

**Guidelines for Programs Serving Students
With Visual Impairments
2014 Revised Edition**



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Introduction

Why Update the Guidelines

These guidelines are developed in response to a mandate in the California Education Code *EC 56136 - Guidelines for Low Incidence Disability Areas*

56136. The superintendent shall develop guidelines for each low incidence disability area and provide technical assistance to parents, teachers, and administrators regarding the implementation of the guidelines. The guidelines shall clarify the identification, assessment, planning of, and the provision of, specialized services to pupils with low incidence disabilities. The superintendent shall consider the guidelines when monitoring programs serving pupils with low incidence disabilities pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 56836.04. The adopted guidelines shall be promulgated for the purpose of establishing recommended guidelines and shall not operate to impose minimum state requirements.

Since the last update of the guidelines in 1997, many important changes have occurred in laws and regulations related to the education of students with visual impairments. Some of the changes have occurred due to both the reauthorizations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 2004 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which was reauthorized in 2002 and was named No Child Left Behind (NCLB). Additionally, laws related to assistive technology have been passed since the last update of the guidelines. Equally important was the adoption of the Braille Reading and Math Standards by the State Board of Education in 2006.

Process for updating the Guidelines

In order to ensure that the updates to the guidelines include all important aspects of education for students with visual impairments, the California Department of Education (CDE) called together two workgroups in 2010. The committees, composed of teachers of students with visual impairments administrators, parents, professors from higher education, paraprofessionals, and representatives from consumer organizations of the blind, provided initial input to CDE toward updating the Guidelines. In 2013 two new workgroups were convened with similar representation. A list of individuals who served on the committees is included at the end of the introduction.

Committees were able to provide input in face to face meetings as well as virtual input. In addition to the committee meetings, presentations about the updates related to the guidelines were provided via a Webinar and a Power point presentation on the CDE Web site. Also, presentations were given at the annual conference of the California Transcribers and Educators of the Blind and Visually Impaired and in regional workshops in Northern and Southern California to obtain feedback from educators, program administrators, and families. In addition, initial presentations were made at the

state convention of the National Federation of the Blind of California.

The committees and the presentations focused on both content and format of the guidelines. Each group was asked to focus on the question: “What needs to be added to the guidelines and what needs to be deleted from the Guidelines that will ensure they provide teachers, families, administrators and students with the most up-to-date information about the education of students with visual impairments?” The updated guidelines represent the work from the committees and input from the presentations as they answered this question.

Purpose of the Guidelines

The guidelines have been developed as a resource for families, staff, and administrators in assessing, identifying, planning, providing, evaluating, and improving the quality and cost effectiveness of programs serving students with visual impairments. These guidelines serve to:

- Clarify the processes for the identification, assessment, planning, and provision of instruction and services to meet the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments, including students with visual impairments and additional disabilities.
- Provide information that will assist families, staff, and administrators in evaluating, improving, and maintaining quality programs.
- Provide criteria for the self-review and monitoring of programs serving students with visual impairments.

In previous guidelines standards were discussed that were established to serve as a model framework of expectations for the identification, assessment, planning, evaluation, improvement, and provision of instruction and services to students with visual impairments. However, due to the increased use of the term standards in various aspects of education, the committee members felt that the content of the chapters should be approached in a different format. Therefore, the reference to standards will not appear in the chapters.

This document contains guidelines to assist local programs in meeting the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments, including students with visual impairments and additional disabilities and is not intended to impose additional mandates beyond those already existing in the state and federal laws or regulations.

Scope of the Guidelines

These guidelines focus on the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments. Unique educational needs for students with visual impairments are delineated by a specialized curriculum. While students with visual impairments require instruction in all areas of the California Common Core Curriculum (Reading, Language

Arts, Science, Social Studies), they also need specialized instruction in the Expanded Core Curriculum (Hatlen, 1996). This curriculum includes nine areas of curriculum content that all teachers of students with visual impairments (TVI) are responsible for assessing and teaching. The nine areas include:

- Compensatory Skills (Braille instruction, listening skills, study & organization skills, abacus) & Functional Academics
- Orientation & Mobility
- Social Interaction Skills
- Independent Living Skills
- Recreation & Leisure Skills
- Career Education
- Use of Assistive Technology
- Sensory Efficiency Skills
- Self-Determination

Each of these content areas will be described in greater detail in Chapter 1 of this document.

All instruction and services provided to students with visual impairments must be planned and coordinated to meet their needs and strengths. Close cooperation and coordination among all agencies, programs, and individuals assessing and providing instruction and services are the keys to meeting these needs successfully and to improving local programs. In order for these services to be delivered to students in a quality manner, they must be provided by a credentialed TVIs and a certified Orientation & Mobility specialist.

Since 1997 the diversity and complexity of students with visual impairments has increased. TVIs are being asked to serve students with multiple disabilities, students who are English Learners (EL), infant and preschool-age students, and students who are transitioning from school to adult life. Sections will be included in these guidelines that address the needs of these groups.

These guidelines will also include a section on some aspects of the common core curriculum. Because of the adoption of the common core state standards that have been established for each grade level, it is important for teachers to understand how these standards and standardized testing are interrelated. According to No Child Left Behind, all students must participate in some aspect of state standardized testing. In California starting in 2015, all students including those with visual impairments will be

involved in state testing using Smarter Balanced. All state testing will be provided via computer adaptive testing (CAT).

Use of the Guidelines

This document was designed to be used in three major ways:

First, the use of these guidelines can help families, staff members, and administrators to improve their effectiveness in understanding and meeting the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments.

Second, these guidelines can serve as a tool for improving the effectiveness of programs in meeting the needs of students with visual impairments and in making maximum use of available resources. The Guidelines provided a Program Self-Review (See Appendix A). Throughout the Guidelines the reader will see questions that relate back to the Program Self-Review document. These questions provide a way for local educational agencies (LEAs) and special education local plan areas (SELPAs) to evaluate the effectiveness of programs for students with visual impairments.

Third, these guidelines provide references for information and resources to assist parents, staff members, and administrators in improving both individual and program effectiveness. The guidelines and the appendixes can be used for:

- Obtaining basic information and suggestions regarding the identification, assessment, and provision of instruction and services to students with visual impairments
- Reviewing pertinent legal requirements (See Appendix F)
- Identifying sources of funding and materials and equipment (See Appendix E)
- Using local, state, and national resources (See Appendix G)

At the end of each chapter there will be information specifically for families. This information reviews the chapter content in a family friendly manner.

Content of the Appendices

Appendixes A through H and the glossary provide additional information and sources of assistance for the reader.

Appendix A, “Self-Review Guide”, can assist parents, staff, and administrators in evaluating and improving the effectiveness of local programs in meeting the unique curricular and instructional content presented in these chapters. The “Self-Review Guide” can be used to:

- Conduct an internal or external review of the program.
- Identify areas and establish goals for program improvement.
- Identify possible topics for local evaluation studies.
- Identify needs for technical assistance.

Appendix B, “Assessing Vision/Low Vision”, contains examples of widely used functional Vision Assessments (FVAs) and links to additional resources.

Appendix C, “Determining the Appropriate Learning Medium”, contains examples of Learning Media Assessments and links to additional resources.

Appendix D contains information about the California School for the Blind in Fremont, including the referral and admissions procedures, residential policy, and assessment program.

Appendix E, “Specialized Books, Materials, and Equipment”, discusses where to find funding for specialized books, materials, and equipment and sources for obtaining them. Information on the American Printing House for the Blind Federal Quota Program is also provided.

Appendix F, “Legal Requirements”, contains pertinent sections from the *Education Code* and from *California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education* that apply to the content of this publication. The purpose of this appendix is to give readers an opportunity to review important legal requirements that relate to the education of visually impaired students.

Appendix G, “Resources for Technical Assistance”, lists addresses and telephone numbers from the California Department of Education and other resources in California and nationwide.

Appendix H, “The Early Start Program”, presents information on legislation that created the Early Start Program in California; Early Start intervention services and individualized family service plans; 14 basic elements of Part H of IDEA and California’s Early Start Program; and key points for addressing the unique needs of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with visual impairments. The glossary contains definitions for terminology used in identifying visual impairments and in educating students with visual impairments;

these terms may be unfamiliar to some readers of this publication.

Appendix I, “A Brief Overview of Cerebral Visual Impairment (CVI)” provides a discussion of the impact of a CVI on learning ability.

Chapter One

Identifying and Assessing Unique Educational Needs

This chapter contains information about the eligibility of students with visual impairments for special education, a discussion of the identification of these students and assessment of their educational needs. Descriptions of the requirements for assessment personnel and of the variables that affect the unique educational needs of students who are visually impaired also appear here (see Appendix F for legal requirements).

Eligibility for Special Education

To be eligible for special education, “a pupil has a visual impairment which, even with correction, adversely affects a pupil’s educational performance.” (*California Code of Regulations*, Title 5, *Education* Section 3030(d)).- When an assessment of a student with a visual impairment determines that he or she has educational needs that cannot be met without special education and related services, this student is provided with instruction, specialized services, and materials and equipment in accordance with his or her individualized education program (IEP). (See Appendix H for eligibility requirements for infants and preschool children, ages zero to five.) The term *visually impaired* includes, for educational purposes:

- Functionally blind students (who because of the severity of their visual impairment rely basically on senses other than vision as their major channels for learning)
- Low vision students (who use vision as a major channel for learning)

Definition of Neurological Visual Impairment

The definition of students with visual impairments includes students with neurological visual impairments who are functionally blind or who have low vision, even with best correction. This qualifies them to receive services from a teacher of students with visual impairment. Many students who have neurologically based visual impairments have visual perceptual and/or visual motor dysfunction.

A visual impairment does not include visual perceptual or visual motor dysfunction resulting solely from a learning disability; students who have visual perceptual or visual motor dysfunction resulting solely from a learning disability do not meet the eligibility criteria for “visual impairment” or “low incidence disability” and are therefore not eligible for vision services or low incidence funding for specialized support services, books, materials, and equipment available to a student with a low incidence disability. (Please

see Appendix I for additional information related to strategies to support students with Neurological Visual Impairment [CVI].)
(See Appendix F for legal requirements.)

Identification of Students with Visual Impairments

How does the program ensure that students with visual impairments who may require special education are referred (including referrals from the vision screening program)?

Identifying a student's visual problems at an early age is important. Local procedures to locate and refer individuals suspected of having a visual impairment include the following:

- Coordination with the vision screening program (See Appendix G, "Resources for Technical Assistance.")
- Activities to inform staff members and parents of behaviors that may indicate a visual impairment.
- Coordination with local eye specialists and other possible referral sources, such as regional centers and infant and preschool programs.

Variables Affecting Educational Needs

How does the program's staff consider the variables that affect students' unique educational needs when students with visual impairments are being assessed?

When assessing the unique educational needs for each student and providing instruction and services, one must consider the variables that influence individual needs. These include but are not limited to:

- Congenital or adventitious visual impairments
- Students with visual impairments who have additional disabilities
- Infants and preschool children
- Elementary school and secondary school students
- The nature of the student's visual impairment

- Students who are functionally blind or have low vision
- Students with other special needs

Each of these topics is discussed in the section that follows.

Congenital or Adventitious Visual Impairments

The terms *congenital* and *adventitious* identify the time of onset of a visual impairment. A congenitally visually impaired student has had a visual impairment since birth or early infancy and generally has difficulty with concepts and skills that are visual in nature. An adventitiously visually impaired student has a visual impairment that was acquired after birth or early infancy; the student usually already has some visual concepts and skills, depending on the age when the onset of the visual impairment occurred. This student may need to integrate and acquire new visual concepts and may have needs relating to his or her adjustment to the visual impairment.

Students with Visual Impairments who have Additional Disabilities

The assessment of students with visual impairments who have additional disabilities requires systematic observation and an understanding of the implications of the additional disabilities on growth, development, and learning. An awareness of age-appropriate developmental and educational expectations is critical for identifying and assessing unique educational needs.

When a student with a visual impairment has other known or suspected disabilities, it is important to understand and *keep in perspective* several variables. These variables will influence the interpretation of assessment results; the determination of necessary instructional strategies, goals or objectives, or both; and the recommendations to the educational team for appropriate educational placement and related services. Variables to be considered include but are not limited to:

- The nature and extent of other disabilities (sensory, cognitive, physical, health, or behavioral) and the manner in which each one, individually or in combination, has an adverse developmental/educational impact.
- The fact that the visual impairment may not correctly account for, or completely explain, the present levels of developmental and/or educational functioning observed.
- The learning rate and learning style that reflect other known or suspected disabilities.
- Special assistive materials, devices, and/or equipment needed to address the adverse impact of another disability.

- Instructional methods, modifications or both needed to address the impact of another disability.
- Adaptive or medically required positioning of the student as necessary to allow physical access to instructional materials or equipment or both.
- Alternative placement and/or positioning of materials or equipment that enables or enhances access to instruction and learning
- Multiple trials using different materials to validate results and to distinguish difficulties related to a visual impairment from those of another disability. (Eliciting a desired response will require the use of motivating materials and reinforcement.)
- The need to determine, during a functional vision assessment, whether observed or reported difficulties reflect an inability to see compared with an inability to interpret what is seen; e.g., a visual impairment compared with a visual perceptual or visual motor dysfunction or both. (The size, distance, contrast, lighting, or other visual variables should be varied to help make this determination.)
- Additional factors that may affect learning, performance, and progress, such as attention span, range of motion, inappropriate behaviors, mood and motivation.

When students with one or more additional disabilities are being assessed, it is important to:

- Consult with the educational staff, family, and eye care specialist.
- Conduct a functional vision assessment, which is required for students who have remaining vision. (See Appendix F, “Legal Requirements,” and Appendix B, “Assessing Vision/Low Vision”)
- Conduct a learning media assessment, which is required for functionally blind students. (See Appendix F, “Legal Requirements,” and Appendix C, “Determining the Appropriate Reading Medium”)
- Observe the student in natural environments. There is considerable “spontaneous” information that can be obtained about vision-related behavior, including apparent strengths and limitations and apparent skills restricted by other physical, sensory, and cognitive, and/or behavioral disabilities.
- Evaluate students’ preferences, strengths, and weaknesses through the use of other sensory modalities and alternative learning media (tactual, visual, aural, olfactory, and so forth).

- Coordinate with staff members who are knowledgeable about the student's disability or disabilities to facilitate a multidisciplinary approach as appropriate. This approach maximizes the interpretation of assessment data and the determination of appropriate instructional strategies and delivery of service.

Instruction and services are provided by the general education teacher, the special education teacher, or teacher specialists according to their credentialed areas of expertise. (See Appendix F, "Legal Requirements") Determination of the need for service by a teacher of students with visual impairments or the orientation and mobility specialist or both is based on assessment. The type of service and frequency is determined by the educational team based on assessment results, and addressing the student's individual learning requirements with regard to the Expanded Core Curriculum (See Chapter 2).

Infants and Preschool Children

Infants and preschool children who are visually impaired have differentiated educational needs. It is critical, therefore, that services begin as soon as a child is identified as having a visual impairment. Specialized support services need to be provided by staff members who have training and expertise in working with young children with visual impairments.

Most infants and preschool children who are sighted learn through imitation and modeling. Therefore, young children with visual impairments need opportunities for experiential learning through the use of their other senses, such as associating sounds, shapes, and objects with their purposes—a process that often occurs incidentally with sighted children. Because research studies have shown that the first five years of a child's life are the most important for developing a foundation for learning, special emphasis must be given to the infant and preschool child whose opportunities to learn through visual observation are limited or nonexistent.

Assessment of infants and preschool children should consider and include the following:

- Potential for delays in development and learning because of limited experiential opportunities in the following areas:
 - *Sensory/motor* development –For example, children who are visually impaired may be delayed in crawling and walking because visual cues are limited.
 - *Communication skills* development –Although communication skills may not be delayed in children with visual impairments, the nature of the communication may be different because of the lack of visual input. For example, children may exhibit echolalia, pronoun confusion, extensive questioning, and egocentric language.

- *Cognitive* development –Young children with visual impairments are not able to conceptualize the world until they have real learning experiences. Children need opportunities to taste, touch, hear, and feel objects in their environment so that abstract concepts become meaningful.
 - *Daily living skills* development –Young children with visual impairments need to become contributing members of the family unit. Learning independent living skills requires the support of family members and professionals. For example, a toddler may need specialized assistance in learning to use utensils in order to eat independently.
 - *Social/emotional* development, including the development of self-concept and self-esteem –All young children learn through play. However, young children with visual impairments require assistance and support in learning to interact with peers; e.g., imitating, turn taking, sharing, and pretend play.
- Acceptance of the family as the primary provider of experiential and learning activities
 - Opportunities for family members to provide recommendations and to learn, from qualified personnel, the manner in which they can assist with their child’s learning
 - Provision for the integration of concepts and the ability to generalize
 - Provision, through early and appropriate introduction to educational processes, for a smooth transition from the infant program to the preschool program and from the preschool program to the elementary school program (See Appendix H for additional information).

Elementary School and Secondary School Students

The unique educational needs of elementary school or secondary school students outlined in Chapter 2 should be appropriately addressed so that these students may have equal access to the Common Core Curriculum (CCC) described in Chapter 2. This section contains a discussion of how these students' needs can be met to accomplish this goal.

Elementary school students— Students in an elementary school program may have the same needs as those described in the previous section, “Infants and Preschool Children,” particularly if these students have developmental delays or have not received needed instruction and services at the infant or preschool level. Elementary school students should be provided intensive instruction in the basic skills required to function independently in the regular education classroom. A resource room for students with visual impairment may be the ideal setting to receive specialized instruction. (See Chapter 4 for a discussion of placement in the least restrictive environment.)

Students in elementary schools should receive instruction and services that will prepare them for the secondary school level. This preparation should include all 9 areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) described in Chapter 2, in addition to the CCC. These students also need instruction in accepting responsibility for their educational needs.

Secondary school students.—Students in a secondary school program should be encouraged to become increasingly responsible for their educational needs, including obtaining necessary adapted classroom materials, equipment, and technology and selecting and using readers. Secondary students should receive instruction and services focused on skills that will enable the students to function independently as adults, particularly in assistive technology and career skills.

Secondary school students should, as much as possible, meet the standards for all students, including the requirements of the prescribed course of study and the proficiency standards for graduation. These students should be provided appropriate modifications and accommodations (such as additional time, large print or braille) to meet the proficiency standards, alternative standards or both, as determined by the individualized education team. Additional information about modifications and accommodations can be obtained at the CDE Web site: www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/documents/matrix2012fnl.doc.

Elementary & Secondary Students with Visual Impairments & Additional Disabilities— Instruction for students with visual impairments and additional disabilities should emphasize the acquisition of academic skills with modified curricula. In addition, emphasis on the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) to meet the unique needs of these students is essential. Assessment and placement decisions for students with visual impairments and additional disabilities should be made by the educational team.

Nature of the Student’s Visual Impairment

A student’s unique educational needs will be influenced by the cause or type of vision loss as well as by the student’s age or when the onset of the visual impairment occurred.

- A student’s visual status may be stable, fluctuating, slowly or rapidly deteriorating, or capable of improvement.
- A student’s visual impairment may range from a mild, moderate, or severe impairment to functional blindness. (See Appendix B for a discussion of the kinds of visual impairments.)

Students Who Are Functionally Blind or Have Low Vision

Functionally blind students will have needs related to using their other senses as primary channels for learning. Reading and writing in braille are particularly important. Students should not rely solely on vision when it is not efficient or effective for reading or writing. (See Appendix C)

Students who have low vision will have needs related to using their vision as a primary channel for learning. The low vision and functional vision assessment information will be particularly useful in identifying and meeting these needs. Students with low vision may use their auditory and tactile skills (Braille) to access reading and writing materials.

Students with Other Special Needs

Some students will have other special needs that assessors should consider. Students with other special needs include students who are English language (EL) learners, gifted, educationally disadvantaged, and those at risk because of specialized health care needs. The persons conducting assessments of students with other special needs must work closely with staff from programs and agencies providing services to meet those needs. (See Appendix G “Resources for Technical Assistance”) For example, when assessing a student who is an EL learner with visual impairment the following should be considered:

- Obtaining and preparing materials in the appropriate language and medium.
- Providing a translator as needed during assessment and when reporting assessment results to families whose primary language is not English.
- Having an understanding and appreciation of the individual’s culture.

Assessment of Students with Visual Impairments

How does the program ensure that students with suspected visual impairments are assessed, when appropriate, in the areas related to their disability?

To identify all the unique educational needs of a student resulting from his or her visual impairment, those conducting the assessment must be sure that the initial comprehensive and ongoing assessments address all appropriate areas of the ECC described in Chapter 2. (See Appendix F for legal requirements, Appendix B for information that will be helpful in assessing a student's vision/low vision, and Appendix C for determining the appropriate reading medium.)

The paragraphs that follow present a discussion of the assessment of students with visual impairments.

Reports on Vision

Diagnosis of a visual impairment will be made by an appropriate medical professional (e.g. eye care specialist, pediatrician, or neurologist). The assessment should begin with the report of an examination by an ophthalmologist or optometrist. It is important to acquire as much information about the student's visual functioning from the eye specialist as possible. This information will be reported in the "Eye Report for Children with Visual Problems" and in the "Educationally Oriented Vision Report." (Sample copies of both of these forms can be found in Appendix B)

The eye report should include:

- Near and distant acuity, with and without best possible correction.
- Field of vision, including peripheral field.
- The etiology, diagnosis and prognosis of the visual impairment.
- The eye specialist's recommendations for school personnel and parents, including when the student should be reexamined.

Functional Vision Assessment

For students with visual impairment who have vision, a low vision assessment is to be conducted in accordance with the guidelines that are discussed in paragraphs that follow. (See Appendix F for legal requirements.)

A functional vision assessment is conducted by the teacher of students with visual impairment, in coordination with the orientation and mobility specialist and the student's family, to determine the student's functional vision. (Appendix B, "Assessing Vision/Low Vision," contains more detailed information and sample report forms.) Medical information including a low vision assessment from an eye specialist and the family's observations provide valuable information that will contribute to understanding how the student uses his or her vision.

The following are some of the purposes of the functional vision assessment:

- To provide information to the educational team about the nature and extent of the need for specialized services related to the visual impairment.
- To determine what the student with a visual impairment sees functionally in a variety of educational situations and settings.
- To evaluate how or when the visual impairment might adversely affect the student educationally—that is, interfere with, limit, or prevent learning or performance.
- To evaluate the student's ability to move efficiently, safely, and independently in multiple environments (home, school, or community).
- To provide information to assist in the determination of necessary and appropriate learning media.
- To identify and indicate vision-related needs. These needs include the type of interventions or compensations which enable or enhance efficient visual functioning and access to instruction, such as:
 - Task modification; for example, adjusting time requirements
 - Instructional methods or modifications; for example, the teacher verbalizing while writing on the board
 - Specialized materials and equipment; for example, braille, large print, low vision aids, or assistive technology
 - Environmental modifications; for example, preferential seating, lighting, and physical arrangements.
- To provide information to the educational team about the need for orientation and mobility services.

- To inform the family and educational team of the benefit of further assessment by an eye specialist, when necessary.
- To provide necessary information for multidisciplinary exchange between educators, eye specialists, and parents.

When the functional vision assessment is being conducted, other known or suspected disabilities should be taken into account. It is necessary to discern visual functioning and resulting learning requirements in conjunction with the impact of other disabilities that may be interfering with learning and performance. The presence of the vision impairment may or may not adequately explain educational difficulties which are observed. A team approach, which includes information from staff and family, is recommended to understand behaviors and performance observed. This information is important to determine appropriate educational interventions.

Once the functional vision assessment has been finished, a written report of the results is completed. Recommendations from the functional vision assessment report are made to the educational team, including the possible need for further assessment by a low vision specialist: an optometrist or ophthalmologist who has training and expertise in low vision and who has available appropriate low vision devices and assessment equipment. (Appendix B, “Assessing Vision/Low Vision,” contains more detailed information.)

Learning Media Assessment

As required in the California Education Code, each student with a visual impairment receives an assessment to determine the appropriate learning media, including the need for braille and braille instruction. This is a separate assessment (as outlined in Appendix C) and is completed after the functional vision assessment (as outlined in Appendix B. See Appendix F for legal requirements). Conducting a learning media assessment is a role of the TVI. It should be given in conjunction with the functional vision assessment, and it is used to determine student’s primary means for accessing materials in order to achieve academic and functional success in areas such as reading,

writing, mathematics and functional skills. It should be administered to a student initially, as part of the battery used to determine eligibility for appropriate services, for each three year evaluation, and should be updated regularly (at least annually) as needed.

The assessment of learning media for students with visually impairments begins by interpreting information obtained from the Functional Vision Assessment and continues with an objective observation and examination of:

- the efficiency with which the student gathers and uses sensory information from various sensory channels.
- the types of general learning media the student uses, or will use, to accomplish learning tasks.

- the literacy media that the student will use for reading and writing. (Koenig & Holbrook, 1993)

The term *learning media* refers to the learning materials most efficiently and consistently used by a student in conjunction with their strongest sensory channels. It may include aural media (e.g., tape recording, reader, voiced software, or technology) as well as visual (e.g., print or large print) or tactual (e.g., objects, braille or raised line) alternatives. The selection of a learning medium that may be considered a primary, secondary, or sole access modality depends on a student's preferences and the nature and extent of a student's cognitive and physical capabilities or limitations or both. A primary, secondary, or alternative learning medium may include one or more sensory modalities; and should enable or enhance the student's access and ability to efficiently learn information, skills, and concepts.

Assessment of a student's learning media should include observation of a student's use of sensory information in a variety of settings and environments such as at home, in school (in classroom and recreational activities) and in the community. It should take into consideration bio-behavioral effects (such as the student's ability to attend to sensory information due to health issues), as well as indicators of reading readiness (such as an understanding of basic concepts, developmentally appropriate language skills, and interest in books).

Determining the *literacy medium* or media is an important aspect of the learning media assessment for students who will become readers and writers. The *literacy medium* refers to the literacy modality (visual or tactual) that is used the most efficiently and consistently and that enables the student to have direct access to print, including spelling, syntax, grammar, format, and other information conveyed through written language. It is the printed medium that provides a "hard copy" referent of the written word. Braille and print are literacy media that enable the student to develop and acquire reading and writing skills. Aural or audible input is a learning medium that enables or supports the student's access to written language and that may be a primary or alternative learning modality.

The Role of Teachers of students with Visual Impairments in Assessment of the Common Core Curriculum

It is important that the TVIs collaborate during the assessment process with all members of the student’s educational team, including the classroom teacher. Although assessment and instruction in academic subject areas are the primary responsibilities of the classroom teacher, students should also be assessed by the teacher of students with visual impairments in coordination with the classroom teacher in academic areas, such as mathematics, reading, and language arts. Such assessments will not only provide valuable information about the level on which the student is performing academically, but will also provide the teacher of students with visual impairments with an opportunity to observe how the student functions visually or tactually in academic tasks. When an assessment indicates that a student’s errors are the result of unique educational needs related to the visual impairment, intervention by the teacher of students with visual impairments is necessary.

Assessing areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum

The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) and its importance in the education of students with visual impairment have been described completely in Chapter 2. The nine areas of the ECC need to be taken into consideration when assessing a student with visual impairment. These areas should not be assessed in isolation but should be evaluated over time and used in planning student IEP’s or individualized transition plan (ITPs). The chart below describes some assessment modes and strategies. Resources for assessment tools are included in Appendix G.

ECC Area	Assessment Modes and Strategies
Compensatory or Functional Academic Skills, including Communication Modes	
Concept Development	This area will be assessed by the TVI & orientation and mobility (O&M) specialist beginning in pre-school and continuing as appropriate. It can be assessed through observation, using informal checklists and through interviews with parents and care-givers. Collaboration with a speech and language specialist who also assesses this area may be helpful.

<p>Braille and Communication Skills</p>	<p>The Learning Media Assessment (described previously) is the assessment process that will ensure that appropriate learning media and tools are used. Ongoing assessment of learning and literacy modes will occur using observation, informal checklists and curriculum-based assessment.</p>
<p>Listening Skills</p>	<p>Listening skills can be assessed through observation and by using checklists. Special attention should be given to ensure that students comprehend what they listen to during instruction and when listening to recorded audible curricular materials through curriculum based assessment.</p>
<p>Study and Organizational Skills</p>	<p>Age-appropriate study and organizational skills can be assessed informally through observation and by using checklists.</p>
<p>Orientation and Mobility</p>	<p>The O & M specialist will assess this area, including sensory/motor skills, concept development and independent travel skills, during on-going observation and using informal checklists. An assessment should address how the visual impairment affects the student's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the physical environment and space • Orientation to different school and community environments • Ability to travel in school and community environments • Opportunities for unrestricted independent movement and play

<p>Social Interaction Skills</p>	<p>Collaboration between students' parents and care-givers, teachers and the TVI is particularly important when assessing social skills. Through observation and using checklists, student progress and necessary guidance and/or remediation can be determined. Tests of emotional functioning are administered by a credentialed school psychologist. The development of positive social and emotional skills is essential for students to function independently at home, at school, and as adults and to be effective in employment and interpersonal relationships.</p>
<p>Independent Living Skills</p>	<p>Assessment of independent living skills should begin in preschool, through parent interview, student observation and eventually, student interview. Observation at home, as well as at school, is important to ensure that students and their families receive adequate support and guidance when teaching these important skills. Assessment of daily living skills often requires a careful task analysis of the skill being evaluated since prerequisite learning may not have occurred. In addition, a student's level of ability in the assessed skill should be precisely specified in terms of the type and level of assistance the student needs to complete the skill.</p>
<p>Recreation and Leisure Skills</p>	<p>Although each individual student will value and enjoy unique recreation and leisure activities, based upon interests, skills and culture, it is important for TVI's to ensure that students are being explicitly introduced to a variety of activities. Checklists and interviews can be used to document a student's growth in this area.</p>
<p>Career Education</p>	<p>Informal assessment checklists and interviews can be used to guide the gradual progression in career education. Since employment should be viewed as an important goal for each student who is visually impaired and the development of concepts in this area begins in early childhood, assessment and training must begin early and progress through four sequential stages: awareness, exploration, preparation, and participation.</p>

<p>Use of Assistive Technology</p>	<p>As students begin to use assistive technology tools for a variety of purposes, on-going assessment by a TVI knowledgeable about appropriate technology for individual student learning requirements is necessary. Observation and checklists can be used to document student growth and skill development. It may be necessary to provide additional assessment by a technology specialist who specializes in assistive technology for students with visual impairments.</p>
<p>Sensory Efficiency Skills</p>	<p>On-going documentation of students' sensory efficiency skills begins when they begin school. It may include the functional vision assessment if they have vision, and must include information about the student's use of tactual, auditory, olfactory and gustatory input, as appropriate. Careful observation, interview and use of checklists can be used to document this information so that students may learn to use sensory information to the best of their ability.</p>
<p>Self-Determination</p>	<p>The inclusion of self-determination skill development should be included in each student's IEP. Curriculum-based assessment found in self-determination curricula, checklists and on-observation of student skill development can be used for this purpose.</p>

Assessment Personnel

How does the program ensure that assessment personnel are knowledgeable about visual impairment?

Assessments must be administered by qualified individuals so that the desired data and educationally relevant information are obtained. (See Appendix G, “Resources for Technical Assistance,” and Appendix F, “Legal Requirements.”)

A multidisciplinary team of credentialed persons conducting the assessment must include a teacher of students with visual impairments who is knowledgeable about the following:

- Individual assessment and learning requirements of students with visual impairment.
- Assessments designed or adapted for individuals who are visually impaired.
- Methods of appropriately adapting or modifying tests for individuals who are visually impaired.
- Providing assessment materials in students’ appropriate learning medium.

Collaboration with the teacher of students with visual impairments should precede the assessment in order to establish the most effective method of nondiscriminatory testing. Throughout the assessment process the teacher of students with visual impairments needs to be involved in identifying areas that should be addressed, including, but not limited to:

- Use of nondiscriminatory assessment instruments, as required by state and federal law
- Need for additional testing time
- Visual performance of the student
- Low vision aids, if needed
- Lighting requirements
- Print and picture size appropriate for the student
- Braille and tactile graphics
- Best positioning of materials

- Other assessment strategies
- Motivation of students
- Other special needs; for example, those of students who are English language learners or non-oral.

Assessment Report

How does the program develop assessment reports that identify a student's unique educational needs related to the visual impairment, including needs for specialized services, equipment, and materials?

The unique educational needs of each student with a visual impairment as identified in the assessment, including needs for specialized services, materials, and equipment, shall be a part of the assessment report along with the other requirements. (See Appendix F for legal requirements.)

Assessment reports can assist in coordinating all of the assessment conducted by the multidisciplinary team. The unique educational needs, as well as the strengths identified in the reports, will provide valuable information that should be used to develop or review a student's educational program [individual family services plan (IFSP), IEP, or ITP].

Information for Families Identifying and Assessing Unique Educational Needs

Eligibility for Special Education

A child has a visual impairment which, even with the best correction, adversely affects his or her educational performance.

Students with Neurological Visual Impairment (CVI) who are functionally blind, or have low vision even with the best correction, qualify for services from the teacher of the visually impaired.

Early Identification

Early identification of student's visual impairments is critical.

Students with impairments who have Additional Disabilities

Keep in mind that when assessing a student with visual impairment with additional disabilities requires:

- Observation
- Understanding of implications
- Keep in perspective the variables that will influence the interpretation of the assessment results.

Infants and Preschool Children

Typical infants and preschool children learn through imitation and modeling; visually impaired infants and preschool children need opportunities for experiential learning using their other senses.

Five areas of potential delays due to limited experiential opportunities:

- Sensory/motor development
- Communication skills
- Cognitive development
- Daily living skills
- Social/Emotional development

Definitions

Resource rooms are classrooms where students with disabilities are given specialized instruction and assistance as individuals or as a group.

Examples of accommodations and modifications could include additional time for assignments or tests, large print and braille.

Reports on Vision

- Diagnosis of a visual impairment will be made by an eye care professional, pediatrician or neurologist.
- Functional vision assessments are performed by the teacher of the visually impaired in coordination with the orientation and mobility teacher and the student's family.
- Functional vision assessments are used to investigate and gather information on how the student uses his/her vision that will later help the teacher of the visually impaired to make recommendations to help the student to learn using his/her vision more effectively.

Learning Media Assessment

Every student with a visual impairment must receive a learning media assessment to determine the appropriate learning media. Learning media refers to the learning materials most efficiently and consistently used in conjunction with the child's strongest sensory channels:

- Aural media (e.g. tape recording, reader, voiced software or technology)
- Visual media (e.g. large print, tactual objects, braille, raised lined drawings)

Assessment Personnel

A teacher of the visually impaired must be included when conducting an assessment to establish the most effective method of nondiscriminatory testing.

Assessment Report

Keep in mind: Assessment reports shall include needs for specialized services, materials and equipment.

Remember two components that will provide valuable information to be used when developing or reviewing a child's educational program (IFSP, IEP or ITP)

- Unique educational needs
- Identified strengths

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Chapter Two

The Core Curriculum and the Expanded Core Curriculum for Students with Visual Impairments

In order for students with visual impairments to achieve success in school, they need to receive instruction in the CCC and the ECC. The CCC briefly described in the introduction of these guidelines refers to subject matter that all students must accomplish for academic competence. These subjects include: English language arts and other languages, math, science, health, physical education, fine arts, social studies, economics, and vocational education. The ECC refers to a specialized curriculum for students who are blind or visually impaired. The nine areas of the ECC (as described in the introduction) address the differentiated needs these students require to access the CCC, function independently in life, and participate meaningfully in these activities.

Because students with visual impairments may develop differently from sighted peers, the acquisition of skills that are taken for granted, such as social cues, independent travel, and use of technology, require systematic instruction. Early concepts that sighted peers learn incidentally must be directly taught so that the student understands the world around him or her. One cannot assume that the student understands what is being taught without careful interpretation of the effect of vision loss on learning. TVIs play a significant role in ensuring that their students access the CCC and ECC. While TVIs play a role in enhancing students' acquisition of academic skills, it is not the role of the TVI to provide direct instruction in areas of the CCC. For example, TVIs are responsible for providing assistance in accessing math concepts by teaching the Nemeth (math braille) Code and tactile graphics, but the classroom teacher is responsible for teaching math skills according to the California Common Core Standards. The TVI is part of a larger educational team that bridges the demands of the classroom with the needs of the student. The information about unique educational needs identified in this chapter will provide valuable assistance for the teams involved in assessing students, and developing, implementing, or revising the IFSP, IEP, and ITP.

The Relationship Between the California Core Curriculum and the Expanded Core Curriculum

The role of the TVI and O&M specialist in providing services to students with visual impairments, as outlined above, clearly identifies that while these professionals should have a solid understanding and knowledge of the CCC, they are not responsible for implementing instruction in the common core. It is important to recognize that TVIs and O&M specialists can integrate common core instruction into direct ECC instruction. The following examples illustrate the integration process.

- Teaching braille while working on literacy skills.
- Teaching a student to use a magnification device while teaching reading.
- Teaching a student to copy material from the whiteboard while learning to use a monocular device or a video magnification system.
- Teaching students to create a PowerPoint presentation with assistive technology.
- Teaching students about their visual impairment while teaching internet research skills.
- Teaching students the route to school so that the student can travel with his or her peers.
- Teaching sharing and conversation skills while working with a student on a group project.
- Developing note-taking skills and enhancing listening skills by having a student participate in a class lecture.
- Teaching students to use the abacus, talking calculator, or graphing calculator to perform accurate math calculations

It is essential for the student's educational team to determine and prioritize which areas of the ECC will be included in the student's IFSP/IEP/ITP. When time constraints do not allow for instruction in the nine areas of the ECC it is important to explore alternative ways of providing this instruction. Families and educators might want to explore summer programs, after school and weekend programs, and short course programs provided by the California School for the Blind or other agencies providing services to students with visual impairments throughout the state.

Areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum

As families, educators, and district administrators determine what needs to be taught through the IFSP, IEP and ITP processes, educational teams need to consider each area of the ECC when providing quality instruction to students with visual impairments and additional disabilities.

Compensatory or Functional Academic Skills, Including Communication Modes

Compensatory skills are needed by students with visual impairments in order to access all areas of the CCC. These skills allow students access to learning in an equivalent manner as sighted peers. For students with multiple disabilities, the development of functional skills allows for meaningful and active participation in the areas of work, play, and personal care.

Concept Development

Since a visual impairment will often impede the development of students' visual concepts and learning in academic subject areas, special concept development will often be needed. Concept developments that should be addressed include:

- Developing a good sense of body image
 - Understanding the following concepts: laterality, time, position, direction, size, shape, association, discrimination, sequence, quantity, sensations, emotions, actions, colors (to the best visual ability), matching, and classifying
 -
- Understanding object permanence, difference, identification, defining characteristics, and relation of part to whole.
- Developing good understandings about conceptual sensations such as feelings, hearing, smell, touch, sight, and taste.
- Understanding the importance of nonverbal cues, social gestures, and facial expressions.
- Being aware of environmental objects and understanding appropriate applications in immediate, intermediate, and distant ranges.
- Understanding time concept such as (begin, end, before, after) and time distance relation such as (present, past, future).

Braille and communication skills

A student with a visual impairment will usually require alternative modes for instruction in reading and writing. He or she will need special skills in using alternative strategies, learning media, and specialized equipment and materials to communicate effectively. Communication needs that should be addressed where appropriate include:

- Being skilled in reading, using appropriate modes (e.g., braille, print, or recorded format) for such purposes as gaining academic information and pursuing personal, career, and recreational interests.
- Developing skill in writing for personal needs, using appropriate modes (e.g., braille, print, typewriting, handwriting, word processing) for such purposes as note taking, recording phone numbers and addresses, taking messages, and writing travel directions and personal notes.
- Being proficient in typing and computer keyboarding skills.
- Being able to write one's own signature legibly.
- Being able to operate primary technology devices, such as braille note taker, audio book player, voice recorder, tablet computer such as iPad, and CD players.
- Being skilled in using a voice recorder for recording lectures or for recording phone numbers and addresses.

Listening skills

A student with a visual impairment will use listening as an important mode of collecting information. Instructions on listening skills will help students with visual impairments to use their ability more efficiently. Listening skills are also equally critical for young children and students with additional disabilities. Auditory discrimination, interpretation of auditory cues, and sound association to events and people will serve as the foundational skills for accessing information effectively. While many children may demonstrate excellent hearing ability, TVIs should carefully evaluate their comprehension level. Listening skills that should be addressed where appropriate include:

- Developing listening skills appropriate to the level of the student's functioning, including the development of auditory reception, discrimination, memory, sequencing, closure, and association skills.
- Developing auditory comprehension and analysis skills appropriate to the level of the student's functioning, such as the development of the ability to summarize; classify; compare; recognize cause and effect; predict outcomes; visualize;

understand character; understand setting; recognize feelings; recognize climax, foreshadowing, and purpose; and distinguish fact from opinion.

- Being cognizant of, and able to hear facts, figures, and details from listening.
- Being able to make meaningful connections between own experience and acquired information through listening.

Study and organizational skills

Many note taking and organizational tasks associated with study skills assume accessing study materials visually. Tasks such as highlighting, underlining, and outlining, are difficult for students with visual impairments if appropriate accommodation and modification have not been made on his/her primary learning media. Learning and developing efficient study skills are crucial in successful participation in classroom and community activities. Study skills that should be addressed where appropriate include:

- Effectively organizing binders, folders, notebooks, personal equipment, and educational equipment.
- Developing note taking skill such as condensing information, picking out major ideas, using assistive technology devices, and sorting information efficiently.
- Being cognizant of, and able to use format, style, paragraph, heading, table of contents, index, and other formatting elements.
- Being cognizant of, and able to use labels, markers, organizers, and other assistive technology devices to organize and to sort books, memos, notes, and other documents.
- Developing skills for note taking during a lesson.
- Developing writing and recording skills for note taking from material originally intended for print; e.g., use of material that has been recorded or is read aloud.
- Developing the ability to organize notes and other study materials.
- Developing the ability to organize one's time

Accessing the general curriculum

- Being cognizant of, and able to use, appropriate special devices for reading and writing, such as slates and styli; optical aids; video magnification systems;

mobile applications; screen reading software; screen magnifying software; and other voice, video, and data information technology

- Being cognizant of, and able to use, appropriate special devices for mathematics and science; e.g., the abacus; talking calculators; electronic braille note-taking devices; specialized measuring equipment; and computers adapted with speech, enlarged type, or Braille
- Becoming familiar with the format of, and knowing how to use, reference materials in the student's primary reading medium or media
- Being able to interpret accurately maps, charts, graphs, models, and tables
- Developing the ability to select and use a reader
- Being able to acquire materials in various learning media; e.g., braille, large type, aural media, or electronic format

Orientation and Mobility

A visual impairment usually affects how the student learns about and functions within various environments. The student with a visual impairment, therefore, will need special skills to understand and become oriented to these environments and to move, travel, and play independently and safely within them. Included within the genre of Orientation & Mobility is developing abilities in sensory motor functioning. This is particularly important for students with visual impairment and additional disabilities, and for infants, toddlers, and preschool children with visual impairments.

Sensory/Motor Needs

A visual impairment may affect one's gross and fine motor skills; alternative sensory discrimination and sensory integration skills; and abilities to develop appropriate posture, balance, strength, and movement. The student with a visual impairment may need to develop special skills in these areas. Sensory/motor needs that should be addressed include:

- Carry out tasks necessary for basic survival
- Being able to control the head, limbs, and body for purposeful exploration and movement.
- Being able to sit, crawl, stand, and walk independently.
- Learning to control the head and body while sitting, crawling, standing, and walking. While walking, the student should exhibit appropriate gait, stride, and posture.

- Developing the ability to balance while standing still and while in motion.
- Using gross motor skills, such as crawling, walking, exploring for objects, negotiating stairs, negotiating depth changes, opening and closing doors, and pushing and pulling objects.
- Developing fine motor skills, such as grasping and releasing objects of varying sizes and shapes, turning door handles, grasping a cane, and dialing a phone.
- Developing sufficient muscle relaxation and flexibility to perform basic daily living and mobility skills safely, efficiently, and gracefully.
- Developing sufficient muscle tone, postural stability, strength, stamina, and endurance to complete routine mobility, physical fitness, and daily living skills tasks.
- Learning to identify, discriminate, and use various textures and objects tactually and underfoot.
- Learning to identify, discriminate, localize, track, and use continuous and intermittent auditory sources indoors and outdoors.
- Learning to identify, discriminate, and use various tactile, kinesthetic, proprioceptive, and haptic information indoors and outdoors, including such things as body movements, changes in temperature, movement of air currents, or height of slopes and depth changes.
- Learning to identify, discriminate, and use various olfactory sources indoors and outdoors

Orientation and mobility needs that should be addressed include the following:

- Enveloping a conceptual understanding of: Body image; e.g., planes, parts, laterality, and directionality in relation to objects and environmental features.
- Developing an understanding of concrete environmental concepts; e.g., grass, lawn, cement, wood, carpet, tile, tree, bush, and street.
- Developing spatial and positional concepts; e.g., far, near, close, high, low, above, below, facing, in front of, behind, beside, away from, next to, forward, backward, sideways, and 90°, 180°, and 360° turns.
- Learning compass direction concepts; e.g., north, south, east, and west relationships, sides of streets, names of corners, and relationships among changes in direction.
- Learning about traffic and traffic control concepts; e.g., fast, slow, parallel, perpendicular, same direction, opposite direction, near side, and far side.
- Learning to travel independently at home and at various school settings throughout one's school career.
- Learning appropriate non-cane techniques including such things as trailing, direction-taking, seating, and protective techniques and techniques for locating objects to facilitate independent orientation and mobility at home and school.
- Learning to use appropriate human guide skills in all travel situations when needed, such as traveling in normal situations; going through narrow passages; ascending and descending stairways; using escalators and elevators; switching sides; seating oneself in chairs, in sofas, and at tables; and establishing and maintaining control of the human guide situation with familiar and unfamiliar guides.
- Learning to use remaining vision and distance low vision aids, as appropriate, to the maximum extent possible for independent, safe orientation and mobility.
- Learning to use the long cane appropriately to supplement or replace visual travel skills (Skills to be acquired including touch technique; negotiating closed doorways and stairs and in congested areas and in social situations; trailing techniques; and modified touch technique for location of drop-offs such as curbs or down staircases, cane storage).
- Developing an understanding of the importance, dangers, responsibilities, and behavior appropriate for independent travel in increasingly complex settings.
- Learning to become oriented and travel independently in residential and rural areas (Examples of skills are– traveling along a residential sidewalk; traveling past driveways and walkways; locating curbs and wheelchair ramps; recovering from veering; crossing residential streets; recognizing and recovering from a

change in direction on street crossings; using environmental tactile, auditory, proprioceptive, kinesthetic, or olfactory cues, compass directions and other orientation systems, maps, and spatial relationships for orientation and safe mobility in familiar rural or residential areas; and becoming independently oriented to an unfamiliar area.)

- Developing an understanding of the services various business establishments provide; e.g., grocery stores, department stores, banks, post offices, and shopping malls.
- Learning the skills necessary to become oriented and to travel independently in light and major metropolitan business areas.
- Using traffic sounds to establish, maintain, or regain orientation and line of travel.
- Traveling safely and appropriately on increasingly busy business area sidewalk.
- Crossing independently intersections of four lanes or more controlled by traffic light.
- Exhibiting appropriate verbal and physical public behaviors.
- Developing the ability to seek out and interact appropriately with the public for assistance in orientation or mobility as needed.
- Learning to use address systems as an aid to orientation.
- Carrying identification and emergency funds when traveling.
- Knowing whom to contact in case of emergency or disorientation.
- Knowing how to locate and use a pay phone (dial or push-button).
- Learning to locate independently various destinations in business areas.
- Learning to travel safely in various retail and service establishments, including independent travel on escalators and elevators.
- Learning to carry out increasingly complex personal business transactions independently.
- Using transportation systems including: buses, subway, and light-rail (including use of lifts, if necessary). Learning proper techniques for entering and exiting an automobile.
- Learning to acquire information regarding products, services, or location of various stores and businesses by using the telephone, including recording this information for later referral.

- Being able to recognize and safely travel past areas of road construction.
- Being able to negotiate railroad track crossings independently.
- Being able to travel independently within light or major metropolitan business areas at a level sufficient to a signal APS.
- If nonverbal, developing a feasible communication system for acquiring information and communicating needs.
- Learning to use adaptive mobility skills as necessary for use with ambulatory aids, such as wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, orthopedic canes and braces, and prostheses to provide for maximum independent mobility.
- Using alternative mobility devices when appropriate.
- Being able to develop and travel specific routes in limited areas to care for basic needs, as well as alternative routes if necessary.
- Being able to problem solve and reorient oneself if necessary.
- Being able to solicit assistance and to decline unwanted assistance using correct procedures.
- Using technology including such things as environmental sensors, global positioning systems, mapping and information gathering systems.

Social Interaction Skills

The impact of a visual impairment often affects a student's ability to acquire a repertoire of social skills without the support of educators and families. The development of social relationship with peers and adults, the ability to observe the behavior of others in social situations and know how to interpret each encounter, developing a sense of identity as a person with a visual impairment, and understanding one's sexuality require direct instruction by TVIs and O & M specialists. Because the skills required for socialization, affective education, and human sexuality require vision to mediate a variety of concepts, the following needs should be addressed:

Socialization needs that should be addressed include:

- Understanding and displaying acceptable social behavior appropriate to a variety of group situations.
- Being able to discriminate between those behaviors that are socially unacceptable in public yet acceptable in private.
- Understanding and exhibiting appropriate assertiveness techniques in a variety of situations.
- Being aware of and using appropriate nonverbal communication techniques; e.g., gestures, eye contact, raised head, and facial expressions.
- Being aware of and being able to control body posture, movement, and physical mannerisms in an acceptable, coordinated manner.
- Being aware of and using proper manners in eating and other social situations.
- Being able to make introductions properly and demonstrate appropriate conversational skills.
- Being prepared to contribute constructively to group activities and social situations.
- Being aware of appropriate social distances for various communication situations.
- Being aware of dress codes for specific groups and occasions and dressing appropriately for one's age and situation.
- Being able to analyze social situations, and know what behaviors need to be used to have a positive interaction.

Affective education needs that should be addressed include:

- Recognizing that each person is unique and different from every other person.
- Understanding that persons who are visually impaired have the same emotions as everyone else.
- Being able to identify feelings.
- Being able to express feelings to others directly and in a socially acceptable manner.
- Having feelings of self-worth and well-being.
- Recognizing personal strengths and weaknesses in a realistic manner.
- Acknowledging both positive and negative feelings in self and in others and understanding that both types of feelings are valid.
- Being able to identify and appropriately express likes and dislikes.
- Being able to understand and recognize teasing and developing appropriate ways of handling it.
- Being aware of alternative ways to respond to the feelings and behavior of others.
- Feeling of being a valuable, contributing member of society.
- Being able to identify and understand a wide range of feelings in oneself and in others; e.g., happiness, guilt, frustration, boredom, confusion, anger, embarrassment, and pride.
- Being aware that the way a person feels about himself or herself is reflected in the way he or she treats others.
- Being aware that each person must establish his or her own set of values and live by them.
- Being aware of the concept of peer pressure and determining the appropriateness of conforming to peer pressure.
- Being able to identify and share feelings about his or her visual impairment in relation to being accepted by one's peers.
- Understanding the ways in which a person can become victimized by allowing others to make choices in his or her life.

- Understanding the long-range results of too much dependence on others.
- Being aware of the connection between being in control of one's life and taking responsibility for what happens in life.
- Being able to feel comfortable asking for help from others when it is appropriate.
- Understanding the difference between allowing others to help when it is not needed and deciding to ask for help when it is needed.
- Being an effective self-advocate.

Human sexuality needs that should be addressed include:

- Being able to identify with his or her own gender.
- Being knowledgeable about appropriate grooming and personal hygiene techniques.
- Being able verbally and tactually, with the use of models, to identify human male and female body parts and organs of the reproductive system, using correct terminology.
- Being knowledgeable about appropriate child care procedures and adaptations that may be necessary for a parent who is visually impaired through contact with real infants and children.
- Being aware of verbal and nonverbal communications that relay sexual messages to others; e.g., the use of body language.
- Being knowledgeable about strategies for prevention of physical and sexual abuse, including inappropriate touching and rape.
- Being knowledgeable about the genetic factors related to some visual impairment that one should consider before having children and being aware of genetic counseling.
- Being aware of the responsibilities associated with premarital sexual relations, marriage, and parenthood.
- Being able to express and discuss any concerns related to one's visual impairment and relations with partners; e.g., dependency, not being able to drive, financial concerns, and genetic factors.
- Understanding the differences in sexual roles & gender differences (e.g., understanding lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender).

Psychological Implications

- How well a student understands and accepts his or her visual impairment can be determined by addressing the needs in this area, including:
- Being able to recognize that one has a visual impairment
- Being knowledgeable about one's own eye condition
- Being able to explain one's eye condition and vision related needs to others
- Understanding the vision process
- Understanding and accepting any physical limitations caused by the visual impairment
- Understanding how low vision aids can assist in improving visual abilities and accepting the use of appropriate low vision aids
- Accepting the use of alternative techniques and apparatuses for obtaining sensory information, where appropriate; e.g., use of braille, tapes, and the long cane
- Being knowledgeable about personal eye care; e.g., medications, hygiene, regular eye exams, and low vision assessments
- Having realistic knowledge of current treatment as it relates to one's visual impairment

Independent Living Skills

Since a visual impairment affects the student's ability to incidentally acquire the skills needed to live independently, the student with a visual impairment will often need special instructional techniques to function as independently as possible. Assessment and instruction to provide needed daily living skills should include the following areas:

Personal hygiene skills

- Performing basic personal hygiene tasks; e.g., toileting, care of teeth and hair, and bathing needs
- Using personal service businesses to care for one's own needs and to make appointments; e.g., for barber or beauty shop services (These activities are for students who are beyond the basic skill level.)

Dressing skills

- Dressing and undressing, including tying shoes and fastening buttons and zippers
- Selecting appropriate clothing and planning clothing purchases
- Knowing clothing, under garment, and shoe sizes

Caring for one's own clothing

- Using techniques for clothing storage and identification of colors and patterns, sorting laundry, and using a washer and dryer
- Using services such as shoe repair, performing minor repairs on clothing, and hemming and ironing clothing
- Knowing when clothes are dirty and need to be cleaned

Housekeeping skills

- Locating and using housekeeping areas in the home, such as the kitchen, dining area, and bedroom; and assisting in basic upkeep, such as putting out trash and setting the table
- Performing many basic housekeeping tasks, such as vacuuming and scheduling regular maintenance
- Being able to make basic home repairs (e.g., changing a light bulb, using a plunger)

Preparing food

- Identifying kitchen appliances and performing basic pouring, stirring, measuring, and spreading techniques
- Using kitchen equipment, such as a stove and oven; preparing and cooking menus; following recipes; and preparing complete meals
- Using a microwave for preparation of snacks & simple meals

Eating skills

- Locating food on the plate
- Using utensils properly; being familiar with passing food, serving oneself at buffets, and using cafeterias; ordering food from restaurant menus; and understanding tipping

Money management

- Identifying coins and knowing coin equivalents
- Knowing how to fold bills for accurate identification
- Handling money in public, planning a budget, using checking and savings accounts, using automatic teller machines (ATMs) and other electronic banking and money management systems, and having one's own system for money management

Telecommunications skills

- Identifying one's own telephone number and placing an emergency call
- Using directory assistance, using various types of telephones for personal and business calls, arranging for one's own telephone service, and displaying good telephone etiquette
- Knowing how to use a cellular telephone and be able to send text messages
- Understanding fax and email communications

Written communication skills

- Understanding that written communication is used to convey information and ideas
- Writing a signature on personal and business letters, using a system for recording information, and using basic office supplies correctly

Understanding changes in time

- Responding to a daily schedule; knowing events that occur during the daytime compared to nighttime
- Knowing how to tell time and use clocks and watches, knowing automatic time (weeks or months), scheduling one's own time, and keeping appointments

Organize systematically

- Being able to organize time, activities, and personal belongings at home, at school, and in the community

Recreation and Leisure Skills

Recreation and leisure skills differ from physical education, because development of these skills are not typically addressed in physical education, and are a lifelong investment in sources of personal enjoyment, satisfaction, and community membership. Students who are visually impaired require explicit instruction in order to select and learn activities typically adopted by visual immersion in a culture such as through television or social events. The following activities are only a few examples, and may change according to different cultural groups and trends relevant to a student's age, community, and environment.

- fine arts, such as pottery, painting, sculpture, photography, knitting
- multimedia arts, such as cinematography, television, fashion
- social media activities, such as exchange with online communities via forums, networking sites, message boards
- winter activities, such as ice-skating, skiing, snowboarding, snowman building, sledding
- water activities, such as wind surfing, sailing, kayaking
- computer activities, such as video gaming, visual programming and design (i.e. mind storm, three dimensional design)
- velocity activities, such as skateboarding, rollerblading, cycling
- comic books and graphic novels
- social dancing
- yoga
- chess

The following skills need to be taught in order for students to gain access to recreational activities.

- Realizing that there are many options in determining how one spends his or her leisure time
- Learning to play indoor and outdoor games appropriately; e.g., ball, cards, and roller skating
- Developing hobbies of individual interests; e.g., arts, crafts, music, or collections

- Being competent in several different recreational activities
- Learning about popular spectator activities in order to enjoy attending them and to be able to discuss these topics appropriately
- Being aware of opportunities for participation in recreational activities in the neighborhood and in the community in addition to those designed specifically for persons who are visually impaired; e.g., YMCA (Young Men's Christian Association) or YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association), neighborhood parks and centers, Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts, and school and social clubs
- Being aware of current recreational trends and being able to participate where appropriate; e.g., learning current dance steps or fad games

Career Education

To be successfully employed, the student with a visual impairment will often need guidance to prepare for the world of work. Assessment and instruction in career awareness and vocational education, including adaptive skills, will often be needed for an individual to succeed in the workplace. Some career/vocational needs that should be addressed include:

- Understanding oneself in terms of the characteristics and attributes that make up one's individuality and recognizing one's uniqueness as a person and building one's self-esteem
- Knowing the difference between work and play and when each is appropriate
- Understanding the importance of doing a job to the best of one's ability
- Understanding work ethics, including getting to work on time
- Understanding the necessity of responsibility and commitment in the workplace
- Being able to fill out a job application or giving the necessary information to another person
- Being familiar with the development and use of a résumé
- Knowing that money is a medium of exchange and related to work and developing concepts of financial management
- Knowing and using personal information skills, including a legal signature
- Maximizing one's capabilities in developing skills in technology and in using adaptive devices, such as computers, note-taking devices, and calculators
- Being familiar with jobs held by one's family members and the jobs available in the school and the community, particularly jobs held by persons who are visually impaired
- Experiencing hands-on work experiences through chores, paid jobs on or off campus or after school (particularly in the private sector), or in simulated work environments
- Having opportunities to volunteer and give back to the community
- Being able to interact appropriately with supervisors, coworkers, and the public
- Participating in skills training at a job-entry level in a variety of experiences to assist in determining realistic occupational choices

- Determining postsecondary education needs: whether to attend college or technical school or go to work
- Knowing how to make contact with the Department of Rehabilitation for referral, training, and/or placement
- Being able to use and train readers
- Knowing sources for having materials transcribed and for obtaining specialized books, materials, and equipment
- Being able to organize time and materials to maximize learning
- Obtaining and managing financial assets for postsecondary education
- Being self-reliant in managing postsecondary education
- Being able to serve as one's own advocate in obtaining necessary services, adaptations, and equipment needed for success on a job, during job training, or in college
- Knowing and using laws prohibiting discrimination based on disability, including "equal access" and "reasonable accommodation"

Use of Assistive Technology

Visually mediated information such as books, web surfing, e-mail, magazines, note taking, and classroom documents typically require transcription to an alternate media for access by students with visual impairments. Technology is the ultimate tool in equalizing access to visual information in a timely and independent manner, and enables opportunities for information gathering, exchange, and storage. Technology skills are absolutely necessary for postsecondary education and employment. Instruction should be carried out treating any assistive technology as a tool for accessing information, and embedded into a lesson as a means to complete a task aligned with a student's curriculum. Any of the following types of technology related skills may be considered, based on careful evaluation of a student's needs, abilities, and assessment of appropriate devices:

- Being able to use refreshable braille displays, and how to pair with external devices such as a computer or tablet
- Being able to use braille note takers, such as the BrailleNote, HIMS
- Accessing audiobook players, such as the Book Port, Victor Reader, National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) player
- Being able to use screen reader software on computers and tablets, such as JAWS, NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA), VoiceOver
- Knowing how to use screen magnification software on computers and tablets, such as ZoomText, MAGic, Zoom
- Accessing programs for text reading, editing, and annotation such as Kurzeil, Read and Write, Co-Writer
- Experiencing non visual use of touch screen devices with audio output, such as smartphones and tablets
- Knowing how to access accessibility options on mainstream technology, such as using an iPad with VoiceOver
- Experiencing non visual use of mainstream applications such as e-mail and cloud computing
- Learning to use accessible global positioning system (GPS) programs, and other mobile applications
- Accessing the internet to use social media
- Learning to use smart phones and tablets to send text messages

Sensory Efficiency Skills

Students who are visually impaired have varying degrees of usable vision. While vision attributes such as acuity may be reported by a finite measure, how a student uses his or her vision, referred to as functional vision, may differ widely across people who have similar measures of acuity. Instruction that targets the development of sensory efficiency skills should be determined by how a student can leverage tactual, auditory, olfactory, and gustatory input to counter the loss of visual information. Sensory efficiency skills should be taught after careful assessment of what may benefit a student, and may address any of the following:

- Use of optical devices, such as monoculars and telescopic lenses
- Use of hearing aids
- Use of communication systems, such as picture exchange communication systems (PECS), tactile symbols, switch-mediated voice output devices
- Identify, discriminate, and use various textures and objects tactually and underfoot
- Identify, discriminate, track, and use continuous and intermittent auditory sources indoors and outdoors
- Identify, discriminate, and use various kinesthetic and proprioceptive sources indoors and outdoors, such as changes in temperature, movement of air currents, or height of slopes and depth changes
- Identify, discriminate, and use various olfactory sources indoors and outdoors

Self-Determination

Self-determination for students with visual impairments is a set of skills aimed at promoting strategies to set appropriate goals for themselves, monitor their performances, identify solutions to present or future problems, verbally direct their own behaviors, reinforce themselves, or evaluate their own performances. Students should have many opportunities to practice these skills so that they can participate more independently in school and community activities. Because the level of self-determination is closely related to systematic instruction in school and home environment, carefully designed activities that can facilitate acquisition of the set of skills will positively influence the overall success of students with visual impairments. Self-determination skills that should be addressed where appropriate include:

- Understanding the impact of his/her visual condition and requesting appropriate accommodations.
- Being familiar with the terms to describe one's visual impairment.
- Developing the ability to make choices based on preferences, interests, needs, and wants.
- Developing the ability to consider multiple options and to anticipate consequences for decisions.
- Being cognizant of, and able to effectively communicate one's needs and to utilize appropriate problem solving skills as needed.
- Being skilled at setting up goals and monitoring progress.
- Being able to identify one's own strengths and limitations.
- Understanding the concepts of dependence, independence, and interdependence and applying necessary skills appropriately in school in social environment.

Special Considerations for Students with Additional Disabilities

Expectations for students with visual impairments and additional disabilities should remain high, and include all areas of the expanded core curriculum. Skills in each area of instruction may be modified to allow for a student's meaningful and active participation to the fullest extent possible. A task analysis should be carried out to identify areas for student involvement and needs for external support. Lessons and objectives should focus on a student's strengths and abilities, and progress celebrated according to the student's own pace of development. Students with multiple disabilities may not learn skills according to a traditional timeline or standards, and evaluation on norm referenced scales should be avoided outside of purposes to determine service provision. Although students may not learn skills in a linear manner, they should nevertheless be exposed to a range of skills for potential adoption. Particular attention and instruction should be provided to support and train staff in inclusive and respectful practices. Parental involvement in learning objectives should be considered to maintain consistency throughout the year, and minimize loss of skills gained during the school year.

Information for Families

The Core Curriculum and Expanded Core Curriculum for Students with Visual Impairments

Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards were developed by national organizations to better prepare students for success in the 21st century. They were adopted by the state of California in 2010 and currently cover English/Language Arts and Mathematics.

Expanded Core Curriculum

The nine areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum:

- Compensatory or functional academic skills, including communication modes
- Orientation and mobility
- Social interaction skills
- Independent living skills
- Recreation and leisure skills
- Career education
- Use of assistive technology

- Sensory efficiency skills
- Self-determination

Task analysis means all of the steps required to complete a task. Systematic instruction refers to a step-by-step plan for how a specific skill will be taught, including motor functions, cognition, and communication components.

An example of task analysis: All the steps that a person does to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

An example of systematic instruction: explaining how making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich would be taught to someone else, including prompts that might start out with direct verbal and physical assistance and eventually fade to indirect verbal prompts, and finally independence.

Chapter Three

Planning and Providing Instruction and Services

This chapter presents a discussion of the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments, the roles and responsibilities of key individuals in meeting those needs, and the planning and coordination of instruction and services.

Unique Educational Needs

How does the program use the assessed unique educational needs of students with visual impairments to form the foundation for the following?

- Developing the IFSP for infants and toddler who have visual impairments, including young children with visual impairments and additional disabilities. The IFSP is family centered and includes present levels of development, family resources, priorities and concerns, outcomes desired, early intervention services, and transition steps to school-based programs, when appropriate. (See Appendix H)
- Developing the IEP for school-aged students with visual impairments, including students with additional disabilities to insure that their unique educational needs are met to promote academic success and, when appropriate, specialized services and materials and equipment. (See Appendix F for legal requirements)
- Developing transition language in the IEP, usually referred to as the Individualized Transition Plan (ITP), which includes, when appropriate, the following domains: training and education; employment; independent living; and residential, recreational, financial and economic, and social relationships. (See Appendix F for legal requirements)
- Providing appropriate instruction, services by qualified personnel, specialized books, materials, and equipment to insure positive education outcomes for students with visual impairments is based on an annual review of student progress.
- Discussing a range of placement options that are based on students' educational needs must be considered, including placement at the California School for the Blind. Please see Appendix E for further information.

- Developing curriculum and implementation strategies to meet these needs so that students with visual impairments can be successful in the least restrictive environment.

Compensatory or Functional Academic Skills Including Modes of Communication

For most students with visual impairments, it is expected that information in the core curriculum areas will be obtained as a part of instruction in the general education or special education classroom. The classroom teacher should work closely with both the student with a visual impairment and the teacher of students with visual impairments so that concepts that may be unfamiliar (e.g., Braille contractions of words in reading, braille mathematics, and use of assistive technology) or visual demonstrations (e.g., science experiments and examples on the whiteboard) do not slow the integrated student's progress and ability to keep up with the rest of the class. If the student with a visual impairment also has a learning disability, the resources of a specialist in that area should also be used so that the student may perform to the maximum extent of his or her ability. For example a TVI may work closely with a reading specialist to determine the best strategies for introducing Braille to a student who exhibits numerous reversals of letters while reading and writing.

Students with visual impairments and intellectual challenges or other disabilities may require support from a TVI along with his or her special education teacher to effectively access functional academics and alternative curricula, in the form of:

- Providing information about modifying the physical classroom environment to maximize the use of vision
- Providing information about the presentation of printed materials with respect to font size, contrast and color, and level of crowding on a printed page
- Providing information about the presentation of pictures and photographs
- Modifying the classroom environment to maximize independence and integration into the classroom environment
- Providing equipment and materials to enhance a student's ability to access the academic curriculum (e.g., reading stands, trays to organize materials, adaptive digital players).
- Providing strategies for labeling and using communication devices effectively.

- Suggesting opportunities for active participation using provided strategies.
- Providing information about a student's learning style and how a visual impairment impacts the way instruction is delivered.
- Providing opportunities for functional literacy (e.g., creating a shopping list, learning to read a menu), including functional braille literacy if appropriate

Three areas in which a student with a visual impairment may require specialized instruction are concept development, listening skills, and study skills. A discussion of these three follows:

Concept development

The development of concepts in sighted children is based almost entirely on their visual observations of the world (identification of objects, their relationship to objects in their environment, and their concepts of the relationships among objects). Unless these relationships are specifically taught, they cannot be totally understood by students whose visual experiences are limited or non-existent. A comprehensive, sequential program of concept development is necessary for most students with visual impairments before they can be expected to develop abstract thinking skills.

Listening skills

Individuals who are functionally blind or have low vision do not automatically develop better listening skills, which must be systematically taught and practiced. The development of good listening skills does not stop with work in auditory perception skills but extends to the development of auditory comprehension, analysis, and memory skills. Good listening skills will be needed by the student to interpret the environment when:

- The student works in the general or special education classroom.
- Materials are read to the student (by a reader or electronically).
- An older student tries to retain the maximum amount of information from lectures.

Organization & Study Skills

In order for students with visual impairments to succeed academically, they need to be able to keep track of their personal belongings, have a way to keep track of classroom and homework assignments, and develop a system for organizing books, materials, and hard copy assignments and tests in the classroom. The study techniques used by students with visual impairments are so different from those used by sighted students that study skills should be taught by a specialized teacher of students with visual impairments. The various formats used in reference works, such as dictionaries, encyclopedias, and atlases, coupled with the difficulty of tracking and keeping one's place in these books, demand that special attention be given to the development of these skills.

Reading and interpreting maps, charts, and graphs also require special techniques, whether the material is in braille or large print, is being read using an optical device or as an image description, or provided as a tactile representation. It is critical for students who are Braille readers to develop strategies to interpret tactile graphics. These students need to learn how to efficiently obtain tactile information in an organized and systematic manner. Also, students with visual impairments need to develop methods of taking notes while listening or reading; organizing notes and other materials in a medium that they can use; and developing the skills needed to acquire and use a reader.

Students with visual impairments need instruction in the use of specialized equipment and technology, such as computers with screen readers, large-type screen access, braille displays, note-taking devices, optical scanners, and reading machines. They also need to acquire the skills necessary to use mainstream technology with appropriate accessibility features such as smart phones and tablets, and electronic forms of information, such as databases, electronic bulletin boards, social media, and the internet. Students should be exposed to a variety of mainstream, assistive and adaptive technologies and be involved in the selection of those most appropriate to their individual needs. Chapter Two contains a more complete listing of unique concept development and academic needs.

Communication Instruction

Without communication skills individuals cannot be fully independent and, therefore, must rely on others to assist them at home, at school, and in the community. For the individual with a visual impairment, dealing with information in a written form is particularly difficult. Unique problems arise both in the reception of printed material (reading) and in the written transmission of one's thoughts and opinions (writing). Many

students with visual impairments will need special instruction in one or both of these areas to develop proficiency in communication.

Depending on the visual functioning of the student, special instruction in braille, large print or video magnification devices, closed-circuit televisions (CCTVs), and/or regular print reading techniques may be necessary. (See Appendix C). It is important for teachers of students with visual impairments to demonstrate skills in being able to teach reading, and have knowledge about specific strategies for teaching reading to students who are blind or visually impaired.

For written communication, depending on the student's visual functioning, use of a braillewriter, braille note taker, slate and stylus, pen and pencil, or electronic equipment should be taught. Students with visual impairments need to be proficient at keyboarding. Also, they should develop a signature that is legible and can be replicated. Chapter Two contains a more complete listing of unique communication needs.

Orientation & Mobility

Sensory/Motor Instruction

From an early age sighted children are able to use vision, imitation, and opportunities for unrestricted exploration, movement, and play to develop necessary fundamental skills in the following areas: gross and fine motor coordination, relaxation of muscles, strength, endurance, flexibility, and balance. Sighted children also are better able to develop their tactual, auditory, proprioceptive, and kinesthetic sense discrimination and integration because they have natural opportunities to explore and engage in rough and tumble play. The lack of visual, imitative, and normal play opportunities may hinder the ability of students with visual impairments to develop these fundamental skills through the natural process of development and maturation as a result of regular physical education activities. Instruction in remediation of identified needs in this area should be provided, as needed, by a team of instructional personnel that may include the following: classroom teacher, special class teacher, teacher of students with visual impairments, adapted physical education specialist, orientation and mobility specialist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist. Sensory/motor development needs to overlap with several other areas of need including body strength and endurance, balance, gait and posture, and concepts of directionality. In some cases certain skills and abilities are prerequisite to the development of more sophisticated skills in other areas, particularly orientation and mobility, daily living skills, and career and vocational education. Chapter Two contains a more complete listing of unique sensory/motor needs.

Orientation and Mobility Instruction

The ability to understand, interact with, and move within one's physical and spatial environment is a fundamental skill. This ability is one of the developmental milestones for students with and without visual impairments.

A visual impairment may affect an individual's opportunities for unrestricted, independent exploration, movement, and play; understanding of the physical environment and space; ability to become oriented to and travel in various community environments; and ability to acquire basic daily living and social skills necessary for interaction with sighted peers and for travel within the school and community. A visual impairment may also result in voluntary or imposed restrictions on a person's activity

simply because of the presence of visual impairment and associated misconceptions concerning the ability of students to develop safe and independent travel.

Students with visual impairments and additional disabilities may receive instruction in orientation & mobility. Depending on the age, ability, and assessed needs of the student, instruction may be provided to enhance motor development, orientation to the community and school environments, introduction to transportation modes, and use of the long cane for travel within and to/from destinations. In many cases, initial instruction is provided by a credentialed O&M specialist, and implemented by the classroom teacher or Paraeducators under supervision from the O&M specialist.

Specific instruction and services will be necessary to meet assessed needs in:

- Environmental and spatial concept development, body image, control, and purposeful movement
- Orientation techniques, including but not limited to: use of cardinal directions, (tactile) maps, way finding technology
- Self-protection skills
- Adaptive visual or nonvisual mobility techniques
- Use of sensory input and residual vision for travel or orientation
- Daily living skills related to community travel and independence
- Identifying when and how to ask for public assistance during school and community travel
- Route planning, orientation, and safe travel in both school campus and community areas off campus

For reasons of safety and liability, persons providing instruction in orientation and mobility must be qualified. For example, instruction in the use of the long cane and off-campus instruction should be provided only by a credentialed orientation and mobility specialist. Chapter Two contains a more complete listing of unique orientation and mobility needs.

Social Interaction Skills

The needs of students with visual impairments in social/ emotional instruction are unique because of the effects loss of vision may have on the formation of one's self-concept, opportunities for appropriate modeling in social situations, development of social relationships, development of concepts about human sexuality and personal safety, and understanding and awareness of one's visual impairment. The acquisition of these skills is essential for insuring that students with visual impairments are able to have positive experiences in school and community settings.

