

## Justice Dept. settles Kindle-on-campus cases

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(AP) -- Three universities testing Amazon's Kindle in the classroom have agreed to shelve the electronic book readers until they are fully functional for blind students, under a deal struck Wednesday with the Justice Department.

The legal settlements were made with Pace University in New York, Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, and Reed College in Portland, Ore.

Two organizations representing the blind had sued after universities announced a pilot program to use the [Kindle](#) in classrooms.

Officials say the version of the Kindle being used in the pilot program has a text-to-speech function, but the device's menu does not, so it is impossible for blind students to navigate through different electronic books or within an electronic book.

The agreement takes effect as soon as the spring semester ends - giving the schools time to finish the pilot project with the Kindles, but preventing them from continuing or expanding their use until the blind and visually impaired can use them as easily as students who can see.

The agreement covers other similar [electronic book](#) readers, including those made by Sony and [bookseller](#) Barnes & Noble.

"Advancing technology is systematically changing the way universities approach education, but we must be sure that emerging technologies

offer individuals with disabilities the same opportunities as other students," Assistant Attorney General Thomas Perez said in a statement. "These agreements underscore the importance of full and equal educational opportunities for everyone."

The Justice Department's civil rights division began examining the issue to see if the use of Kindles or other e-readers violated the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The announcement of the settlement comes two days after a similar deal was struck with Arizona State University.

Last June, the National Federation of the Blind and the American Council of the Blind joined a blind ASU student in suing Arizona State, alleging that the Kindle's inaccessibility to blind students constituted a violation of federal law.

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