

I am very concerned that the FCC might grant an exception to the requirement that e-readers must be accessible to individuals with disabilities as specified within the Advanced Communications Services (ACS). Exceptions to the ACS have been requested by Sony, Amazon and other manufacturers of e-readers.

There is partial validity to these manufacturers' claims that blind individuals may have other alternatives to e-readers when they are reading books for personal entertainment. However, I believe very strongly that if e-readers are used within public schools or other educational facilities, they must not exclude blind students because these blind students would suffer a tremendous additional obstacle which would prevent them from learning along with sighted students.

I offer two potential solutions:

1. If e-readers are not accessible to the blind, then they should NOT be permitted to sell them to schools or colleges for educational use.
2. Despite the claims of these manufacturers, I believe that the cost of making an e-reader accessible to the blind (including those who have learning disabilities or are dyslexic) is not only very low, the added capability of audio navigation and playback has also been found to be helpful by many folks that are sighted.