Socialization

Students with visual impairments often need assistance in demonstrating appropriate social skills. The majority of a sighted person's social skills are learned from visual modeling. An appropriate behavior or mannerism is observed and then copied in a similar situation. Many acceptable social behaviors go unnoticed by students with visual impairments unless they are taught to them with an appropriate demonstration of *how* and an explanation of *when* and *why* one would use such a behavior.

The area of nonverbal communication is often inaccessible to the student with a visual impairment. Nonverbal methods of communication are often critical avenues of social interaction for the sighted and must be directly addressed if the students with visual impairments are to incorporate them into their repertoire of social skills.

Perspective-taking is another area in which students with visual impairments may have difficulty. Understanding all the nuances of a social situation or exchange may require interpretation from a trusted adult or peer to learn effective ways to "figure out" what is taking place. Often, students may misinterpret or not know how to respond to a specific social encounter. For example, students may confuse teasing or sarcasm for bullying behaviors by others. Helping students to learn these discrete differences is the role of the teacher of students with visual impairments.

Affective education

The emotional needs of students with visual impairments must be addressed through affective education so that these needs do not interfere with these students' academic, social, and vocational growth. One of the most crucial emotional developmental tasks for students with visual impairments is the formation of self-concept. Research has shown that children and adolescents who are visually impaired have a lower self-concept than do their sighted peers.

Infants and young children with visual impairments often have difficulties in recognizing themselves as individuals apart from other individuals and objects in the environment because vision plays such a crucial role in this process. The lack of feedback from a mirror, which assists sighted students in learning how they appear to others, further hinders the development of a healthy self-concept in students with visual impairments.

As students with visual impairments become older, they may perceive themselves as devalued or incapable persons because of their inability to perform many of the common tasks required in school or on the playground. Another common occurrence is the over-emphasis of certain strengths, resulting in an unrealistic self-concept, which may later be deflated in adolescence or adulthood. For example, many students who are blind, who perform well in school academically, may be told by adults, that they are amazing or exemplary because they are able to achieve at the same rate as their sighted peers. Because of this feedback, the student may perceive himself or herself as academically more capable than is true.

Students who are visually impaired often encounter teasing by peers and must learn to handle those situations constructively while maintaining a good self-concept. Providing them with specific instructional strategies that focus on teaching assertion skills and using I messages may combat negative encounters.

As students with visual impairments reach adolescence, many emotional issues arise, such as dealing with learned helplessness, dependency, obtaining a driver's license, overprotective families, and sexuality. The emotional needs of students who are visually impaired must be addressed so that these needs do not interfere with these students' academic, social, and vocational growth.

Sex education

Students with visual impairments need a much more intensive and conceptually oriented education program than their sighted peers do because of the lack of conceptual understanding and accurate information that cannot be gained through visual media sources available to sighted students. Many times students who are visually impaired can verbalize sexual concepts and information accurately, but further inquiry reveals that these students have many misconceptions.

One of the most basic elements of sex education for students with visual impairments is knowledge of personal safety. It is important for students to know the difference between public and private behavior. If for example, students with visual impairments dress without window shades or drapes drawn, they may not realize that sighted people can see them undressed without clothing.

The use of tactual models is an important part of the sex education program for students with visual impairments because visual media are often not useful in the learning process. Dealing with the attitudes and emotions surrounding these students' sexuality at various stages of growth is important. The confusion that often exists regarding the stigmas attached to the disability and sexuality of individuals who are visually impaired can seriously affect these students' self-concepts.

The local sex education program must be adapted for students who are visually impaired to deal with gender identity, reproduction processes, sexual and social issues, and health and safety precautions—all in relation to each student's visual impairment and moral code. Before providing sex education, one should follow both the IEP and local policies and procedures. In addition, parent permission is needed before students can engage in a sex education program.

Psychological implications

Many of the psychological problems faced by students who are visually impaired stem from the lack of understanding and acceptance of their individual eye condition. Many students cannot discuss their eye condition when others inquire about it. Students with visual impairments are often uncomfortable discussing their visual condition, since such a discussion forces them to acknowledge that they do, in fact, have a visual impairment. These students need to understand and embrace fully their visual impairment as part of their identity so that a healthy adjustment results and so that they are able to deal with the stereotypes and prejudice often encountered in society. If the students are knowledgeable, comfortable, and accepting of their visual impairment, then the chances of creating a similar comfortable and accepting attitude in others will be increased. Chapter Two contains a more complete listing of social/emotional needs.

Independent Living Skills

Specific instruction in independent living skills will often be necessary if students are to function independently at home, at school, and later as adults. Sighted children learn these daily living skills from their parents beginning at a very early age. Parents of students with visual impairments are often unaware of the students' ability to acquire these skills or are reluctant to teach them because they usually have not had any training in the use of adaptive techniques.

For sighted children the acquisition of independent living skills is seen as a milestone in their development; e.g., eating and dressing independently or doing household chores. Often, students with visual impairments are not expected to be independent in this area, resulting in the performance of daily living skills that is far below the level of skills expected from sighted students. Working closely with parents and other caretakers as early as possible is important so that they can assist in teaching these skills and following through at home. One of the most effective ways of teaching daily living skills is through the involvement of the parents by providing instruction, as appropriate, in the student's home.

For sighted children many of these skills are learned incidentally or are reinforced through visual modeling. Depending on the level of visual functioning of a student with a visual impairment, he or she should be taught these skills, using specialized or adapted methods, materials, and equipment. Teaching students to make simple adaptations is important so that they will be able to function independently in a variety of settings and situations.

Planning, instruction, and curriculum should focus on self-help needs of increasing complexity within each of the following independent living skill areas: personal hygiene, dressing, clothing care, housekeeping, food preparation, eating, money management, social communication, telephone use, written communication, time, and organization. Chapter Two contains a more complete listing of unique daily living skills needs.

When teaching independent living skills to students with visual impairments and additional disabilities it is important to work closely with speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, and physical therapists who can provide valuable information about adaptive equipment, adaptive methods for teaching specific skills, and information about proper positioning for maximizing instruction. For example, many students with visual impairments and additional disabilities have oral motor issues. They may have difficulty tolerating various textures, or exhibit difficulty with chewing and swallowing. Some students may need support with using utensils because of physical or motor disabilities.

Recreation & Leisure Skills

Students with visual impairments are often limited in the range of recreational and leisure-time activities available to them, including extracurricular activities. A need exists to expose these students to a variety of available options, which they either may not be aware of or in which they may not feel sufficiently competent to participate.

The sighted person becomes aware of many recreational activities through visual media sources. Many specific leisure skills are learned from visual modeling. In addition, students may be limited because of a lack of mobility skills, and they cannot always independently explore neighborhood options. Both individual and group recreational activities must be included in the development of recreational and leisure skills, including art, music, drama, and dance. Students need to be given opportunities to be exposed to activities that foster hobbies like playing chess or board games, or knitting or crocheting.

With an emphasis on health and wellness, it is important for students with visual impairments to actively participate in sports and fitness activities. Whenever possible, providing students with the opportunity to have exposure to a variety of sports activities such as swimming, hiking, roller skating, ice skating, biking, and skiing. Some sports activities can be adapted with audible devices and special equipment like adapted tennis, basketball, beeper baseball, and goalball.

Career Education

Career and vocational education are essential components in a program for students with visual impairments. Even though new technology and legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that prohibits discrimination have provided more opportunities for employment, individuals with visual impairments will continue to encounter many barriers in realizing their employment potential. Career and vocational education should therefore begin in preschool and continue through four phases: awareness, exploration, preparation, and participation.

Awareness

Awareness begins during early childhood and includes the development of an individual's self-esteem and self-concept and the beginning of an understanding of how people live, work, and play. Activities at this level should begin to assist students in developing a realistic self-appraisal of their skills, abilities, attitudes, strengths, and responsibilities, as well as of their limiting factors. Instruction should also help students gain the skills, abilities, and attitudes they need to become successfully employed. Awareness also includes an introduction to the world of work and occupations, emphasizing those positions that are held, or could be held, by individuals who are visually impaired. These areas should be addressed both at home and in the educational setting during the early childhood and elementary school years.

Exploration

Exploration should include a broad range of career and vocational choices based on ability and interests. Required skills for specific career choices must be addressed. Students should be encouraged to explore ways in which occupational tasks could be adapted for a person with a visual impairment, including the use of assistive technology. The rehabilitation counselors for the blind in the California State Department of Rehabilitation or other individuals knowledgeable about employment opportunities and adaptations for the visually impaired need to become involved. ITPs should be developed and implemented.

Preparation

Preparation should include vocational and educational training in the specific skills, abilities, and attitudes necessary for the individual's achievement in his or her career interest or choice. Training in technological and adapted devices used in the workplace should be explored. A student should be referred for services to the Department of Rehabilitation no later than the eleventh grade or after reaching a comparable

chronological age. During this phase students need to be given opportunities to participate in a variety of volunteer experiences. Research clearly documents a strong correlation between volunteer experiences and successful paid employment as an adult.

Participation

Participation could include either paid or volunteer on-the-job training for a specific career or work experience. These experiences may provide opportunities for individuals to develop the skills, abilities, and attitudes that will be valuable in any career choice. Cooperation with local vocational education programs and local businesses is essential. (See Appendix G, “Resources for Technical Assistance.”)

Knowledge of individual rights and affirmative action policies, current law—including the Americans with Disabilities Act—and the skills of self-advocacy should also be included in the career and vocational education programs.

All of these areas of learning and achievement are lifelong for everyone. Because students with visual impairments are unable to learn about these areas through visual observation, as sighted students do, training of students with visual impairments in meeting their career and vocational needs should begin in early childhood. Chapter Two contains a more complete listing of unique career/vocational needs.

Use of Technology and Assistive Technology

Students with visual impairments require explicit and specific instruction in order to use mainstream, as well as specialized, technology. Technology skills are linked to improved postsecondary and employment outcomes, and mediate visual media by providing students with independent and timely access to information. TVIs must teach these skills regardless of their personal tendencies or preferences for technology, and may do so in collaboration with other colleagues. Components of technology instruction include: Evaluation and assessment, procurement of the technology, teaching how to use the technology, and implementing the technology into instructional activities.

Evaluation and assessment

Evaluation and assessment should be equally mindful of available specialized devices and software programs, accessibility features of mainstream technology, and student capabilities. Given the constantly evolving array of technology options, the TVI may benefit from consulting other colleagues. If the TVI does not feel comfortable carrying out the technology evaluation and assessment, a colleague who is qualified and familiar with both educating students with visual impairments and currently available technologies should be invited to join the educational team. Although mainstream technology may have accessibility features, the capabilities of these features across devices and programs vary. Likewise, various devices and programs that are specialized for users with visual impairment may share similar features, but have varying benefits depending on a student's repertoire of skill and technology needs. For example, several devices exist that use text to speech to provide access to digital textbooks, but device selection would depend on the student's ability to leverage available features, understanding of virtual folder organization, and preferences. Thoughtful evaluation and assessment should consider both the accessibility and usability of any technology or assistive technology, and recommendations based on these factors will result in more successful implementation in the classroom.

Procurement of technology

According to Ed Code **56341.1** When developing each pupil's individualized education program, the individualized education program team shall consider the following: (b)(5) Consider whether the pupil requires assistive technology devices and services as defined in Section 1401(1) and (2) of Title 20 of the United States Code **and** (c) If, in considering the special factors described in subdivisions (a) and (b), the individualized education program team determines that a pupil needs a particular device or service, including an intervention, accommodation, or other program modification, in order for the pupil to receive a free appropriate public education, the individualized education program team shall include a statement to that effect in the pupil's individualized education program.

Therefore, the IEP team must consider the recommendations for assistive technology and services as outlined in an evaluation carried out by a qualified professional, in order for a student to have the same access and opportunities to education as sighted peers. This technology may include specialized devices specifically for individuals with visual impairment, or mainstream devices with appropriate accessibility features.

Device-specific instruction

The TVI must impart a general set of instructions so the student can begin using any recommended technology. These instructions should include: understanding the function of the technology, why it is integral to learning in the classroom, and how to care for a device or manage updates to software programs. Unless the TVI is also visually impaired and personally uses the recommended technology, it is not expected for the TVI to be an expert on using a device or program. Rather, the TVI should teach the basic skills and functions of a device with the understanding that the student will become more skilled with ongoing technology use. It is more important that the TVI have resources available so that when troubleshooting needs arise, the TVI can leverage the expertise of colleagues to continue supporting the student. As the student matures, instruction should also include teaching the student how to find resources and assistance as needed.

Technology implementation

No device or software program should be taught in isolation from the task it aims to serve. Technology should be viewed as another tool in a student's set of adaptive skills, and should be supplemented by other skills in case the technology is unavailable due to breakage, theft, or loss. For example, although a program may provide text to speech support for a totally blind student, the student should still receive braille literacy instruction to complement the technology, and also be able to read embossed braille in the event that the text to speech program malfunctions. Students' use of any technology should be carried out by classroom staff including teachers and paraprofessionals according to specific instruction and direction from a qualified TVI. TVIs must therefore embed any technology-specific instruction within a classroom activity to provide the context for technology use and improved implementation.

Sensory Efficiency Skills

Instruction to develop and refine sensory efficiency skills should be carried out after careful assessment of the student, and determination of which skills may be most relevant. A student with usable residual vision should receive a functional vision assessment at least every three years, and may benefit from a low vision evaluation. Recommendations from a qualified low vision specialist may differ from a medical professional such as a pediatrician or ophthalmologist because functional vision cannot be gauged by traditional measures of acuity, or determined based on a diagnosis alone. Other sensory efficiency skills counter the loss of information through the visual system by leveraging input via tactual, auditory, olfactory, proprioceptive, and vestibular systems.

Use of optical devices

Based on evaluation from a TVI or low vision specialist, a student with usable vision may be prescribed optical devices such as a monocular or telescopic lens. Use of these devices depends on instruction in the appropriate context for its use, and care of the device itself. School staff should also be advised of the student's use of any optical device to support its implementation into the classroom and community outings, and should carry out implementation activities under the direction and supervision of a TVI.

Tactile input

Students with visual impairments should be taught to identify, discriminate, and use various textures and objects tactually and underfoot. Any visual image that requires more extensive information than what could be conveyed through a verbal description should be rendered as a tactile graphic. Students who require tactile graphics in order to access images must be provided with specific instruction and consistent exposure throughout the learning process before encountering this adapted material in an assessment situation such as for standardized testing purposes. Tactile graphics may be used in the classroom to convey academic material, or as an accessible map to support with orientation and mobility instruction. Students with nonverbal communication in addition to visual impairment should be introduced to tactile symbols for labeling and communication exchange. These symbols should be labeled with braille to provide exposure to functional literacy objectives if the student has no functional vision.

Auditory input

For students with a hearing impairment in addition to a visual impairment, instruction should be carried out in conjunction with a colleague qualified to work with students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The student and TVI should both understand how to manage and care for any hearing aids or cochlear implants, and the effects of different types of auditory input on the student. Students should be able to identify, discriminate, track, and use continuous and intermittent auditory sources indoors and outdoors to help with orientation and mobility, and leverage these sources as environmental supports.

Olfactory input

Similar to auditory input, students with visual impairments should be instructed to identify and discriminate olfactory information indoors and outdoors to help with orientation and mobility. In some cases such as a fire, olfactory input may provide information crucial to the safety of the student.

Proprioceptive and vestibular input

Information through proprioceptive and vestibular channels helps a student who is visually impaired by understanding where his or her body parts are in space, and helps process information regarding the size and shape of objects, as well as navigating elevation changes during travel. Instruction in this area affects how the student maintains posture and natural gait patterns, and how the student translates environmental information such as changes in temperature or air currents to inform orientation and mobility.

Self-Determination

The importance of self-determination skills for students with visual impairments cannot be overemphasized. Research clearly demonstrates that self-determination skills should be explicitly taught and students with visual impairments must be given sufficient opportunities to practice such skills. Self-determination skills such as self-awareness, choice making, self-advocacy, problem solving, and goal setting must be addressed for all students with visual impairments regardless of their functional level so that they can enjoy self-directed, high quality life as an individual.

Instructions in self-determination skills should be provided continually throughout the educational settings. They can be taught and practiced in various settings, where appropriate, and can be integrated into other areas of expanded core curriculum instructions.

Self-awareness

It is important that children and youth with visual impairments understand concept of likes and dislikes and develop preferences. When children with visual impairments understand that they are separate from the environment and that their decisions make differences in the surroundings, they are ready to exercise personal control and to appreciate the value of self-determination.

Choice making

It has been reported that children and youth with disabilities are not given with opportunities for making choices in their daily lives. Therefore, it is important that structured decision making activities would be created and students with visual impairments understand the procedure of reviewing available options and considering consequences for making choices.

Self-advocacy

Assertive communication and advocate one's needs, as appropriate, can be taught through simulated experience and practices. Students with visual impairments must know their visual conditions and be familiar with proper adaptations and environmental modifications necessary to maximize their visual functioning. They should be able to effectively communicate such needs. It is also important that, when making request, children should be able to specifically describe their needs in assertive and polite manner.

Problem solving and goal setting

Setting up short and long term goals and guiding children with visual impairments in monitoring progress and achieving those goals can positively reinforce self-determination skills. It is important for students with visual impairments to review strengths and weaknesses of oneself and to consider diverse options in solving problems. It is also critical for children and youth to practice these skills in infused settings.

Specialized Books, Materials, and Equipment

What is UDL?

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of principles that assists teachers in creating and using educational materials and equipment. The main premise behind UDL is that all educational materials, including assessment, curriculum, and instructional materials, should be designed so that all learners can access and use the materials with as much independence as possible in a manner that meets the learner's unique individualized needs. UDL is based on the idea that materials and equipment should be designed to "work for everyone--not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs.

(<http://www.cast.org/udl/>; <http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/whatisudl/>)"

How does UDL relate to students with visual impairments?

Students who are visually impaired often have unique learning needs and require individualized adaptations to materials. UDL helps to ensure that materials are created to minimize the adaptations necessary, by addressing individual differences in curriculum planning, assessment, and educational programming.

How does the program provide the educational materials, assistive technology, and technology equipment necessary to meet the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments as specified in the IFSP/IEP/ITP?

Educational materials, assistive technology, and technology equipment are provided as indicated in the IFSP, IEP, or ITP to meet the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments. (See Appendix F for legal requirements.) As much as possible materials and equipment provided should be based on the principles of universal design for learning. IDEA requires that if materials or equipment are mandated in an IEP that the LEA is responsible for providing it.

Sufficient time must also be allocated for the transcriber or teacher of students with visual impairments to locate, prepare, and disseminate materials and equipment for each student. Indirect services can be appropriated in the IEP, as necessary to meet this requirement.

Funds at the local level must be budgeted to ensure that necessary books, materials, and equipment are provided, coordinated, and maintained. The intent of the Legislature is that, to the extent to which funding is available, school districts and county offices give first priority to expenditures to provide specialized books, materials, technology,

assistive technology, and equipment that are necessary and appropriate for the IFSP/IEP/ITP of pupils with low incidence disabilities.

Materials, technology, assistive technology, and equipment purchased with federal or state funds by local educational agencies remain the property of the state and may be reassigned by the Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology (CSMT) when they are no longer being used locally. It is important that a process for tracking materials and equipment purchased to implement the IFSP/IEP/ITP of students with visual impairments be maintained so that this information may be reported to CSMT. (See Appendix E for sources of funding and Appendix F for legal requirements.)

An organized, cost-effective, and coordinated system for acquiring, coordinating, disseminating, and maintaining these special materials and equipment should be operated from a central location, with one individual assigned this responsibility. CSMT has developed and tracks materials, technology, assistive technology, and equipment that has been distributed to LEAs.

CSMT also is the statewide contact for NIMAC and NIMAS, described as follows: “The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 established the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC) to serve as a national repository of National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) source files for accessible media production of textbooks and related printed core materials that are written and published primarily for use in elementary school and secondary school instruction. The NIMAC is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education and is based at the American Printing House for the Blind in Louisville, Kentucky. We began operations on December 3, 2006. The NIMAC receives NIMAS file sets from publishers, catalogs these files, and makes them available for download by Authorized Users, who are identified and registered with the NIMAC by a representative of the state department of education. Once downloaded, the file sets are then converted into a student-ready specialized format. These formats are braille, audio, or digital text which is exclusively for use by blind or other persons with disabilities, and includes large print formats when distributed exclusively for use by blind or other persons with disabilities. (NIMAC, n.d.; http://www.nimac.us/faq_teachers.html#what)”

All efforts should be made to coordinate the sharing of books and materials with other programs for students with visual impairments in the state as well as nationally. A statewide email list-serve, Braille-n-Teach, has been established for the purpose of coordinating and sharing of materials. Individuals may sign up for an account through CSMT <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/sm/>.

How does the program provide instruction on the use of educational materials, assistive technology, and technology equipment necessary to meet the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments as specified in the IFSP/IEP/ITP?

Selection of educational materials, assistive technology, and technology equipment should be based on assessment data (see chapter 1). Recommendations for technology and assistive technology devices should be included in a specialized technology assessment. Instructional goals should include the use of such materials and equipment and be carefully monitored through ongoing assessment practices. Prescription of educational materials also should take into consideration instruction and training time for teachers, students and families, in addition to resources for students, as deemed in the IFSP/IEP/ITP. Similarly, teachers providing instruction on the use of specialized equipment, including technology and assistive technology, should be considered as necessary professional development and a budget for such training should be planned by the LEA as needed.

The State Legislature has provided special funds for students with low incidence disabilities: visual impairments, hearing impairments, severe orthopedic impairments, and deaf-blindness. These funds are allocated to the SELPA on the basis of the total annual count of students with a low incidence disability in the SELPA.

Students who are considered visually impaired (i.e., who meet requirements for legal eligibility for special education and related services as a pupil with a low incidence disability) are eligible to access low incidence disability funds. The eligibility is based on several criteria, which include:

- A student is identified as having a low incidence disability.
- A student has assessed needs, which result from the low incidence disability, for specialized books, materials, and/or equipment.
- The specialized books, materials, and/or equipment are required under the student's IEP.
- The item requested is specialized in some way to address the student's unique educational needs that result from the low incidence disability.
- The item is not medically prescribed, and it does not supplant items typically provided by the general or special education program or by other agencies.

To provide instruction and services to meet these assessed needs, a program must provide, as indicated by the student's IEP, specialized books, materials, and equipment, including braille, large type, recordings, tactual diagrams, and technological aids and devices. If the student's IEP so indicates, these specialized books, materials, and equipment must be provided.

Those responsible for providing materials and equipment for students who are visually impaired should follow these guidelines:

- Students who are functionally blind will need tactile or auditory adaptations or both in the form of braille, recorded materials, and technological devices to function optimally within a classroom. (See Appendix C)
- Many students with low vision will often be able to use regular print, large type, or optical devices (magnifiers or video magnification systems) as their primary reading medium. Recorded materials, technological devices, and braille may also be needed. (See Appendix C)
- Students, who have visual impairments and additional disabilities, will need to use a wide variety of adaptive materials and equipment, depending on the combination and severity of the impairments. For students with multiple impairments who need a specialized curriculum, the standard adaptations (braille, access to assistive technology, use of large print and magnifiers, and so forth) may be used as modes for learning. Students may need additional time to master the operation of equipment and the use of materials.
- Students who are receiving a functional curriculum, and infants, toddlers, and preschool children will need to use real objects, picture representations, auditory, and tactual materials that may be more appropriate to enhance sensory stimulation, concept development, and readiness skills. (See Appendix E, "Specialized Books, Materials, and Equipment.")

Roles and Responsibilities of Key Individuals

What do the key individuals who are involved in the assessment or provision of instruction, services, or consultation to students with visual impairments need to know about these students' unique educational needs?

The skills, abilities, and knowledge these individuals possess in carrying out their roles and responsibilities should be understood and used.

Each educational plan (IFSP/IEP/ITP) identifies the special education instruction and services, including the specialized services, materials, and equipment, needed by a student with a visual impairment. (See Appendix F for legal requirements.) The degree of coordination that can be achieved among all individuals involved in implementing the educational plan, and the knowledge and skills of these individuals, will play a vital role in the success of the total program in meeting all of the needs of students with visual impairments.

Therefore, each of the following individuals who provide instruction and services to visually impaired students must understand his or her roles and responsibilities:

Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments

The teacher of students with visual impairments has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Has primary responsibility for specialized instruction and services required to meet the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments including all areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum.
- Possesses the skills and abilities necessary to provide and coordinate this instruction.
- Assists the student, family, special and general education personnel, and sighted peers in:
 - Understanding the unique educational needs and learning characteristics of visually impaired students.
 - Becoming aware of services and support available from local, regional, and statewide programs for visually impaired students.

- Acquiring information regarding local, state, and national resources in the education of students with visual impairments.
 - Interpreting the student's specific eye condition, the educational implications of the visual impairment, and the results of functional vision assessments to all staff and the student's family.
 - Acts as a liaison between the school and medical community to interpret eye reports and other medical information.
 - Identifying and interpreting the findings from the student's learning media assessment to determine specific media for instruction.
- Confers regularly with the classroom teacher, other general and special education personnel, families, and others to coordinate programs and services for the student with a visual impairment.
 - Assists the site administrator and teachers in making environmental adjustments for the student in the school situation and in the improvement of practices and procedures.
 - Shares responsibility with classroom teachers in the identification of instructional areas in which the student requires assistance.
 - Has responsibility for selecting and obtaining large print, recorded, or braille textbooks, supplementary materials, educational aids, and equipment needed by the student with a visual impairment and the classroom teacher to ensure the student's maximum participation in all classroom activities (Appropriate educational materials may be obtained from educational, clerical, or transcriber services; or they may be prepared or adapted by the teacher of students with visual impairments).
 - Provides specialized instruction to the student with a visual impairment, school personnel, and families in the use of necessary educational aids and equipment including the use of mainstream and assistive technology, and low vision devices.

- Provides instruction to the student with a visual impairment in the development and maintenance of skills related to the visual impairment designed to meet students' unique educational needs in the following areas, as indicated in the IFSP, IEP, or the ITP:
 - Low vision and visual efficiency skills in coordination with the eye specialist.
 - Concept development and academic skills in coordination with the classroom teacher and other staff.
 - Sensory/motor skills in coordination with the physical education instructor, occupational and physical therapist, and the orientation and mobility specialist.
- Communication skills in coordination with the general education teacher and the language, speech, and hearing specialist. These skills include:
 - Teach reading and writing in Braille, use of the slate and stylus, and use of the abacus to complete mathematical calculations.
 - Develop skills in the use of appropriate assistive technology including screen readers, scanners, Braille displays, magnification software, and use of Smart Phone and tablets.
 - Develop skills in teaching students to design powerpoint presentations and provide oral class presentations.
 - Design instruction in listening skills.
 - Develop skills in teaching organization of materials and personal belongings.
- Career/vocational education skills in coordination with career/vocational education staff and rehabilitation counselors.
- Social/emotional skills and abilities in coordination with the counselors, psychologists, and classroom teachers.
- Independent living skills in coordination with the orientation and mobility specialist, classroom teacher, and family.

- Collaborates with physical education and adaptive physical education teachers to provide meaningful sports and recreational programs for students in school and in the community.
- Provides information and creates instruction to maximize a student's use of vision in the classroom and in the community through the use of low vision devices, video magnification devices, and assistive technology.
- Provides information to classroom teachers, paraeducators, and other specialists on the best ways to maximize visual functioning for students with visual impairments and additional disabilities with respect to positioning, classroom organization, presentation of materials, and environmental modifications (e.g., lighting, visual clutter).
- Provides assistance to the classroom teacher in academic subjects and activities of the classroom that, as a direct result of the visual impairment, require adaptation or reinforcement.
- Provide information to the classroom teacher about the physical organization of the classroom to maximize the student's efficient use of vision and independence within the classroom environment.
- Provides assistance for any assessment.
- Conducts the functional low vision assessment in coordination with the orientation and mobility specialist.
- Conduct the Learning Media Assessment with the support of the classroom teacher, school psychologist, and family.
- Participates in IFSP/IEP/ITP meetings for students with visual impairments.
- Serves as a case manager or service coordinator for students with no additional impairments.
- Shares responsibility for initial and ongoing assessments, program planning, and scheduling with parents; the student, when appropriate; the classroom teacher; principal; counselor; and other school personnel.
- Schedules adequate time for assessment, instruction, planning, preparation of materials, travel, and conferences with relevant school and other key individuals (Scheduling should be flexible to meet the varying needs of each student.)

- Maintains ongoing contact with families to assist them in the development of a realistic understanding of the child’s abilities, progress, and future goals.
- Provides in-service training programs for all school personnel, students, and community groups and education for parents regarding the needs, adaptations, programs, and services for visually impaired students.
- Provides on-going training and support to Paraeducators who provide services to students with visual impairments including students with visual impairments and additional disabilities.
- Manages and oversees the instructional needs of students with visual impairments that are carried out by Paraeducators.
- Is aware of pamphlets, videos, and other public relations materials that may be useful in developing realistic and unprejudiced attitudes toward students with visual impairments.
- Is aware of pertinent resource materials to assist families and school personnel.
- Assists in the coordination of other personnel, such as transcribers, readers, counselors, orientation and mobility specialists, career/vocational education staff, and rehabilitation counselors.
- Maintains a reference library of current professional materials.
- Acquires information about current research, development, and technology and local, regional, statewide, and national resources.

The teacher of students with visual impairments in a self-contained classroom or school for students with visual impairments may be responsible for instruction in all subjects in addition to undertaking most of the previously listed responsibilities. In addition, the TVI in a special day classroom or a specialized school for the blind is responsible for implementing all areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum.

Classroom Teacher

The classroom teacher (general education, special class, or resource specialist) has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Provides classroom instruction to the student with a visual impairment.
- Works cooperatively with the teacher of students with visual impairments to:
 - Identify the educational needs and strengths, including unique educational needs of students with visual impairments.
 - Coordinate instruction and services to meet these needs and strengths.
 - Provide the teacher of students with visual impairments with classroom materials that need to be reproduced in another medium in a timely manner.
 - Determine mutually convenient times during the school day for scheduling the teacher of students with visual impairments to work with the student.
 - Provides worksheets, tests, and other materials for transcription into braille or large print in a timely manner.
 - Modify classroom procedures and environment to meet the specific needs of the visually impaired student for participation in classroom activities.
 - Exchange information concerning the student with families and other individuals on a regular basis.
 - Participate in the development and implementation of the student's IFSP/IEP/ITP.
 - Participate in team meetings to assist the student's continuous progress.
 - Participate in student's IFSP/IEP/ITP meetings.

Orientation and Mobility Specialist

The orientation and mobility specialist has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Instructs students with visual impairments in the development of skills and knowledge that enable them to travel independently, to the highest degree possible, in accord with the students' assessed needs and the students' IFSP/IEP/ITP.
- Teaches students to travel with proficiency, safety, and confidence in familiar and unfamiliar environments.
- Possesses the skills and abilities necessary to provide and coordinate this instruction.
- Provides consultation and support services to families, general and special education teachers, other school personnel, and sighted peers human guide and appropriate travel techniques.
- Confers regularly with families, classroom teachers, physical education teachers, and/or other special education personnel to assist in home and classroom environmental modifications, adaptations, and considerations and to ensure reinforcement of appropriate orientation and mobility skills that will encourage the student with a visual impairment to travel independently in these settings.
- Works with the teacher of students with visual impairments to conduct the functional vision assessment as it relates to independent travel.
- Develop and implement comprehensive O & M assessment that includes:
 - Spatial concepts
 - Awareness of body parts
 - Directionality
 - Use of human guide
 - Protective techniques for dropped objects and movement through space
 - Knowledge of cardinal directions
 - Use of the long cane (e.g., constant contact, two point touch)

- Knowledge of campus locations
 - Knowledge of organization of neighborhoods, including street address systems
 - Knowledge of community travel
 - Knowledge of various intersections
 - Use of public transportation systems including bus, paratransit, taxi services, trains
 - Ability to travel safely in neighborhoods
 - Ability to travel in small business areas
 - Ability to travel in busy and complex shopping areas
 - Ability to travel in a shopping mall
 - Demonstrates an understanding of time
 - Has a time management system
 - Keeps a schedule
 - Makes purchases in the community
- Includes in the assessment report the needs and strengths of the student and an estimate of the length and frequency of service necessary to meet identified needs
 - Prepares sequential and meaningful instruction geared to the student's assessed needs, IEP goals and objectives, functioning level, and motivational level
- I
- Prepares and uses equipment and materials for the development of orientation and mobility skills; e.g., tactile maps, models, distance low vision devices, and long canes (including adaptive canes and tips)

- Transports students to various community locations as necessary to provide meaningful instruction in realistic learning environments
- Is responsible for teaching safe techniques to use at all times and in all environments while fostering maximum independence. Provides orientation and mobility instruction, where appropriate, in the following areas:
 - Body image
 - Laterality
 - Directionality
 - Environmental concepts
 - Gross and fine motor skills related to independent travel
 - Sensory awareness, stimulation, and training
 - Spatial concepts
 - Compass direction concepts
 - Human guide procedures
 - Basic protective and information gathering technique
 - Orientation skills
 - Map skill
 - Cane skills
 - Use of residual vision for travel
 - Low vision devices related to travel skills
 - Residential travel
 - Travel in business districts and mall
 - Procedures for crossing streets, including traffic control signal

- Use of public transportation system
 - Procedures for use of the telephone for information gathering and for emergencies
 - Procedures for making purchases in the community
 - Time management systems and keeping track of a schedule
 - Procedures for interacting with the public
 - Knowledge and application of community address system
 - Procedures for travel and independent functioning in places of public accommodation
 - Skills of daily living
- Sensory/motor skills in coordination with the physical or occupational therapist and teacher of students with visual impairments
 - Evaluates students' progress on an ongoing basis
 - Keeps progress notes on each student
 - Participates in necessary parents' conferences and meetings
 - Provides in-service training to general and special education personnel, sighted peers, and family members concerning the orientation and mobility needs of the student with a visual impairment and appropriate methods and procedures for interacting with the individual who is visually impaired that will foster maximum independence and safety

Aide/Paraprofessional/Instructional Assistant

The aide/paraprofessional/instructional assistant has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Assists, as directed by the teacher of students with visual impairments or other credentialed staff, in the following areas
 - Facilitating the classroom organization and environment
 - Reinforcing the individualized instruction provided by the teacher to achieve IFSP/IEP/ITP goals and objectives
 - Planning and preparation of materials demonstrating understanding of specific techniques and skills used to adapt educational materials for use by individual students under the supervision of the teacher of students with visual impairments
 - Is familiar with the Expanded Core Curriculum needs of students with visual impairments in the classroom and in the community
 - Is knowledgeable of the literary braille code
 - Supports students with visual impairments in the classroom, but promotes independence by facilitating decision-making and problem-solving by “stepping back” and allowing the student to perform activities with indirect supervision

Parent, Guardian, or Conservator

The parent, guardian, or conservator has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Is fully informed as to why an assessment is being conducted and how it is to be conducted
- Provides information relating to the assessment, including medical information
- Gives written informed consent before an individual assessment is conducted and may receive a copy of the assessment report when requested
- Is knowledgeable about the assessment results prior to the IFSP/IEP/ITP meeting, enabling him or her to participate more effectively in the meeting

- Participates as a member of the IFSP/IEP/ITP team by
 - Stating the observation of needs, expectations, interests, and goals for the student
 - Cooperating with school and other personnel to determine goals and objectives for the child
 - Accepting responsibility for assisting in the implementation of goals and objectives
 - Participates in ensuring that an appropriate educational program is planned and implemented to meet the individual needs of the student
 - Maintains communication with school personnel to accomplish this goal, including providing feedback and suggestions about the instruction and services being provided
 - Provides, in cooperation with school personnel, appropriate support in the home and community to improve the students' daily living skills, career and vocational skills, orientation and mobility skills, and other developmental skills as a supplement to special instruction and services to meet the student's unique educational needs
- Participates in and provides ideas for formal and informal family education programs that are designed to assist families in understanding and meeting the needs of their students with visual impairments
- Has information and assistance from school personnel and other sources to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in meeting the unique educational needs of these students (See Appendix G, "Resources for Technical Assistance.")

The Student with a Visual Impairment

The student with a visual impairment has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Is involved, unless it is clearly not appropriate, in all decisions about his or her education
- Is encouraged to provide information about his or her unique educational needs, strengths, and expectations as a part of the assessment
- Participates, when appropriate, in the development of the IEP/ITP
- Chooses a career or a postsecondary educational program as a personal goal to be the basis for transition planning in a secondary student's IEP/ITP
- Gives feedback and suggestions about the instruction and services being provided
- Has high expectations and works toward achieving them to become as independent as possible
- Takes responsibility for keeping a daily schedule, organizing books and materials, and keeping track of assignments
- Takes responsibility for the appropriate use and care of low vision devices and assistive technology devices including laptop computers, note-taking devices, tablets, and scanners

Eye Specialist

The eye specialist, a licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist, makes vision-related recommendations to the classroom teacher, teacher of students with visual impairments, orientation and mobility specialist, other professional staff, and families. Some optometrists and ophthalmologists specialize in low vision and have the necessary equipment and expertise to assess low vision and prescribe low vision devices.

