

# **AEM Center Brief: Accessible Educational Materials in the IEP**

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National Center on Accessible Educational Materials (2021). *Accessible Educational Materials in the IEP*. Wakefield, MA: National Center on Accessible Educational Materials.

This guide discusses a number of locations in the IEP where it might be appropriate to refer to a student's use of AEM. There is no specific requirement in IDEA regarding where to include the consideration and documentation of AEM in developing the IEP. To promote clarity and consistency across IEP teams, however, SEAs and LEAs are encouraged to provide guidance related to considering a student's need for AEM in the IEP.

# **Accessible Educational Materials in the IEP**

Questions often arise about how accessible educational materials (AEM) might be included in Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The two purposes of this article are to (1) help families and educators understand the importance of including AEM in the IEPs of students who require them, and (2) to discuss locations in the IEP where it may be appropriate to refer to a student’s need for and use of AEM.

As an accompaniment to this guide, see the AEM Center policy brief, [The Right of Students with Disabilities Who Need Accessible Educational Materials](#).

## **What are AEM?**

Accessible educational materials (AEM) are print- and technology-based educational materials, including printed and digital textbooks and related core materials, that are designed or enhanced in a way that makes them usable across the widest range of learner variability, regardless of format (e.g., print, digital, graphic, audio, video). Thus, AEM includes text-based curricular materials that have been converted to accessible formats, as well as technologies that are developed to meet or exceed federal accessibility standards (i.e., Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act/Web Content Accessibility Guidelines).

In order for AEM to be most effective for students who need them, both the materials that provide the content of the curriculum and the technologies used to deliver those materials need to be accessible. The National AEM Center website has definitions of key terms related to accessibility of materials and technologies: [What is Accessibility?](#)

States, districts, and schools can minimize the need to retrofit materials and technologies for students who require AEM by prioritizing accessibility in procurement procedures. See the National AEM Center resources, [Vetting for Accessibility](#) and [Communicating Accessibility Requirements](#).

## **What are Accessible Formats?**

Accessible formats are a subset of AEM. Specifically, they relate to converted versions of materials that contain primarily static or fixed text and images, referred to as “text-based materials.” Both print and digital materials can be text-based. For example, a digital textbook that replicates a standard print textbook would be considered a text-based material.

Books in standard print are common examples of text-based materials. To successfully use print, learners need functional skills related to sensory, physical, and cognitive abilities. Some learners may have visual disabilities that make it difficult to see the text and images on the page. Other learners may be unable to hold printed materials because of a physical disability. Still others may be unable to read or derive meaning from the printed text because of a learning disability.

Certain digital materials, such as ebooks and PDF documents, also contain text and images. Such text-based digital materials are not consistently designed for use with assistive technology (AT), which many learners with disabilities use to read and navigate text and images in digital materials. Screen readers, text to speech, and switches are a few examples of AT devices and software that learners with a wide range of disabilities use.

Because of the frequent barriers presented by text-based materials, some learners with disabilities need alternative forms, known as accessible formats. Examples of accessible formats include audio, braille, large print, tactile graphics, and digital text conforming with accessibility standards.

**The term “accessible format” is defined in Section 121 of the U.S. Copyright Act, also known as the Chafee Amendment:**

[A]n alternative manner or form that gives an eligible person access to the work when the copy or phonorecord in the accessible format is used exclusively by the eligible person to permit him or her to have access as feasibly and comfortably as a person without such disability (20 U.S.C. § 121(d)(1)).

Rather than specifying types of file formats, the legal definition of accessible format is an inclusive and functional term that focuses on the experience of the user, emphasizing that an alternative format enables the eligible person to have access to the work “as feasibly and comfortably as a person without such disability.”

Visit the National AEM Center website for more information about [Section 121/the Chafee Amendment](#).

## **What happened to the term “specialized format?”**

In 2018, Congress passed the Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act (MTIA), amending Section 121. Among the changes made by the MTIA, the term “specialized formats,” which had previously appeared in Section 121, was replaced with that of “accessible

formats.” Because IDEA cross-references Section 121, the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) at the U.S. Department of Education has stated that the term “specialized formats” in IDEA has also been replaced with that of “accessible formats.” For more information, refer to this [January 2020 Memorandum](#) to Chief State School Officers and State Directors of Special Education on Procedures for Receiving a FY2020 Grant Award Under Part B of IDEA.

