

Department of Education
AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND
Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Request

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AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

For carrying out the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind of March 3, 1879,
\$37,431,000. (*Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2021.*)

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Appropriation, Adjustments, and Transfers
(dollars in thousands)

Appropriation/Adjustments/Transfers	2020	2021	2022
Discretionary:			
Appropriation	<u>\$32,431</u>	<u>\$34,431</u>	<u>\$37,431</u>
Total, discretionary appropriation	32,431	34,431	37,431

ACCOUNT

Summary of Changes
(dollars in thousands)

2021	\$34,431
2022	<u>37,431</u>
Net change	+3,000

Increases:	<u>2021 base</u>	<u>Change from base</u>
<u>Program:</u>		
Increase funding for the American Printing House for the Blind to produce and distribute educational materials adapted for students who are legally blind and enrolled in formal educational programs below the college level.	\$34,431	<u>+\$3,000</u>
Subtotal, increases		+3,000
Net change		+3,000

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Authorizing Legislation
(dollars in thousands)

Activity	2021 Authorized	2021 Estimate	2022 Authorized	2022 Request
The Act to Promote the Education of the Blind (20 U.S. C. 101 et. seq.).....	<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>\$34,431</u>	<u>Indefinite</u>	<u>\$37,431</u>
Total annual appropriation.....		34,431		37,431

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Appropriations History (dollars in thousands)

Year	Budget Estimate to Congress	House Allowance	Senate Allowance	Appropriation
2013	\$24,505	\$24,505 ¹	\$24,508 ¹	\$23,223
2014	24,505	N/A ²	24,456 ³	24,456
2015	24,456	N/A ²	25,000 ³	24,931
2016	24,931	25,431 ⁴	24,931 ⁴	25,431
2017	25,431	25,431 ⁵	25,431 ⁵	25,431
2018	25,383	26,431 ⁶	25,431 ⁶	27,431 ⁶
2019	25,431	28,431 ⁷	30,431 ⁷	30,431 ⁷
2020	25,431	39,000	31,931 ⁸	32,431 ⁸
2021	32,431	32,931	34,431 ⁹	34,431 ⁹
2022	37,431			

¹ The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2013 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 112th Congress only through the House Subcommittee and the Senate Committee.

² The House allowance is shown as N/A because there was no Subcommittee action.

³ The level for the Senate allowance reflects Senate Subcommittee action only.

⁴ The levels for House and Senate allowances reflect action on the regular annual 2016 appropriations bill, which proceeded in the 114th Congress only through the House Committee and Senate Committee.

⁵ The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect Committee action on the regular annual 2017 appropriations bill.

⁶ The level for the House allowance reflects floor action on the Omnibus appropriations bill; the Senate allowance reflects Committee action on the regular annual 2018 appropriations bill; the Appropriation reflects the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018 (P.L. 115-141).

⁷ The levels for the House and Senate allowances reflect Committee action on the regular annual 2019 appropriations bill; the Appropriation reflects enactment of the Department of Defense and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Act, 2019 (P.L. 115-245).

⁸ The Senate allowance reflects the Chairman's mark; the Appropriation reflects the Further Consolidated Appropriation Act, 2020 (P.L. 116-94).

⁹ The level for the Senate Allowance reflects the Chairman's mark; the Appropriation reflects Division H of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (P.L. 116-260).

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American Printing House for the Blind

(Act to Promote the Education of the Blind (20 U.S.C. 101 et seq.))

(dollars in thousands)

FY 2022 Authorization: Indefinite

Budget Authority:

<u>2021</u> <u>Appropriation</u>	<u>2022</u> <u>Request</u>	<u>Change from</u> <u>2021 to 2022</u>
\$34,431	\$37,431	+\$3,000

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Act to Promote the Education of the Blind authorizes an annual appropriation for the American Printing House (APH) for the Blind to produce and distribute educational materials adapted for students who are legally blind and enrolled in formal educational programs below the college level. The APH, located in Louisville, Kentucky, has received Federal support under this Act since 1879. Materials produced by APH include textbooks in braille and large type, educational tools such as braille typewriters and computer software and hardware, teaching aides, including tests and performance assessments, and other specialized supplies. State educational agencies and programs serving persons who are blind may order materials free of charge up to the amount of funds allocated to each State for educational materials. Approximately 70 percent of the appropriation is used to cover the cost of producing these educational materials. The APH uses the remainder of the appropriated funds to conduct research and to provide outreach services to professional and consumer organizations.

