Figure 1

Guiding Questions for Determining Student Need for AIM

Discuss each probe below to determine the answer to this question: **Given standard *print-based curriculum materials used in the content areas, does the student have difficulty accessing or gaining meaning from these materials?**

PROBE	EVIDENCE
Have any <u>factors</u> related to the student's disability been identified that contribute to the student's difficulty in accessing standard print-based curriculum materials?	**Factors** Identify factors that contribute to the student's difficulty in accessing standard print-based curriculum materials**.** ☐ Physical ☐ Cognitive ☐ Visual ☐ Reading Disability ☐ Auditory ☐ Perceptual ☐ Attention Deficit Behaviors ☐ Dyslexia ☐ Other: _____
Is the student able to read standard printed materials at a <u>sufficient rate and with adequate comprehension</u> in order to complete academic or curricular tasks with success, relative to same-age peers?	**Current Reading Ability** 1. Identify the student's current performance indicated by data (e.g.: DIBELs scores, Standardized Test Results, Informal Teacher Test, Teacher Observation and Formal Evaluation). _____ 2. Is the student's reading efficiency with standard print material adequate for timely completion of tasks? _____ 3. Is the student's reading comprehension adequate for understanding of content? _____
Do <u>other barriers</u> to reading proficiency exist?	**Other Barriers** Identify any barriers <u>other than</u> the print-based format that prevent student access to instructional materials. ☐ Lack of instruction ☐ Inadequate pre-requisite kills ☐ Behaviors ☐ Other:
Have <u>strategies</u> to address reading or access issues been successful?	**Strategies** List the strategies or accommodation to materials that have already been tried to address reading or access. Have they been successful?
Would the student benefit from an <u>alternate format</u> of core curriculum materials? If so, which? ☐ Braille ☐ Large print ☐ Audio ☐ Digital	**Alternate Format** Identify any changes to text format of standard print material that the student needs. ☐ Print-based to digital format ☐ Standard print to enlarged print ☐ Electronic Text ☐ Standard print to braille ☐ Picture-symbols ☐ Print-based to audio format ☐ Color of text or background color ☐ Use of Style Sheets
Would the student/educational team require <u>additional supports</u> for successful use/implementation of materials in an alternate format?	**Additional Supports** Identify additional instruction, assistive technology, supports, services, and/or training that will be needed by the student and others to use the materials effectively.

*Print-based core materials are textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, basal textbooks and reproducible materials printed on paper, in book, or single sheet format.

Use the questions in this guide to provide a framework for discussion about a student's need for accessible instructional materials (AIM).

1. Refer to the *Guiding Questions for Determining Student Need for AIM* in Figure 1.
2. Discuss each **probe** to identify specific factors, barriers and strategies that may affect a student's use of core instructional materials.
3. Identify if the student is **eligible** for digital resources from the National Instructional Material Center (**NIMAC**) or **Bookshare.org**.
   a. Identify the district's Competent Authority.
   b. Determine if a *Verification of Eligibility to Use NIMAS Materials* form has been completed for the student.
4. Identify how the team will **obtain AIM** for the student. (The district is responsible for the provision of AIM whether the student meets NIMAS eligibility or not.)
5. Identify the need for AIM on the student's IEP or 504 plan as part of the consideration for assistive technology.
   a. Refer to the Framework for Consideration on the Louisiana Department of Education website at www.louisianaschools.net/lde/eia/1538.html.
   b. For more information refer to www.atanswers.com/aim.

Obtaining AIM

How will the team obtain and/or prepare alternate formats that support the student's need.
- ❏ Order from LA Book Depository
- ❏ Order from LIMC (blind/low-vision)
- ❏ Request NIMAC file from the Louisiana Authorized User (AU)
- ❏ Order within district resources
- ❏ Order the CD-ROM or audio version direct from the vendor
- ❏ Order from Bookshare.org
- ❏ Teacher-Created
- ❏ Other (Describe):

   _____

Is the student eligible to receive files from the NIMAC or Bookshare.org?

Has the student been certified as having a "print disability" by the District Competent Authority?

Is there a copy of the *Verification of Eligibility to Use NIMAS Materials* form in the student's file?

If not, contact the District Competent Authority listed below to determine eligibility.

   Identify your district's Competent Authority

   Name: _____

   E-mail: _____

   Phone: _____

   Address: _____

NIMAS Eligibility

Students identified as having a "print disability" as defined by the Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR 701.6(b)(1)) can receive digital files from the National Instructional Materials Center (NIMAC) or Bookshare.org.

From Federal Register 34 CFR Parts 300 and 301, p. 46621, published August 14, 2006:

The Library of Congress regulations (36 CFR 701.6(b) (1)) related to the Act to Provide Books for the Adult Blind (approved March 3, 1931, 2 U.S.C. 135a) provide that blind persons or other persons with print disabilities include:

   (i)   *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 if visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees.*

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

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

   (iv) *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.*

Note: If a student who requires AIM is not eligible for the resources through the NIMAC, the district must provide appropriate AIM through other means such as direct purchase of an alternate format from the textbook publisher. Contact the LA AIM Consortium at http://www.atanswers.com/aim for more information.

Who is the "Competent Authority"?

Competent authority is defined in 36 CFR 701.6(b) (2) as follows:

*(i) 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**).*

*(ii) 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.*

   Identify your district's Competent Authority

   Name: _____

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)

AIM Determination Guide

www.atanswers.com/aim

How do I know if my student needs AIM?