Physical Education or Adapted Physical Education Specialist

The physical education or adapted physical education specialist has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Is knowledgeable about unique educational needs in the area of sensory/motor skills
- Works closely with the teacher of students with visual impairments, the orientation and mobility specialist, and the occupational or physical therapist to share needed information and coordinate services that may be provided by these individuals
- Is familiar with specialized or adapted equipment in the area of physical education for students who are visually impaired

Occupational or Physical Therapist

The occupational or physical therapist has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Is aware of unique educational needs of individuals who are visually impaired, particularly in the areas of sensory/motor skills
- Works closely with the teacher of students with visual impairments, orientation and mobility specialist, and physical education staff to coordinate services
- Assesses and provides direct or consultative therapy services

Speech/Language Pathologist

The speech/language pathologist has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Understands the differences in language development among students with visual impairments
- Adapts and modifies therapy to meet the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments
- Collaborates with the TVI to adapt augmentative communication devices with braille, tactile markers, or simple and high contrast pictures

- Assists students with visual impairments with social pragmatics
- Works with students with visual impairments to improve their oral motor functioning

School Nurse

The school nurse has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Acts as a liaison with health professionals, special educators, other school personnel, and families
- Coordinates vision and hearing screening, including making referrals and providing hearing screening to students with visual impairments
- Provides assistance in determining the need for additional health assessment; e.g., physical examinations and referrals to other agencies, including California Children Services and Regional Centers
- Coordinates health care plans for students who have visual impairments and additional disabilities who may need special protocols for feeding, suctioning, injections, or seizures

School Psychologist or Counselor/Social Worker

The school psychologist has the following roles and responsibilities for serving students with visual impairments:

- Collaborate with the teacher of students with visual impairments to insure that assessment materials are provided in an appropriate medium to support the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments.
- Provide psychoeducational testing for initial and triennial evaluations.
- Have knowledge of the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments, and know how to adapt testing, and interpret results with respect to the student's unique educational needs.
- Assess student's behavioral needs and provide information to the classroom teacher, the teacher of students with visual impairments, the O&M specialist, other professionals, and family to support success in the classroom.

- Develop and design behavior support plans that take into account the impact of a student's visual impairment.
- Work with students in small groups to provide social skills training and counseling support.
- Understand the unique psycho-social needs of students with visual impairments.
- Have knowledge about accommodations and modifications for testing.

Program Specialist

The program specialist has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Have in-depth knowledge of the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments, and have experience in providing education for these students.
- Provide technical assistance and in-service training to all personnel serving students with visual impairments and their families.
- Have knowledge about local, state, and national resources for individuals who are visually impaired.
- Have knowledge about legal requirements regarding students with visual impairments and other students with low incidence disabilities (See Appendix F.)
- Is especially knowledgeable about program options and services available within the SELPA, county, or school district.

Early Childhood Specialist

The early childhood specialist has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Work with the infant or preschooler with a visual impairment and his or her family in a home-based or center-based program.
- Work collaboratively with the family, the teacher of students with visual impairments, and other members of the transdisciplinary team, including members of other agencies, when appropriate, to:
 - Identify each child's areas of unique needs related to his or her visual impairment and other needs, including those of the family.
 - Coordinate services to meet these needs.
 - Identify each child's need to receive services/consultation/evaluation/assessment from the teacher of students with visual impairments.
 - Work with the teacher of students with visual impairments to provide toys and other materials and equipment which are appropriate to the needs of the child.
 - Include the teacher of students with visual impairments in all IFSP meetings, including planning for transition.
 - Determine a mutually convenient time for the teacher of students with visual impairments to work with the child and to coordinate services.
 - Modify the environment and activities with the assessment of the teacher of the visually impaired to meet the specific needs of the child.
 - Exchange information on progress with the family, the teacher of the visually impaired and other members of the transdisciplinary team on a regular basis.
 - Coordinate services from therapists and agencies including regional centers and California Children Services.

Transition Specialist

The specialist in career/vocational education has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Participate as a contributing member of the ITP team.
- Facilitate participation of outside services or agencies or both in ITP meetings.
- Coordinate with other programs or agencies, such as Workability; Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA); Regional Occupational Centers/ Programs (ROC/Ps); and regional centers.
- Coordinate services with the Department of Rehabilitation (student must be 16 years old to become a rehab client).
- Be aware of unique educational needs in career/ vocational education and in other related areas, including appropriate career and vocational assessment tools.
- Consult and work with the student, teacher of students with visual impairments, orientation and mobility specialist, and families to determine realistic goals and instruction in this and related areas.
- Be knowledgeable about the expanding career/ vocational education opportunities currently available to individuals who are visually impaired, including the use of technological aids and adapted and assistive devices.
- Collaborate with the rehabilitation counselor for the blind in the local office of the California Department of Rehabilitation and with other related staff as appropriate.
- Act as a liaison to the ITP team regarding local and regional vocational programs.

Assistive Technology Specialist

The technology specialist has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Have detailed knowledge of current trends in educational curricula, media, technology, and strategies to make these learning tools accessible to students with disabilities, including those with visual impairments.
- Have access to databases and other information concerning current specialized or adaptive technology, media, and materials.
- Work with other educators and specialists and make recommendations to assess the need for and the provision of needed assistive technology, including training.
- Facilitate the modification of educational technologies used by schools so that they may be used by students with visual impairments.
- Work collaboratively with the Assistive Technology staff at the California School for the Blind to insure that appropriate technology equipment and services are provided to students with visual impairments

Certified Braille Specialist (Transcriber)

The certified braille specialist (transcriber) has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Hold Library of Congress Certification in Literary Braille for preparing materials in braille
- Adhere to standards of the Braille Authority of North America when preparing braille materials in mathematics, music, foreign language, or computer notation and demonstrates knowledge of specific braille codes
- Have knowledge of embossing tools and software, techniques, and media and understand the concepts to be presented when preparing tactual materials
- Adhere to the transcribing standards and procedures for large print of the National Braille Association and qualify as a typist according to the standards of the local educational agency when preparing materials in large type

- Have knowledge about techniques used to prepare large-type materials appropriately with enlarging photocopiers and scanners with computer software
- Have the necessary competencies to prepare aural media, including knowledge of recording equipment, and the ability to comprehend and present materials at an appropriate pace and in a well-modulated voice
- Work closely with the teacher of students with visual impairments to ensure that materials are transcribed appropriately to meet the needs of the students in the classroom
- Have knowledge about resources and agencies that provide materials and services to students with visual impairments, identifies needs, and locates and procures required specialized books and materials
- Demonstrate knowledge of and ability to operate a variety of specialized equipment and software used in the production of braille and large-print materials, including braillewriters, computers, specialized software, and peripheral equipment such as embossers and scanners
- Receive, record, distribute, and maintain inventories of specialized books, materials, and equipment needed by students who are visually impaired

Reader

The reader has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Possess the skills necessary to read print materials to students with visual impairments, including
 - Knowledge in the use of recording equipment
 - Good articulation and pronunciation and a pleasant voice
 - Ability to follow the directions of the teacher and student
 - Ability to meet deadlines
 - Work under the supervision of the teacher of students with visual impairments when the reader is a sighted student or volunteer

Ancillary Staff in Residential Programs

The roles and responsibilities of staff members will vary, depending on the agency in which they work.

Dormitory personnel

Dormitory personnel have the following roles and responsibilities:

- They are responsible for the health, safety, and well-being of students when the students are not in school. Since these staff members engage in activities with students similar to those normally provided by parents, these personnel should be aware of the unique needs of students and coordinate with instructional staff, particularly in the area of daily living skills, recreation and leisure skills, and social skills so that consistency in expected behavior occurs.

Food services staff

Food service staff members have the following roles and responsibilities:

- They are responsible for planning, preparing, and serving meals to students. Diets should be monitored so that they meet the special needs of students. Food services staff should coordinate with instructional staff, when appropriate, in reinforcing students' eating skills, placement of food on a plate, and assisting students when moving through a cafeteria-style food line.

Health services staff:

Health services staff members have the following roles and responsibilities:

- They are responsible for the health and medical needs of students and should communicate with appropriate personnel regarding the changing health and medical needs of students, particularly concerning medications and special health care needs.

Coordination of Instruction and Services

How does the program coordinate instruction and services to students with visual impairments?

To be effective, all instruction and services should be coordinated to focus on the student who is visually impaired. Meetings concerning the individualized education plan and the program itself should form the foundation for the coordination of instruction and services.

It is important, however, that all key individuals involved develop formal and informal ways to communicate with one another on an ongoing basis to ensure that the individualized education program is implemented in a coordinated manner. Since many key individuals are often involved in the education of students with visual impairments, one staff member should be assigned to facilitate this coordination among all key individuals, including the family. In most cases, the teacher of students with visual impairments will have this responsibility when the visual impairment is the student's primary disability.

Information for Families Planning and Providing Instruction and Services

Unique Educational Needs—Remember:

- The unique needs of the student with visual impairments guide the educational program.
- The emphasis and priorities of the educational program will vary depending on the age of the student.
- The annual review of the educational program will define the type of instruction, the services, materials and equipment needed.
- The educational placement is based on the student's needs, and a least restrictive environment is considered. This could include California School for the Blind.

Compensatory or Functional Academic Skills Including Modes of Communication Critical considerations when implementing the educational program:

- The classroom teacher, the student with visual impairments and the teacher for the visually impaired need to work closely so the student have access to the information and can learn new concepts.
- Other specialists may be involved when the student has additional disabilities.

Compensatory or Functional Academic Skills Including Modes of Communication Does your child with visual impairment have additional disabilities? What kinds of adaptations are included in your child's education?

- Modify the physical environment so the student can use his or her vision better and be more independent.
- Adapt printed material so it is easier to read.
- Provide additional information when presenting pictures or photos.
- Provide special equipment so the student can access the curriculum.
- Encourage the student's active participation in the classroom.
- Work on functional literacy and communication through the program.

Compensatory or Functional Academic Skills Including Modes of Communication

Three areas in which students with visual impairments need specialized instruction:

- **Concept development:** Vision plays a big role in learning concepts. Children with visual impairment may have limited or no access to visual information. They will need to learn concepts in a sequential manner so they can develop abstract thinking.
- **Listening skills:** Learning to listen, comprehend, analyze and memorize information is critical for students with visual impairments. Those students who are functionally blind may need systematic instruction and practice to learn these skills.
- **Organization and study skills:** In order to success academically, students with visual impairments need to keep their educational materials organized, keep track of their assignments and tests, and need to learn how to access in a systematic way the different formats information is provided.

Sensory/Motor Instruction

Visual impairments may hinder the natural process of physical development. Team members such as general and special education teachers, teachers of students with visual impairments, adapted physical education specialists, orientation and mobility specialists, and occupational and physical therapist may all provide instruction in this area.

Orientation and Mobility Instruction

Orientation and Mobility instruction instructs the student with visual impairments on understanding, interacting and moving in the physical environment. It encourages:

- Independent traveling
- Exploration
- Safety
- Independent living skills for the community and independence
- Appropriate social interaction with the people in the environment
- The use of specialized equipment.

Social Interaction Skills

Many acceptable social behaviors go unnoticed by students with visual impairments unless they are taught to them with an appropriate demonstration of *how* and an explanation of *when* and *why* one would use such a behavior.

Social Interaction Skills

Affective education is critical for the self-concept and self-esteem of students with visual impairments.

Social Interaction Skills

Students with visual impairments need a much more intensive and conceptually oriented social/sexual education program than their sighted peers.

Psychological Implications

Some of the psychological problems a student with visual impairments may have are caused by a lack of understanding and acceptance of their visual condition.

Independent Living Skills

One of the most effective that families can teach daily living skills is through the involvement of family members who provide instruction, as appropriate, in the child's home.

Recreation and Leisure Activities

Students with visual impairments need direct exposure to a variety of leisure activities such as art, music, dance and drama; to different hobbies like playing chess or board games, or knitting or crocheting; and to different sports (adapted and non-adapted) such as swimming, hiking, roller skating, ice skating, biking, skiing, adapted tennis, adapted basketball, beeper baseball, and goal ball.

Career Education

Career and vocational education should begin in preschool and continue through four phases: awareness, exploration, preparation, and participation.

Use of Technology and Assistive Technology

Students with visual impairments require explicit and specific instruction in order to use mainstream *and* specialized technology.

Use of Technology and Assistive Technology

By law states need to provide the technology that individuals with disabilities need.

Sensory Efficiency Skills

A student with usable residual vision should receive a functional vision assessment at least every three years, and may benefit from a low vision evaluation.

Sensory Efficiency Skills

Students with visual impairments need instruction on how to more efficiently use the other senses—touch, hearing, smell, proprioception, and vestibular—to compensate for the loss of information through the sense of vision.

Self-Determination

Self-determination skills are critical in the education of students with visual impairments. They need to learn that they are separate from their environment, and that they can control it by making choices, by advocating for their visual needs, and by setting up goals.

Specialized Books, Materials, and Equipment

- The individualized educational program of your child with visual impairments needs to state the educational materials and assistive technology that the child requires to meet their unique educational needs.
- A specialized technology assessment defines the educational materials, assistive technology equipment the student needs to use.
- The State Legislature has provided special funds for students with low incidence disabilities: visual impairments, hearing impairments, severe orthopedic impairments, and deaf-blindness. These funds are allocated to the Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) on the basis of the total annual count of students with low incidence disabilities in the SELPA.

Roles and Responsibilities of Key Individuals

The degree of coordination that can be achieved among all individuals involved in implementing the educational plan, and the knowledge and skills of these individuals, will play a vital role in the success of the total program.

It is important that all key individuals involved develop formal and informal ways to communicate with one another on an ongoing basis to ensure that the IEP is implemented in a coordinated manner.

Roles and Responsibilities of Key Individuals

Depending on the unique needs of the student with visual impairments, the key individuals of the educational program may comprise:

- Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments
- Classroom Teacher
- Orientation and Mobility Specialist
- Aide/Paraprofessional/Instructional Assistant
- Parent, Guardian, or Conservator
- The Student with a Visual Impairment
- Eye Specialist
- Physical Education or Adapted Physical Education Specialist
- Occupational or Physical Therapist
- Speech/Language Pathologist
- School Nurse
- School Psychologist or Counselor/Social Worker
- Program Specialist
- Early Childhood Specialist
- Transition Specialist
- Assistive Technology Specialist
- Certified Braille Specialist (Transcriber)
- Reader
- Ancillary Staff in Residential Programs

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Chapter Four

Organizing and Supporting Instruction and Services

This chapter presents a discussion of the provision of services for students with visual impairments, including students who have visual impairments and additional disabilities. Also discussed are administrative roles and responsibilities, placement in the least restrictive environment, class sizes and caseloads, qualified personnel, staff development and parent education, guidelines for facilities, emergency procedures, materials and equipment, transportation, and program improvement.

The Importance of Collaboration

How does the program ensure that appropriate instruction and services are provided through a full range of program options and support services?

Because of the unique educational needs and low incidence disabilities of students with visual impairments, collaboration is often necessary when the site, district, county, or SELPA is unable to meet the students' unique needs.

Sharing service among LEAs and collaborating among professionals is an approach that involves SELPAs and other agencies within a geographic region in working together more effectively and efficiently to improve the coordination, provision, and quality of specialized program options and services to students with low incidence disabilities, families, personnel who serve them, and administrators responsible for their programs. Three common models of team approaches have been widely adopted when providing services to students with visual impairments. These include multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary models.

- In a multidisciplinary model, each individual involved in the services is only responsible for the areas of his/her specialty.
- In an interdisciplinary model, team members work together to create programs and services, but services may be provided by individual professionals. This model requires effective communication among team members.
- In a transdisciplinary team model, while one or two key team members are responsible for providing direct services, the other members provide consultation and support to the key members for achieving common goals that the team would like to implement.

For students with visual impairments, this support is planned and designed to address local needs in the following broad areas:

- Providing assistance in specialized assessment, instruction, curriculum, and support to identify and address the unique educational needs of students with low incidence disabilities, as outlined in Chapter One and Chapter Three of these guidelines. For example, in order to provide staff that is knowledgeable about assessing the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments, it is often effective to provide for regional assessment teams of appropriately trained individuals or other ways of sharing assessment expertise regionally.
- Providing a full range of specialized program options and support services, including technology, to meet the identified unique educational needs of these students, as outlined later in this chapter. For example, in order to provide the needed specialized instruction and services by appropriately credentialed staff in an efficient and cost-effective manner, a SELPA may find it necessary to cooperate with adjacent SELPAs, particularly in rural areas. Other options include contracting with private agencies for services, using telecommunication, and using staff members who are dually credentialed as teachers of students with visual impairments and as orientation and mobility specialists.
- Providing specialized personnel development for all staff serving these students and for their families to assist them in meeting the unique educational needs of their children. For example, local, regional, and statewide needs assessments for staff development and parent education often do not reflect the specialized needs of staff and families of students with low incidence disabilities. In order to provide this specialized in-service training or family education, it is often necessary to use a regional or statewide approach. The outreach services provided by the California School for the Blind, for example, allow LEAs and SELPAs with valuable resources like comprehensive educational assessment, assistive technology assessment and training, and low vision services.

New programs for students with visual impairments should be planned and existing programs modified so that the assessment, instruction, and services necessary to meet these students' varied unique educational needs, including needed specialized materials and equipment, can be provided through coordinated administrative services.

The Special Education Division of the California Department of Education can assist local agencies in developing quality programs to address local needs in providing

appropriate support services to students with visual impairments, their families, and staff responsible for their programs.

(See Appendix G "Resources for Technical Assistance" and Appendix F "Legal Requirements.")

Administrative Roles and Responsibilities

In this section the roles and responsibilities are examined for staff from the special education local plan area, the supervisor of personnel serving students with visual impairments, and the site administrator or designee.

Special Education Local Plan Area

Each SELPA submits a local plan to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction which includes the following:

- A description of services to be provided by each district and county office, demonstrating that the SELPA is of sufficient size and scope to ensure that all individuals with exceptional needs, including students with visual impairments, have access to services and instruction appropriate to meet their needs, as specified in their education plans (IFSP/ IEP/ITP) Responsibility for provision of and consultation to special education programs and support services for students with visual impairments must be clearly defined, including, when necessary, provisions for coordinating with adjacent SELPAs, other public agencies, and other states and contracting with private agencies.)
- A description of the governance and administration of the plan (The roles and responsibilities of SELPA administrators, district and county, are unique to each SELPA. See Appendix F for legal requirements.)

Supervisor of Personnel

The supervisor of personnel serving students with visual impairments has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Is knowledgeable about the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments, including students with visual impairments and additional disabilities and the roles and responsibilities of the personnel being supervised so that he or she may assist in improving the instruction and services being provided to meet these needs
- Is knowledgeable about the other areas outlined in this chapter, as well as funding sources (see Appendix E) and legal requirements (see Appendix F), so that he or she can be responsive and supportive of improving instruction and services based on the changing needs of students, staff, and families

Site Administrator or Designee

The site administrator or designee has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Is knowledgeable about the needs of students with visual impairments, including students with visual impairments and additional disabilities and the roles and responsibilities of the general education teacher, the teacher of students with visual impairments, and other professionals working with these students
- Assists in the coordination of all instruction and services in the school, including regular course of study, instruction, and special services, such as specialized services for English Language Learners and special education support services, including alternative instructional strategies and common core standards
- Assists in promoting and supporting the least restrictive environment for students by helping the school in accepting the student, special education staff, families of students with visual impairments as a part of the school (This acceptance can be supported through coordinated staff in-service training and parent education and by providing information to all students in the school about visual impairments through classroom activities, cross-age tutoring, and student assemblies.)
- Provides facilities that are appropriate to meeting the unique needs of students who are visually impaired, as outlined later in this chapter

Placement in the Least Restrictive Environment

How does the program ensure that students with visual impairments are appropriately placed in the least restrictive environment on the basis of their educational needs?

When making placement decisions, the IEP team should:

- Focus on the assessed educational needs and strengths of each student with a visual impairment.
- Consider each student's need for supplementary aids and services.
- Assess the feasibility of implementing the student's IEP in a general education setting.
- Determine a placement in the least restrictive environment that appropriately addresses the student's needs and strengths.
- Consider placement options that are nearest to the student's home.
- Review each student's placement on at least an annual basis.
- Change the placement as the needs of the student change.
- In IEP meetings discuss an array of placement options for students with visual impairments and for students with visual impairments and additional disabilities, including the California School for the Blind.

Goal 5 of *The National Agenda for the Education of Children and Youths with Visual Impairments, Including those with Multiple Disabilities, Revised* specifies that LEAs provide access to a full array of service delivery options for all students. Accordingly, the least restrictive environment for each student may vary according to the intensity of the student's needs. The least restrictive environment is determined on an individual basis, according to the student's IFSP/IEP/ITP. Additional considerations for appropriate placements in the least restrictive environment include the following:

- Students may be grouped with peers who do not have disabilities to provide appropriate academic and behavioral models, and to encourage high expectations for achievement.
- Placement in a general education setting does not guarantee that the student's needs are automatically met. Appropriate services, supports, and supplementary aids are necessary to provide an individualized, appropriate education in accordance with the student's IFSP/IEP/ITP.

- Students with visual impairments who have the necessary skills and services should be placed, to the maximum extent appropriate, with students who do not have disabilities.
- Students who require intensive specialized services should be placed where these services can be provided. Placing a student in an inclusive setting without adequate services can actually be more restrictive.
- Placement decisions must not be based on the needs of the school district, budget restrictions, or the inability to hire qualified personnel. Rather, these decisions are based on each student's needs as specified in the IFSP/IEP/ITP.
- The team needs to consider if the visual impairment is the primary disability, and if services from a teacher of students with visual impairments or an orientation and mobility specialist will enhance a student's skill development.
- When determining the placement and services for students who have a visual impairment and additional disabilities, the team should consider how the student's visual impairment impacts learning.
- Staff members and peers without disabilities should be prepared with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote acceptance and social interaction.

The IFSP/IEP/ITP team should be creative when deciding on options that will best meet the needs of each individual student. The use of innovation in making these important placement decisions may be especially relevant in rural areas, where placement options may include: exploring programs in neighboring SELPAs, adapting existing programs and services, examining a placement at the California School for the Blind, and exploring services provided by public and private agencies.

A single, ideal placement may not exist where a student's needs, can be met throughout the student's entire educational career. Thus, the most appropriate placement and least restrictive environment must be re-evaluated by the team on a regular basis. Various program options should be considered based on the student's current and future academic, social, emotional, behavioral, and vocational needs. Access to the core curriculum, Expanded Core Curriculum, and social environment must also be provided.

A policy on least restrictive environment has been adopted by the State Board of Education. This policy paper and technical assistance in this area are available from the California Department of Education (see Appendix G).

Program Options

The following section describes the recommended minimum options in a range of placement options and service delivery models available to students with visual impairments, including students with visual impairments and additional disabilities. From these options, the IFSP/IEP/ITP team selects the most appropriate placement in the least restrictive environment for each student. Options are listed according to the intensity of specialized instruction and services provided by the teacher of students with visual impairments, from the least intensive to the most intensive; other specialized services, including orientation and mobility, assistive technology, transcriber services, and readers, are provided to students in any of these settings in accordance with the IFSP/IEP/ITP.

Continuum of Alternative Placements

According to IDEA, schools must ensure the availability of a *continuum of alternative placements* to provide options for educating students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. This continuum of placements may consist of the following options:

General Education Class without Specialized Services

Students are enrolled in a general education classroom in the school they would attend if they did not have a visual impairment. Direct services are not provided by a teacher of students with visual impairments; however, students may be eligible to receive modifications and accommodations through a 504 Plan. A 504 Plan may be an option for students who do not meet eligibility for an IEP, but who would still benefit from support.

General Education Class with Specialized Services

Students are enrolled in a general education classroom. Assistance, instruction, and consultation are provided by the teacher of students with visual impairments according to students' needs for these specialized services.

Special Education Class

Students placed in a special education classroom ordinarily require specialized instruction for all or most of the school day. Instruction that emphasizes both subject matter skills (Common Core State Standards) and the development of special skills is provided by a teacher of students with visual impairments in coordination with other appropriate staff. Students may profit by participating in general education classes in selected academic subject areas or in nonacademic areas as appropriate.

Special School for Students with Visual Impairments

Students who need intensive services throughout the day may attend a special school that provides services to meet the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments. These students require specialized instruction and support services related to their visual impairment that are not available in their local school districts. Students enrolled in special school programs should have access to programs in local schools to provide opportunities for inclusion as appropriate. Special school programs may be offered on a nonresidential or residential basis. These programs include:

- A special school for students with visual impairments in a local educational agency
- The California School for the Blind (See Appendix D)

Home Instruction

For various reasons, families may elect to homeschool a child with a visual impairment. Homeschooled students are still eligible to receive specialized services according to their needs; however, students enrolled in a private homeschool program are typically not eligible to receive services beyond those offered in a public school program.

Hospital or Other Public or Private Institution

A hospital or private institution may be a program option when the student's needs cannot be met by a less restrictive placement. Services may be provided by nonpublic schools and agencies when such services are not available in a public school; e.g., orientation and mobility instruction, instruction in daily living skills, and infant and preschool services. (See Appendix G, "Resources for Technical Assistance," for additional information.)

Service Delivery Models

Services provided by a teacher of students with visual impairments may follow one of the following models, depending on each student's individual needs:

Consultation Services

A consultation model may be initiated when students with visual impairments, including those with additional disabilities, do not require direct services from a teacher of students with visual impairments or an orientation and mobility specialist. In this model, the teacher of students with visual impairments provides instruction to the adults who interact with the student. Specifically, the classroom staff may require on-going information or training on how to provide specialized support. Students with visual impairments and additional disabilities may require direct instruction to acquire specific skills, such as human guide or learning to scan for objects in the classroom, and then move to consultation services, whereby the classroom teacher or Paraeducators follows through with direct implementation.

Itinerant Services

An itinerant teacher of students with visual impairments provides direct services to students based on their IFSPs/IEPs/ITPs. An itinerant teacher may cover a wide geographical area and provide services to students in various placements. These services may be provided in the classroom environment or in another setting as appropriate. For younger children, the itinerant teacher of students with visual impairments can provide intervention strategies in the home or in a preschool setting.

Resource Room for Students with Visual Impairments

Students placed in a resource room have more intensive needs that, ordinarily, require daily support services and specialized instruction from a teacher of students with visual impairments. Students also attend general or special education classrooms for varying amounts of the school day according to their individual needs, as determined by the educational team, including the teacher of students with visual impairments and the classroom teachers.

Program Options for Infants and Preschool Children

Various options exist at the infant and preschool program level in California. All program options, however, may not be available in each community. The following options are cited as examples, not as a complete list:

- Public school programs for infants and preschoolers with disabilities
- Preschools that are supported by private funding
- State preschool programs

- Children's centers
- School-age parenting and infant development programs
- Head Start programs
- Family information and counseling services, such as: as Family Resource Networks

Role of the TVI in Providing Infant/Preschool Services

- Referring children to the appropriate educational facilities
- Providing appropriate assessment information to the educational team regarding the child's visual and developmental needs
- Assisting infant and preschool teachers in methods of integrating and educating young children with visual impairments, including students with visual impairments and additional disabilities
- Facilitating opportunities for families to network with other families of students with visual impairments to exchange ideas and information
- Providing opportunities for families to meet and consult with adolescents and adults who are visually impaired
- Providing information about specialized programs and services, resources and materials, and agencies that help to support families

Class Sizes and Caseloads

How does the program establish class sizes and caseloads that allow for providing specialized instruction and services based on the educational needs of students with visual impairments?

It is essential to establish class sizes or caseloads for the teacher of students with visual impairments and for the orientation and mobility specialist that are appropriate to assess and provide the instruction and services necessary to meet the unique educational needs of students who are visually impaired. It is also important to monitor the workload of support service personnel, such as Paraeducators, transcribers (certified Braille specialists) and readers.

It is recommended that programs use one or both of the following options in determining class sizes and caseloads:

Option I

Develop a process for establishing and monitoring the class size or a caseload for the teacher of students with visual impairments or for the orientation and mobility specialist depending on the time required for:

- Providing instruction based on the severity or intensity of students' needs and age of student:
 - The intensity of the student's needs is largely affected by the severity of the student's impairment. Typically, students who use Braille as their primary learning medium require extensive intervention and modification throughout their academic careers. On the other hand, students with low vision may function well academically, but require support in various aspects of the Expanded Core Curriculum.
 - The consistency of instructional service and length of service will vary as the student progresses through the stages of literacy. For instance, when the student is in the beginning literacy stage (kindergarten to third grade), it is recommended that consistency be high [daily contact], and the total time per day devoted to instruction be as long as one-two hours
 - Additional time consideration should be given to instruction in the Expanded Core Curriculum including assistive technology, orientation and mobility, independent living skills, compensatory skills, sensory efficiency skills, social interaction skills, recreation and leisure and career and vocational education. The time spent on providing instruction on the expanded core curriculum will vary from student to student.

- Providing comprehensive assessment related to the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments
- Ongoing communication/collaboration between school personnel and the responsible supervisor or administrator to ensure that students are receiving appropriate instruction and services in accordance with the IFSP/IEP/ITP and the changing needs of students.
- Securing and preparing needed specialized materials, media, and equipment and implementing adaptations into student's classroom
- Training teachers and paraprofessionals on educational strategies that meet the student's unique needs
- Ensuring adequate travel time:
 - Number of schools served
 - Location of schools served
- Consulting with medical personnel and community resource persons
- Consulting and assisting families
- Attending meetings, preparing reports, and recordkeeping

Below are several links that offer tools such as formulas and severity rating scales, which could help determine caseloads for teachers of students with visual impairments as well as for orientation and mobility specialists.

The Michigan Vision Severity Rating Scale, designed for determining the type and amount of services for infants:

<http://www.tsbvi.edu/infants/3273-determining-type-and-amount-of-services-for-infants>

The Michigan Vision Services Severity Rating Scale:

<http://www.tsbvi.edu/images/documents/VSSRS-2013.pdf>

The Michigan Vision Services Severity Rating Scale for Students with Additional Needs:

<http://www.tsbvi.edu/images/documents/VSSRSplus-2013.pdf>

The Michigan Orientation and Mobility Severity Rating Scale and The Michigan Orientation & Mobility Severity Rating Scale for Students with Additional Needs:

<http://mde-llo.cenmi.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=RrNrK5Tc73E%3d&tabid=1901>

Connecticut Plan for Determining Caseload Size for Teachers of the Visually Impaired:

<http://www.tsbvi.edu/national-agenda/1209-national-agenda-goal-4-connecticut-plan-for-determining-caseload-size-for-teachers-of-the-visually-impaired>

QPVI: Caseload Analysis, Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired:

www.tsbvi.edu

*Information about consistency and length of instructional time for teaching Braille literacy was gathered from the Delphi study, *“Ensuring High-Quality Instruction for Students in Braille Literacy Programs,”* by Koenig and Holbrook (2000).“

Information on expanded core curriculum, caseload tools and severity scales were from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired website.

Caseload tools and severity scales were from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired website.

Option II

Establish local caseloads and class sizes based on the age and the severity of the needs of the students being served and the instruction and services needed to meet these needs.

The following ranges for class sizes and caseloads are based on state and national averages and may be used as a general guide in establishing local caseloads and class sizes. These ranges should not be viewed as establishing minimum state requirements.

<i>Type of program</i>	<i>Class size and caseload ranges</i>
Resource room (one teacher and one Paraeducator)	8 to 12 students
Special classrooms (one teacher and one Paraeducator): -Infants or preschool -Kindergarten through third grade -Fourth through twelfth grade -Multiple disabilities	4 to 8 students 6 to 10 students 8 to 12 students 3 to 7 students
Itinerant teacher of students with visual impairments	8 to 12 students
Orientation and mobility specialist	8 to 12 students
Home-based infants or preschool age	13 to 17 children

Local caseloads and class sizes of staff may fall above or below these ranges according to the time requirements outlined in Option I. Two tools used to determine caseload size and services are the Caseload Analysis from the Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired, and the Severity Rating Scale

Qualified Personnel

How does the program provide qualified certificated and non-certificated personnel who have the skills and abilities necessary to conduct assessments and to provide instruction and services that meet the educational needs of students with visual impairments?

Provision of necessary qualified staff is a critical component in providing appropriate assessments, instruction, and services.

Certificated Personnel

Programs for students who are visually impaired provide the necessary appropriately credentialed professional staff; including the following (see Chapter Three for roles and responsibilities and Appendix F for legal requirements):

- Teachers of students with visual impairments who are credentialed in this area and possess the skills and abilities necessary to meet the unique educational needs of the students with visual impairments they serve (See Appendix G, “Resources for Technical Assistance.”. See Appendix F for legal requirements.)
- Orientation and mobility specialists who are credentialed in this area and possess the skills and abilities necessary to meet the unique orientation and mobility needs of the students with visual impairments they serve (See Appendix G.)
- Assessment personnel, including a psychologist, as appropriate, who are knowledgeable about assessing students who are visually impaired (See Chapter One for additional information regarding assessment personnel.)
- Other professional staff, including, but not limited to, general and special education teachers; program specialists; language, speech, and hearing specialists; physical and occupational therapists; adapted physical education specialists; school nurses; early childhood specialists; recreation therapists; social workers; guidance counselors; and vocational specialists

All staff should be knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities in providing and coordinating needed instruction and services as outlined in Chapter Three. Personnel serving preschool children should have competencies and experience in the areas of education for children who are visually impaired and in early childhood education.

Non-certificated Personnel

Each local or regional program for students with visual impairments should also provide, as needed, transcribers, readers, paraprofessionals, and other personnel who possess the skills necessary to meet the unique educational needs of the students who are served. These individuals should receive training on how to work effectively with students who are blind or visually impaired, including students with additional disabilities.

Students who use braille as their primary reading medium should have equal access to the same educational materials at the same time as their sighted classmates. Programs for students with visual impairments should provide the services of certified braille specialists to ensure that daily assignments, tests, work sheets, and textbooks are available to these students. Students must be provided with braille and tactual materials that have been transcribed in accordance with established codes and formats for literary, Nemeth (math and science), music, and computer notation.

Students who use large print as their primary reading medium should have equal access to the same educational materials at the same time as their sighted classmates. Local or regional programs for students with visual impairments should provide these students with the services of knowledgeable transcribers (certified braille specialists) to ensure that daily assignments, tests, work sheets, and textbooks have been transcribed or enlarged according to accepted standards. In addition, students with low vision should receive the appropriate assessment and instruction in the use of low vision devices, including magnifiers, monocular telescopes, and video magnification devices to gain immediate access to printed material in the classroom.

Use of Paraeducators:

Careful consideration should be given to the use and function of Paraeducators for students with visual impairments. When appropriately trained, by credentialed personnel, the Paraeducators can support the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments. The Paraeducators should not be used in place of a teacher for students with visual impairments or an orientation and mobility instructor. The IFSP/IEP/ITP team needs to consider the amount of time and the intensity of service the Paraeducators will provide to the student. Please see Chapter Three for a detailed description of the role and responsibilities of the Paraeducators.

Staff Development and Parent Education

How does the program provide staff development and parent education that are based on a needs assessment reflecting the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments?

Staff development, based on a continuing needs assessment, is provided for all special and general education personnel regarding the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments and the roles and responsibilities of the staff in meeting these needs. (See Chapter Three for a discussion of the roles and responsibilities of staff and Appendix F for legal requirements.)

Family education based on a continuing needs assessment is provided in every local or regional program for students who are visually impaired and is designed to:

- Assist families in their roles and responsibilities to meet the special developmental needs of their children with visual impairments through ongoing two-way communication. (See Chapter Three for a discussion of the roles and responsibilities of families.)
- Provide families with needed information pertinent to the education of their children, including information regarding the range of educational program options, related agencies and services at local, state, and national levels, conferences related to visual impairment and special education, and recreation and leisure opportunities and agencies. (See Appendix F for legal requirements.)

Because of the low numbers of staff and families of students with visual impairments, their specialized needs are often not addressed or are given a low priority, especially when staff development and family education are based on a general needs assessment. Collaboration on a regional level is often necessary to meet these specialized needs.

Guidelines for Facilities

How does the program provide for the design or modification of facilities to enhance the provision of instruction and services to students with visual impairments?

Facilities should be provided to meet the unique educational needs of students who are visually impaired. Resource rooms or special classrooms used in programs for the students who are visually impaired should be the same as the standard size for regular classrooms of the school system and should include:

- Appropriate lighting meeting minimum standards, including lighting which is adjustable to meet the varying needs of students who have low vision
- Adequate storage space for specialized books, equipment, and materials
- A separate area for listening activities
- Furniture and chalkboards (black or white) with nongame surfaces
- A sufficient number of electrical outlets for specialized equipment
- A location on the site that allows convenient accessibility for all students with visual impairments who are attending general education classes

The teacher of students with visual impairments should provide assistance in designing and modifying facilities to meet the needs of students who will be using them.

The following guidelines should be considered:

- Appropriate bathroom facilities should be provided students with multiple disabilities and primary-age students.
- Adequate working space, including space for safe storage of equipment and materials, with proper lighting for individual instruction and counseling should be available on a consistent basis in each school attended by a student with a visual impairment who is being served by an itinerant teacher.
- Adequate desk and storage space should be provided in classrooms for the visually impaired student's specialized books, materials, and equipment.
- Office space should be available for itinerant teachers and orientation and mobility instructors. Such office space should include adequate storage areas, a computer, telephones, answering service, and clerical assistance.