The APH conducts research necessary to develop and improve educational materials in core curriculum areas such as science, mathematics, English language arts, and social studies and adapts testing materials related to these subject areas. APH also conducts research in product areas related to the unique needs of the visually impaired population, such as braille reading, orientation and mobility, and assistive technology. In addition, APH produces special materials in areas such as early intervention and early childhood education, prevocational training, and the functional use of residual vision.

Outreach services provided by the APH include: administration of the Student Registration System, the Louis Database of Accessible Materials, and the Electronic File Repository and Expert Database; National Instructional Partnership activities; and the production of catalogs, brochures, videos, and a wide variety of web-based information. APH also convenes expert advisory committees and focus groups to address specific issues, as necessary.

APH materials are reviewed by a six-member Educational Products Advisory Committee charged with ensuring that all educational materials produced and research undertaken by APH effectively focus on meeting the needs of students who are blind. In addition, a five-member Educational Services Advisory Committee provides oversight and accountability regarding

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APH's outreach and support services. Both committees are composed of ex officio trustees who are the State officials responsible for administering APH accounts.

APH materials are distributed to programs serving blind students through allotments of funds to the States. These allotments are based on an annual census (conducted by APH) of the number of legally blind students located in each State and are provided in the form of credits, which trustees use to order materials from APH. These materials are also available for purchase by the trustees and the general public at <http://shop.aph.org>.

Materials provided through the APH appropriation supplement the various other resources available to the States. For example, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires States to provide a free appropriate public education, including appropriate related materials and supplies, to all students with disabilities. In order to meet their responsibilities under the IDEA, many States make additional purchases from APH and other suppliers of materials for students who are visually impaired.

In fiscal year 2020, Federal funding provided through the APH appropriation represented 76 percent of APH's total actual revenue of approximately \$42.4 million. Federal grants and contracts from agencies such as the National Library Service for the Blind and Veterans Administration represented another 6 percent. The remaining 18 percent of APH's revenue came from nongovernmental contracts and revenue generated from the sale of unsubsidized products to State and local agencies, direct sales to individuals who are blind, private sector contract sales, corporate and individual donations from the private sector, and interest income from endowments and other investments.

Funding levels for the past 5 fiscal years were:

Fiscal Year	(dollars in thousands)
2017	\$25,431
2018	27,431
2019	30,431
2020	32,431
2021	34,431

FY 2022 BUDGET REQUEST

For fiscal year 2022, the Administration requests \$37.4 million for the American Printing House (APH) for the Blind, \$3 million more than the fiscal year 2021 appropriation. The request would provide substantial resources to support services in each of the three program areas—educational materials, outreach services, and research. The largest proportion of the increase will be used to support the Federal quota, increasing direct support for students by approximately 10 percent over fiscal year 2020, which is the most current year for which APH has final numbers.

Educational Materials: The request includes \$26 million for educational materials, or an estimated \$448 per eligible student, leading to an increase in direct support for eligible students. APH provides adapted and specially designed educational materials including textbooks in braille and large type, tangible teaching devices, educational tests, and special instructional aids, tools, and other materials essential for the education of students who are blind. APH

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manufactures these instructional materials for a broad range of academic subjects and grade levels. In fiscal year 2020, approximately 800 educational products were available for purchase with Federal Quota funds. The Federal Quota consists of funds from the APH appropriation (about 70 percent of available funds) in the form of credits that are allocated to States on the basis of the annual census of blind students in each State. APH intends to continue focusing its product catalog on products that are consistently in high demand, unique, and supported with strong educational programming. This ensures the most efficient use of available support.