## **Who can receive accessible formats?**

The provision of accessible formats is also guided by copyright law. For a student to receive accessible formats, they must meet the definition of “eligible person.”

### **Under Section 121, an “eligible person” means**

(A) an individual who, regardless of any other disability—

(A) is blind;

(B) has a visual impairment or perceptual or reading disability that cannot be improved to give visual function substantially equivalent to that of a person who has no such impairment or disability and so is unable to read printed works to substantially the same degree as a person without an impairment or disability; or

(C) is otherwise unable, through physical disability, to hold or manipulate a book or to focus or move the eyes to the extent that would be normally acceptable for reading.

2 U.S.C. §§ 135a(1), (g)(1)

Understanding the definition of “eligible person” helps guide the process of determining a student’s need and qualifications for accessible formats.

### **The National Library Service provides a list of professionals who may certify a student as an eligible person:**

Doctor of medicine, doctor of osteopathy, ophthalmologist, optometrist, psychologist, registered nurse, therapist, and professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or welfare agencies (such as an educator, a social worker, case worker, counselor, rehabilitation teacher,

certified reading specialist, school psychologist, superintendent, or librarian).

Library of Congress, 86 Fed. Reg. 9289, 9290 (Feb. 12, 2021) (codified at 36 C.F.R. § 701.6(b)(2))

Note that a range of staff members who commonly participate in IEP meetings are authorized to certify that a student is an eligible person. As a supplement to this guide, the [AEM Navigator](#) is a useful tool for IEP teams. It assists teams in making informed, accurate, and multi-step decisions related to determining a student's need for accessible formats, selecting the format(s) needed, acquiring materials, and determining the supports needed by the student, family, and school staff.

Also note that, as a result of the changes to Section 121 created by the MTIA, a medical doctor is no longer required to certify that a student with a reading disability is eligible to receive accessible formats.

## **What happened to the phrase “blind or other persons with print disabilities?”**

As part of the changes made to Section 121 by the MTIA, the term “blind or other persons with disabilities” was replaced with the term “eligible person” 17 U.S.C. § 121(d)(3). OSERS subsequently clarified that the term “blind or other persons with print disabilities,” which previously appeared in IDEA, has also been replaced with that of “eligible person.” For more information, see the previously referenced [January 2020 Memorandum](#) on Procedures for Receiving a FY2020 Grant Award Under Part B of IDEA.

## **Why should AEM be included in the IEP?**

The U.S. Department of Education has stated that timely access to appropriate and accessible materials is an inherent component of the obligation of public education agencies to ensure a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities so that they can participate in the general education curriculum as specified in their IEPs (71 Fed. Reg. 46618). Given the strong connection between AEM, the provision of FAPE, and participation in the general education curriculum, it is important for IEP teams to consider each student's need for AEM and to specify what is needed in the student's IEP.

Two federal civil rights laws, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. State education agencies (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) have an obligation under Section 504 and the ADA to ensure an equal educational opportunity to students with disabilities. The timely provision of AEM to students with disabilities who need them enables these students to have an equal opportunity to learn and apply the same knowledge and skills that are expected of all learners.

When students receive AEM in a timely manner, they are more likely to increase their independence, participation, and progress in the general curriculum and meet their IEP goals.

## **Where in the IEP should AEM be included?**

The IEP is the foundation of the student’s educational program and serves as a roadmap to help teachers provide instruction. The IEP is both a document describing the services the student will receive and a process which enables the educators, parents, and student to work together to develop an individualized program. There is no specific requirement in IDEA regarding the consideration of AEM or where it should be documented in the IEP. To promote clarity and consistency across IEP teams, it is beneficial for SEAs and LEAs to provide guidance on the consideration and placement of AEM in the IEP.