Adequate working space for the transcriber should be provided. Special equipment should be available as needed for production and duplication of materials, including computers, braille embossers, specialized software for production of braille and large print, computer printers, tape-recording equipment and duplicators, enlarging photocopiers, braillewriters, and braille binding and duplicating equipment.

Programs for preschool children who are visually impaired should be housed in a school or facility where:

- Other preschool programs are available for nondisabled children to provide inclusion opportunities for the children who are visually impaired.
- Bathroom facilities have been designed or adapted for young children.
- Playground facilities are adjacent to the classroom and include space for appropriate toys and equipment.

Emergency Procedures

Students with visual impairments, like all other students, should receive instruction and practice in responding appropriately and calmly to emergencies by participating in fire and earthquake drills, bus evacuation drills, and other emergency procedures, including possible specialized health care needs. Local codes and ordinances regarding emergency procedures must be followed.

Staff should be prepared to handle emergencies, including knowledge of the specific procedures to follow. The teacher of students with visual impairments or the orientation and mobility specialist should provide assistance to the students and staff in evacuation routes and procedures. The school nurse should assist with procedures to follow for medical emergencies.

Transportation

How does the program provide for transportation that is suitable to the health and safety needs of students with visual impairments?

When students with visual impairments are transported to special classes or schools:

- Transportation is arranged appropriate to the health and safety of the students, including consideration of the travel time involved.
- Drivers are made aware, through continuing in-service training by the orientation and mobility instructor or teacher of students with visual impairments, of unique orientation and mobility needs that may be useful, including emergency, drop-off, and pick-up procedures.
- Students are encouraged to travel independently to and from school when they have the necessary orientation and mobility skills.

Program Improvement

How does the program improve its effectiveness in identifying, assessing, planning, and providing instruction and services to meet the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments?

Each program serving students with visual impairments has an ongoing process to evaluate the effectiveness of the program in meeting students' needs and using the results for program improvement. The evaluation process should encompass all of the areas outlined in this document, using the quality indicators and the key questions in each chapter, and the "Self-Review Guide" (Appendix A) as the basis for program improvement. It is particularly important that this process focus on student outcomes and other evidence of student learning when a program's effectiveness is being determined. The unique educational needs outlined in Chapter Two may be used to establish standards of expectations and to measure student outcomes based on these expectations.



When conducting a self-review, program planners should develop specific questions for interviewing administrators, special and general education staff, and families, and for reviewing students' records and other documentation. Interview questions should be open-ended, beginning with *how*, *what*, *who*, and *when* as appropriate. This approach will provide more valuable information than simple yes or no questions for determining and improving the effectiveness of a program. This approach can also clarify a program's strengths and areas that need improvement.

These guidelines are considered when programs serving students with visual impairments are monitored by the California Department of Education. The Department also provides technical assistance to families, teachers, and administrators in the implementation of these guidelines, including assistance in conducting self-reviews, validation reviews, and program improvement. (See Appendix G, "Resources for Technical Assistance," and Appendix F, "Legal Requirements.")

Information for Families Organizing and Supporting Instruction and Services

What's the difference between LEA and SELPA?	
<p>LEA: This acronym stands for local educational agency. In most cases, this is the school district or County Office of Education that provides educational services and supports to students with IEPs.</p>	
<p>SELPA: This acronym stands for Special Education Local Plan Area. A SELPA may include many districts or county offices within a geographical region. A region might be a group of many small districts or a large single district, but each region must be of sufficient size and scope to provide the full continuum of services for children and youth residing within the region boundaries. By joining together the services, programs, and trainings needed by those LEAs can be provided more equally and efficiently. There are approximately 124 SELPAs in California.</p>	
Three common collaborative approaches	
Multidisciplinary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each service provider is only responsible for goals and services specific to his/her area of specialty. • Not much collaboration between service providers.
Interdisciplinary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team members work together to create goals and plan services. • Requires effective and consistent communication between service providers
Transdisciplinary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few key members are responsible for providing direct services. • Other team members provide consultation and support as needed to achieve common goals.

Program Fits Student, NOT Student Fits Program
<p>It is important to remember that <i>special education is service, not a place</i>. Placement decisions for students with visual impairments must be based on the needs and IEP goals of each individual student, not the personnel or budgetary needs or restrictions of the school district or county office of education serving the student.</p> <p>To the maximum extent possible a student with visual impairments should be educated alongside students without disabilities and provided equal access to the general education core curriculum (<i>Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 2004</i>).</p> <p>A student's program placement may change over the student's time in school depending on the intensity of services and supports needed and IEP goals related to the child's future. The IEP team must evaluate the appropriateness and intensity of services and supports and least restrictive environment on a regular basis.</p>

Continuum of Program Options for Students with Visual Impairments		
<p>Less intensive instruction & services</p>  <p>More intensive instruction & services</p>	General Education Class without Specialized Services	<p>Maximum Integration, Least Restrictive</p>  <p>Least integration, Most Restrictive</p>
	General Education Class with Specialized Services	
	Special Education Class	
	Special School for Students with Visual Impairments	
	Home Instruction	
	Hospital or Nonpublic or Private Institution	

Common Service Delivery Models	
<i>Consultation Services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student does not require direct instruction from a vision or orientation and mobility specialist. • Instruction is provided to adults who directly teach and support student. • EXAMPLE: Student learning to scan to locate materials within the classroom or use a human guide to get around campus.
<i>Itinerant Services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An itinerant teacher of student with visual impairments provides direct instruction to the student in various school locations on regularly scheduled basis (e.g. weekly or monthly). • For younger students, these services might be provided in a home or preschool setting. • EXAMPLE: An itinerant VI teacher instructs a student to use a computer with an adapted screen with large font and Word Prediction software to complete Language Arts assignments; an O & M specialist provides orientation training to a 6th grade student in the nearby community once a week for 1 hour.
<i>Resource Room for Students with Visual Impairments</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More intensive services are provided to students on a daily basis from a teacher of students with visual impairments. • Students also attend other general education or special education classes based on their IEP. • EXAMPLE: A small group of students with visual impairments receive daily math lessons using a variety of adaptive materials and assistive technology for 45 minutes each day.

Note on table in the current text. On page 10 under Option II for Caseloads and Class sizes, the table used in the document could be clearer if the in the third row the information from the second column was matched more exactly with information from the first column to really show the number of students that should be considered for each type of special education classrooms.

Origins of UDL: Did you know?
<p>Universal Design for Learning (UDL) has its origins in architecture. The principle of universal design was originated by architects and planners who sought to offer maximum access and benefit to all users when considering the design of structures and environment This principle was the inspiration behind differentiation of instruction for students with varying abilities, accommodations and instructional needs in educational settings.</p> <p>Consider the entrance to a local department store being redesigned to include a wide, low-sloping ramp. This entrance will likely not only be used by shoppers using a wheelchairs or walkers or guide dogs, but also by parents pushing a strollers, an elderly shopper with knees that hurt when using stairs, the delivery person pushing a cart of merchandise, or another shopper with bags full of new purchases. The design of this entrance benefits and provides access to multiple members of the community.</p> <p>The critical question asked when utilizing UDL is this simple, yet equally complex, question: “Is this curriculum designed to maximize the learning for <i>all</i> learners?” (Rose & Meyer, 2002). This questions shift the focus to the barriers presented by the curriculum, rather than on “problems” or deficits the students in the class may present.</p>

Chapter 4:Sidebar #7, p. 15 in UDL Section

UDL Principles
<p>Principle 1: <i>Provide multiple means of representation.</i> Because students differ in how they understand information, a curriculum should provide a variety of ways to comprehend the concepts being taught—e.g., Braille, audio recordings, and tactual materials.</p>
<p>Principle 2: <i>Provide multiple means of action and expression.</i> Because students differ in how they navigate a learning environment and express what they know, a curriculum should be flexible and provide varied ways for students to respond to and act upon what they are learning.</p>
<p>Principle 3: <i>Provide multiple means of engagement.</i> Because students differ in the ways they are motivated to learn, a curriculum should provide varying levels of challenge, support, and relevance that help students stay engaged in learning and support meaningful connections with others.</p>

(Hartmann, E. (2011) *Universal Design for Learning*)

Specialized Materials & Equipment: Organization and Dissemination

<p>Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology (CMST)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials and specialized equipment purchased with federal or state funds remain property of the state and can be reassigned to other students once they are no longer used locally. • State-level clearinghouse that processes, tracks, stores and redistributes adapted materials and specialized equipment used by students with visual impairments. • Local education agencies can make requests to CMST for specialized equipment and materials for students with visual impairments
<p>National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This a national repository of source files for accessible media production of textbooks and related core curricular print materials. • Housed in Louisville, KY at the America Printing House for the Blind. • Funded by the US Department of Education • Must be an authorized user to download files.
<p>National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established in 2004 with IDEA Improvement Act • Ensures access to media production of textbooks and core curricular print materials for use in elementary and secondary instruction. • Files are downloaded by authorized users and can be converted to in to braille, audio or digital text, including large print format.

Appendix A

Self-Review Guide

This self-review guide contains criteria for evaluating the components of chapters 1 – 4. Listed in this guide are criteria for program self-review, a scale for rating program effectiveness and a section for comments. This self-review guide is meant to be user friendly and is to be used as a tool to evaluate strengths and timeliness of each program. Listed below are the criteria rating scale.

4. **Highly Effective.** Criteria rated as highly effective provide exemplary practices that may serve as a model statewide. These practices result in addressing students' unique educational needs, as measured by student outcomes.

3. **Effective.** Criteria rated as effective provide current practices that are satisfactory in meeting the standards in these guidelines which result in programs that are effective in meeting students' unique educational needs, as measured by student outcomes.

2. **Somewhat effective.** Criteria rated as somewhat effective need improvement so that they do not affect the program's ability to address all of the students' unique educational needs, as measured by student outcomes.

1. **Ineffective.** Criteria rated as ineffective need change and strategies to bring about improvement. It is critical to address ineffective practices so that they do not result in programs that are ineffective in addressing students' unique educational needs as measured by student outcomes.

Chapters 1 & 2

Chapter 1 – Identifying and Assessing Unique Educational Needs

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

I. How effective is your program in providing for each of the following?

- A. Providing the process for referring students identified through vision screening? _____
- B. Informing parents and staff of signs that may indicate a visual impairment? _____
- C. Coordinating with local eye specialists, regional centers, infant/preschool programs, and other referral sources? _____

Comments:

II. Assessing students with suspected visual impairments in all of the following areas when appropriate:

- A. Assessing vision/low vision:
 - 1. Acquiring as much information as possible on eye reports? _____
 - 2. Ensuring that students with residual vision receive a low vision assessment?
 - a. Conducting functional vision assessment? _____
 - b. Determining the need for further assessment? _____
 - c. Using the low vision assessment to determine needs in the other areas related to this disability _____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

B. Determining the appropriate learning medium or media:

- 1. Using functional vision assessment as one criterion? _____
- 2. Determining the primary learning medium? _____
- 3. Selecting the primary or alternative learning medium or media? _____

C. Assessing Compensatory Skills:

- 1. Typing? _____
- 2. Signature? _____
- 3. Use of optical aids? _____
- 4. CCTV's/video magnification? _____
- 5. Slate and stylus? _____
- 6. Abacus? _____
- 7. Talking calculator? _____

D. Compensatory Skills for Assessing Academic Tasks:

- 1. Coordinating with the general education classroom teacher? _____
- 2. Determining the student's level of functioning in academic tasks? _____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

3. Basic concepts for common core subject matter?	_____	_____	_____	_____
a. Braille instruction in reading?	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Braille instruction in math	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Including Nemeth code?	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Braille instruction in writing?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Listening skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Study skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Organizational skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. Assessing O&M skills:				
1. Gross and fine motor skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Alternative sensory discrimination and integration skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Posture, balance, strength, movement, and coordination?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Spatial concepts?	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Body image control and purposeful movement?	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Orientation and mobility skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
a. Home?	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. School?	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. Community?	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Residual vision for travel?	_____	_____	_____	_____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

8. Interaction with the public?	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Acquiring and remembering necessary information for travel?	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Related daily living skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
F. Assessing Social Interactions skills:				
1. Socialization skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Affective education?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Social media?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Human sexuality?	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Psychological implications?	_____	_____	_____	_____
G. Assessing Independent skills:				
1. Personal hygiene?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Dressing skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Clothing care?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Food preparation?	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Eating skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Money management?	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Telephone skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Written communication?	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Cleaning?	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Shopping?	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. Time skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

12. Organizational skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
 H. Assessing Recreation and Leisure skills:				
1. Student’s knowledge of age appropriate recreational activities?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Coordinating with appropriate staff, including APE?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Knowledge of organizations/agencies that provide recreation/leisure skills development and activities?	_____	_____	_____	_____
 I. Assessing Career/Vocational skills:				
1. Awareness?				
a. Introduction to occupations?	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Role models/mentors who are visually impaired?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Exploration?				
a. Job shadowing?	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Department of Rehabilitation referrals?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Preparation?				
a. Technological and adaptive devices?	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Vocational education training programs?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Participation?				
a. Volunteer work?	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Paid work experience?	_____	_____	_____	_____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

J. Assessing Assistive Technology?

- | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Use of computer? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Use of keyboard commands for editing formatting? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Use of screen reader? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Use of visual enhancement software? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Use of scanner? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Use of Braille note-takers? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Use of smart phones and tablets? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 8. Use of reading devices (bookport, VictorStream)? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

K. Assessing Sensory Efficiency:

- | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Uses vision effectively to perform academic and functional tasks? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Use of hearing to interpret information for academic and functional tasks? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Use of tactile skills to discriminate information for academic and functional tasks? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

L. Interpretation of bio-behavioral states for students with additional disabilities in determining the appropriateness of academic and functional tasks?

M. Self Determination:

- | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Knowledge of student's strengths and limitations? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

- 2. Uses effective strategies for asking for assistance or support? _____
- 3. Provides information to students about visual impairments and other disabilities if appropriate? _____
- 4. Provides opportunities for students to advocate for themselves in a positive manner? _____
- 5. Provides opportunities for students to discuss visual impairments with others? _____
- 6. Provides opportunities for students to take an active role in IEP/ITP development and meetings? _____

Comments:

III. Providing assessment personnel who are knowledgeable about visual impairments:

- A. Involving the teacher of the visually impaired in determining appropriate assessment strategies? _____
- B. Providing for communication among individuals conducting assessments? _____
- C. Determining the best qualified individuals to conduct assessments? _____

Comments:

IV. Identifying in the assessment report the unique educational needs related to the visual impairments, including needs for specialized materials, and equipment in the following areas:

- A. Vision/low vision needs? _____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

- B. Compensatory and academic skills? _____
- C. Reading/learning media needs? _____
- D. Communication needs? _____
- E. Orientation and Mobility skills? _____
- F. Social interaction skills? _____
- G. Independent Living skills? _____
- H. Recreation and Leisure skills? _____
- I. Career and Vocational needs? _____
- J. Assistive Technology? _____
- K. Sensory efficiency? _____
- L. Self-determination? _____

Comments:

V. Considering the variables that affect unique educational needs when the following are assessed:

- A. Congenitally and adventitiously visually impaired students? _____
- B. Students with multiple impairments including Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)? _____
- C. Infants and preschool children? _____
- D. Elementary school and secondary school students? _____
- E. The nature of the student’s visual impairments? _____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

F. Functionally blind and low vision students? _____

G. Students who are English Language Learners (ELL)? _____

Comments:

VI. Using assessed unique educational needs in the following areas:

A. Developing the IEP, including the need for specialized materials, equipment, and services in the following areas:

1. Compensatory and academic needs? _____

2. Communication needs including instruction in Braille? _____

3. Orientation and Mobility including sensory motor skills? _____

4. Social interaction skills? _____

5. Daily Living skills needs? _____

6. Recreation and Leisure? _____

7. Career vocational needs? _____

8. Assistive Technology? _____

9. Sensory efficiency? _____

10. Self-determination? _____

B. Providing appropriate instruction and services in the following areas:

1. Compensatory and academic needs? _____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

2. Communication needs including instruction in Braille?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Orientation and Mobility including sensory motor skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Social interaction skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Daily Living skills needs?	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Recreation and Leisure?	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Career vocational needs?	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Assistive Technology?	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. Sensory efficiency?	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Self-determination?	_____	_____	_____	_____
C. Developing curriculum that provides for the following areas:				
1. Compensatory and academic needs?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Communication needs including instruction in Braille?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Orientation and Mobility including sensory motor skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Social interaction skills?	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Daily Living skills needs?	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Recreation and Leisure?	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Career vocational needs?	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Assistive Technology?	_____	_____	_____	_____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

9. Sensory efficiency? _____

10. Self-determination? _____

D. Providing the necessary specialized books, materials, equipment and services in accordance with the IEP to meet the unique educational needs for:

1. Functionally blind students? _____

2. Low vision students? _____

3. Students with multiple impairments including ASD? _____

4. Infants and preschool children? _____

5. Students who are ELL? _____

Comments:

VII. Ensuring that the following key individuals understand the unique needs and possess the skills and abilities to carry out their roles and responsibilities:

A. Teacher of the students in VI general ed? _____

B. Classroom teacher (general ed, special class or resource specialist)? _____

C. Orientation and mobility specialist? _____

D. Parent or caregiver? _____

E. Student who is visually impaired? _____

F. Eye specialist? _____

G. Regular or adapted education specialist? _____

H. Occupational or physical specialist? _____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

- | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| I. School Nurse? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| J. Program specialist or administrator? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| K. Early childhood specialist? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| L. Specialist in career/vocational education? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| M. Speech/language pathologist? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| N. Assistive technology specialist? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| O. Counselor? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| P. School psychologist? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Q. Social worker? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| R. Certified Braille specialist (transcriber)? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| S. Reader? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| T. Paraprofessional/instructional assistant? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| U. Ancillary staff in residential programs: | | | | |
| 1. Dormitory personnel? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Food services staff? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Health services staff? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

Comments:

VIII. Coordinating the instruction and services provided to meet all of the needs of visually impaired students:

- | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| A. Using the IFSP/IEP/ITP as the focus for coordination? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

B. Assigning an individual responsible for this coordination? _____

Comments:

IX. Providing for the delivery of appropriate instruction and services through a full range of program options and support services that are planned, provided, and coordinated, as necessary, on a local and/or regional basis:

A. Planning, providing, and coordinating the following, as necessary: _____

1. A full range of program options and services, including technology? _____

2. Specialized assessment, instruction, curriculum, and support? _____

3. Specialized personnel development for staff and families? _____

4. Other support services to address additional needs which cannot be met at the district, county or SELPA levels? _____

Comments:

X. Placing students appropriately in the least restrictive environment:

A. Considering the changing needs and strengths of students? _____

B. Placing students based on the intensity of needs and the intensity of instructional services to meet these needs? _____

C. Preparing the student for the most appropriate placement? _____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

- D. Preparing school staff and peers for inclusion? _____
- E. Exploring additional program options? _____
- F. Providing full range of program options when needed, through:
 - 1. Itinerant teacher? _____
 - 2. Resource room? _____
 - 3. Special day class? _____
 - 4. California School for the Blind? _____
 - 5. Nonpublic schools and agencies? _____
 - 6. Additional options for instants and preschool children? _____

Comments:

- XI. Establishing class sizes and caseloads of staff to allow for providing specialized instruction and services based on the needs of visually impaired students by:
 - A. Developing a process for establishing and monitoring class sizes and caseloads based on the time required to meet students’ needs? _____
 - B. Establishing local caseloads and class sizes based on the age of the students and the severity of their needs? _____

Comments:

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

XII. Providing qualified professionals and paraprofessional personnel who have the skills and abilities necessary to conduct assessments and provide instruction and services that meet the education needs of students:

A. Certificated personnel:

1. Appropriately credentialed teachers of the visually impaired? _____

2. Appropriately credentialed orientation _____

3. And mobility specialists? _____

4. Assessment personnel? _____

B. Noncertificated personnel:

1. Transcribers? _____

2. Readers? _____

3. Paraeducators? _____

4. Other staff as needed? _____

Comments:

XIII. Providing staff development and education for parents based on a needs assessment:

A. Basing the needs assessment for specialized parent education and parents' roles and responsibilities and the unique educational needs of their children? _____

B. Basing the needs assessment for specialized staff development on the staff members' roles and responsibilities and the unique educational needs of the students they serve? _____

Comments:

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

XIV. Designing and modifying facilities to enhance the provision of instruction and services to meet the unique educational needs of visually impaired students in the following areas:

A. Facilities for school-age students:

- | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Lighting? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Storage space and electrical outlets? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Area for listening activities? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Furniture and whiteboards/smart board surfaces? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. Bathroom facilities? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Work area and storage space for students being served by an itinerant teacher? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Work space for the transcriber? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 8. Special equipment for production and duplication of Braille? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

B. Facilities for infants and preschool children:

- | | | | | |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Opportunities for inclusion with students who do not have disabilities? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Bathroom facilities? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Playground and storage space? | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

C. Emergency procedures? _____

Comments:

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

XV. Providing the materials and equipment necessary to meet the unique educational needs of students as specified in the IFSP/IEP/ITP:

- A. Establishing a system for budgeting that projects costs of specialized media materials and equipment? _____
- B. Allowing time for the teacher or transcriber or both to locate, prepare and disseminate media, materials and equipment? _____
- C. Establishing an organized, cost-effective and coordinated system for acquiring, disseminating, and maintaining specialized media, materials and equipment? _____

Comments:

XVI. Providing appropriate transportation to students with visual impairments:

- A. Considering health and safety, including travel time? _____
- B. Providing continuing in-service training to drivers? _____
- C. Encouraging students to travel independently when appropriate? _____

Comments:

XVII. Establishing a process to improve the effectiveness of programs in meeting the needs of visually impaired students in these areas:

- A. Identification? _____
- B. Assessment? _____
- C. Planning? _____

Evaluation: Highly Effective – 4; Effective – 3; Somewhat effective – 2; Ineffective – 1

D. Providing instruction and services?	_____	_____	_____	_____
E. Planning, organizing, and supporting instruction and services?	_____	_____	_____	_____
F. Using information obtained through self-review process to:				
1. Identify the areas of need and suggestions for improvement?	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Identify area of strength?	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Identify needs for technical assistance?	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Coordinate with monitoring activities of the California Department of Education?	_____	_____	_____	_____
G. Using student outcomes to determine programs effectiveness?	_____	_____	_____	_____

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Appendix B

Assessing Vision/Low Vision

This appendix contains a list of visual impairments and a discussion of procedures for assessment by a qualified eye specialist and for assessment of functional vision. Also included are the following forms:

Observational Assessment of Functional Vision, adapted from Lueck, (2004). Functional vision: A practitioner's guide to evaluation and intervention. New York: AFB Press
Functional Vision Assessment (Children and Adults), compiled by Stephanie Herlich & Angela Martyn, California School for the Blind

Functional Vision Assessment (Young Children and Students with Additional Disabilities), compiled by Stephanie Herlich & Angela Martyn, California School for the Blind

Eye Report for Children with Visual Problems, California State Department of Education
Preferred Visual Acuity Notations, Northern California Society to Prevent Blindness

Visual Impairments

The list of visual impairments in this appendix is by no means meant to be complete or all-inclusive. Rather, it is presented as an example of the range of visual impairments that may be encountered. Many of the visual impairments listed may be congenital or acquired. The educational implications of the eye condition are an important factor in determining needs. Interaction of the teacher of students with visual impairments, the eye specialist, and the student's physician is essential in assessing and meeting the student's unique educational needs in this area.

A chart of most common causes of visual impairment and visual consequences follows.

At the bottom of the last chart include following reference: Source: Flom, Roann, (2004). Visual Consequences of Most common Eye Conditions Associated with Visual Impairment. In Lueck Hall, Amanda (editor), *Functional Vision A Practitioner's Guide to Evaluation and Intervention*. New York: AFB Press

Assessment by a Qualified Eye Specialist

An assessment by a fully qualified eye specialist should be performed to provide an understanding of the nature and extent of visual loss. The following is a list of the information contained in a thorough vision report:

- Cause of visual impairment
- Date of onset
- Distance acuity with and without correction

- Near vision acuity: recommended print size from specific distance
- Visual field assessment
- Binocular status (whether both eyes are used together), stereopsis (depth perception)
- Contrast sensitivity
- Color vision
- Prognosis
- Recommended spectacle prescription
- Further treatment, if needed (medical treatment is determined by an ophthalmologist)
- Restrictions to activities
- Date for next visit to eye care specialist

If a low vision examination has been conducted:

- Recommended low vision devices such as magnifiers, CCTV, monocular, sunshades, etc.
- Lighting recommendations

The *Eye Report for Children with Visual Problems and Preferred Visual Acuity Notations* has been included for use in this appendix.

Functional Vision Assessment

Students with a visual impairment need to learn to use their remaining vision as efficiently as possible. This refers to the relative ease and speed with which a particular student is able to use his or her vision to access instruction and instructional materials and to interpret environmental cues for safe orientation and mobility in a variety of settings. To meet this need, the teacher of students with visual impairments, in conjunction with the orientation and mobility specialist, should evaluate how the student uses his or her vision to function within a variety of settings and situations which include the school, home, and community. Information from eye specialists and the family can also provide valuable information about the student's use of vision. The functional vision assessment is one criterion that is used in determining the appropriate reading medium or media for functionally blind students who have the ability to read. (See Appendix F, *Legal Requirements*, and Appendix C, *Determining the Appropriate Learning Medium*.)

The goals of the functional vision assessment are to:

- Identify apparent vision-related needs which result from the vision impairment.
- Provide information about necessary interventions or compensations (e.g., adaptations to materials or specialized instructional methods and modifications) that will enable the student with a visual impairment to function as independently as possible, and with maximum efficiency, within the school, home, and community. (Refer to the discussion of low vision in Chapter 3.)

Areas that are a part of a functional vision assessment include the following, many of which are of interest to teachers of students with visual impairments and to orientation and mobility specialists. (Evaluation of the student's use of remaining vision as it relates to orientation and mobility in the student's environments should be conducted by the orientation and mobility specialist.)

- Background information obtained from the most recent vision evaluation by an eye specialist
- Relevant health/medical information
- Observational information about the following:
 - Viewing distances for common tasks
 - Lighting needs and sensitivity
 - Eye preference and appearance

- Contrast sensitivity
- Color recognition
- Print size requirements
- Object and picture recognition
- Handwriting
- Depth perception
- Eye-hand coordination

A Functional Vision Evaluation Report for Young Children and Students with Additional Disabilities a Functional Vision Evaluation Summary for Children and Adults, Recording Form Observational Assessment of Functional Vision are included in this appendix for use in documenting this information. For students with low incidence disabilities, one of which is visual impairments, this report is to include the need for specialized books, materials, and equipment. (See Appendix F, *Legal Requirements*.)

From this assessment information the teacher of students with visual impairment and the orientation and mobility specialist will be able to provide specialized materials and strategies that enable or enhance a student's access to instruction and the environment and teach the student to maximize the functional use of vision in a variety of settings. Specialized instruction in adaptations for indoor or outdoor settings may include:

- Control of lighting and glare factors
- Preferred field of view and best gaze posture (eccentric viewing)
- Advantageous positioning of materials to maximize field of view and postural comfort
- Adaptations for reading and reading materials, such as print size, use of color, fatigue factors, time adjustments, and assignment modification
- Provide information that will be used in the Learning Media Assessment with regard to use of alternative learning media, such as large print, braille, objects, and aural media

- Use of specialized access skills, such as visual or tactual scanning for efficient localization of designated material or previewing of printed or raised line or both
- Use of optical low vision aids, for near and distance viewing (e.g., magnifiers and monoculars)
- Use of nonoptical low vision aids, such as specialized paper, and reading stands
- Provide information that will be used in the Learning Media Assessment with regard to training in the use of access technology, such as an electronic braille note-taker, talking calculator, closed circuit television, computer hard and software to provide required print specifications, digital listening devices, etc.

Functional Vision Assessment of Preschool Children

It is important to use age-appropriate activities and materials when the functional vision assessment of a preschool-age child (three to five years old) is being conducted. Much relevant information about vision related functioning and apparent vision-related needs can be derived from observation of the child while he or she interacts with toys, household materials, and other items and while he or she moves about in different environments.

To get meaningful information about nonreaders' use of functional vision, use objects, shapes, and pictures of shapes and common objects. Vary the size, contrast and distance presented to get an idea of current and potential use of vision and of vision-related needs. This information will be helpful in determining the appropriate learning medium. This decision becomes increasingly important and receives greater focus as the transition from preschool to formal education approaches. (See Appendix C, *Determining the Appropriate Learning Media.*)

The following suggestions are intended to assist teachers of students with visual impairments and orientation and mobility specialists with the functional vision assessment of preschoolers:

1. Observe how the child typically becomes oriented to objects. Does he or she use visual, tactual, auditory, or olfactory senses? Does the child seem to show a preference for looking, touching or both?
2. Note the child's apparent ease and speed in visual orientation to objects and to small parts of them. Does the child seem to quickly notice and/or reach for a pictured detail or part to manipulate?
3. Is eye-hand coordination (e.g., precise aim) demonstrated in the child's grasp of, and/or manipulation of, small parts or use of items which fit together?
4. Observe how the child typically becomes oriented to pictured material. Does the child notice, point to, or name pictured shapes, single objects, pictured activity, numbers, and letters? Notice the size, amount of detail, contrast.
5. Note the child's apparent ease, speed, and stamina in attention to or in the recognition of objects and pictorial materials.
6. Does the child appear to "work" at seeing? Is recognition slow and laborious, or is it accomplished with apparent ease and at reasonable speed? Note the child's posture and the position of materials.

7. Observe the distance, background, and size of objects detected or picked up or both from a table, floor, or shelf.
8. Observe the child's head position and distance, as well as factors of contrast and quality, with the child's attempts at using scissors to cut paper or at using writing utensils (for coloring, tracing, etc.)
9. Note how the child moves about the home, school, and/or community environments. What cues are noticed and responded to—visual, tactual, auditory, or olfactory?
10. How does the child become oriented to and move about within familiar and unfamiliar surroundings? Is movement accomplished safely and with apparent ease and speed?
11. Note environmental factors, such as lighting, contrast, and texture cues, that the child appears to be aware of, respond to or both. What does the child avoid or detect as he or she moves about?

Additional Resources:

American Foundation for the Blind Glossary of Eye Conditions:
<http://www.afb.org/section.aspx?FolderID=2&SectionID=93>

Low Vision Information: Definitions, causes, devices, assessment, and resources. This information is available on the California Department of Education website at:
<http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/sm/lowvision.asp>

Name of Pupil (Type or print) _____ (First) _____ (Middle) _____ (Last) _____ Sex _____

Address _____ (No. and street) _____ (City or town) _____ (Country) _____ (State) _____ Date of Birth _____

Grade _____ School _____ Address _____

I. HISTORY

- A. Probable age at onset of vision impairment. Right eye (O.D.) _____ Left eye (O.S.) _____
B. Severe ocular infections, injuries, operations, if any, with age at time of occurrence _____
C. Has pupil's ocular condition occurred in any blood relative(s)? ___ If so, what relationship? _____

II. MEASUREMENTS

(See back of form for preferred notation for recording visual acuity and table of approximate equivalents.)

A. VISUAL ACUITY

Table with columns: DISTANCE (Without Correction, With best Correction*, With low Vision aid), NEAR VISION (Without Correction, With best Correction*, With low Vision aid), PRESCRIPTION (Sph., Cyl., Axis). Rows: Right eye (O.D.), Left eye (O.S.), Both eyes (O.U.), Date.

- B. If glasses are to be worn, were safety lenses prescribed in: Plastic ___ Tempered Glass _____ *with ordinary lenses
C. If low vision aid is prescribed, specify type and recommendations for use. _____
D. FIELD OF VISION: Is there a limitation? _____ If so, record results of test on chart on back of form.
E. Is there impaired color perception? _____ If so, for what color(s)? _____

III. CAUSE OF BLINDNESS OR VISION IMPAIRMENT

- A. Present ocular condition(s) responsible for vision impairment. (If more than one, specify all but underline the one which probably first caused severe vision impairment.) O.D. _____ O.S. _____
B. Preceding ocular condition, if any, which led to present condition or the underlined conditions, specified in A. O.D. _____ O.S. _____
C. Etiology (underlying cause) of ocular condition primarily responsible for vision impairment, (e.g., specific disease, injury, poisoning, heredity or other prenatal influence.) O.D. _____ O.S. _____
D. If etiology is injury or poisoning, indicate circumstances and kind of object or poison involved. _____

IV. PROGNOSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. Is pupil's vision impairment considered to be: Stable _____ Deteriorating _____ Capable of improvement _____ Uncertain _____
B. What treatment is recommended, if any? _____
C. When is reexamination recommended? _____
D. Glasses: Not needed _____ To be worn constantly _____ For close work only _____ Other (specify) _____
E. Lighting requirements: Average _____ Better than average _____ Less than average _____
F. Use of eyes: Unlimited _____ Limited, as follows: _____
G. Physical activity: Unrestricted _____ Restricted, as follows: _____

TO BE FORWARDED BY EXAMINER TO:

Date of examination _____
Signature _____
Of Examiner _____ Degree _____
Address _____
If clinic case: Number _____ Name of of clinic _____

Preferred Vision Acuity Notations

DISTANT VISION. Use Snellen notation with test distance of 20 feet. (Examples: 20/100, 20/60). For acuities less than 20/200 record distance of which 200 foot letter can be recognized as numerator of fraction and 200 as denominator. (Examples: 10/200, 3/200). If the 200 foot letter is not recognized at 1 foot record abbreviation for best distant vision as follows:

- HM Hand Movements (Specify inches or feet)
- PLL Perceives And Localizes Light In One Or More Quadrants LP
Perceives But Does Not Localize Light
- No LPNo Light Perception

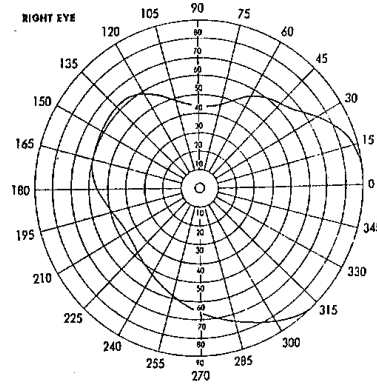
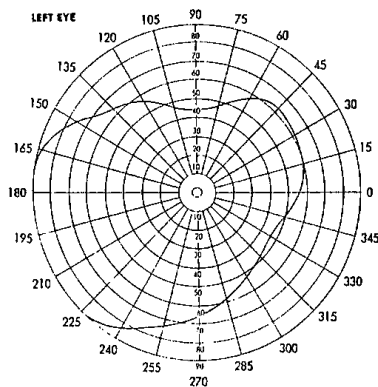
NEAR VISION. Use standard A.M.A. notation and specify best distance at which pupil can read. (Example: 14/70 at 5 in.) TABLE OF APPROXIMATE EQUIVALENT VISUAL ACUITY NOTATIONS

These notations serve only as an indication of the approximate relationship between recording of distant and near vision and point type sizes. The teacher will find in practice that the pupil's reading performance may vary considerably from the equivalents shown.

Distant Snellen	Near			% Central Visual	Point	Usual Types of Text Size
	A.M.A.	Jaeger	Metric			
20/20 (ft.)	14/14 (in.)	1	0.37 (M.)	100	3	Mail order catalogue
20/30	14/21	2	0.50	95	5	Want ads
20/40	14/28	4	0.75	90	6	Telephone directory
20/50	14/35	6	0.87	50	8	Newspaper text
20/60	14/42	8	1.00	40	9	Adult text books
20/80	14/56	10	1.50	20	12	Children's books 9-12 yrs
20/100	14/70	11	1.75	15	14	Children's books 8-9 yrs.
20/120	14/84	12	2.00	10	18	Large type text
20/200	14/140	17	3.50	2	24	Large type text
12.5/200	14/224	19	6.00	1.5		
8/200	14/336	20	1			
5/200	14/560					
3/200	14/900					

FIELD OF VISION. Record results on chart below.

Type of test used: _____ Illumination in ft. candles: _____



Test Object: Color(s) _____ Size(s) _____
Distance(s): _____

Test object: Color(s) _____ Size(s) _____
Distance(s): _____

**FUNCTIONAL VISION ASSESSMENT
CHILDREN AND ADULTS**

Assessor: _____ Assessment Date(s): _____

Student's Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

School: _____ Program: _____ Grade: _____

REVIEW OF RECORDS

Visual Diagnosis: _____

Visual Prognosis stable deteriorating capable of improvement unknown

Eye Doctor: Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Date of most recent assessment: _ Visual Acuity without correction from doctor's report:

OD (right): OS (left): _____ OU (both): _____

Visual Acuity with correction from doctor's report:

OD (right): _____ OS (left): _____ OU (both): _____

Glasses Prescribed: _____ Near _____ Distance

Contacts: _____ yes _____ no

Sunglasses: _____ yes _____ no

Visual Field from doctor's report: _____ Surgeries: _____

Doctor's recommended activity limitations: _____

Other Relevant Health/Medical/Educational Information: (If this FVA is part of a complete Triennial, other health/medical information may not need to be repeated.)

INTERVIEW

How is your vision doing?

What are your main concerns?

What is most difficult at school?

What is most difficult at home?

Are you using any current low vision aids?

