

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS IN ALTERNATIVE FORMATS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The Board of Education of the Bethlehem Central School District adopts the following policy and procedures to ensure that every student with a disability determined by the committee to require instructional materials in alternative formats receives them at the same time as they become available in regular format to nondisabled students, as required by state law and regulation.

Definitions and Terms

In accordance with this Policy, any medium or format used for the presentation of instructional materials as part of any course curriculum offered by the District, other than a traditional print textbook, including but not limited to Braille, large print, open and closed captioned, audio, or electronic files, shall be provided in alternative formats where necessary to ensure that a student identified with a disability, as defined below, receives such materials in an appropriate format at the same time such instructional materials are made available to nondisabled students.

This policy is applicable to all students identified with disabilities under Part 200 of the Commissioner's Regulations as well as students who qualify for such accommodations under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act ("504").

Preference to Vendors able to Provide Timely Delivery of Instructional Materials in Alternative Formats

It shall be the policy of the Board of Education to give a preference in the purchase of instructional materials to those Vendors determined by the Board of Education as able to meet the District's obligation to provide all instructional materials in alternative formats to students with disabilities who require them at the same time they are made available by the Vendor to nondisabled students in regular format.

In accordance with this Policy, Assistant Superintendent for Business shall require that all bids for instructional materials shall provide the following information:

- (A) A list of alternative formats routinely offered by the Vendor; including its capacity to convert to accessible formats those materials it provides in the form of an electronic file;
- (B) The advance notification required by the Vendor from the District to provide instructional materials in an alternative format as compared to the notification required for placing orders of instructional materials in regular formats;

All prospective bidders shall be notified in writing that the Board of Education will give a preference to those bidders able to guarantee receipt of alternative formats at the same time as regular formatted materials.

Electronic Files

If an electronic file is provided to the District, and must be utilized by a student with a disability, the District will either:

- (A) Wherever necessary or cost effective, the Vendor shall be required to convert those instructional materials it provides to the District in an electronic format to those students with disabilities who require an alternative format;
- (B) Where practicable, the District shall, at its discretion, convert electronic files into accessible formats for those students whose disabilities would otherwise preclude them with access to such files;

The Director of Pupil Personnel Services is directed to identify, rent, purchase or arrange to access the necessary software or other technology, needed to convert an electronic file into a format accessible to such students to ensure that they are available to the student at the same time as the electronic file is available to the nondisabled student.

It shall be the obligation of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) chairperson and the building administrator charged with implementation of the §504 Committee, to identify each student with a disability who requires instructional materials in alternative formats to develop and forward to the Assistant Superintendent of Educational Programs and Instruction as soon as practicable, but in no event any later than 30 days a list of the alternative formats and materials required in such format

It shall be the obligation of the Committee on Special Education (CSE) chairperson and the building administrator charged with implementation of the §504 Committee, to identify each student with a disability who transfers into the District during the school year who requires instructional materials in alternative formats and to contact the sending District to seek to borrow (even if for an interim) or purchase any instructional materials which the former District obtained, where it is not practicable to secure for the student similar materials in a timely manner from the Vendor.

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