SEAs and LEAs can include specific language in sample forms that prompt IEP team members to discuss a student’s need for AEM. In the absence of—or in addition to—such prompts, there are specific components of the IEP where it is appropriate to refer to a student’s use of AEM. Although the language will be somewhat different depending on the component, they include the following:

- Summary of Evaluation Results
- Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance
- Special Factors
- Measurable Annual Goals
- Special Education and Related Services, Supplementary Aids and Services, Program Modifications, and Supports
- Participation in Statewide Assessments
- Postsecondary Goals and Transition Service

## Summary of Evaluation Results

In developing the IEP, the IEP team must consider the results of a child’s initial or most recent evaluation (20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(3)(A)(iii); 34 C.F.R. § 300.324(a)(1)(iii)). Because the evaluation process is a critical, often first step in the development of the IEP, it is important for the evaluation team to consider the student’s needs in relation to educational materials. For example, the evaluation should consider

- If printed materials pose a barrier to the student’s participation and progress in the general education curriculum, does the student need accessible formats of printed materials (e.g., braille, tactile graphics, large print, audio, and/or digital text)?
- If digital text-based materials pose a barrier to the student’s participation and progress in the general education curriculum (e.g., inaccessible PDFs, ebooks, or web-based documents), does the student need accessible formats of those digital text-based materials?
- Does the student need AT to use accessible formats or to perceive and interact with technologies?

Table 1 presents some of the legal requirements related to evaluations and some suggestions for how AEM might be considered as part of the evaluation process.

**Table 1. Summary of Evaluation Results & AEM Considerations**

Requirements in IDEA	AEM Considerations
<p>In conducting an evaluation, the LEA must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess students in all areas of suspected disability (20 U.S.C. § 1414(b)(3)(B); 34 C.F.R. § 300.304(c)(4)).</li> <li>• Use a variety of assessment tools and strategies (20 U.S.C. § 1414(b)(2)(A), (B); 34 C.F.R. § 300.304(b)(1), (2)).</li> <li>• Obtain information that may assist in determining the content of the IEP, including information related to enabling the student to be involved and progress in the general education curriculum (20 U.S.C. § 1414(b)(2)(A)(ii); 34 C.F.R. § 300.304(b)(1)(ii)).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are text-based educational materials a barrier for the student?</li> <li>• Does the student have difficulty using digital-based materials and technologies?</li> <li>• Does the student need AT to use accessible formats of educational materials?</li> </ul>

## **Example of IEP Statement for Summary of Evaluation Results**

Tiffany (she, her) is a seventh-grade student who has been previously identified as having a learning disability. According to the most recent evaluation data reviewed by the team, Tiffany understands grade-level content but is unable to independently derive meaning from text-based materials. These data suggest that Tiffany may need an accessible format of text-based materials and AT.

Further evaluation data indicate that to participate and progress in the general education curriculum, the accessible format that Tiffany needs is accessible digital text. She will also need AT that enables her to see and hear the content at the same time. This feature, called text to speech, provides Tiffany with audio-supported reading.

## **Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance**

IDEA requires that IEPs include a description of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including how the student's disabilities impact their involvement and progress in the general education curriculum. Present levels are critical to the development of an appropriate educational program and should include a focus on student strengths as well as needs. In relation to AEM, this statement should indicate how the student's disability-related needs affect the student's ability to access and derive meaning from the text-based materials that make up the general education curriculum and the technologies needed for the student to perceive and interact with the materials.

The present levels statement provides information about a student's current levels of academic achievement and functional performance. It is important to be specific in describing competencies and areas of difficulty. This information, in turn, is used as the basis for developing measurable annual goals in the IEP. If the student is currently using AEM and/or AT, the team should be specific in describing what is being used and how it impacts the student's access to the content and learning.

Table 2 presents the related legal requirements and some suggestions for how AEM might be considered as part of the description of the student's present levels.



**Table 2. Present Levels & AEM Considerations**

<b>Requirements in IDEA</b>	<b>AEM Considerations</b>
<p>The IEP must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Describe the student’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance.</li><li>• Describe how the student’s disability affects the student’s involvement and progress in the general education curriculum.</li></ul> <p>20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(I); 34 C.F.R. § 300.320(a)(1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is the student able to access and derive meaning from text-based educational materials?</li><li>• Is the student currently using AEM and AT to access the general education curriculum?</li></ul>

**Example of IEP Statement for Present Levels**

Tiffany is a seventh-grade student who has a learning disability. She understands instructional content at grade level but is only able to read text-based materials independently at the fourth-grade level. When using educational devices and supported reading software with text to speech, Tiffany successfully perceives and interacts with accessible digital text formats of grade-level text-based materials and other educational media across content areas.