The timely delivery of textbooks in accessible media formats for braille-reading students is crucial to ensuring that children who are visually impaired have the same access to a free appropriate public education as children without disabilities. In order to address this need, each year APH produces thousands of braille and large print textbooks on demand, including instructional materials featuring tactile graphics, which are essential for teaching subjects such as geography and geometry. APH issues industry standards for tactile graphics, manufactures and distributes graphics to students across the country, and maintains a Tactile Graphic Image Library in order to increase the variety and lower the cost of pictures and graphics included in accessible educational materials. The funds requested for educational materials support APH's production of teaching modules and associated instructional materials in these subjects.

Outreach Services: The request includes \$2.3 million for a variety of activities that support the administration of the educational materials program, including the annual census of students who are blind and visually impaired; the annual meeting of the ex officio trustees; advisory group panels; printing and distribution of catalogs of available materials; and field services such as consultation, in-service training, webinars, and workshops. Other funded activities include the provision of ongoing consumer information and technical support to customers, as well as support and information to staff and teachers at schools around the country.

The APH website (www.aph.org) offers many features that support the Act, including: information on ordering accessible textbooks and tests; demonstration copies of APH software; downloadable catalogs and newsletters; information on training events; archived webcasts on products and services; product videos; online surveys; and educational content web pages. The informational website serves as a gateway to online services such as the Louis Database, the APH File Repository, and the Accessible Media Producers Database. The informational site content continues to grow each month as more information and features are added.

Research and Product Development: The request includes \$6.1 million for research and product development focused on innovative educational products for students who are visually impaired. APH engages in developmental and applied research in the following areas: adult life, braille, early childhood, educational games and toys, low vision, mathematics, microcomputer applications, multiple disabilities, science, social skills and emotional growth, tactile graphics, accessible tests, orientation and mobility, cortical vision impairment, literacy, and transition.

Product development activities planned for fiscal year 2022 are categorized into 14 content areas: Adult Life, Braille, Core Curriculum, Cortical Visual Impairment, Early Childhood, Emergent Literacy, Low Vision, Multiple Disabilities, Physical Education, Art, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), Tactile Graphics, Technology, and Tests and Assessments.

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The request will provide funds for APH to conduct over 350 research projects, including the development of new products for use with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who are visually impaired. Projects are also expected to produce materials for students who are visually impaired with secondary disabilities, equipment to assist students with low vision, materials for braille literacy, classroom learning aids, tactile graphics, and tools to aid in the transition from school to postsecondary educational or job settings.

The request also includes funding for APH's Accessible Tests Department initiative. The overall goal of the Accessible Tests Department is to provide timely delivery of: test materials in high quality accessible media; reviews of test items; text-based alt-tags and scripts of graphical information and mathematical/scientific equations, formulas, and symbols; and guidelines and recommendations of the most promising practices for accessible test production and assessment.

Regional Partnerships: The request includes \$3 million to continue and expand the regional partnership with the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind (AIDB) Center for Assistive Technology Training (CATT) established in early 2019 at \$1 million. The CATT is a regional partnership focused on providing students with vision loss, as well as those that work with students with vision loss, training on how to use current and evolving technology. AIDB employs trainers to work in nine Southeastern states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee). These trainers, appropriately certified in the use of the technology, work with and travel to educational programs and agencies throughout the region to model for and provide training on assistive technology to the following audiences: students with vision loss; educators working with students with vision loss; local system assistive technology specialists/IT specialists; and families and caregivers of students with hearing loss.

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PROGRAM OUTPUT MEASURES

(dollars in thousands)

Output Measures

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Distribution of funding:			
Educational materials	\$23,193	\$23,731	\$26,000
Outreach services	\$1,654	\$2,100	\$2,300
Educational and technical research	\$5,584	\$5,600	\$6,131
Regional Partnerships	<u>\$2,000</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>	<u>\$3,000</u>
 Total	 \$32,431	 \$34,431	 \$37,431
Number of eligible students	56,866	57,434	58,008
Average per student allotment (whole dollars)	\$408	\$413	\$448
 Number of services and products provided:			
Products available with Federal funds	800	700	600
Advisory committee meetings	8	5	9
State educational agencies visited	0	12	13
Residential programs visited	3	10	11
Rehabilitation programs visited	0	12	13
In-service training programs and webcasts	40	50	65
Product training presentations and exhibits	130	130	145
Visits to Ex Officio Trustees	75	75	85
Total employees (full-time equiv.)	315	315	315

