

PALM Initiative

Purchasing Accessible Learning Materials

Purchasing Accessible Learning Materials – the PALM Initiative

<http://aim.cast.org/learn/practice/palm>

As classrooms start to incorporate more digital technology, it becomes increasingly important that materials used in the classroom are designed to be useable by all students. This may require adjustments in the way materials are purchased, and that, in turn, will drive the availability of more flexible and accessible learning materials in the marketplace. The National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM Center, www.aim.cast.org) is launching the **PALM** Initiative (Purchase Accessible Learning Materials) to ensure this change happens as soon as possible.

The Problem We Want Your Help in Fixing

There is widespread recognition of the important role the market is starting to play in ensuring all students have access to learning. However, when we ask publishers/developers about the availability of accessible digital learning materials for purchase, they generally tell us they rarely hear about accessibility as a decision factor in purchasing. **We need your help in bringing this to their attention by encouraging and, to the extent possible, requiring the purchase of materials that are accessible from the start.**

Resources for Making the Case: Your PALM Toolkit

The following resources are "ready to go" or you may customize to fit your needs

- [Guidance for Purchasers](#)
- [Overview PowerPoint Presentation](#)
- **Handouts**
 - [Introducing the PALM Initiative](#)
 - [Why Buy Accessible?](#)
 - [What are Accessible Learning Materials](#)

Take Action: What You Can Do

Purchasers

- Check current purchasing policies and practices for alignment with PALM
 - Require that all materials purchased are accessible
 - Include accessibility in purchasing contract language
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Educators

- When purchasing any learning materials, consider their accessibility
 - Tell your colleagues to purchase accessible learning materials
 - Share PALM resources with your purchasing and technology coordinators
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Families

- Share PALM resources with classroom teachers, administrators
 - Share PALM resources with parent groups
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Advocates

- Make a presentation about PALM to your stakeholder group, share handouts
 - Share PALM resources through your networks
 - Working with publishers? Include accessibility in purchasing contract language
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[AIM Center Brief on E-Books](#) – Updated, June 2012

The brief, *E-Books for Education, Not so Fast...*, begins to highlight some of the problems that we are seeing in the commercial and open education resource markets. The problem extends to purchasing decisions for hardware, software, e-learning platforms, apps, and more. This is a problem worth solving. We believe that publishers will respond when states and local education agencies demand accessible learning materials directly from the source.