same time. They are also available as digital braille should the certified teacher of students with visual impairments and/or certified administrative unit brailist deem this an appropriate format for a given book for a given students. Braille files should not be ordered through Bookshare unless the person who is ordering the book is a CO certified teacher of students with visual impairments and/or a Colorado Administrative Unit brailist. This policy is to ensure that the individual receiving the file has the needed full braille competency to ensure that the braille product is of high quality.*
- *There are no membership fees for qualified students with Bookshare per a five-year grant award to Bookshare from the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (Cooperative Agreement #H325U040001). This grant award was effective October 1, 2007.*

*Special note: Only a certified teacher of students with visual impairments or an administrative unit brailist should order recreational reading books and/or textbooks from Bookshare.*

Bookshare is the only Colorado designated authorized user of NIMAS files for digitized textbooks for students who are print disabled. Braille files should not be ordered through Bookshare unless the person who is ordering the book is a CO certified teacher of students with visual impairments and/or a Colorado Administrative Unit brailist. This policy is to ensure that the individual receiving the file has the needed full braille competency to ensure that the braille product is of high quality.

### **So how does this all work?**

Teachers or public school staff verifies that the student has a current IEP and is Chafee-qualified by a competent authority when registering the student with CIMC, RFB&D, or Bookshare. These records are kept at the school. Teachers or public school staff downloads NIMAC sourced files on behalf of students who qualify for free digital text files.

The Colorado process is to download that NIMAC sourced book or materials through the appropriate Authorized User(AU)/ Accessible Media Producers (AMPs); the Colorado Instructional Materials Center, CIMC, Bookshare, or RFB&D so the request can be converted into the desired usable format. For titles not yet available through one of these AUs, first search the NIMAC Repository, <http://nimac.privatereserve.com/> to determine if the file set is available and then request it through one of the three Authorized Users(AU)/ Accessible Media Producers (AMPs). Currently Bookshare converts NIMAC-sourced files in about 2 weeks into DAISY and BRF formats.

*Special Note: Only certified teachers of students with visual impairments can order braille textbooks on behalf of the Colorado Instructional Materials Center. In addition only a certified teacher of students with visual impairments or an administrative unit brailist should order recreational reading books and/or textbooks from Bookshare.*

Bookshare is the Accessible Media Producer that had been awarded a grant by OSEP to provide free subscriptions to qualifying student. The website has been significantly revised as of January 2009, and provides lots of information in additional to providing free down loads of software; an enhanced Victor Reader Soft and READ:OutLoud Bookshare edition by Don Johnston, to play the digital files. The hope is that most titles will be available and acquired this way.

This free service provides an unprecedented opportunity for qualifying students. To qualify for NIMAC-sourced textbooks through Bookshare, a K-12 U.S. student must both be Chafee-qualified and have a current IEP. Only educators and staff in U.S. K-12 public schools are allowed to download NIMAC-sourced textbooks for qualifying students. During registration, the public school educator provides the qualifications for each student indicating they have an IEP and certifies that the qualifications are on file at the school or district.

These links will answer many of your questions...

“Colorado Procedures for Securing Adapted-Format Instructional Materials for Students who are Blind/Visually Impaired or Print Disabled Per NIMAS Requirements” July 2009

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/NIMAS.asp> (CDE NIMAS/NIMAC website)

“OSEP NIMAS Regulations Summary” April 2008

[http://nimas.cast.org/about/resources/policy\\_brief-2008-04](http://nimas.cast.org/about/resources/policy_brief-2008-04)

[http://nimas.cast.org/about/regulations/osep\\_summary](http://nimas.cast.org/about/regulations/osep_summary)

<http://nimas.cast.org/about/faq> NIMAS FAQ's

<http://www.nimac.us/index.html> NIMAC FAQ's

Bookshare resources:

<http://www.atanswers.com/aim/ReadySetRead.pdf>

<http://www.bookshare.org/about/educatorFAQ>

<http://www.bookshare.org/about/nimacFAQ>

Bookshare has provided and recorded number of excellent webinars that are available to view under the HELP > Training, pull down menu on the Bookshare website. **“Ready, Set, Read” is an excellent place to start and will walk you through the process of creating a school account, adding sponsors (other teachers that can download NIMAC sourced books for qualifying students) and adding qualifying students. Other excellent training webinars are, “How to read with Read:OutLoud”, How to read with Victor Reader Soft”, and How to read with Macs”.**

## Pre-recorded Webinars

<http://www.bookshare.org/about/training>

Webinars for Educators and Parents

- [Bookshare Buzz - How to Get Your Students Individual Memberships](#) on April 15, 2009
- [Bookshare 101 en Espanol para Padres](#) on April 14, 2009
- [Parent Webinar - How to read with Macs](#) on April 9, 2009
- [Parent Webinar - How to read with Read:OutLoud](#) on April 8, 2009
- [Parent Webinar - How to read with Victor Reader Soft](#) on April 7, 2009
- [Bookshare Buzz - How to Use READ:OutLoud](#) on April 1, 2009
- [Bookshare - Ready, Set, Read](#) on March 24, 2009
- [Bookshare Buzz - Learn more about the National Instructional Materials Access Center \(NIMAC\)](#) on March 17, 2009
- [Bookshare Buzz - How to Use Victor Reader Soft](#) on March 4, 2009
- [Bookshare University Webinar](#) on February 20, 2009
- [Bookshare 101 for Parents](#) on February 17 - 19, 2009
- [Meet the New Bookshare for Educators Webinar](#) on January 15, 2009
- [Bookshare 101](#) on May 21, 2008