Assistive technology? (Brands & style)

Other comments:

1A. READING

List current reading activities:

Are you using large print books? ____ Font size? ____

Check desired reading tasks currently unable to perform:

Usual reading material (specify grade level if in school and type of material) _____

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> textbooks | <input type="checkbox"/> dictionary | <input type="checkbox"/> labels and price tags |
| <input type="checkbox"/> paperback books | <input type="checkbox"/> bills, letters | <input type="checkbox"/> maps, charts, graphs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper text | <input type="checkbox"/> newspaper headlines | <input type="checkbox"/> wall menus |
| <input type="checkbox"/> menus | <input type="checkbox"/> stove, radio, TV dials | <input type="checkbox"/> food & medicine labels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cookbooks | <input type="checkbox"/> sheet music | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ |

Eye Fatigue yes/no

1B. KNOWLEDGE OF EYE CONDITION

Describes eye condition information as follows:

Comments: _____

2.OBSERVATION

2A. UNUSUAL VISUAL BEHAVIORS

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Presses eyes | <input type="checkbox"/> Head tilt when viewing | <input type="checkbox"/> Light flicks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pokes eyes | <input type="checkbox"/> Twirls or spins objects | <input type="checkbox"/> Shakes head side to side |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | | |

Comments: _____

2B. SOCIAL BEHAVIORS DEPENDENT UPON VISION CUES

- Identifies people from distance (specify distance) _____
- Identifies facial expressions (specify distance) _____
- Maintains appropriate social distance when talking (specify distance) _____
- Uses appropriate gesture (*for school-age students primarily*) _____
- Recognizes gestures of others _____
- Uses eye contact appropriately _____
- Other (specify) _____

2C. BRIGHTNESS SENSITIVITY

- Sunglasses outdoors wears regularly rarely uses
- Requires tints indoors wears regularly rarely uses
- Visor wears regularly rarely uses
- Sun hat (Baseball cap) wears regularly rarely uses
- Directional lighting: near tasks uses regularly rarely uses
- Squints in bright light avoids looking toward bright light
- Visually disoriented for _____ minutes when going from indoors to outdoors
- Visually disoriented for _____ minutes when going from outdoors to indoors
- Performs near tasks more accurately or easily with directional light on task (*based on information from observation and/or tests of visual acuity*)

Comments _____

2D. APPEARANCE OF EYES

List any unusual appearance of the eyes that should be evaluated by an eye doctor.

2E. PREFERRED MODES OF VIEWING

Natural viewing distance for viewing up close _____

Natural viewing distance for viewing far away _____

Head tilt? _____

- Must first touch or hear object before vision is used to investigate it. (*Often associated with cortical visual impairment.*)

Comments _____

2F. EYE PREFERENCE FOR NEAR WORK

If consistently holds objects or reading material under one eye compared to another, that eye is the preferred eye for near work.

Eye preference: RE LE None observed

Comments _____

2G. ASSISTIVE DEVICES

Describe efficiency and independence when using devices

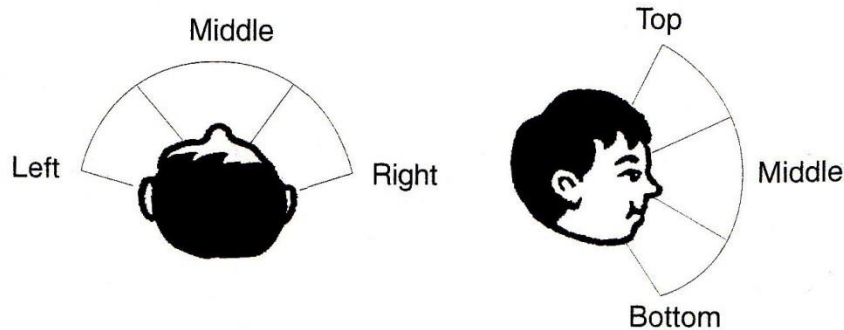
2 H. ORGANIZATIONS

Describe organizational skills/patterns

Level of independence

3. DIRECT ASSESSMENT

3A.. PERIPHERAL VISUAL FIELDS (Confrontation Field Test)



*(Note: Color in area where targets are **not** seen)*

When moving, often bumps into objects: to the left to the right above below

Comments _____

3B. DISTANCE VISUAL ACUITY

Test Administered: _____

With correction Without correction

Distance Presented _____ Symbol Size Read _____

Visual Acuity (Test Distance/Symbol Size) _____

Converted to Equivalent Snellen Acuity _____

Additional Comments: _____

3C. NEAR VISUAL ACUITY

Test Administered: _____

With correction Without correction

With directional lamp or under usual room illumination

Symbol Size Read Most Comfortably: M units or Point Size _____ Distance _____

Smallest Symbol Size Read (Threshold): M units or Point Size _____ Distance _____

Comments _____

3D. CONTRAST SENSITIVITY

Test _____ Administered: _____

Describe Lighting: _____

Comments: _____

3E. COLOR

Test Administered: _____

Comments: _____

demonstrates color preferences (*specify colors*)

Comments _____

3F. READING

Many of these factors can be measured in conjunction with formal reading tests (i.e., MN Read, reading level inventories) or usual reading material.

Evaluate 2 different reading tasks (i.e. textbook, maps, pleasure reading, magazine...)

Task 1: Description _____ Print

Size _____

Distance _____

Comments (ex. Finger guide, missing words, loses place, posture...)

Task 2: Description _____

Print Size _____

Distance _____

Comments (ex. Finger guide, missing words, loses place, posture...)

3G. WRITING

handwriting is legible

reads own handwriting

uses optical device to assist with handwriting (describe) _____

Comments: _____

3H. COPYING AND LOCATION SKILLS (if appropriate to student)

Locating items while reading

- locates page numbers in a book easily
- locates words in table of contents, glossary or index
- easily locates items on maps, charts, graphs easily
- can follow unusual formats (e.g., columns, sidebars, descriptions under pictures, bill)

Copying (Describe speed, accuracy, and distance)

- copies from board

-
- copies from books
-

3I. PICTURE AND PHOTOGRAPH RECOGNITION

- Recognizes simple pictures: smallest size _____
- Recognizes complex pictures: smallest size _____
- Recognizes black/white photos of people: smallest size _____
- Recognizes color photos of people: smallest size _____

Comments _____

3J. EYE-HAND COORDINATION (for students in primary grades)

Consider student's grade level.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Draws lines | <input type="checkbox"/> Cuts along lines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Draws intersecting lines | <input type="checkbox"/> Pastes within lines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colors within lines | <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate reach for objects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Draws shapes (specify) _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate placement of objects |

Comments _____

**FUNCTIONAL VISION ASSESSMENT
YOUNG CHILDREN AND STUDENTS WITH ADDITIONAL DISABILITIES**

Assessor: _____ Assessment Date(s): _____

Student's Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

School: _____ Program: _____ Grade: _____

REVIEW OF RECORDS

Visual Diagnosis:

Visual Prognosis stable deteriorating capable of improvement unknown

Eye Doctor: Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Date of most recent assessment: _____

Visual Acuity without correction from doctor's report:

OD (right): _____ OS (left): _____ OU (both): _____

Visual Acuity with correction from doctor's report:

OD (right): _____ OS (left): _____ OU (both): _____

Glasses Prescribed: _____ Near _____ Distance

Contacts: _____ yes _____ no

Sunglasses: _____ yes _____ no

Visual Field from doctor's report: _____

Surgeries: _____

Doctor's recommended activity limitations: _____

Other Relevant Health/Medical/Educational Information: (If this FVA is part of a complete Triennial, other health/medical information may not need to be repeated.)

1A. INTERVIEW (Parent and/or Education)

Does the student communicate about what he or she sees? Provide examples or behaviors.

Does the student take medication regularly? Do you notice if he/she is visually affected by the medication?

What materials does the student prefer for leisure activities? Provide examples or behaviors.

When is the student most alert?

What is the student's preferred position?

Does the student demonstrate unusual sensory response, such as a startle, tactile defensiveness, or visual attraction?

2.OBSERVATION

2A. UNUSUAL VISUAL BEHAVIORS

- Presses eyes
- Head tilt when viewing
- Light flicks
- Pokes eyes
- Twirls or spins objects
- Shakes head side to side
- Other

Comments _____

2B. SOCIAL BEHAVIORS DEPENDENT UPON VISION CUES

- Identifies people from distance (specify distance) _____
- Identifies facial expressions (specify distance) _____
- Maintains appropriate social distance when talking (specify distance) _____
- Uses appropriate gesture (*for school-age students primarily*) _____
- Recognizes gestures of others _____
- Uses eye contact appropriately _____
- Other (specify) _____

Comments _____

2C. BEHAVIORAL IMPRESSIONS

- Responds to simple verbal requests
- Communicates verbally Communicates non-verbally only
- Responds more readily to familiar people
- Responds more readily in familiar places
- Has limited hand use (specify) _____
- Has limited mobility (specify) _____
- Requires minimal environmental distractions to stay on task

Comments _____

2D. PREFERRED AREA OF VIEWING

Observe the student's visual behaviors during usual activities for preferred areas of viewing. Pay attention to direction and distance. For students with physical impairments, it is important to determine if responses are due to physical or visual limitation or both.

Responds and/or reaches for objects or people based on vision alone:

- To the right To the left Above Below Directly in front

2E. PREFERRED DISTANCE OF VIEWING

Natural viewing distance for viewing up close _____

Natural viewing distance for viewing far away _____

Describe head tilts when viewing (*These postures may be adopted to achieve the null point for nystagmus, to compensate for a peripheral field loss, or to view eccentrically if there is a central scotoma*)

- Must first touch or hear object before vision is used to investigate it.

Comments _____

2F. BRIGHTNESS SENSITIVITY

Be sure to observe lighting needs of students who must lay on their backs in the classroom; in some cases, overhead lights may be uncomfortable for them.

Outdoors, student prefers to use baseball cap visor sunglasses

- Student requires tinted lenses indoors
- Student squints in bright light Student avoids looking toward bright light
- Student visually disoriented for _____ minutes when going from indoors to outdoors
- Student performs near tasks more accurately or easily with directional light on tasks (*based on information from observation and/or tests of visual acuity*)

Comments _____

3. DIRECT ASSESSMENT

3A. APPEARANCE OF EYES

List any unusual appearance of the eyes that should be evaluated by an eye doctor.

3B. SHIFT OF GAZE

Present two lights or two objects to the student in the positions indicated below. Shine, blink, or shake one object, then pause and do the same with the second object. Additional response time may be needed for students who have motor coordination or motor planning difficulties.

Shifts gaze from one light source to another:

Shifts gaze from one object to another:

Comments _____

3C. FOLLOWING (TRACKING)

Use a small object or light source that holds the student's attention. Move object or light slowly -while it is within the student's range of vision. Try objects first, use a light if not successful with an object.

Object/Light Used: _____

Follows object or light source: left right up down Distance: _____

Follows a person's movement: within 3 ft. within 10 ft. within 25 ft.

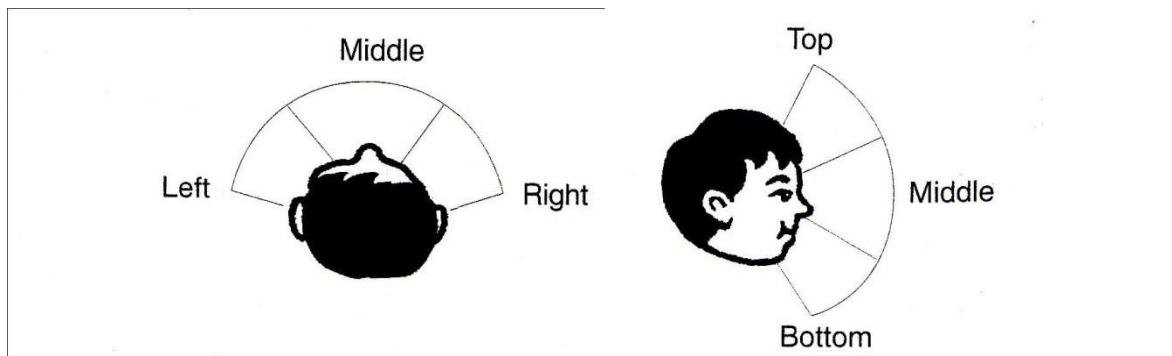
Following is: smooth jerky

Follows across midline: Yes No

Follows with: head head and eyes both eyes RE only LE only

Comments _____

3D. PERIPHERAL VISUAL FIELDS



(Note: Color in area where targets are **not** seen)

When moving often bumps into object: to the left to the right above below

Comments _____

3E. DISTANCE VISUAL ACUITY

Only test if appropriate to student's cognitive level and ability.

Test Administered: _____

Distance Presented _____ Symbol Size Read _____

Visual Acuity (Test Distance/Symbol Size) _____

Converted to Equivalent Snellen Acuity _____

Comments: _____

3F. NEAR VISUAL ACUITY USING SYMBOLS (OPTOYPES)

Only test if appropriate to student's cognitive level and ability.

Test Administered: _____

Distance Presented _____

Symbol Size Read _____

Recognizes Pictures *(If appropriate)*

Recognizes simple pictures: smallest size _____

Recognizes complex pictures: smallest size _____

Comments _____

3G. CONTRAST SENSITIVITY

Test Administered: _____

Describe Lighting: _____

Comments: _____

3H. STEREOPSIS

This pertains to fine nearpoint tasks such as threading needles, pouring liquids, reaching for objects within arm's reach. For activities such as walking, climbing stairs, and stepping down from curbs, the major cause of reported difficulties is poor contrast sensitivity rather than poor stereopsis.

Activity Observed:

Comments _____

3I. COLOR

Selects or points to named primary colors:

Matches primary colors:

Demonstrates color preferences *(specify colors)*:

Test Administered:

Comments

References

Corn, A. & Koenig, A. (200). Foundations of low vision: Clinical and functional perspectives, pg. 229.

Harrell, L. Functional Vision Assessment Checklist: Appendix E.

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Appendix C

Learning Media Assessment and Expanded Core Curriculum Assessment Resources

This Appendix contains guidelines and website sources about assessments in all areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum. Forms for *Learning Media Assessments* are included.

Assessments:

The following websites include compilations of assessments, including formal and informal assessments, checklists, observational protocols and assessment guidelines.

Compendium of Instruments for Assessing the Skills and Interests of Individuals with Visual Impairments or Multiple Disabilities, Second Edition (August 2005), compiled by Keith Benoff, Ph.D. & Mary Ann Lang, Ph.D., available from Lighthouse International, 111 East 59th Street, New York, NY 10022 and from the following website:
<http://www.lighthouse.org/for-professionals/practice-management/patient-management-pediatrics/assessment-compendium>

Perkins School for the Blind: Assessment of Children with Visual Impairments or Blindness, available from: **<http://www.perkins.org/resources/scout/early-childhood/assessment.html#Tools>**

Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Instructional Resources: Assessment (last updated November 2010), available from: **<https://www.tsbvi.edu/instructional-resources/1879-assessment>**

Forms included:

Assessment of Learning Media, 2nd Edition, compiled by Julie Manning, June Waugh, Lizbeth Barclay and Sharon Sacks, California School for the Blind, available from: **http://www.csb-cde.ca.gov/assessment_learning_media.htm**

Learning Media Assessment:

The Learning Media Assessment (LMA) offers a framework for selecting appropriate literacy media for a student who is visually impaired. A Functional Vision Assessment (FVA) should be done first, in order to determine what the student is able to see and how he or she is using his or her vision. These two assessments should be used together to help to guide the team decision about the best instructional medium for a given student, such as braille, print, dual media (both print and braille), auditory, tactile or some combination.

The Learning Media Assessment is:

- an assessment for selecting the appropriate literacy media for students with visual impairments. "Literacy media" refers to the way in which students access the general education curriculum and includes braille, print, auditory strategies, objects, and pictures.
- offers teachers and educational teams a framework or decision-making process for the selection of literacy media.
- provides a decision and monitoring tool for both conventional and functional literacy for students with visual impairments.
- involves a team process and the collation of medical, educational, family and student-supplied data to make informed decisions.

What exactly does the LMA assess?

The LMA assesses a student's learning style, or the way in which he or she uses vision, touch, hearing, and other senses, either singularly or in combination, to gain access to information. This is where LMA has often been misunderstood. **One of the key things that is assessed is the student's learning style**, which is particularly useful when working with young children with visual impairments.

Where and when should the LMA be done?

The LMA scale should begin no later than age 3, when a child begins the transition to preschool. It should be updated annually and/or as visual functioning changes.

LMA takes a broad definition of literacy, which includes reading and writing in some form, such as using drawing or expressive communication. Some Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVIs) only look at the braille/print decision, but the Learning Media Assessment goes much further than that to look at the preferred sensory channels of ALL students.

Why perform Learning Media Assessments?

The primary reason to perform a Learning Media Assessment is to ensure that all students have access to literacy and to education. In addition, **Braille Bills** require the determination of literacy media exists at both the Federal and State level. **These various Braille bills assume that Braille is the modality to be used unless otherwise demonstrated through appropriate assessment.** Learning Media Assessment offers the tool to make that determination and monitor it over time. (See Appendix F, "Legal Requirements.")

Information above from: <http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/learning-media-assessment>

Guidelines to Determine the Appropriate Learning Media

Listed as follows are guidelines to help in determining the appropriate reading medium for a student with a visual impairment:

1. An examination by an eye specialist with expertise in low vision is important in order to determine the student's ability to benefit from optical low vision aids.
2. Flexibility across learning tasks and environments should always be encouraged for the student with a visual impairment. Some students may benefit from instruction in both braille and print. A survey of the types of instructional tasks, curricular areas, and educational media the student is required to use will determine the most efficient medium for each task. A primary reading medium should be selected and used for the majority of educational tasks. Alternative learning media (e.g., digital, reader, or tactual representation) are recommended for occasions when it is necessary to alleviate fatigue experienced when the primary reading medium is being used for an extended period of time.
3. Use of audio material, while an important resource and alternative learning medium, should not be relied on to the exclusion of providing access in hard copy for students who read (print or braille or both). Verbal descriptions alone are inadequate to convey meaning in maps, diagrams, charts, and drawings, provision of tactile graphics can expand a student's understanding.
 4. Current technology can enable or enhance access to both braille and print. Specialized equipment does not supplant the need for braille or print literacy or the student's need to receive hard copies of instructional materials.
 5. Many interrelated factors (e.g., visual, social/ emotional, or learning) may need to be considered in addition to the selection of the most appropriate reading medium when a student is having difficulty with learning and achievement. Difficulty in reading or writing or both may be more related to the inability of a student to *understand* what he or she sees rather than to his or her ability to *access* the information in either braille or print. Multidisciplinary assessment is crucial to determine the specific factors related to difficulties in learning and achievement.

Factors to Consider in Determining the Learning Media

Academic performance and selection of the most appropriate reading and writing medium are influenced by many factors. **No single factor** in isolation should be used in determining the most appropriate medium. This decision has significant implications, and decisions should be made through an ongoing evaluation process as well as through consideration of visual, learning, and social/emotional variables.

Vision-Related Factors

1. *Etiology and Prognosis*—the nature and extent and stability of the student's vision loss determined on the basis of a current examination by an eye specialist is an important consideration.
2. *Visual Acuity*—A student's distance and near acuity, with and without corrective lenses or low vision aids.
3. *Visual Field*—the visual field may affect a student's reading rate. Although the student may be able to read labels or signs, with a restricted visual field, their reading rate may not be sufficient for sustained and/or extensive reading as required in school and workplace settings.
4. *Focal Distance*—Focal distance as it applies to this discussion is the distance between the student's eyes and the reading or writing material. The focal distance will vary with print size. Low vision students often require less than standard reading and writing distances (14 to 16 inches). The closer the student is to the reading and/or writing material, the more physically challenging the task may become. For example, unnatural body positions, head tilting, difficulty maintaining focus, and loss of field may make reading or writing slow and tedious.
5. *Type Size required*—the required type size is the smallest print size that the student can read efficiently and accurately, *even with optical aids*. Large-print materials are usually published in the 18 to 22 point range; materials beyond 24 points are not readily available.
6. *Visual Stamina*—this is the amount of time a student (with correction) can sustain a reading or writing activity before making significant errors or experiencing physical signs of fatigue and discomfort. Signs of fatigue or discomfort may include headaches, watery eyes, neck and shoulder strain, and other signs of stress.

Related Factors

7. *Preferred Mode of Functioning*—It is important to consider whether the student is primarily a visual, tactual, or auditory learner. Observation of the student in a variety of settings and activities will help determine which sensory modality the student prefers.
8. *General Learning Abilities*—It is important to consider the student's overall present levels of functioning in areas such as intellectual ability, academic achievement, motor ability, communication skills, and so forth, as well as the student's preferred learning modality. These considerations give relevant information about the student, which is important when the student receives instruction in reading and writing.
9. *Special Considerations for Students with Visual Impairments and Other Disabilities*—It is important to keep in perspective the presence of other known or suspected sensory, physical, or cognitive disabilities. The presence of an apparent learning disability, developmental delay, or orthopedic impairment, for example, may interfere with the student's ability to learn and demonstrate adequate skills or progress. A multidisciplinary team should consider the use of braille or print in a modified or an adapted format that enables and promotes, to the maximum extent possible, the student's acquisition of information and functional communication skills.
10. *Reading Rate*—Just as a student's reading vocabulary and comprehension should increase, so too should there be measurable growth in a student's reading rate. If the student's reading rate (with correction and print modification) is considerably slower than that of his or her sighted peers, and apparently is the result of a vision impairment rather than of a visual perceptual/visual motor dysfunction problem, the process of determining the appropriate reading medium should be initiated.
11. *Comprehension*—The student's reading comprehension should be commensurate with that of his or her sighted peers. Consideration must be given to the student's abilities and length of instruction in the medium. If the student spends an inordinate amount of physical energy trying to see the material, that problem will interfere with the student's ability to comprehend at the expected level.

Social/Emotional-Related Factors

12. *Attitude and Motivation*—Acceptance of visual loss and the need to use different educational media can be stressful for students. The student with a visual impairment and his or her family may be very sensitive to using media in an adapted format and may need help to adjust. A student must have the desire and motivation to use the adapted medium for learning and achievement.
13. *Parents and Community*—It is important that the student’s family and community understand and value the learning medium selected. To ensure this acceptance, the family should be involved in the ongoing assessment and decision-making process.

Determining the Appropriate Learning Media: The Preschool Child

The assessment and determination of the appropriate reading medium for a preschool child three to five years old require careful observation and interpretation of apparent vision-related strengths and limitations. There is a considerable amount of preacademic information, skills, and concepts which preschoolers need to learn. Preschoolers who have low vision may have difficulty in learning this information for three major reasons: first, they may not yet have had the opportunity; second, they may not have been shown how to use their vision effectively and efficiently; and third, they may be using sensory channels other than vision or vision alone to learn because of the nature and extent of their visual impairment. It is important to separate the apparent difficulties that, most likely, may result from the inability to see from the apparent difficulties that may reflect initial lack of exposure and experience in use of vision.

Preschoolers cannot be assessed through the use of the same techniques and materials that would be used with students who have learned their letters or have started reading. However, it is possible to use age appropriate activities and materials to get an idea of whether print or braille or both will be the appropriate reading medium. For some children it may be clear (on the basis of a child’s medical information and results from assessed visual functioning) whether print or braille will be the appropriate reading medium. For other children, initially, it may be necessary to simultaneously develop visual and tactual prereading skills to maximize participation and access to learning; then as a child’s skills emerge, an appropriate and/or primary reading medium can be more clearly determined.

Selected References

- Conroy, M. AB 2445, Chapter 998, Statutes of 1994, known as the “Braille Bill.” (See Appendix F, “Legal Requirements.”)
- Efron, J. “Determining Appropriate Reading Medium,” Edsp 467, California State University, Los Angeles. January 26, 1993. (Lecture Notes).
- Koenig, A. J., and M. C. Holbrook. “Determining the Reading Medium for Visually Impaired Students Via Diagnostic Teaching,” *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness*, Vol. 85, No. 2, (1991), 61–68.
- Mangold, S. S., and P. N. Mangold. “Selecting the Most Appropriate Primary Learning Medium for Students with Functional Vision,” *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness*, Vol. 83, No. 6, (1989), 294–96.
- Print and Braille Literacy: Selecting Appropriate Learning Media*. Edited by H. Caton. Louisville, Ky.: American Printing House for the Blind, 1991.

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Appendix D

California School for the Blind

This appendix contains information about the California School for the Blind in Fremont, including the program's mission, referral and admissions procedures, residential policy, and assessment program.

MISSION STATEMENT

The California School for the Blind provides intensive, disability specific educational services for enrolled students who are blind, visually impaired, deaf blind and visually impaired/multi-disabled, whose primary learning needs are related to their visual impairment.

In partnership with student, families, other consumers, local educational agencies, professional and community resources, California School for the Blind prepares students to participate at their highest level of independence in their schools, workplaces and communities.

The California School for the Blind, as a State Special School of the California Department of Education, is a statewide resource offering expertise in the low prevalence disabilities of visual impairment and deaf blindness through innovative model programs, assessment, consultation, and technical assistance, professional development, research and publications, advocacy and outreach.

Further information regarding the school may be found at <http://www.csb-cde.ca.gov/>; the following are among the services and organizations offered at CSB;

- Educational and transition placements from elementary school through the age of 22;
- Assessment Center services statewide;
- Assistive technology services and consultation statewide;
- Low vision examinations at CSB and other sites statewide;
- An active Community Advisory Committee;
- An active Parents and Friends organization, along with an Educational Foundation;
- Orientation and Mobility services
- Adapted Physical Education.

Please visit the CSB website!

<http://www.csb-cde.ca.gov/>

Guidelines for Enrollment

The following guidelines for enrollment define the referral process and criteria for referral of students to the California School for the Blind.

Referral Process: The referral process is contained in the California Code of Regulations at Title 5. EDUCATION, Division 1. California Department of Education, Chapter 18. California State Schools for the Deaf, Blind, Subchapter 2. State Special Schools Admission Process

Definitions

Article 2. California School for the Blind

§ 17664. Definitions.

(a) An “applicant” includes “blind or visually impaired applicant,” and “deaf-blind applicant” and is a pupil between the age of 3 through 21 whose primary disability is a severe sensory loss which limits their ability to access the general education curriculum and who seeks admission into California School for the Blind’s (CSB) educational program.

(b) “Assessment of suitability for placement” is the period of evaluation and review for purposes of determining whether the CSB is the appropriate placement for an applicant.

(c) “Enrollment” is the registration of the applicant into CSB’s educational program.

(d) “Severe sensory loss” is a loss of vision, or vision and hearing combined, that severely affects the pupil’s ability to access the general education or alternative curriculum and causes difficulty to such an extent that it adversely affects his/her educational performance requiring the services of personnel trained to work with blind, visually impaired or deaf-blind children.

(e) “Temporary assignment” is an applicant’s presence at the School for purposes of completing an assessment of suitability for placement at the school. Temporary assignment shall not exceed the time limits set forth in Education Code section 56344(a), and does not guarantee admission. For purposes of stay put, the temporary assignment shall not constitute the last agreed upon placement.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 59020, Education Code. Reference: 5 CCR section 3030(a); Section 56342(a), Education Code; 34 CFR Section 300.555.

§ 17665. Admission Process for the California School for the Blind (CSB).

For purposes of determining whether an applicant is qualified for enrollment in CSB, the following process shall be followed:

(a) The school district of residence (LEA) shall refer an applicant to CSB by submitting an application packet to CSB.

(b) The completed application packet must be received by CSB within 60 calendar days of the referral. It is the responsibility of the LEA to complete the application packet and submit it to CSB. Applications not completed within 60 days of the referral shall be returned to the applicant's district of residence (LEA), and the applicant shall not be assessed for suitability of placement at CSB.

(c) The Application shall contain the following information, assessments and reports:

(1) The last three years of IEP or IFSP if completed;

(2) An Ophthalmologic or optometric assessment completed within one year of the date of the application;

(3) The current assessments and/or reports prepared pursuant to Education Code sections 56320, et seq. and 56352, and as required to comply with Education Code section 56381; and

(4) Any additional assessments and/or reports dated within two years of the date of the application of admission which document:

(A) The impact of the applicant's vision or vision and hearing loss,

(B) The applicant's inability to visually or visually and auditorily access the general education curriculum; and

(C) Any other disabilities, conditions, or behaviors that may affect the applicant's ability to access the general education curriculum.

(D) Once a completed application has been received, CSB shall initiate and complete an assessment of suitability for placement at CSB, in accordance with Education Code section 56344. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant's district of residence (LEA) to ensure compliance with Education Code section 56321 prior to CSB's commencement of the applicant's assessment for suitability for placement. This assessment plan may include temporary assignment at CSB for purposes of determining eligibility for enrollment in the day or residential program and should include any necessary and appropriate amendments to the IEP to ensure appropriate services during this temporary assignment.

(E) Prior to the completion of the assessment of suitability for placement at CSB, the applicant's IEP team, including the appropriate CSB personnel, shall meet to determine the appropriate placement. The IEP team may not make a determination of placement at CSB without the agreement of CSB personnel.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 59020, Education Code. Reference: 5 CCR Section 3030(a); Section 56342(a), Education Code; 34 CFR Section 300.555.

Eligibility, Day Students:

§ 17666. Eligibility for Enrollment in CSB's Day Program.

Applicants may be considered for admission if they can demonstrate they will benefit educationally from the CSB instructional program by showing:

(a) Applicant demonstrates that his or her primary educational needs are related to a severe sensory loss such that it affects the pupil's ability to access the general education or alternative curriculum.

(b) The ability to attend to non-visual stimuli.

(c) The ability to benefit from disability-specific instruction, as demonstrated by the following:

(1) Potential to learn Braille, potential to use low vision aids;

(2) Potential to benefit from expanded core curriculum instruction; and

(3) Potential to benefit from adaptations to the environment.

(4) The ability to learn simple mobility patterns and routes around campus, as demonstrated by the following:

(5) The potential to use the white cane;

(6) The potential to orient self in space;

(7) The potential to learn own body and body parts; and

(8) The potential to learn concepts of directionality.

(9) Applicant demonstrates the ability to access the general education or alternative curriculum with reasonable accommodations without requiring a fundamental alteration of the educational program of CSB.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 59020, Education Code. Reference: Sections 56350 and 56352, Education Code.

Eligibility, Residential Students:

§ 17667. Eligibility for Enrollment in CSB's Residential Program.

Applicants eligible for CSB's day program are not automatically enrolled into the residential program. Enrollment into CSB's residential program is a separate and distinct consideration even for a pupil currently enrolled in CSB's day program. An applicant who meets the criteria established by section 17666 may also be admitted into CSB's residential program, if CSB determines:

(a) The applicant resides beyond a 60-minute commute each way between home and CSB using transportation the LEA provides for day pupils.

(b) The applicant has the ability to respond independently and appropriately to life-threatening situations.

(c) The responsible local school district and parent/guardian have approved the applicant's placement in the residential program.

(d) The applicant does not have a history of un-rehabilitated behavior that poses a threat to themselves and/or others, including but not limited to substance abuse, fire-starting, sexually predatory behavior or assault.

NOTE: Authority cited: Section 59020, Education Code. Reference: Section 59020, Education Code.

Assessment Program

In addition to providing educational and residential services, the CSB offers diagnostic evaluation and outreach services to students with visual impairments who are enrolled in public and private schools throughout California and who are expected to continue in those settings. This assessment program helps local educators and parents to better understand students' needs so that the most effective educational program can be designed. CSB assessment program staff members are available to provide direct student assessment services, train local teams in the assessment of visually impaired students, work with educators and parents to modify curriculum and instruction, disseminate information regarding vision loss and the implications of vision loss for the school program, and provide training for educational staff and parents. Services may be provided at the CSB or in the LEA.

The assessment program is provided in accordance with the following provision of the Education Code:

59102. The California School for the Blind is under the administration of the State Department of Education.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction, in connection with the California School for the Blind, shall do all of the following:

(a) Provide educational assessments and individual educational recommendations for individuals referred for those services pursuant to Section 56326

Appendix E

Specialized Books, Materials, and Equipment

This appendix identifies sources of funding for specialized books, materials, and equipment. Information on the American Printing House for the Federal Quota Program is also provided. Funding provisions for all special education programs are found in Part 30, Chapter 7, of the *Education Code*, commencing with Section 56836.

Funding for Specialized Books, Materials, and Equipment

Low Incidence State funding is available to purchase and coordinate the use of specialized equipment and materials for pupils with low incidence disabilities. Yearly entitlements are computed and allocated on a per capita basis by using the December unduplicated pupil counts of Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) for students in the following categories: hard of hearing, deaf, visually impaired, orthopedically impaired, and deaf-blind. This entitlement is allocated at the SELPA level. Each responsible local education agency (LEA) of the SELPA needs to ensure that appropriate materials and equipment are purchased, as required under the Individualized Education Program (IEP), coordinated, and reassigned as necessary. (See Appendix F for legal requirements and Appendix G for sources of technical assistance from the California Department of Education.)

Another source of funding for materials and equipment for legally blind students is the American Printing House for the Blind Federal Quota Program, administered by the Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Translations (CSMT), a unit of the California Department of Education. The activities of CSMT are described in the next section of this appendix.

Local service clubs and other community groups may help to provide funds for equipment and materials when no other funding source is available.

Sources of Specialized Books, Materials, and Equipment

Sources of specialized books, materials, and equipment discussed in this section are the Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology (CSMT).

Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Translations

The California Department of Education's Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology (CSMT) is a unit within the Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division of the Instructional and Learning Support Branch. Major functions and services of the CSMT discussed in this section are the provision of state-adopted instructional materials, kindergarten through grade eight.

State-adopted elementary school textbooks. The State Board of Education (SBE) is required to provide state-adopted textbooks in braille and large print to pupils enrolled in

elementary schools through grade eight whose visual impairment makes the use of such books necessary (see *Education Code* sections ~~60240~~, 60312, and 60313). Information regarding the titles and formats of instructional materials are available online at <http://csmt.cde.ca.gov/>.

Titles produced in braille, large print, and audio and digital media are produced and distributed through:

Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Translations
California Department of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 3207
Sacramento, CA 95814
csmt@cde.ca.gov
(916) 445-5103
FAX: (916) 323-9732

At the end of the school year, current adoptions in braille or large print that will not be used must be returned by mail to:

CSMT Textbook Warehouse
3740 Seaport Blvd. #20
West Sacramento, CA 95691
(916) 272-3193

Books that have become obsolete during the year may be retained, shared with other education agencies, or disposed of through regular procedures. The CSMT should be notified of titles that are to be destroyed.

Computer searches. The CSMT uses the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) Louis repository to help teachers and parents locate books in braille, large print, and other specialized media for high school titles or materials not adopted by the SBE. Those wishing to have the CSMT search the APH database may send an e-mail to csmt@cde.ca.gov and include the title, publisher, copyright date, and International Standard Book Number (ISBN).

Parents, consumers, and teachers in their search for assistive devices and instructional materials for students with vision impairments are referred to the APH catalog, online at http://shop.aph.org/webapp/wcs/stores/servlet/Home_10001_11051.

Key Agencies for Specialized Materials

Agencies that have an extensive role in providing specialized materials for students who are visually impaired are listed as follows:

American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206
Phone at (800) 223-1839, Web site at <http://www.aph.org/>

California Department of Education
Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Translations
California Department of Education
1430 N Street, Suite 3207
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone at (916) 445-5103, Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/sm/>

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, DC 20542
Phone at (800) 952-5666, Web site at <http://www.loc.gov/nls/>
Braille Institute
741 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029
Phone at (800) 252-9486, Web site at <http://www.brailleinstitute.org/>

Braille and Talking Book Library
California State Library
900 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
(Phone at (800) 952-5666, Web site at <http://www.library.ca.gov/services/btbl.html>)
Learning Ally (formerly Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic)
2633 McKinney Avenue, Suite 103
Dallas, TX 75204
Phone at (800) 221-4792, Web site at <https://www.learningally.org/>

Bookshare
480 S. California Avenue, Suite 201
Palo Alto, CA 94306-1609
Phone at (650) 644-3400, Web site at <https://www.bookshare.org/>

Key Agencies for Technology

Key agencies for technology discussed in this section are the AT Network, the California Technology Assistance Project (CTAP), and the Alternate Text Production Center (ATPC).

AT Network: Located in 19 centers throughout California, the AT Network provides information, training on assistive technology tools, and borrow/lend in their Reuse facilities. Legal questions and referrals are provided by professional consultants for individuals with disabilities.

AT Network
California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, California Department of
Rehabilitation
Toll-Free: 800-390-2699 TTY: 800-900-0706 |
E-mail: info@atnet.org Web site at <http://www.atnet.org/>

California Technology Assistance Project: The California Technology Assistance Project (CTAP) is a state-wide technical assistance program. Intended to promote the effective use of technology in teaching, learning and school administration, the CTAP provides assistance to schools and districts based upon local needs in each of 11 regions in California. Workshops, tutorials, and technical assistance are provided through each of their facilities located throughout California.

California Technology Assistance Project
Web site at <http://www.myctap.org/>

Alternate Text Production Center: The ATPC is the first publicly funded, system-wide resource dedicated to serving the alternate media needs of the students with disabilities. There are 112 community colleges in California and each of them has equal access to the media services provided by the ATPC.

Alternate Text Production Center (ATPC)
1175 Calle Suerte
Camarillo, California 93012
(805) 383-0187
<http://www.atpc.net/>

American Printing House for the Blind Federal Quota Program

Each year Congress appropriates a specific sum of money to the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) to be used for developing and supplying books in special media as well as for providing specialized aids and equipment for educating the nation's blind students. In turn, the APH allots a credit to each agency, public or private, on the basis of the number of blind students in that organization. States may acquire materials and equipment from the APH without cost up to the amounts of their federal quota allotment.