**Special Factors**

IDEA requires that IEP teams consider several “special factors” in the development, review, and revision of IEPs. Three of these special factors are specifically important to the issue of AEM:

- For blind students and students with other visual impairments, the team must provide for instruction in braille and the use of braille unless the team determines, after an evaluation of the student’s reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the student’s future needs for instruction in braille or the use of braille), that such instruction or use is not appropriate for the student.
- For all students, the team must consider communication needs, including, but not limited to, students who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- For all students, the team must consider whether the student needs AT devices or services.

These special factors emphasize the importance of AEM as part of the right to FAPE. If students with visual impairments have difficulty perceiving and using text-based materials, they may need braille and instruction in the use of braille to support their use of educational materials. As part of the communication special factor, the needs of all students with disabilities must be considered, not just those who are deaf or hard of hearing. Since communication includes both visually and aurally presented information, the need for AEM should be considered as part of this factor. In considering if a student needs AT, IEP teams must determine if AT is necessary to help the student access the curriculum. Even when technology-based materials are developed with accessibility standards and universal design principles, AT will be needed for some students.

A [Dear Colleague Letter](#) (DCL) and a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ) document, issued jointly by the Department of Education and the Department of Justice, discussed “Effective Communication for Students with Hearing, Vision, or Speech Disabilities in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools.” Three federal statutes (IDEA, Section 504, and Title II of the ADA) address the obligations of public schools related to effective communication. IDEA and Section 504 provide the right to FAPE while Title II specifies that communication with students with disabilities must be as effective as communication with students without disabilities. Both areas should be considered in determining a school district’s obligation related to oral and written communication for students with disabilities. Moreover, the need for AEM should be considered as part of the IDEA special factor related to communication.

SEAs and LEAs might also consider explicitly adding a student’s need for AEM as a sixth factor for IEP teams to consider. The IEP form might include a specific prompt for the consideration of AEM (e.g., “Does the student require one or more accessible formats—such as braille, tactile graphics, large print, audio, and/or accessible digital text—of text-based materials and/or accessible digital media and technology to increase independence, participation and progress in the general curriculum?”).

Regardless of whether the team ultimately determines that the student needs AEM, it is wise to include a discussion of the deliberations in the IEP document. Future IEP teams will need that information to understand how determinations were made. During consideration, the primary focus of the IEP team should be on determining whether or not the student needs AEM and should not be limited to determining if a student’s situation satisfies eligibility requirements for different sources of materials.

Table 3 presents the related legal requirements and some suggestions for how AEM might be considered as part of special factors.

**Table 3. Special Factors & AEM Considerations**

Requirements in IDEA	AEM Considerations
<p>The IEP team must consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Braille instruction and use for students who are blind or visually impaired, unless the team determines, after an evaluation of the student’s reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the student’s future needs for instruction in braille or the use of braille), that such instruction or use is not appropriate for the student.</li> <li>• Communication needs of the student, and in the case of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing, consider the child’s language and communication needs.</li> <li>• Need for AT devices and services.</li> </ul> <p>20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(3)(B)(iii), (iv), (v); 34 C.F.R. § 300.324(a)(2)(iii), (iv), (v)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the student need instruction in braille or use of braille in relation to AEM?</li> <li>• Does the student need AEM to perceive and interact with written or aurally presented information?</li> <li>• Does the student need AT to perceive and interact with accessible formats of text-based materials or digital materials and technologies?</li> </ul>

**Example IEP Statement for Special Factors**

Tiffany understands educational content at grade level but is unable to read text-based materials independently with sufficient accuracy and fluency to support comprehension at that level. Tiffany needs materials provided in an accessible digital text format to access the general curriculum. She will need a tablet and/or other device with text-to-speech and word prediction capabilities to perceive and interact with accessible digital text formats of grade-level materials and digital media used across content areas.

**Measurable Annual Goals**

IDEA also requires that IEPs include measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to enable the student to be involved and make progress in the general education curriculum. IEP goals lay the foundation for a student’s educational program and provide a roadmap for their teachers. It is, therefore, important

for the IEP to describe how the student’s use of AEM will support reaching these goals and enable the student to be involved and progress in the general education curriculum.

Table 4 presents the related legal requirements and some suggestions for how AEM might be considered in measurable annual goals.

