NIMAS is a technical standard used by publishers to produce source files in multiple specialized formats for students with print disabilities. At the end of 2004, President George Bush signed into law the reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This statute addressed the timely delivery of print textbooks to school-age students with print disabilities in specialized formats including audio, braille, digital text, and large print.

CISAM’s role is to assist school personnel in locating accessible educational materials (AEM) for eligible Ohio students with print disabilities.
IDEA defines eligible students as: “Blind or other persons with print disabilities” – The term ‘blind or other persons with print disabilities’ means children served under this Act and who may qualify in accordance with the Act entitled An Act to Provide Books for the Adult Blind, approved March 3, 1931 (2 U.S.C. 135a; 46 Stat. 1487) to receive books and other publications produced in specialized formats.

The Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR 701.6(b)(1) related to An Act to Provide Books for the Adult Blind provide that blind persons or other persons with print disabilities include:
1.3.1 Blind persons whose visual acuity, as determined by competent authority, is 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting glasses, or whose widest diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.

1.3.2 Persons whose visual disability, with correction regardless of optical measurement, is certified by competent authority as preventing the reading of standard printed material.

1.3.3 Persons certified by competent authority as unable to read or unable to use standard printed material as a result of physical limitations.

1.3.4 Persons certified by competent authority as having a reading disability resulting from organic dysfunction and of sufficient severity to prevent their reading printed material in a normal manner.
1.3.5 In cases of blindness, visual disability, 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 (e.g., social workers, case workers, counselors, rehabilitation teachers, and superintendents).

1.3.6 In the case of a reading disability from organic dysfunction, competent authority is defined as doctors of medicine who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines.
Requests

For eligible students, CISAM notifies the school district that a NIMAS source file may be available from the publisher for textbooks sold in Ohio. The CISAM Accessible Materials Production Center (AMPC) can work with the school district to produce a formatted file of the textbook.

Requests for AEM must be submitted on a CISAM Materials Request form.

To view how CISAM processes an AEM request, refer to the CISAM website:
How CISAM Processes Requests for Accessible Educational Materials (AEM).

In order to ensure timely delivery, requests for AEM must be submitted in March preceding the school year in which the AEM will be used. Teachers, supervisors, and administrators can request AEM on behalf of eligible students.
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