**Louisiana Department of Education
P.O. Box 94064
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
1-877-453-2721**

D.D. Council Quarterly Report
January 2009
Division of Educational Improvement and Assistance

1.   **Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) Staff Changes/Contacts**
     Robyn Hargrave is the new state supervisor of programs for students with autism. She can be reached at robyn.hargrave@la.gov. Other specialized staff contacts include:
     - DeafBlind Project & Blind/Visually Impaired: Joyce Russo (joyce.russo@la.gov)
     - Assistive Technology: Donna Broussard (donna.broussard@la.gov)
     - Transition: Keita Rone (keita.rone@la.gov)
     - Deaf/Hard of Hearing: Melodie Sparks (melodie.sparks@la.gov)
     - Mild/Moderate Disabilities: Kristina Braud (Kristina.braud@la.gov)
     - Speech/Language Pathology, 504, Dyslexia: Phyllis Butler (Phyllis.butler@la.gov)
     - Social Work Services: Angela Tyrone (angela.tyrone@la.gov)
     - School Psychology: Debra Duhe' (debra.duhe@la.gov)
     - Ed Diagnostician: Patricia McElroy Patricia/mcelroy@la.gov
     - IEP: Noah Wartelle (noah.wartelle@la.gov)

2.   **Access Guide**
     In January 2009, the LDE will launch the *Access Guide* on its website. The *Access Guide*, designed by Louisiana educators, provides a variety of suggestions, resources, and tools to maximize the likelihood of higher academic achievement for ALL students, including struggling learners, students with significant disabilities, and those who need added rigor. The site will expand over time in response to user input.

     The *Access Guide* can be found at http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov/AccessGuide. The section of the *Access Guide* focused specifically upon the needs of students with significant disabilities can be found at http://sda.doe.louisiana.gov.

     The LDE will issue a press release in the near future to announce the availability of the *Access Guide*. A brochure describing the resources found at the site will be mailed to every school in the state, with sufficient copies available for general and special educators. Brochures will also be sent to schools districts to be disseminated to the parents of students with disabilities. Training/information on

navigating the site will be provided via multiple avenues (e.g., webinars, Families Helping Families sponsored events, conferences).

3. **Bulletins**
    Bulletins 1508 (*Pupil Appraisal Handbook)* 1530 (*IEP Handbook)* were approved as a Notice of Intent by BESE in December 2008; the public review process will begin on January 20, 2009. The planned implementation date for both bulletins is July 1, 2009. The IEP Handbook will be expanded to include content from the old Extended School Year Handbook, which will then be expired.

4. **High School Redesign**
    The Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) will bring final recommendations to the January 2009 BESE meeting on the alternate pathways to a high school diploma that have been recommended by the Alternate Diploma Task Force. Discussions have centered on the LAA2 test as a substitution to the LEAP/GEE. LDE staff members were directed by Superintendent Pastorek to study the Occupational Diploma Option, and a team will travel to Alabama in February 2009 to observe/ask questions.

5. **Transition Summit**
    The Statewide Transition Summit will be held in Lafayette on January 28, 2009. Registration is via Coursewhere on the LDE's website. We are receiving assistance through three federally funded centers- National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center, National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities, and Post-School Outcome Center. The focus will be around the four State Performance Plan Indicators of Graduation, Dropout, Meaningful Secondary Transition Goals, and Post Secondary Outcomes.

6. **World Class Special Education System**
    A committee met on November 17-18, 2008, to discuss how the LDE could create a "world class special education system." The following national consultants were in attendance to support this effort: Larry Gloeckler (LEA Funding), Sue Gamm (Disproportionality), Tom Hehir (Student Performance), and Sharmann Davis Barrett (Parent Issues). Alan Coulter with the National Data Center facilitated the discussion. The consultants presented information, reviewed data, and listened to the LDE's concerns. The consults will prepare a report and present it to Superintendent Pastorek at a meeting on January 6, 2009.

7. **University Coursework in Low Incidence Disabilities**
    University teacher preparation coursework in the areas of Blind/Visually Imparied, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Significant Disabilities, and Autism is available on-line and can be accessed from any computer in the state with broadband

access. Financial assistance is available to eligible individuals. For further information, visit the website at www.lalidc.org.

8.   **Response to Intervention**
        The LDE is taking further steps to expand the Response to Intervention (RtI) initiative in Louisiana. This expanded effort will entail linking with multiple state initiatives. Phyllis Butler of the LDE is establishing a group to examine the role of the Speech Language Pathologist in LEA reading/literacy instruction and the Response to Intervention (RtI) initiative.

9.   **Louisiana AIM Framework**
        Some students (including those with significant cognitive disabilities) who have difficulty with reading or understanding text may be candidates for the provision of accessible instructional materials (AIM). That is, these students may need to have their core and supplemental instructional materials provided to them in an alternate format (e.g., digital, audio, Braille) to support their access of the curriculum.

        The Louisiana Department of Education developed a framework to help school-based teams, IEP teams, 504 teams, parents and supervisors answer the questions below related to AIM. This framework, further described in the AIM brochure (see attached), provides details about the AIM decision making process.

        • How do you know if your student could benefit from AIM?
        • How will I get AIM for my students?
        • How do I know if my student meets eligibility criteria for "print disability"?
        • How do I document the need for AIM?

        For more information about AIM and Louisiana resources, refer to www.atanswers.com/aim.

        Information and step-by-step procedures for consideration of assistive technology can be found in the *Framework for Consideration*, *Screening and Assessment* on the Louisiana Department of Education website at www.louisianaschools.net/lde/eia/1538.html.