**Table 4. Measurable Annual Goals & AEM Considerations**

Requirements in IDEA	AEM Considerations
<p>The IEP team must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals.</li> <li>• Describe how the goals will meet the student’s disability-related needs in order to enable the student to be involved and progress in the general curriculum.</li> </ul> <p>20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(II); 34 C.F.R. § 300.320(a)(2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For which goals will AEM be needed to support achievement of IEP goals and progress in the general education curriculum?</li> </ul>

**Example IEP Statement for Measurable Annual Goals**

In May 2021, when using an accessible digital text format of the seventh-grade social studies textbook and other materials, Tiffany will identify examples of sequential, comparative, and causal presentations of information in text with 80% accuracy.

**Special Education and Related Services, Supplementary Aids and Services, Program Modifications, and Supports**

The requirement that the IEP include a statement of the special education and related services, supplementary aids and services, program modifications, and supports for school personnel provides another opportunity to specify the particular AEM that a student will use to be involved and progress in the general education curriculum. This part of the IEP also specifies the accommodations, AT, and other supports and services that are necessary to assist the student’s use of accessible formats of text-based educational materials.

For a student to be able to use AEM for effective educational participation and achievement, the team should determine the types of supports that are needed. Supports typically fall into the following categories:

- Features of the technology that may be needed for the student to use the materials effectively
- Training for the student, educators, and family
- Instructional strategies for educators
- Support services for the student and staff
- Additional accommodations and/or modifications

Table 5 presents the related legal requirements and some suggestions for how AEM might be considered.

**Table 5. Special Education and Related Services, Supplementary Aids and Services, Program Modifications, and Supports & AEM Considerations**

<b>Requirements in IDEA</b>	<b>AEM Considerations</b>
<p>The IEP must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State the special education and related services and supplementary aids and services, based on peer-reviewed research to the extent practicable, to be provided to the child, or on behalf of the child, and</li> <li>• State the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided for the child               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals,</li> <li>○ To be involved and progress in the general education curriculum,</li> <li>○ To be educated and participate with students with and without disabilities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(IV); 34 C.F.R. § 300.320(a)(4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can AEM help the student be involved and make progress in the general education curriculum?</li> <li>• Is AEM needed as part of special education and related services?</li> <li>• What supports will be needed to help the student use AEM?</li> <li>• Who will help the student use AEM?</li> <li>• What training related to AEM and technology will be needed for the student, educators, and family?</li> </ul>

## **Example IEP Statement for Special Education and Related Services, Supplementary Aids and Services, Program Modifications, and Supports**

Tiffany will use a tablet and/or other device that provides simultaneous visual and auditory output to support perception of and interaction with accessible digital text formats of grade-level text-based materials across content areas.

Tiffany will receive training in how to use the accessible digital text format and technology for participation and achievement.

Tiffany's teachers and parents will receive training to support her use of the materials and technology.

Tiffany will require headphones and preferential seating in a quiet area when she is reading with text to speech.

## **Participation in Statewide Assessment**

Under IDEA, all students with disabilities must be included in general state and district-wide assessment with appropriate accommodations or alternate assessments as specified in their IEPs (20 U.S.C. § 1412(a)(16); 34 C.F.R. § 300.160(a)). Best practice suggests that assessment accommodations align with the accommodations and supports that a student receives during instruction. There is a danger that overly restrictive assessment policies may have an adverse impact on instructional decisions made by IEP teams, including the provision of AEM and other accommodations. It is, therefore, important for IEP teams to be cognizant of the relationship between assessment and student use of AEM in teaching and learning environments to ensure consistency across settings.

When selecting the assessment accommodations that will be provided to a student, it is important for IEP teams to review accommodations frequently used during instruction that enable the student to demonstrate and express knowledge on a daily basis. Although all of those accommodations may not be allowable in statewide assessment, assessment accommodations should, to the greatest extent possible, mirror accommodations frequently used during instruction and learning.

Because so much rests on the outcomes of large-scale assessment, there may be a tendency in some places to restrict the accommodations used during instruction to the accommodations that are allowable in large-scale assessment. Such limitations should

be avoided because they can constrain a student’s opportunity to learn, develop greater independence, and show what they know and are able to do. Such limitations may undermine the provision of FAPE to a student.