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Performance Measures

This section presents selected program performance information, including, for example, GPRA goals, objectives, measures, and performance targets and data. Achievement of program results is based on the cumulative effect of the resources provided in previous years, and those requested in fiscal year 2022 and future years, as well as the resources and efforts invested by those served by this program. The Department will be reviewing GPRA program performance goals, objectives, and measures for APH for possible revision in future years to ensure alignment with Administration policy.

Goal: Pre-college level blind students will receive appropriate educational materials that result in improved educational outcomes.

Objective: *Appropriate, timely, high-quality educational materials are provided to pre-college level blind students to allow them to benefit more fully from their educational programs.*

Measure: From an unrepresentative sample of American Printing House for the Blind trustees, advisory committee members, consumers, and teachers, the percentage who agree that the educational materials provided through the Act are appropriate, timely, and high-quality.

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Trustees - Percentage who agree:

Year	Target	Actual: Extremely, Mostly, or Somewhat	Extremely Satisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not too Satisfied	Not at all Satisfied
2017	98%	100%	67%	32%	1%	0	0
2018	98	97	57	33	7	3%	0
2019	98	97	44	42	11	1	1%
2020	98	98	56	35	7	2	0
2021	98						
2022	98						

Advisory Committee Members - Percentage who agree:

Year	Target	Actual: Extremely, Mostly, or Somewhat	Extremely Satisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not too Satisfied	Not at all Satisfied
2017	100%	100%	71%	29%	0	0	0
2018	100	95	52	29	14%	5%	0
2019	100	100	42	33	25	0	0
2020	100	96	54	34	7	4	0
2021	100						
2022	100						

Consumers - Percentage who agree:

Year	Target	Actual: Extremely, Mostly, or Somewhat	Extremely Satisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not too Satisfied	Not at all Satisfied
2017	96%	98%	59%	34%	5%	2%	1%
2018	96	98	58	35	5	2	1
2019	96	98	54	36	8	2	0
2020	96	96	54	37	5	3	0
2021	96						
2022	96						

Note: Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

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Teachers - Percentage who agree:

Year	Target	Actual: Extremely, Mostly, or Somewhat	Extremely Satisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Not too Satisfied	Not at all Satisfied
2017	97%	99%	59%	34%	5%	1%	0
2018	97	96	48	41	8	3	1%
2019	97	96	47	39	11	3	1
2020	97	98	57	36	4	2	0
2021	97						
2022	97						

Note: Detail may not add to totals due to rounding.

Additional Information: In 2020, data was collected using a survey instrument designed to measure the levels of consumer satisfaction specified in the objective. The actual data reflect the percentage of respondents who were extremely satisfied, mostly satisfied, or somewhat satisfied that the educational materials provided through the Act are appropriate, timely, and high-quality. There were 410 valid respondents to the 2020 survey, a similar number of respondents to the 2019 survey (421). For 2020, the subsets of total respondents are: (1) 66 Ex Officio Trustees, (2) 10 advisory committee members; (3) 98 other consumers; and (4) 236 teachers. The response rate for Ex Officio Trustees was 50 percent.

Objective: *To improve the quality of APH research and product usefulness.*

Measure: The percentage of APH product sales revenue that is from new products.

Year	Target	Actual
2017	22%	17%
2018	22	29
2019	22	32
2020	22	29
2021	22	
2022	22	

Additional Information: This measure was developed to help determine the efficacy of new products developed by APH. The intent of this measure is to maintain a minimum percentage of sales of new products, as an indication that consumers are responding to and buying new products developed by APH. For fiscal year 2020, a total of \$6.8 million of new products (defined as products introduced in fiscal years 2018 and 2019) were sold. Total product sales for fiscal year 2020 was \$23.6 million.