In California the APH Federal Quota Program is administered by the Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Translations (CSMT), a unit of the California Department of Education. During January of each year, the CSMT conducts an annual registration of blind students in California to establish the state's proportional credit allotment with the APH. As is the policy in many other states, the allotment for California from the annual federal quota appropriation is apportioned to school districts, county education offices, state hospitals, and private schools on the basis of the number of legally blind students registered in the educational programs of these facilities.

To acquire materials on the APH Federal Quota accounts, schools in California access the Instructional Materials Ordering and Distribution System (IMODS), an online ordering Web site. Most items are stocked in the CSMT Warehouse. Items not stocked by the CSMT are shipped directly to the school from the APH.

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Appendix F

Legal Requirements

Note: Reference is first made to the IDEA (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.) and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR §300 et seq.). This appendix contains pertinent sections from the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education and the California Education Code that apply to the content of this publication. These legal requirements were current as of January 2014. The purpose of this appendix is to give readers an opportunity to review legislative provisions for which citations appear throughout this publication.

Federal definitions of visual impairment are as follows:

34 C.F.R. 300.8(c)(13)

Eligibility criteria: Visual impairment including blindness means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

34 C.F.R. 300.8(c)(2)

Eligibility criteria: Deaf-blindness means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

CALIFORNIA

Eligibility Criteria for the Visually Impaired

[Sec. 300.8\(c\)\(13\)](#) of IDEA 2004 states:

Visual impairment including blindness means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

Text of Code:

30 EC 56350 - Definitions; Visually Impaired Pupils

56350. Unless the context otherwise requires, the definitions set forth in this section shall govern the construction of this article.

(a) A "functionally blind pupil" means a pupil who relies basically on senses other than vision as major channels for learning.

(b) A "pupil with low vision" means a pupil who uses vision as a channel for learning, but who may also benefit from instruction in braille.

(c) A "visually impaired pupil" means a pupil who is functionally blind or a pupil with low vision. For purposes of this article, a "visually impaired pupil" does not include a pupil who is eligible for special education and related services based on a specific learning disability identified pursuant to Section 56338.

(d) A pupil has a visual impairment which, even with correction, adversely affects a pupil's educational performance.

Vision Services

California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education, Section 3051.7

(a) Vision services shall be provided by a credentialed teacher of the visually handicapped and may include:

(1) Adaptations in curriculum, media, and the environment, as well as instruction in special skills.

(2) Consultative services to pupils, parents, teachers, and other school personnel.

(b) An assessment of and provision for services to visually impaired pupils may be conducted by an eye specialist who has training and expertise in low vision disabilities and has available the appropriate low vision aids for the purposes of assessment. The eye specialist may provide consultation to the pupil, parents, teacher and other school personnel as may be requested by the individualized education program team.

(c) Procedures which may be utilized by qualified personnel are those procedures authorized by federal and state laws and regulations and performed in accordance with these laws and regulations and standards of the profession.

(d) For the purposes of this section, an eye specialist shall mean a licensed optometrist, ophthalmologist, or other licensed physician and surgeon who has training and expertise in low vision disabilities.

Low Incidence Disabilities Definitions

Education Code Section 56000.5

(a) The Legislature finds and declares that:

(1) Pupils with low incidence disabilities, as a group, make up less than 1 percent of the total statewide enrollment for kindergarten through grade 12.

(2) Pupils with low incidence disabilities require highly specialized services, equipment, and materials.

Education Code Section 56026.5

“Low incidence disability” means a severe disabling condition with an expected incidence rate of less than one percent of the total statewide enrollment in kindergarten through grade 12. For purposes of this definition, severe handicapping conditions are hearing impairments, vision impairments, and severe orthopedic impairments, or any combination thereof. For purposes of this definition, vision impairments do not include disabilities within the function of vision specified in Section 56338.

Qualified Staff

Education Code Section 56001

It is the intent of the Legislature that special education programs provide all of the following:

(n) Appropriate qualified staff are employed, consistent with credentialing requirements, to fulfill the responsibilities of the local plan and positive efforts are made to employ qualified disabled individuals.

Special Education Program Options

Education Code Section 56031

Text of Code:

30 EC 56031 - Definition of "Special Education"

56031. (a) "Special education," in accordance with Section 1401(29) of Title 20 of the United States Code, means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of individuals with exceptional needs, including instruction

conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and other settings, and instruction in physical education.

(b) In accordance with Section 300.39 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, special education includes each of the following, if the services otherwise meet the requirements of subdivision (a):

(1) Speech-language pathology services, or any other designated instruction and service or related service, pursuant to Section 56363, if the service is considered special education rather than a designated instruction and service or related service under state standards.

(2) Travel training.

(3) Vocational education.

(c) Transition services for individuals with exceptional needs may be special education, in accordance with Section 300.43(b) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, if provided as specially designed instruction, or a related service, if required to assist an individual with exceptional needs to benefit from special education.

(d) Individuals with exceptional needs shall be grouped for instructional purposes according to their instructional needs.

Continuum of Program Options

Text of Code:

EC 56361 - Continuum of Program Options

56361. The continuum of program options shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, all of the following or any combination of the following:

(a) Regular education programs consistent with subparagraph (A) of paragraph (5) of subsection (a) of Section 1412 of Title 20 of the United States Code and implementing regulations.

(b) A resource specialist program pursuant to Section 56362.

(c) Designated instruction and services pursuant to Section 56363.

(d) Special classes pursuant to Section 56364 or Section 56364.2

(e) Nonpublic, nonsectarian school services pursuant to Section 56365.

(f) State special schools pursuant to Section 56367.

(g) Instruction in settings other than classrooms where specially designed instruction may occur.

(h) Itinerant instruction in classrooms, resource rooms, and settings other than classrooms where specially designed instruction may occur to the extent required by federal law or regulation.

(i) Instruction using telecommunication, and instruction in the home, in hospitals, and in other institutions to the extent required by federal law or regulation.

Special education provides a full continuum of program options to meet the educational and service needs of individuals with exceptional needs in the least restrictive environment.

Guidelines, Technical Assistance, and Monitoring

Education Code Section 56136

The superintendent shall develop guidelines for each low incidence disability area and provide technical assistance to parents, teachers, and administrators regarding the implementation of the guidelines. The guidelines shall clarify the identification, assessment, and planning of, and the provision of, specialized services to pupils with low incidence disabilities. The superintendent shall consider the guidelines when monitoring programs serving pupils with low incidence disabilities pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 56836.04. The adopted guidelines shall be promulgated for the purpose of establishing recommended guidelines and shall not operate to impose minimum state requirements.

Compliance Assurances/Description and Services

Education Code 56205

Local Plans, Assurances and Services Agreements

56205. (a) Each special education local plan area submitting a local plan to the Superintendent under this part shall ensure, in conformity with Sections 1412(a) and 1413(a)(1) of Title 20 of the United States Code, and in accordance with Section 300.201 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, that it has in effect policies, procedures, and programs that are consistent with state laws, regulations, and policies governing the following:

- (1) Free appropriate public education.
- (2) Full educational opportunity.
- (3) Child find and referral.
- (4) Individualized education programs, including development, implementation, review, and revision.
- (5) Least restrictive environment.
- (6) Procedural safeguards.
- (7) Annual and triennial assessments.

(8) Confidentiality.

(9) Transition from Subchapter III (commencing with Section 1431) of Title 20 of the United States Code to the preschool program.

(10) Children in private schools.

(11) Compliance assurances, including general compliance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1400 et seq.), Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794), the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.), federal regulations relating thereto, and this part.

(12) (A) A description of the governance and administration of the plan, including identification of the governing body of a multidistrict plan or the individual responsible for administration in a single district plan, and of the elected officials to whom the governing body or individual is responsible.

(B) A description of the regionalized operations and services listed in Section 56836.23 and the direct instructional support provided by program specialists in accordance with Section 56368 to be provided through the plan.

(C) Verification that a community advisory committee has been established pursuant to Section 56190.

(D) Multidistrict plans, submitted pursuant to subdivision (b) or (c) of Section 56195.1, shall do the following:

(i) Specify the responsibilities of each participating county office and district governing board in the policymaking process, the responsibilities of the superintendents of each participating district and county in the implementation of the plan, and the responsibilities of district and county administrators of special education in coordinating the administration of the local plan.

(ii) Identify the respective roles of the administrative unit and the administrator of the special education local plan area and the individual local educational agencies within the special education local plan area in relation to the following:

(I) The hiring, supervision, evaluation, and discipline of the administrator of the special education local plan area and staff employed by the administrative unit in support of the local plan.

(II) The allocation from the state of federal and state funds to the special education local plan area administrative unit or to local educational agencies within the special education local plan area.

(III) The operation of special education programs.

(IV) Monitoring the appropriate use of federal, state, and local funds allocated for special education programs.

(V) The preparation of program and fiscal reports required of the special education local plan area by the state.

(iii) Include copies of joint powers agreements or contractual agreements, as appropriate, for districts and counties that elect to enter into those agreements pursuant to subdivision (b) or (c) of Section 56195.1.

(E) The description of the governance and administration of the plan, and the policymaking process, shall be consistent with subdivision (f) of Section 56001, subdivision (a) of Section 56195.3, and Section 56195.9, and shall reflect a schedule of regular consultations regarding policy and budget development with representatives of special education and regular education teachers and administrators selected by the groups they represent and parent members of the community advisory committee established pursuant to Article 7 (commencing with Section 56190) of Chapter 2.

(13) Personnel qualifications to ensure that personnel, including special education teachers and personnel and paraprofessionals providing related services, necessary to implement this part are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained in accordance with Sections 56058 and 56070 and Sections 1412(a)(14) and 1413(a)(3) of Title 20 of the United States Code.

(14) Performance goals and indicators.

(15) Participation in state and district wide assessments, including assessments described under Section 1111 of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. Sec. 6301 et seq.) and alternate assessments in accordance with Section 1412(a) (16) of Title 20 of the United States Code, and reports relating to assessments.

(16) Supplementation of state, local, and other federal funds, including nonsupplantation of funds.

(17) Maintenance of financial effort.

(18) Opportunities for public participation prior to adoption of policies and procedures.

(19) Suspension and expulsion rates.

(20) Access to instructional materials by blind individuals with exceptional needs and others with print disabilities in accordance with Section 1412(a)(23) of Title 20 of the United States Code.

(21) Over identification and disproportionate representation by race and ethnicity of children as individuals with exceptional needs, including children with disabilities with a particular impairment described in Section 1401 of Title 20 of the United States Code and in accordance with Section 1412(a)(24) of Title 20 of the United States Code.

(22) Prohibition of mandatory medication use pursuant to Section 56040.5 and in accordance with Section 1412(a)(25) of Title 20 of the United States Code.

(b) Each local plan submitted to the Superintendent under this part shall also contain all the following:

(1) An annual budget plan that shall be adopted at a public hearing held by the special education local plan area. Notice of this hearing shall be posted in each school in the local plan area at least 15 days prior to the hearing. The annual budget plan may be revised during any fiscal year according to the policymaking process established pursuant to subparagraphs (D) and (E) of paragraph (12) of subdivision (a) and consistent with subdivision (f) of Section 56001 and Section 56195.9. The annual budget plan shall identify expected expenditures for all items required by this part which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(A) Funds received in accordance with Chapter 7.2 (commencing with Section 56836).

(B) Administrative costs of the plan.

(C) Special education services to pupils with severe disabilities and low incidence disabilities.

(D) Special education services to pupils with non-severe disabilities.

(E) Supplemental aids and services to meet the individual needs of pupils placed in regular education classrooms and environments.

(F) Regionalized operations and services, and direct instructional support by program specialists in accordance with Article 6 (commencing with Section 56836.23) of Chapter 7.2.

(G) The use of property taxes allocated to the special education local plan area pursuant to Section 2572.

(2) An annual service plan shall be adopted at a public hearing held by the special education local plan area. Notice of this hearing shall be posted in each district in the special education local plan area at least 15 days prior to the hearing. The annual service plan may be revised during any fiscal year according to the policymaking process established pursuant to subparagraphs (D) and (E) of paragraph (12) of subdivision (a) and consistent with subdivision (f) of Section 56001 and with Section 56195.9. The annual service plan shall include a description of services to be provided

by each district and county office, including the nature of the services and the physical location at which the services will be provided, including alternative schools, charter schools, opportunity schools and classes, community day schools operated by districts, community schools operated by county offices, and juvenile court schools, regardless of whether the district or county office is participating in the local plan. This description shall demonstrate that all individuals with exceptional needs shall have access to services and instruction appropriate to meet their needs as specified in their individualized education programs.

(3) A description of programs for early childhood special education from birth through five years of age.

(4) A description of the method by which members of the public, including parents or guardians of individuals with exceptional needs who are receiving services under the plan, may address questions or concerns to the governing body or individual identified in subparagraph (A) of paragraph (12) of subdivision (a).

(5) A description of a dispute resolution process, including mediation and final and binding arbitration to resolve disputes over the distribution of funding, the responsibility for service provision, and the other governance activities specified within the plan.

(6) Verification that the plan has been reviewed by the community advisory committee and that the committee had at least 30 days to conduct this review prior to submission of the plan to the Superintendent.

(7) A description of the process being utilized to meet the requirements of Section 56303.

(c) A description of the process being utilized to oversee and evaluate placements in nonpublic, nonsectarian schools and the method of ensuring that all requirements of each pupil's individualized education program are being met. The description shall include a method for evaluating whether the pupil is making appropriate educational progress.

(d) The local plan, budget plan, and annual service plan shall be written in language that is understandable to the general public.

Staff Development

Education Code Section 56240 - 56245

Staff development programs shall be provided for regular and special education teachers, administrators, certificated and classified employees, volunteers, and community advisory committee members and, as appropriate, members of the district and county governing boards. The programs shall be coordinated with other staff

development programs in the district, special education local plan area, or county office, including school level staff development programs authorized by state and federal law.

56241. Staff development programs shall include, but not be limited to, all the following:

(a) Provision of opportunities for all school personnel, paraprofessionals, and volunteers to participate in ongoing development activities pursuant to a systematic identification of pupil and personnel needs.

(b) Be designed and implemented by classroom teachers and other participating school personnel, including the school principal. Teachers shall comprise the majority of any group designated to design local staff development programs for instructional personnel to be established pursuant to this part. Positive efforts shall be made to ensure the individuals with exceptional needs and parents of such individuals are involved in the design and implementation of staff development programs.

(c) Allowance for diversity in development activities, including, but not limited to, small groups, self-directed learning, and systematic observation during visits to other classrooms or schools.

(d) Scheduling of time which is set aside for such purpose throughout the school year, including, but not limited to, time when participating school personnel are released from their regular duties.

(e) Evaluation and modification on a continuing basis by participating school personnel with the aid of outside personnel, as necessary.

(f) Inclusion of the school principal and other administrative personnel as active participants in one or more staff development activities implemented pursuant to this chapter.

(g) Provision of a budget for reasonable and necessary expenses, relating to staff development programs.

56243. It is the intent of the Legislature, pursuant to this article, that a local educational agency provide regular classroom teachers serving individuals with exceptional needs appropriate training each year relating to the needs of those individuals.

56244. The superintendent shall, to the extent possible using federal and state funds appropriated for this purpose, provide staff development to child care center staff and family day care providers to improve child care services to individuals with exceptional needs.

56245. The Legislature encourages the inclusion, in local in-service training programs for regular education teachers and special education teachers in local educational

agencies, of a component on the recognition of, and teaching strategies for, specific learning disabilities, including dyslexia and related disorders.

Identification and Referral

Education Code Section 56300

A local educational agency shall actively and systematically seek out all individuals with exceptional needs, from birth to 21 years of age, inclusive, including children not enrolled in public school programs, who reside in a school district or are under the jurisdiction of a special education local plan area or a county office of education.

Education Code Section 56301

30 EC 56301 - Continuous Child-Find System

56301. (a) All children with disabilities residing in the state, including children with disabilities who are homeless children or are wards of the state and children with disabilities attending private, including religious, elementary and secondary schools, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, and who are in need of special education and related services, shall be identified, located, and assessed and a practical method is developed and implemented to determine which children with disabilities are currently receiving needed special education and related services as required by Section 1412(a)(3) and (10)(A)(ii) of Title 20 of the United States Code. A child is not required to be classified by his or her disability so long as each child who has a disability listed in Section 1401(3) of Title 20 of the United States Code and who, by reason of that disability, needs special education and related services as an individual with exceptional needs defined in Section 56026.

(b) (1) In accordance with Section 300.111(c) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the requirements of this section also apply to highly mobile individuals with exceptional needs, including migrant children, and children who are suspected of being an individual with exceptional needs pursuant to Section 56026 and in need of special education, even though they are advancing from grade to grade.

(2) In accordance with Section 300.213 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, the local educational agency shall cooperate in the efforts of the federal Secretary of Education, under Section 6398 of Title 20 of the United States Code, to ensure the linkage of records pertaining to migratory children with disabilities for the purpose of electronically exchanging, among other states, health and educational information regarding those children.

(c) (1) The child find process shall ensure the equitable participation in special education and related services of parentally placed private schoolchildren with

disabilities and an accurate count of those children. Child find activities conducted by local educational agencies, or where applicable, the department, shall be similar to those activities undertaken for pupils in public schools.

(2) In accordance with Section 1412(a)(10)(A)(ii)(IV) of Title 20 of the United States Code, the cost of the child find activities in private, including religious, elementary and secondary schools, may not be considered in determining whether a local educational agency has met its obligations under the proportionate funding provisions for children enrolled in private, including religious, elementary and secondary schools.

(3) The child find process described in paragraph (1) shall be completed in a time period comparable to that for other pupils attending public schools in the local educational agency.

(d) (1) Each special education local plan area shall establish written policies and procedures pursuant to Section 56205 for use by its constituent local agencies for a continuous child find system that addresses the relationships among identification, screening, referral, assessment, planning, implementation, review, and the triennial assessment. The policies and procedures shall include, but need not be limited to, written notification of all parents of their rights under this chapter, and the procedure for initiating a referral for assessment to identify individuals with exceptional needs.

(2) In accordance with Section 1415(d)(1)(A) of Title 20 of the United States Code, and Section 300.504(a) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, parents shall be given a copy of their rights and procedural safeguards only one time a school year, except that a copy also shall be given to the parents:

(A) Upon initial referral or parental request for assessment.

(B) Upon receipt of the first state complaint under Section 56500.2 in a school year.

(C) Upon receipt of the first due process hearing request under Section 56502 in a school year.

(D) When a decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of an individual with exceptional needs because of a violation of a code of pupil conduct in accordance with Section 300.530(h) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(E) Upon request by a parent.

(3) A local educational agency may place a current copy of the procedural safeguards notice on its Internet Web site, if such Web site exists, pursuant to Section 1415(d)(1)(B) of Title 20 of the United States Code.

(4) The contents of the procedural safeguards notice shall contain the requirements

listed in Section 1415(d)(2) of Title 20 of the United States Code and Section 300.504(c) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

(e) Child find data collected pursuant to this chapter, or collected pursuant to a regulation or an interagency agreement, are subject to the confidentiality requirements of Sections 300.611 to 300.627, inclusive, of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Each district, special education local plan area, or county office shall establish written policies and procedures for a continuous child-find system which addresses the relationships among identification, screening, referral, assessment, planning, implementation, review, and the triennial assessment. The policies and procedures shall include, but need not be limited to, written notification of all parents of their rights under this chapter, and the procedure for initiating a referral for assessment to identify individuals with exceptional needs.

Education Code Section 56302

A local educational agency shall provide for the identification and assessment of the exceptional needs of an individual, and the planning of an instructional program to meet the assessed needs. Identification procedures shall include systematic methods of utilizing referrals of pupils from teachers, parents, agencies, appropriate professional persons, and from other members of the public. Identification procedures shall be coordinated with school site procedures for referral of pupils with needs that cannot be met with modification of the regular instructional program.

Education Code Section 56303

A pupil shall be referred for special educational instruction and services only after the resources of the regular education program have been considered and, where appropriate, utilized.

Assessment/Low Vision Assessment

Education Code Section 56320

(f) The pupil is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability including, if appropriate, health and development, vision, including low vision, hearing, motor abilities, language function, general intelligence, academic performance, communicative status, self-help, orientation and mobility skills, career and vocational abilities and interests, and social and emotional status. A developmental history shall be obtained, when appropriate. For pupils with residual vision, a low vision assessment shall be provided in accordance with guidelines established pursuant to Section 56136. In assessing each pupil under this article, the assessment shall be conducted in accordance with Sections 300.304 and 300.305 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The pupil is assessed in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, where appropriate, health and development, vision, including low vision,

hearing, motor abilities, language function, general ability, academic performance, self-help, orientation and mobility skills, career and vocational abilities and interests, and social and emotional status. A developmental history is obtained, when appropriate. The assessment of a pupil, including the assessment of a pupil with a suspected low incidence disability, shall be conducted by persons knowledgeable of that disability. Special attention shall be given to the unique educational needs, including, but not limited to, skills and the need for specialized services, materials, and equipment consistent with guidelines established pursuant to Section 56136.

Persons Conducting the Assessment

Education Code Section 56320

Assessment Report

Education Code Section 56327

30 EC 56327 - Assessment Results; Reports

56327. The personnel who assess the pupil shall prepare a written report, or reports, as appropriate, of the results of each assessment. The report shall include, but not be limited to, all the following:

- (a) Whether the pupil may need special education and related services.
- (b) The basis for making the determination.
- (c) The relevant behavior noted during the observation of the pupil in an appropriate setting.
- (d) The relationship of that behavior to the pupil's academic and social functioning.
- (e) The educationally relevant health and development, and medical findings, if any.
- (f) For pupils with learning disabilities whether there is such a discrepancy between achievement and ability that it cannot be corrected without special education and related services.
- (g) A determination concerning the effects of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage, where appropriate.
- (h) The need for specialized services, materials, and equipment for pupils with low incidence disabilities, consistent with guidelines established pursuant to Section 56136.

Visual Perceptual/Visual Motor Dysfunction

Education Code Section 56338

As used in Section 56337, “specific learning disability” includes, but is not limited to, disability within the function of vision which results in visual perceptual or visual motor dysfunction.

Individualized Education Program

Education Code Section 56345

a) The individualized education program is a written statement for each individual with exceptional needs that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with this section, as required by Section 1414(d) of Title 20 of the United States Code, and that includes the following:

(1) A statement of the individual’s present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, including the following:

(A) The manner in which the disability of the individual affects his or her involvement and progress in the general education curriculum.

(B) For preschool children, as appropriate, the manner in which the disability affects his or her participation in appropriate activities.

(C) For individuals with exceptional needs who take alternate assessments aligned to alternate achievement standards, a description of benchmarks or short-term objectives.

(2) A statement of measurable annual goals, including academic and functional goals, designed to do the following:

(A) Meet the needs of the individual that result from the disability of the individual to enable the pupil to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum.

(B) Meet each of the other educational needs of the pupil that result from the disability of the individual.

(3) A description of the manner in which the progress of the pupil toward meeting the annual goals described in paragraph (2) will be measured and when periodic reports on the progress the pupil is making toward meeting the annual goals, such as through the use of quarterly or other periodic reports, concurrent with the issuance of report cards, will be provided.

(4) A statement of 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 pupil, or on behalf of the pupil, and a statement of the program modifications or supports for school personnel that will be provided to enable the pupil to do the following:

(A) To advance appropriately toward attaining the annual goals.

(B) To be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum in accordance with paragraph (1) and to participate in extracurricular and other nonacademic activities.

(C) To be educated and participate with other individuals with exceptional needs and nondisabled pupils in the activities described in this subdivision.

(5) An explanation of the extent, if any, to which the pupil will not participate with nondisabled pupils in the regular class and in the activities described in subparagraph (C) of paragraph (4).

(6) (A) A statement of individual appropriate accommodations that are necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the pupil on state and district wide assessments consistent with Section 1412(a)(16)(A) of Title 20 of the United States Code.

(B) If the individualized education program team determines that the pupil shall take an alternate assessment instead of a particular state or district wide assessment of pupil achievement, a statement of the following:

(i) The reason why the pupil cannot participate in the regular assessment.

(ii) The reason why the particular alternate assessment selected is appropriate for the pupil.

(7) The projected date for the beginning of the services and modifications described in paragraph (4), and the anticipated frequency, location, and duration of those services and modifications.

(8) Beginning not later than the first individualized education program to be in effect when the pupil is 16 years of age, or younger if determined appropriate by the individualized education program team, and updated annually thereafter, the following shall be included:

(A) Appropriate measurable postsecondary goals based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and where appropriate, independent living skills.

(B) The transition services, as defined in Section 56345.1, including courses of study, needed to assist the pupil in reaching those goals.

(b) If appropriate, the individualized education program shall also include, but not be limited to, all of the following:

(1) For pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, any alternative means and modes necessary for the pupil to complete the prescribed course of study of the district and to meet or exceed proficiency standards for graduation.

(2) For individuals whose native language is other than English, linguistically appropriate goals, objectives, programs, and services.

(3) Pursuant to Section 300.106 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, extended school year services shall be included in the individualized education program and provided to the pupil if the individualized education program team of the pupil determines, on an individual basis, that the services are necessary for the provision of a free appropriate public education to the pupil.

(4) Provision for the transition into the regular class program if the pupil is to be transferred from a special class or nonpublic, nonsectarian school into a regular class in a public school for any part of the school day, including the following:

(A) A description of activities provided to integrate the pupil into the regular education program. The description shall indicate the nature of each activity, and the time spent on the activity each day or week.

(B) A description of the activities provided to support the transition of pupils from the special education program into the regular education program.

(5) For pupils with low-incidence disabilities, specialized services, materials, and equipment, consistent with guidelines established pursuant to Section 56136.

(c) It is the intent of the Legislature in requiring individualized education programs, that the local educational agency is responsible for providing the services delineated in the individualized education program. However, the Legislature recognizes that some pupils may not meet or exceed the growth projected in the annual goals and objectives of the individualized education program of the pupil.

(d) Consistent with Section 56000.5 and Section 1414(d)(3)(B)(iv) of Title 20 of the United States Code, it is the intent of the Legislature that, in making a determination of the services that constitute an appropriate education to meet the unique needs of a deaf or hard-of-hearing pupil in the least restrictive environment, the individualized education program team shall consider the related services and program options that provide the pupil with an equal opportunity for communication access. The individualized education program team shall specifically discuss the communication

needs of the pupil, consistent with “Deaf Students Education Services Policy Guidance” (57 Fed. Reg. 49274 (October 1992)), including all of the following:

(1) The pupil’s primary language mode and language, which may include the use of spoken language with or without visual cues, or the use of sign language, or a combination of both.

(2) The availability of a sufficient number of age, cognitive, and language peers of similar abilities, which may be met by consolidating services into a local plan area wide program or providing placement pursuant to Section 56361.

(3) Appropriate, direct, and ongoing language access to special education teachers and other specialists who are proficient in the pupil’s primary language mode and language consistent with existing law regarding teacher training requirements.

(4) Services necessary to ensure communication-accessible academic instructions, school services, and extracurricular activities consistent with the federal Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794 et seq.) and the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.).

(5) In accordance with Section 300.113 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, each public agency shall ensure that hearing aids worn in school by children with hearing impairments, including deafness, are functioning properly.

(6) Subject to paragraph (7), each public agency, pursuant to Section 300.113(b) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, shall ensure that external components of surgically implanted medical devices are functioning properly.

(7) For a child with a surgically implanted medical device who is receiving special education and a service under Section 56363, a public agency is not responsible for the postsurgical maintenance, programming, or replacement of the medical device that has been surgically implanted, or of an external component of the surgically implanted medical device.

(e) State moneys appropriated to districts or local educational agencies may not be used for any additional responsibilities and services associated with paragraphs (1) and (2) of subdivision (d), including the training of special education teachers and other specialists, even if those additional responsibilities or services are required pursuant to a judicial or state agency determination. Those responsibilities and services shall only be funded by a local educational agency as follows:

(1) The costs of those activities shall be funded from existing programs and funding sources.

(2) Those activities shall be supported by the resources otherwise made available to those programs.

(3) Those activities shall be consistent with Sections 56240 to 56243, inclusive.

(f) It is the intent of the Legislature that the communication skills of teachers who work with hard-of-hearing and deaf children be improved. This section does not remove the discretionary authority of the local educational agency in regard to in-service activities.

(g) Beginning not later than one year before the pupil reaches the age of 18 years, a statement that the pupil has been informed of the pupil's rights under this part, if any, that will transfer to the pupil upon reaching the age of 18 years pursuant to Section 56041.5.

(h) The individualized education program team is not required to include information under one component of a pupil's individualized education program that is already contained under another component of the individualized education program.

(i) This section does not require that additional information, beyond that explicitly required by Section 1414 of Title 20 of the United States Code and this part, be included in the individualized education program of a pupil.

Individualized Education Program for Visually Impaired Pupils

Education Codes 56350 to 56352

56350. Unless the context otherwise requires, the definitions set forth in this section shall govern the construction of this article.

(a) A "functionally blind pupil" means a pupil who relies basically on senses other than vision as major channels for learning.

(b) A "pupil with low vision" means a pupil who uses vision as a channel for learning, but who may also benefit from instruction in braille.

(c) A "visually impaired pupil" means a pupil who is functionally blind or a pupil with low vision. For purposes of this article, a "visually impaired pupil" does not include a pupil who is eligible for special education and related services based on a specific learning disability identified pursuant to Section 56338.

(d) "Braille" means the system of reading and writing through touch commonly known as "Standard English Braille, American Edition."

56351. Local educational agencies shall provide opportunities for braille instruction for pupils who, due to a prognosis of visual deterioration, may be expected to have a need for braille as a reading medium.

56351.5. (a) (1) A local educational agency may reinforce braille instruction using a braille instructional aide who meets the criteria set forth in paragraph (2) under the supervision of a teacher who holds an appropriate credential, as determined by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, to teach pupils who are functionally blind or visually impaired. This instruction shall be in accordance with the individualized education program of the pupil.

(2) For purposes of this section, a braille instructional aide shall demonstrate to the supervising teacher that he or she is fluent in reading and writing grade 2 braille and possesses basic knowledge of the rules of braille construction.

(b) A local educational agency that employs a braille instructional aide shall provide the aide with information regarding teaching credential programs, including the Wildman-Keeley-Solis Exemplary Teacher Training Act of 1997 (Article 12 (commencing with Section 44390) of Chapter 2 of Part 25) and the Teacher Education Internship Act of 1967 (Article 3 (commencing with Section 44450) of Chapter 3 of Part 25).

(a) The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall form an advisory task force to develop standards for the mastery of the braille code as a child progresses through kindergarten to grade 12, inclusive.

(b) The task force shall include, but shall not be limited to, members approved by the State Board of Education representing all of the following:

- (1) Parents of visually impaired pupils.
- (2) Teachers of visually impaired pupils.
- (3) Researchers in the field of visual impairment.
- (4) Braille experts.
- (5) Groups that advocate for teaching of, and use of, braille.
- (6) Groups that advocate for the visually impaired.

(c) The task force shall report to the Governor and to the education committees of the Assembly and the Senate by June 30, 2004.

(A) The Superintendent shall utilize the advisory task force established pursuant to Section 56351.7 to develop standards for pupils described in subdivision (b) to learn, and to achieve mastery of, the braille mathematics code as they progress through kindergarten and grades 1 to 12, inclusive.

(b) The standards described in subdivision (a) shall be developed for pupils who, due to a visual impairment, are functionally blind or may be expected to have a need to learn

the braille code as their primary literacy mode for learning.

(a) By June 1, 2006, the state board shall adopt braille reading and mathematics standards for pupils who, due to a visual impairment, are functionally blind or may be expected to have a need to learn the braille code as their primary literacy mode for learning.

(b) County offices of education, school districts, and special education local plan areas shall provide to pupils described in subdivision (a) opportunities for instruction to master the braille reading and mathematics standards described in subdivision (a).

56352. (a) A functional vision assessment conducted pursuant to Section 56320 shall be used as one criterion in determining the appropriate reading medium or media for the pupil.

(b) An assessment of braille skills shall be required for functionally blind pupils who have the ability to read in accordance with guidelines established pursuant to Section 56136. A local educational agency may provide pupils with low vision with the opportunity to receive assessments to determine the appropriate reading medium or media, including braille instruction, for the pupils.

(c) The determination, by a pupil's individualized education program team, of the most appropriate medium or media, including braille, for functionally blind pupils who have the ability to read shall use as one criterion the assessment provided for pursuant to subdivision (b) and shall be in accordance with guidelines established pursuant to Section 56136.

(d) Except as provided in subdivision (b) of Section 56351.5, braille instruction shall be provided by a teacher who holds an appropriate credential, as determined by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, to teach pupils who are functionally blind or visually impaired.

(e) Each visually impaired pupil shall be provided with the opportunity to receive an assessment to determine the appropriate reading medium or media, including braille instruction, if appropriate, for that pupil.

Definitions

Education Code Section 56350 (as above)

Unless the context otherwise requires, the definitions set forth in this section shall govern the construction of this article.

(a) A "functionally blind pupil" means a pupil who relies basically on senses other than vision as major channels for learning.

(b) A “pupil with low vision” means a pupil who uses vision as a channel for learning, but who may also benefit from instruction in braille.

(c) A “visually impaired pupil” means a pupil who is functionally blind or a pupil with low vision. For purposes of this article, a “visually impaired pupil” does not include a pupil who is eligible for special education and related services based on a specific learning disability identified pursuant to Section 56338.

(d) “Braille” means the system of reading and writing through touch commonly known as “Standard English Braille, American Edition.”

Education Code Section 44265.5(a)

Pupils who are visually impaired, as defined in Section 56350, shall be taught by teachers whose professional preparation and credential authorization are specific to that impairment. .

As above

Education Code Section 56360

Each special education local plan area shall ensure that a continuum of program options is available to meet the needs of individuals with exceptional needs for special education and related services, as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sec. 1400 et seq.) and federal regulations relating thereto.

Designated Instruction and Services

Education Code Section 56363

(a) As used in this part, the term “designated instruction and services” means “related services” as that term is defined in Section 1401(26) of Title 20 of the United States Code and Section 300.34 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations. The term “related services” means transportation, and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services (including speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, social work services, school nurse services designed to enable an individual with exceptional needs to receive a free appropriate public education as described in the individualized education program of the child, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation, and mobility services, and medical services, except that such medical services shall be for diagnostic and evaluation purposes only) as may be required to assist an individual with exceptional needs to benefit from special education, and includes the early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in children.

(b) These services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(1) Language and speech development and remediation. The language and speech development and remediation services may be provided by a speech-language pathology assistant as defined in subdivision (i) of Section 2530.2 of the Business and Professions Code.

(2) Audio logical services.

(3) Orientation and mobility services.

(4) Instruction in the home or hospital.

(5) Adapted physical education.

(6) Physical and occupational therapy.

(7) Vision services.

(8) Specialized driver training instruction.

(9) Counseling and guidance services, including rehabilitation counseling.

(10) Psychological services other than assessment and development of the individualized education program.

(11) Parent counseling and training.

(12) Health and nursing services, including school nurse services designed to enable an individual with exceptional needs to receive a free appropriate public education as described in the individualized education program.

(13) Social worker services.

(14) Specially designed vocational education and career development.

(15) Recreation services.

(16) Specialized services for low-incidence disabilities, such as readers, transcribers, and vision and hearing services.

(17) Interpreting services.

(c) The terms “designated instruction and services” and “related services” do not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, including cochlear implants, the optimization of the functioning of a medical device, maintenance of that device, or the replacement of that device, pursuant to Section 300.34(b) of Title 34 of the Code of

Federal Regulations. In accordance with Section 300.34(b) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations, nothing in this subdivision shall do any of the following:

(1) Limit the right of an individual with exceptional needs with a surgically implanted device, including a cochlear implant, to receive related services or designated instruction and services that are determined by the individualized education program team to be necessary for the individual to receive a free appropriate public education.

(2) Limit the responsibility of a local educational agency to appropriately monitor and maintain medical devices that are needed to maintain the health and safety of the individual, including breathing, nutrition, or operation of other bodily functions, while the individual is transported to and from school or is at school.

(3) Prevent the routine checking of an external component of a surgically implanted device to make sure it is functioning properly, as required by Section 300.113(b) of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Integrated Special Classes/Instruction

Education Code Section 56364.1

Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 56364.2, pupils with low incidence disabilities may receive all or a portion of their instruction in the regular classroom and may also be enrolled in special classes taught by appropriately credentialed teachers who serve these pupils at one or more school sites. The instruction shall be provided in a manner which is consistent with the guidelines adopted pursuant to Section 56136 and in accordance with the individualized education program.

Low Incidence Funding

Since the mid 1980's, the state budget has included two line items for funding specialized equipment, books and materials and for specialized services for students with low incidence disabilities. Beginning in the state budget for 2013-14, those two line items were put into one line item. The funds are to be used for special education and related services indicated in the IEP of students with low incidence disabilities.

Braille Standards

Text of Code:

30 EC 56351.9 - State Board Shall Adopt Braille Reading and Mathematics Standards for Pupils

(As above)

The Braille Reading Standards can be found on the CDE Web site at www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/sr/documents/brailreadstand.pdf#search=Braille%20Standards&view=FitH8pagemode=none

The Braille Math Standards can be found on the CDE Web site at www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/sr/documents/brillemathstand.pdf#search=Braille%20Standards&view=FitH8pagemode=none.