Table 6 presents the related legal requirements and some suggestions for how AEM might be considered in participation in statewide assessment.

**Table 6. Participation in Statewide Assessment & AEM Considerations**

<b>Requirements in IDEA</b>	<b>AEM Considerations</b>
<p>The IEP must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include a statement of individual, appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the child on state and district-wide assessments.</li> <li>• If the team determines that the student needs to take an alternate assessment, state why the student cannot participate in the regular assessment and why the particular alternate assessment selected is appropriate.</li> </ul> <p>20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(VI); 34 C.F.R. § 300.320(a)(6)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What accommodations are needed in state and district-wide assessment for a student who uses AEM and AT?</li> <li>• To what extent do these accommodations relate to the AEM and AT that the student uses in daily instruction?</li> </ul>

**Example of IEP Statement for Participation in Statewide Assessments**

Consistent with the accommodations that Tiffany is using in teaching and learning environments, she will receive the following accommodations on statewide assessment:

Read aloud: Simultaneous visual and auditory access to text through the independent use of text to speech for all allowable parts of the assessment.

Scribe: Text input through independent use of word prediction software for allowable parts of the assessment.

## Postsecondary Goals and Transition Services

The transition planning process that begins when a student turns 16 (or earlier, if determined appropriate by their IEP team or required by state law), allows the IEP team to develop measurable postsecondary goals and transition services to be included in the student's IEP. The Summary of Performance (SOP) provides the student with a summary of their academic achievement and functional performance and includes recommendations as to how the student can be assisted in meeting their postsecondary goals.

It is important to consider AEM during the transition planning process. When students with disabilities exit special education, they are no longer entitled to services under IDEA. As a result, they have to be able to advocate on their own behalf in other settings, including postsecondary education and the workplace. At the postsecondary level, students with disabilities must be able to communicate information about the nature of their disability in order to request particular aids or services. Therefore, as part of the transition planning process, the team should make it a priority to help the student understand their own disability in relation to the need for AEM and supporting technology.

It is critical to build students' self-determination skills so that they can advocate for their needs throughout their lives. AEM and accessible technologies may need to be explicitly included in the transition planning process. Without this direct focus and the student's ability to advocate effectively, there is a good possibility that the use of AEM will be overlooked in postsecondary environments.

For an example of the importance of self-determination skills and independence for students related to their use of AEM, see the video, [Getting to Know Juna](#). Explore the story of Juna Gjata, a student who has a visual impairment, and learn how she—with the help of supportive teachers, AEM, and AT—has been able to excel academically.

Table 7 presents the related legal requirements and some suggestions for how AEM might be considered in postsecondary goals and transition services.



**Table 7. Postsecondary Goals and Transition Services & AEM Considerations**

Requirements in IDEA	AEM Considerations
<p>The IEP must include a statement of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals based on age-appropriate transition assessments.</li> <li>• Transition services (including courses of study) needed to assist the student in reaching their goals.</li> </ul> <p>20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(VIII); 34 C.F.R. § 300.320(b)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The LEA must develop a Summary of Performance (SOP) of the student’s academic achievement and functional performance, including recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting postsecondary goals.</li> </ul> <p>20 U.S.C. § 1414(c)(5)(B)(ii); 34 C.F.R. § 300.305(e)(3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What opportunities and supports will be provided for the student to develop self-determination skills needed to advocate for their own needs in relation to AEM?</li> <li>• What supports will be provided to help the student plan for the use of AEM and related technologies in postsecondary environments?</li> </ul>

**Example of IEP Statement for Transition Planning Goals**

Tiffany will learn to advocate on her own behalf in determining when she needs to use an accessible format and what technology works best for her in different contexts with different materials.

Tiffany will build the self-determination skills needed to advocate for her needs in postsecondary environments by leading discussions during IEP development.

## **Conclusion**

There is no specific requirement regarding the exact location where the use of AEM and related technologies are to be included in an IEP. When AEM is explicitly incorporated into a student's IEP, however, the likelihood is increased that the student's use of AEM will become an effective and integrated part of the learning process in K-12 and beyond. This guide has highlighted several components in the IEP in which it would be appropriate to refer to a student's use of AEM. Clarity and consistency are enhanced when SEAs and LEAs provide guidance to IEP teams on the various ways in which student use of AEM can be included in an IEP document.