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Measure: The average rating, according to approved criteria on relevance, for a sample of new American Printing House for the Blind products evaluated by an independent panel of qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise related to the target audience.

Year	Target	Actual
2017	4.0	6.1
2018	4.0	6.2
2019	4.0	6.2
2020	4.0	6.3
2021	4.0	
2022	4.0	

Additional Information: To determine the average relevance rating, a panel of experts, who are proposed by APH and approved by the Department, reviews a sample of new products developed by APH to assess whether the products: (1) address the needs of individuals who meet the definition of blind or visually impaired; (2) address the needs of blind or visually impaired individuals of any age included in an education or rehabilitation program; and (3) are fully accessible for the intended population. The products are rated using a 7-point rating scale, where 1 equals “no evidence is given to demonstrate that the criteria are being addressed,” 4 equals “evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that the criteria are met,” and 7 equals “evidence from multiple sources is of extremely high quality and demonstrates that the criteria are being met.”

Measure: The average rating, according to approved criteria on quality of research, for a sample of new American Printing House for the Blind products evaluated by an independent panel of qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise related to the target audience.

Year	Target	Actual
2017	4.0	6.1
2018	4.0	6.1
2019	4.0	5.9
2020	4.0	6.0
2021	4.0	
2022	4.0	

Additional Information: The panel of experts annually reviews the underlying research related to a sample of new products developed each year by APH to assess whether data were gathered: (1) through an appropriate method; (2) from a geographically diverse U.S. population; (3) from appropriately qualified individuals (e.g., individuals who possess appropriate qualifications or appropriate learner characteristics); and (4) from an adequate number of sources. The products are rated using a 7-point rating scale, where 1 equals “no evidence is given to demonstrate that the criteria are being addressed,” 4 equals “evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that the criteria are met,” and 7 equals “evidence from multiple sources is of extremely high quality and demonstrates that the criteria are being met.”

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Measure: The average rating, according to approved criteria on utility, for a sample of new American Printing House for the Blind products evaluated by an independent panel of qualified experts or individuals with appropriate expertise related to the target audience.

Year	Target	Actual
2017	4.0	6.2
2018	4.0	6.1
2019	4.0	6.1
2020	4.0	6.3
2021	4.0	
2022	4.0	

Additional Information: For this measure, the panel of experts annually reviews a purposefully selected sample of new products developed each year by APH to assess whether: (1) sales of the new products indicate demand; (2) new product indicators, such as field evaluations and other feedback, substantiate that the new product is meeting a need; and (3) the products are considered highly useful for individuals with visual impairments. The ten products are rated using a 7-point rating scale, where 1 equals “no evidence is given to demonstrate that the criteria are being addressed,” 4 equals “evidence is sufficient to demonstrate that the criteria are met,” and 7 equals “evidence from multiple sources is of extremely high quality and demonstrates that the criteria are being met.”

Efficiency Measures

Measure: The cost per page to produce color large type textbooks.

Year	Target	Actual
2017	\$0.10	\$0.09
2018	0.10	0.09
2019	0.10	0.08
2020	0.10	0.11
2021	0.10	
2022	0.10	

Additional Information: In fiscal year 2020, the total cost to produce color large type textbooks increased by 3.1 cents from 8.1 cents to 11.2 cents per page, which was unfavorable to the target of 10 cents per page. This increase in cost is directly tied to a 34 percent decrease in demand. Despite this most recent annual decrease in demand, APH believes it can continue to manage production costs, holding costs close to 10 cents per page in future years.

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Measure: The cost per page to produce braille textbooks.

Year	Target	Actual
2017	\$0.15	\$0.22
2018	0.15	0.27
2019	0.15	0.27
2020	0.15	0.35
2021	0.26	
2022	0.26	

Additional Information: In fiscal year 2020, the total cost to produce braille textbooks increased to 35 cents per page, which was unfavorable to the current target of 15 cents per page. While COVID-19 led to a substantial decrease in the volume of orders, APH has not met the established target four of the last five years. Due to a consistent decrease in demand since 2017, the Department will reset the target for this measure to 26 cents per page, reflecting the three year running average for fiscal years 2017 to 2019.