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Appendix G

Resources for Technical Assistance

This list of resources shows where information about specific areas may be obtained. Resources for technical assistance are available from the California Department of Education, other state agencies, and various state and national organizations.

California Department of Education

For information about identification, assessment, instruction and services, curriculum, public school programs and private schools and agencies, directories (including the low incidence directory), funding (including low incidence funding), and legal requirements, and monitoring, one should contact:¹

Special Education Division
1430 N Street
Sacramento, California 95814
(916) 445-4613
TDD: (916) 323-4014 or 327-3678

Information about the educational and residential program, the assessment center, and assistance in assessing and providing specialized instruction to students with visual impairments (particularly students with additional disabilities) may be obtained from:

California School for the Blind
500 Walnut Ave.
Fremont, CA 94536
(510) 794-3800

Materials and equipment, aural media, and transcribers, as well as information about them, are available from:

(Send materials in packages to this address):

Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 445-5103
www.cde.ca.gov/

Additional program support and assistance are also provided by many other units within the following main branches of the California Department of Education. The main mailing address is California Department of Education, 1430 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Special Services and Support Branch **Phone:** 916-319-0797 **Fax:** 916-319-0100

Curriculum, Learning and Accountability Branch **Phone:** 916-319-0812 **Fax:** 916-319-0109

Finance, Technology and Administrative Branch **Phone:** 916-319-0815 **Fax:** 916-319-0106

Government Affairs and Charter Development Branch **Phone:** 916-319-0700 **Fax:** 916-319-0116

Additional Resources

The following agency provides assistance in a variety of settings to parents, staff, and administrators of programs serving students who are deaf-blind and maintains a registry of these students in California:

California Deaf-Blind Services
San Francisco State University
1600 Holloway Ave./
San Francisco, CA 94132-4201
cadbs@sfsu.edu
415-405-7560 - V/TTY
415-405-7562 - FAX
800-822-7884 - Toll Free

For information about eye specialists, one should contact:

California Optometric Association
2415 K Street
Sacramento, CA 95816
(916) 441-3990
(800) 877-5738
(916) 448-1423 (Fax)
contact@coavision.org

California Academy of Eye Physicians and Surgeons
1201 J Street, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: (415) 777-3937
Fax: (415) 777-1082

The following organization sponsors an annual state conference and provides information about transcription in special media and publications, including a newsletter for transcribers and educators:

California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped
741 N. Vermont Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90029
(213) 666-2211

The address of the main office of the California State Department of Rehabilitation is:

California Department of Rehabilitation

(916) 324-1313 (VOICE)

(916) 558-5807 (TTY)

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 944222

Sacramento, CA 94244-2220

Physical Address:

721 Capitol Mall

Sacramento, CA 95814

ExternalAffairs@dor.ca.gov

District offices are located throughout the state. Information about state hospital programs in California is available from:

The address of the main office of the California Department of Developmental Services is:

Department of Developmental Services

1600 Ninth St., Second Floor

South Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 323-4848

Information about preparation programs for teachers of the visually impaired, orientation and mobility specialists, and credentials may be obtained from:

Commission on Teacher Credentialing

1020 "O" St., Rm 222

Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 445-7254

California State University, Los Angeles Special Education Division

5151 State University Dr.

Los Angeles, CA 90032

(213) 343-4400

San Francisco State University Department of Special Education
1600 Holloway Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94132
(415) 338-1080 or 338-1245

The following is the only membership organization dedicated to the education and rehabilitation of blind and visually impaired children and adults. The organization and chapters conduct local, regional, and international meetings and conferences; provide publications, including newsletters and journals; and offer a job exchange service. The address is as follows:

Association of Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (National Office)
1703 North Beauregard Street, Suite 440
Alexandria, VA 22311
877-492-2708 (Toll free)
703-671-4500
703-671-6391 (Fax)
www.aerbvi.org

The following professional organizations of orientation and mobility specialists hold state and local meetings, publish newsletters, and provide information in this field. The addresses in California for this organization are:

California Association of Orientation and Mobility Specialists
Northern California Chapter
San Francisco State University Department of Special Education
1600 Holloway Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94132
(415) 338-1245

California Association of Orientation and Mobility Specialists
Southern California Chapter
California State University, Los Angeles Department of Special Education
5151 State University Dr.
Los Angeles, CA 90032
(213) 343-4411
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The organization listed as follows provides catalogs of publications and media. The services of national and regional consultants and publications, including the *Directory of Agencies Serving the Visually Handicapped in the U.S.*, are available from this organization:

American Foundation for the Blind, Inc.
Tel: (212) 502-7600
Fax: (888) 545-8331
E-mail: afbinfo@afb.net
Penn Plaza, Suite 1102
New York, NY 10121

The following organization publishes newsletters and position papers and hosts national meetings:

Division for Visually Handicapped Council for Exceptional Children
1920 Association Dr.
Reston, VA 22091
(703) 620-3660

The following organization supports sight conservation and work for the blind:
Lions International
300 22nd St.
Oak Brook, IL 60521

The organization listed below provides peer support, information, and services to parents of visually impaired and multiply impaired/visually impaired students.

National Association for Parents of the Visually Impaired, Inc.
1 North Lexington Avenue
White Plains, New York
(212) 769-7819 or (800) 562-6265

The address of the California chapter is:

California Association for Parents of the Visually Impaired
P.O. Box 1126
Los Gatos, CA 95031
(909) 945-5619

Organizations of the blind that can provide assistance to staff and parents are:

California Council of the Blind
1303 J Street Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814-2900
(916)441-2100 or (800) 221-6359

National Federation of the Blind of California
3934 Kern Court
Pleasanton, CA 94588
(510) 846-6086

The following organization is a source for a network of services to infants and preschool children provided by agencies in southern California:

Southern California Network
Serving Infant and Preschool Children with Visual Impairments
P.O. Box 1305
Woodland Hills, CA 91365

For resources related to materials and equipment, see Appendix E.

Appendix H

The Early Start Program

The California State Legislature passed the California Early Intervention Services Act in 1993 (CEISA; 14 G.C. Section 95000 et seq.). CEISA established state authority to develop an early intervention service system that was congruent with federal requirements. The California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) plans, develops, implements, and monitors the statewide early intervention services system in collaboration with the California Department of Education (CDE), and with advice and assistance from the State Interagency Coordinating Council (ICC). The Departments of Health, Social Services, Mental Health, and Alcohol and Drug Programs cooperate and coordinate with DDS and CDE in the delivery of early intervention services.

The Early Start Program became California's response to the federal legislation, ensuring that early intervention services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families are provided in a coordinated, family-centered system of services available statewide.

The California Early Start Program reflects the focus and intent of Part C legislation and has a positive impact on early intervention services through:

- Continued support for existing services and expansion of some programs
- Enhanced services for infants and toddlers with low incidence conditions, which include vision, hearing and orthopedic disabilities and combinations thereof
- Commitment to family-focused service delivery systems, including support for local Family Resource Centers (FRC/N)
- Interagency collaboration to promote local interagency agreements, memoranda of understanding (MOU), and the coordinated development of services in the participating agencies.

The success of the Early Start Program depends on parent involvement, interagency collaboration and a broad base of community support to establish and maintain an effective early intervention system.

Listed as follows are 14 basic elements of Part C of IDEA and California's Early Start Program:

1. A definition of developmental delay
2. A timetable for availability of services
3. A comprehensive multidisciplinary evaluation of children and families
4. An individualized family service plan that includes coordination of services
5. A comprehensive child-find and referral system

6. A public awareness program to focus on early identification of developmentally delayed children
7. A central directory of services, resources, state experts, and research and demonstration projects
8. A comprehensive system of personnel development
9. A single line of authority to a lead agency
10. A policy for contracting or making arrangements with local service providers
11. Steps for timely reimbursements of funds
12. Procedural safeguards
13. Policies and procedures for personnel standards
14. A system of compiling data regarding the early intervention program

Eligibility

Under California government code children age 0 to 2 with visual impairments may be eligible for services from LEAs if they meet the requirements in the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education, section 3030(d). *A pupil has a visual impairment which, even with correction, adversely affects a pupil's educational performance.* But they are required to have an established risk of a solely low incidence disability and not be eligible for services from the Regional Center. Infants and toddlers who have visual impairments are not required to show a 50 percent delay in one area or a 25 percent delay in two areas.

California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Division 2, Chapter 2 - Early Intervention Services

SubChapter 1 - General Provisions Article 2 - Eligibility for California's Early Start Program also states: *eligibility exists under established risk when an infant or toddler has a solely low incidence disability.*

Infants and toddlers whose multiple disabilities include visual impairment, may be dually eligible for and dually served by Regional Centers and the LEA. The number of dually eligible infants and toddlers receiving services from the LEA is determined by the LEA's funded capacity.

Determination of eligibility is established through evaluation; programmatic needs are determined through assessment in all the five domains of development and will include an assessment of the family's concerns, priorities and resources.

Early Intervention Services

Early education programs for infants identified as individuals with exceptional needs, that provide educational services with active parent involvement, can significantly reduce the potential impact of many disabling conditions, and positively influence later development when the child reaches school age. Early education programs shall provide a continuum of program options provided by a multi-disciplinary team to meet the multiple and varied needs of infants and their families. Recognizing the parent as the infant's primary teacher, it is the intent that early education programs will include opportunities for the family to receive home visits and to participate in family involvement activities. As an infant grows older, program emphasis would shift from home-based services to a combination of home-based and group services. It is further the intent of Early Start that services provided by state and local agencies serving infants with exceptional needs and their families be coordinated and maximized. (California Education Code: 56441.

Early Start services are specialized and provide ongoing support, which includes developmental, educational, health and social interventions that influence the overall development of the child with disabilities.

Multi-disciplinary coordination of specialties, such as vision and hearing services, physical/occupational therapies, nutritional, speech, medical and psychosocial, has a goal of reducing duplication of services and ensuring the provision of needed services.

Services shall include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Observing the infant's behavior and development in his or her natural environment.
- (2) Presenting activities that are developmentally appropriate for the infant and are specially designed, based on the infant's exceptional needs, to enhance the infant's development. Those activities shall be developed to conform with the infant's individualized family service plan (IFSP) and to ensure that they do not conflict with his or her medical needs.
- (3) Modeling and demonstrating developmentally appropriate activities for the infant to the parents, siblings, and other caregivers, as designated by the parent.
- (4) Interacting with the family members and other caregivers, as designated by the parent, to enhance and reinforce their development of skills necessary to promote the infant's development.
- (5) Discussing parental concerns related to the infant and the family, and supporting parents in coping with their infant's needs.
- (6) Assisting parents to solve problems, to seek other services in their community, and to coordinate the services provided by various agencies.

(b) The frequency of home-based services shall be once or twice a week, depending on the needs of the infant and the family.

(Education Code: 56426.1)

Home based and group activities shall also include, but are not limited to:

(1) Group and individual activities that are developmentally appropriate and specially designed, based on the infant's exceptional needs, to enhance the infant's development. Those activities shall be developed to conform with the infant's individualized family service plan and to ensure that they do not conflict with his or her medical needs.

(2) Opportunities for infants to socialize and participate in play and exploration activities.

(3) Transdisciplinary services by therapists, psychologists, and other specialists as appropriate.

(4) Access to various developmentally appropriate equipment and specialized materials.

(5) Opportunities for family involvement activities, including parent education and parent support groups.

(Education Code: 56426.2)

Credentialed personnel with expertise in vision or hearing impairments shall be made available by the Local Educational Agency to early education programs serving infants identified in accordance

with subdivision (a), (b), or (d) of Section 3030 of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations, and shall be the primary providers of services under those programs whenever possible.

(Education Code: 56426.6)

Individualized Family Service Plan

The purpose of the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) is to provide a process that enables the family and service provider(s) to work together as equal partners in determining child and family needs, priorities and resources, and the early intervention services required for the child with disabilities and the family. Both formal and informal resources and services are considered. The IFSP is *one* component of a comprehensive system of early intervention services: a process where family members and the team reflect on what has been learned while planning for the next steps in the journey.

The Role of the IFSP

The most important part of the IFSP is the relationship built among the family, professionals and paraprofessionals.

The relationship is built on trust and respect, with the goal of enabling and empowering the family to become active decision makers on behalf of the child and family. Family members should be supported in their attainment of self-confidence and self-esteem as a result of participating in development of their child's IFSP.

For children who may be eligible for services from regional centers as well as from LEAs, an interagency team must participate in decisions about the early intervention services for infants, toddlers and their families.

Infants and toddlers who are enrolled in LEA programs are eligible for services such as service coordination, respite, nutrition consultation, and transportation for families to activities that are necessary to fulfill the requirements of the IFSP. The IFSP must also describe services the family needs that other agencies may offer, but are not paid for by the LEA.

Periodic Review

Part C also requires that every child's individualized family service plan (IFSP) is reviewed every six months and that steps for a transition be written in the IFSP when the child is two years and six months of age. The receiving preschool staff needs to be involved in the transition planning to ensure a smooth transition and no gap in service when the child turns three.

Assessment

Part C requires an assessment in all five areas of development: cognitive, communication, adaptive, social and emotional, and physical, which includes vision, hearing and health status.

Transition

Families are the primary decision maker for their child. Transition planning should be approached as though the team were consultants to the family, providing them with the information they need to assess the various program options in light of their child's and family's needs and resources. This approach should permeate the entire system and influence each service and each transition that a family experiences.

Families of children with disabilities who are making transition from infant care to preschool and preschool to kindergarten programs experience stress from many sources:

- Loss of support persons in their lives and in their child's life
- Anxiety regarding separation and safety issues, particularly if the child is unable to communicate
- Responsibility for making placement decision that will affect the child's future
- Adjustment to a new system of service provision that establishes relationships with the child's new support team and to the role of advocate for the child in the new situation.
- The need to adopt new family routines, depending on the location and schedule of the child's new program.

The stressors may increase when the disability is initially diagnosed and the family first learns of the impact of the diagnosis on the child and whole family.

(p.6, Handbook on Transition from Early Childhood Programs, 2005).

Preschool Children

Part B of IDEA requires policies and procedures to ensure that children participating in early intervention programs under Part C will participate in preschool programs under Part B, if eligible, and experience a smooth and effective transition. For a child previously served under Part C, IDEA requires that an invitation to the initial IEP meeting, at the request of the parent, be sent to the Part C Service Coordinator or other representatives of the Part C system to assist with the smooth transition of services.*

Eligibility for preschool services under Part B of IDEA is the same as for older children to age twenty two. Preschoolers, making a transition to kindergarten or to the first grade must be assessed to determine whether they continue to be eligible for special education and related services.

Once a child is determined eligible, any necessary special education placement option or related service is available to insure the child's educational progress. The individualized family service plan (IFSP) must contain the steps supporting the transition of the child to a Part B preschool special education program if appropriate, or to other available services. For children, whose multiple impairments include vision impairment, adult to child ratios are specified in Education Code 56441.5.

*Handbook on Transition from Early Childhood Special Education, California Department of Education, Sacramento, 2005

Appendix I

“A Brief Overview of Cerebral Visual Impairment (CVI)”

adapted from Lueck, A.H., & Dutton, G.N. (in press). Impairment of vision due to disorders of the visual brain in childhood: A practical approach

Cerebral visual impairment (CVI) is the most frequent cause of visual impairment during childhood in industrialized countries, including the United States. It refers to damage to the visual brain that leads to disordered vision and/or visual perception of any type or severity. While CVI is often associated with additional conditions in children, such as cerebral palsy, it can occur in students who do not have other disorders. Students with more severe visual conditions due to CVI are more likely to be identified than those with milder visual concerns, but students with CVI can have less severe visual impairment or even normal to near normal visual acuity.

CVI can be described as a deficiency in the functions of vision due to damage or malfunction of visual pathways and/or visual centers in the brain (specifically those behind the lateral geniculate bodies), including the optic radiations, the occipital cortex and the visual associative areas, which may be accentuated by associated disorders of the control of eye movements.

From a practical perspective, students who have cerebral visual impairment fall into three groups:

Students with profound visual impairment due to CVI. This group comprises those who do not use vision as their primary mode of learning, but many of these students may have identifiable elements of visual function that respond to interventions. Infants and very young children in this category often develop more functionally useful vision over time.

Students with CVI who have functionally useful vision and cognitive challenges. These students have widespread damage to the brain that affects vision, intellect, and often mobility. Students with cerebral palsy, for example, may have this type of widespread brain damage.

Students with CVI who have functionally useful vision and who work at or near the expected academic level for their age group. These youngsters are the least severely affected, but some may have additional minor disorders of intellectual function and mobility. Others may have good central visual functions (acuity and contrast sensitivity), but their principal visual difficulties relate to disorders of visual perception and may also impair the way in which vision is used to guide movement of the limbs and body.

While these three broad categories are useful, they are not mutually exclusive and may overlap. For example, a child who has developed poor visual acuity due to an episode

of low oxygen/blood delivery to the parts of the brain that serve vision (the occipital lobes), can retain the ability to move around and be intellectually unaffected.

Clarification of the use of the term “cortical visual impairment”: The term “cerebral visual impairment” has historically been applied in a variety of ways, as has the term “cortical visual impairment.” At times these terms have been used interchangeably to refer to visual impairment that is due to damage or malfunction of the brain. The term cortical visual impairment has, however, tended to refer to visual impairment related to the cortical area of the brain only, or to be conceptually limited to deficits in visual acuity and/or visual field due to damage to the brain. Yet many affected children with low visual acuity or limited visual fields may also display a variety of perceptual deficits or disorders of visual guidance of movement that need to be recognized and addressed. In addition there is a range of affected children whose visual acuities are normal or near normal (Ortibus et al., 2011), and these children do not fall under this definition of cortical visual impairment. While some highlight that the terms “cortical” and “cerebral” have similar meanings (Good, 2009), others have suggested the need for a term that could be applied to white matter injuries that are anatomically outside the cortical region of the brain. This led to a movement to adopt a term that encompassed more than the cortical region, and the term “cerebral visual impairment” was introduced (Ortibus et al., 2011).

CVI can affect a range of visual functions. These can include but are not limited to:

Visual acuity is commonly reduced but can be normal.

Visual field can be affected. The type of field impairment depends of the site of brain damage. For example, bilateral lower visual field loss is commonly associated with periventricular leukomalacia (PVL).

Contrast sensitivity is more likely reduced in most profound injuries, but can be normal.

Color perception is most likely reduced in most profound injuries, but can be normal

Eye movements can be affected. There can be eye motility concerns, strabismus, nystagmus, inaccurate fast eye movements (saccades), and deficient visual following movements (smooth pursuit).

Accommodation disorders may be present.

Perception of movement can be absent or only slow movements can be seen.

Visually-guided movement concerns can be present such as inaccurate reach and grasp, inaccurate movement through space, difficulty negotiating stairs, and difficulty in the perception of floor boundaries (e.g., may interpret change from carpet to linoleum as a drop-off).

Object/shape recognition can be affected.

Face or facial expression recognition may be absent.

Orientation in space can be affected.

Following travel routes may be problematic.

Visual-memory tasks such as copying may be affected.

Visual crowding can make it harder for children to decipher details.

Visual attention such as visual neglect (inattention to an area of vision) or maintaining global vs. focal attention can be affected.

Assessment

Comprehensive assessment for all children with CVI is multidimensional. A variety of functional domains may need to be evaluated in individual children and a team of specialists may be required to conduct the array of assessments required.

- Both *visual functions* (i.e., the limits at which the eyes and visual system operate) and *functional vision* (i.e., the limitations to the ways in which a person uses visual skills and abilities binocularly in typical tasks of daily life) need to be ascertained.
- *Visual processing concerns*, related to damage to the visual brain, need to be addressed. This requires gathering information about higher order brain functions through history taking, brain imaging, observation, interview, and performance on key assessment tasks.
- *Motor function and knowledge of abilities and disabilities in verbal and performance tasks* must be analyzed so that their effects can be taken into account in the design of appropriate intervention strategies (Dutton & Jacobson, 2001).
- *Evaluation of social and emotional ramifications* must also be considered so that evaluators are aware of the ways in which the student, family, and other caregivers have addressed and adapted to the student's CVI.
- *Disordered auditory processing can be associated with CVI in children* (Morse, 2012). It is important to consider the evaluation of auditory processing as well as visual processing for students who have CVI.
- *Evaluation of the influence of the student's environment on performance* is critical, since the performance of students who have CVI can be particularly sensitive to the way the environment is structured and to the effects of competing sensory stimuli. This will lead to recommendations about ways in which each setting can be structured to support a student's growth and learning.

Assessment results, pulled together by the educational team, paint a summary picture of ways in which a student functions and addresses such questions as:

- What does the student perceive, and what does he or she miss?
- How does the student prefer to interact with his or her world?
- How does the student react in different environments and under different environmental conditions?
- How do internal states affect function (e.g. discomfort, sickness, hunger, fatigue, emotions)?
- How are the environments in which the student operates constructed?
- What activities motivate the student?

- What are the student's likes and dislikes?
- What are the student's and family's understanding of CVI and the student's condition?
- What are the student's and family's immediate and future concerns?

This picture is used to better understand how the student functions in different settings and how best to design matching interventions so that they are multidimensional, motivational, and address the complex interplay of vision and vision processing with other areas of function. As with assessment of students with CVI, interventions may also need to be multidisciplinary to address diverse learning and environmental needs (Lueck, 2004). Furthermore, interventions can also address the design of general learning environments, to minimize distraction and reduce stress from competing sensory stimuli. Such learning environments, with or without adaptations, can render key elements perceptible for all students in order to promote active participation, interaction, and learning.

Instructional activities, methods, and strategies for students with CVI are ones that engage, motivate, and sustain student interest and attention within a framework of instruction that highlights the use of appropriate adaptations to maximize active participation. Instruction in basic skills can be considered for some children with CVI. This is especially important for infants and toddlers, but may also apply to older students who have CVI. Since the evidence-base for successful interventions for children with CVI is just beginning to develop, diagnostic teaching is recommended as a way to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional approaches in a systematic way. With this approach, methods and progress are monitored regularly, and successful interventions are developed, maintained, and expanded. Intervention protocols are revised when they do not work or no longer apply, as students grow and change, or their learning environments alter.

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Glossary

The purpose of this glossary is to define terminology that may be unfamiliar to some readers of this publication. These terms apply to the areas of special treatment, medication, and services for the visually impaired as well as to the nature of certain visual impairments.

Accommodation - The adjustment of the eye to focus at different distances, accomplished by changing the shape of the crystalline lens through action of the ciliary muscle.

Adapted physical education - A diversified program of developmental activities, physical fitness, games, sports, and rhythms suited to the needs, interests, capacities, and limitations of students who may not safely or successfully engage in unrestricted participation in the vigorous activities of the general physical education program.

Adaptive behavior - A reaction that promotes the social or biological welfare of an organism and leads to the adjustment of the organism to its environment.

Adventitious - Occurring after birth; not present at birth.

Albinism - Congenital absence or deficiency of pigment in the iris, skin, and/or hair; usually associated with lowered visual acuity, nystagmus, and photophobia and often accompanied by large refractive errors.

Amblyopia - Diminished visual acuity, not correctable with conventional lenses, and not related to structural or pathological ocular defects.

Aniridia - Congenital or acquired absence of the iris.

Anomaly - Marked deviation from the normal standard.

Anophthalmos (Anophthalmia) - Absence of a true eyeball.

APH - American Printing House for the Blind. Major supplier of educational materials for visually impaired children.

Aphakia - Absence of the crystalline lens of the eye, a result of surgery, trauma, or a congenital condition.

Assistive technology - Any item, piece of equipment, or system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Astigmatism - A refractive error that prevents the light rays from a single point from coming to a single focus on the retina because of unequal refraction or bending of the incident light by the refractive media of the eye.

Aural - Pertaining to the ear, hearing.

Binocular vision - The ability to use the two eyes simultaneously to focus on the same object and to fuse the two images into a single perception.

Blindness - The inability to see; absence or severe reduction of vision.

Blind spot - A “blank” area in the visual field, corresponding to the position of the optic nerve (a physiological blind spot). May also be an area of absent or reduced sensitivity anywhere in the visual field.

Braille - A system of raised dots that enable some functionally blind students to read by touch.

Braillewriter - A machine used to produce embossed braille symbols.

Cataract - A condition in which the crystalline lens of the eye partially or totally loses transparency, with consequent loss of visual acuity.

Central visual acuity - Ability of the macula to separate details of images brought to a focus on it.

Choroiditis - Inflammation of the choroid.

Closed-circuit television (CCTV) - *Electronically* enlarges printed material onto a television screen; allows the user to change black print on a white background into white print on a black background. The degree of illumination can be altered, as well as that of magnification.

Cognitive skills - *Intellectual* processing abilities.

Color deficiency - Partial or complete inability to discriminate the ordinarily differentiated hues.

Communication skills - Skills that enable a visually impaired person to communicate with or receive communications from others.

Compensatory skills - *Any* technique, habit, or activity that must be developed to overcome a severe visual impairment; e.g., daily living skills, social and emotional skills.

Cones and rods - Two kinds of cells that form the photoreceptor layer of the retina and act as light-receiving media. Cones are concerned with visual acuity and color discrimination; rods pertain to motion and vision at low degrees of illumination (night vision).

Congenital - Present at birth.

Conjunctiva - Mucous membrane that forms the posterior layer of the eyelids and covers the front part of the eyeball, ending at the corneal limbus.

Contact lenses - Lenses made to fit directly on the cornea. These lenses are used for correction of vision in people having a cone-shaped cornea (keratoconus) to provide an improved retinal image and for cosmetic reasons. Corneal lenses are also used after cataract (lens) extraction to replace the lens removed from the eye. They provide less distortion and difference in the size of the image than spectacles do.

Convergence - The process of directing the visual axes of the two eyes to a near point, with the result that the pupils of the two eyes are closer together. The eyes are turned inward.

Cornea - Clear, transparent portion of the outer coat of the eyeball forming the front of the aqueous chamber. The cornea is also the major refracting medium of the eyes.

Corneal scarring - A lack of transparency of the clear tissue forming the anterior surface of the aqueous humor.

Cortical Visual Impairments (CVI) – A form of visual impairment that affects the visual system in the brain. Students can have CVI along with other visual impairments. Also referred to as neurological visual impairment.

Count fingers (CF) - A method of reporting vision too poor to read the Snellen chart; the examiner records the number of inches at which fingers can be counted.

Daily living skills – Skills that enable student with a visual impairment to live independently. This content area is also known as independent living skills.

Dark adaptation - The ability of the retina and pupil to adjust to a dim light.

Depth perception - The ability to perceive the solidity of objects and their relative position in space.

Diffused light - Light spread out to cover a large space or area.

Diopter - Unit of measurement of lens power.

Diplopia - The seeing of one object as two.

Direct lighting - Light with no shield; creates glare.

Distance vision - The ability to see objects clearly from a distance.

Echolalia - The meaningless repetition by a person of words addressed to him or her.

Enucleation - Complete surgical removal of the eyeball.

Esotropia - A manifest turning inward of the eye.

Exotropia- Abnormal turning outward from the nose of one or both eyes. *Extraocular motility*. Ability to move the eyes from one position to another.

Expanded Core Curriculum – A disability specific curriculum that includes ten content areas of instruction for students with visual impairments.

Eye specialist - A California-licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist.

Farnsworth test - A measurement of color perception using a series of plastic chips of slightly differing hues.

Federal quota program - See “American Printing House for the Blind Federal Quota Program,” which appears in Appendix E.

Fixation ability - Ability of the eyes to direct a person’s gaze on an object and to hold the object steadily in view.

Focus - Point to which rays are converged after passing through a lens.

Foot candle - The unit commonly used to measure light intensity; the amount of light given off by a candle at a one-foot distance.

Fovea - A pit or depression; a rodless area of the retina affording acute vision.

Free matter for the blind - The mail regulation that permits free mailing privileges for the blind.

Functional vision - The presence of enough usable vision, giving the student the ability to use sight as a primary channel for learning. This term also means the total act of seeing and how the student uses sight to function educationally.

Functionally blind - A student whose primary channels for learning are tactual and auditory.

Fusion - The power of coordinating the images received by the two eyes into a single mental image.

Glare - A quality of light that causes discomfort in the eye; it may result from a direct light source within the field of vision or from a reflection of a light source not in the field of vision.

Glaucoma - A disease of the eye marked by an increase in the intraocular pressure causing organic changes in the optic nerve and defects in the visual field.

Halberg clips - Lens holders that can be placed on glasses for testing.

Hemianopsia (Hemianopia) - Defective vision or blindness in half of the visual field.

Hand movements (HM) - A method of reporting the vision of people that is too poor for them to read the Snellen chart and too poor for them to count fingers; the examiner moves his or her hand at a relatively close distance from the eyes of the patient and records this distance, if movement is discernible.

Hyperopia - Farsightedness; a condition of the eye in which light rays from distant objects are brought to a focus behind the retina when the eye is at rest.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) - IDEA ensures a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for all students and youths with disabilities.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP) - A written plan for a special education student that is developed and implemented in accordance with the IEP team and that is designed to meet the assessed needs of the student.

Individualized plan - Includes the IFSP, the IEP, and/or the ITP.

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) - A plan developed to meet the requirements of Part H of IDEA.

Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) - A term commonly used to refer to transition language in the IEP required by IDEA.

Intraocular origin - Occurring from inside the eye.

Iris - Colored, circular muscle suspended between the cornea and the crystalline lens. It separates the anterior and posterior chambers and is perforated in the center to form the pupil.

Jaeger test - A test for reading, in which lines of reading matter are printed in a series of type sizes, often written J#1, J#2, and so forth.

Keratoconus - A conical protrusion of the cornea associated with corneal thinning and scarring.

Keratometry - The measurement of corneal curvature.

Large print or type - Print which is larger than type commonly found in magazines, newspapers, and books. Ordinary print is 6 to 11 points in height (about 1/16 to 1/8 of an inch). Large type is 14 to 18 points (3/16 to 1/4 of an inch) or larger.

LEA - Local educational agency.

Legally blind - Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye after best correction with conventional spectacle lenses; or visual acuity better than 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the widest diameter of the visual field is no greater than 20 degrees. In the United States this definition has been established primarily for economic and legal purposes.

Lens - A refractive medium.

Lentiglobus - An exaggerated curvature of the crystalline lens producing a spherical bulging on its anterior surface.

Light adaptation - The power of the eye to adjust itself to variations in the amount of light. *Light perception (LP)*. The ability to distinguish light from dark.

Light preference - Preferring a specific type of light and/ or degree of illumination to accommodate for a visual impairment; i.e., direct light to indirect lighting/dim light to bright.

Light projection - The ability to determine the direction of light.

Loupe - A small magnifier.

Low vision - A student whose vision can be used as a primary channel for learning (sometimes referred to as partial sight or subnormal vision).

Low vision aids - Optical devices of various types useful to persons with visual impairments (magnifiers, monoculars, lenses, hand-held telescope, prism lenses, and so forth).

Low vision assessment - A comprehensive assessment of a visually impaired student's visual impairment and visual potentials and capabilities.

Low vision clinic - A clinic that gives eye examinations, provides low vision assessments, prescribes low vision aids, and offers instruction on how to use the aids.

Macula lutea - The small area of the retina that surrounds the fovea and with the fovea makes up the area of the most distinct vision.

Macular degeneration - A disease affecting cone cells in the macula, usually results in gradual loss of central vision, but never in total blindness. It is often associated with the aging process.

Mobility - A term used to denote the ability to navigate from one's present fixed position to one's desired position in another part of the environment. (See also *Orientation*.)

Monocular diplopia - A condition in which two images of the same object are seen by one eye.

Motor skills - Movement ability.

Multiply impaired - Two or more concomitant disabilities that have a direct effect on learning ability.

Muscle balance - The ability of the six extra ocular eye muscles of each eye to pull together to allow binocular vision to occur in all directions—vertical, horizontal, oblique, and circular.

Myopia - Nearsightedness; a refractive error in which the point of focus for rays of light from distant objects falls in front of the retina.

Near vision - The ability to see objects distinctly at the required reading distance.

Nemeth Code - A braille code for mathematics and science.

Night blindness - A condition in which the rod function is diminished to cause deficient visual acuity at night and in dim light.

Nystagmus - An involuntary, rapid movement of the eyeball; it may be lateral, vertical, rotary, or mixed.

Ocular pursuit - The act of tracking a moving object in all cardinal directions—vertical, horizontal, oblique, and circular.

Occipital cortex - The section of the brain that monitors visual sensations.

O.D. - Oculus dexter; right eye.

Ophthalmologist - A doctor of medicine (M.D.) who specializes in diagnosis and treatment of defects and diseases of the eye, performing surgery when necessary or prescribing other types of treatment, including glasses or other optical devices.

Optic atrophy - Degeneration of the nerve tissue that carries messages from the retina to the brain.

Optic nerve - The group of nerve fibers that carry impulses from the retina to the visual cortex.

Optic Nerve Hypoplasia – A underdeveloped optic nerve

Optician - One who grinds lenses, fits them into frames, and dispenses and adjusts glasses or other optical devices on the written prescription of an optometrist or physician.

ptometrist - A doctor of optometry (O.D.) who specializes in the examination and treatment of conditions or impairments of the visual system. Optometrists are trained to detect problems with vision, eye diseases, and other abnormalities.

Orientation - The process of using the remaining senses in establishing one's position and relationship to all other significant objects in the environment. (See also *Mobility*.)

Orthoptic training - Series of scientifically planned exercises for developing or restoring the normal teamwork of the eyes.

Orthoptist - One who provides orthoptic training.

O.S. - Oculus sinister; left eye.

O.U. - Oculus unitas; both eyes.

Paresis - Slight or partial paralysis.

Part H - The section of IDEA dealing with infants with disabilities.

Partially sighted - The visual acuity of a partially sighted person ranges from 20/70 to 20/200 in the better eye, with correction. (See also *Low vision*.)

Peripheral vision - The perception of objects, motion, or color by any part of the retina, excluding the macula.

Photophobia - Abnormal sensitivity to or discomfort from light.

Polycoria - The existence of more than one pupil in an eye.

Program evaluation - A process for obtaining information to assist in making decisions on program improvement and expansion, maintenance, or termination of a program or program component.

Proprioceptive - Receiving stimulations within tissues of the body.

Ptosis - A paralytic drooping of the upper eyelid.

Public Law 94-142. - A federal law that mandates a free appropriate public education for all handicapped children.

Pupil - The round opening (black center) in the center of the iris, which corresponds roughly with the shutter opening of a camera. This opening permits light to enter the eye.

Quadrantanopsia (Quadrantanopia) - Defective vision or blindness in one-fourth of the visual field bounded by a vertical and a horizontal radius.

Reading machine - A machine used to read printed material orally or tactually.

Reading stand - A stand that supports regular or large print books and allows the reader to change the position of the book.

Refraction - The bending or deviation of rays of light in passing obliquely from one medium to another one of different density; the determination of the refractive errors of the eye and their correction by prescription of lenses.

Refractive error - A defect in the eye that prevents light rays from being brought to a single focus on the retina.

Residual vision - The remaining useful sight after a congenital defect, injury, illness, trauma, systemic disease, or ocular pathology has caused a vision loss.

Retina - Innermost coat of the eye, containing light sensitive nerve cells and fibers connecting with the brain through the optic nerve.

Retinal detachment - A separation of the retina from the choroid.

Retinitis - Inflammation of the retina.

Retinitis pigmentosa - Degeneration and atrophy of the light-sensitive (rod cells) of the retina.

Retinoblastoma - A tumor arising from the retinal germ cells; the most common malignant intraocular tumor of childhood, usually occurring under age five.

Retinopathy of Prematurity – Visual impairment due to premature birth causing scarring of the retinal tissues and possible retinal detachment.

Retinoschisis - A congenital cleft of the retina. A cleavage of the retinal layers.

Retrolental fibroplasia (RLF) - A disease of the retina in which a mass of scar tissue fills the space between the back of the lens and the retina. Both eyes are affected in most cases, and it occurs chiefly in infants born prematurely who receive excessive oxygen.

Saccadic fixation - Relating to eye movements; the jumping movement of the eyes between fixations. *Sclera*. The white coating of the eye.

Scotoma (Scotomata) - A blind or partially blind area in the visual field.

SEA - State educational agency; e.g., the California Department of Education.

SELPA - Special education local plan area.

Sensory/motor - Relating to or functioning in either sensory or motor aspects or both of bodily activity.

Sensory stimulation - To rouse or invigorate the senses— visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and kinesthetic.

Sighted guide techniques - Techniques that are used by the sighted to guide the visually impaired.

Sine correction (SC) - Without correction, not wearing glasses.

Slate and stylus - Slate: a metal plate used to hold paper for hand brailing. Stylus: an instrument used to press the braille dots on the paper held by the slate.

Snellen chart - Used for testing central visual acuity. It consists of lines of letters, numbers, or symbols in graded sizes drawn to Snellen measurements. Each size is labeled with the distance at which it can be read by the normal eye. Most often used for testing vision at a distance of 20 feet.

Stereoscopic vision (Stereopsis) - Ability to perceive the relative position of objects in space without such cues as shadows, size, and overlapping.

Retinoscope - An instrument for the objective determining of the refractive state of the eye by observing the movements of lights and shadows across the pupil by the light thrown onto the retina from a moving mirror.

Strabismus - Squint; failure of the two eyes to direct their gaze simultaneously at the same object because of muscle imbalance.

Suppression - A mental process of inattention to distracting or disturbing stimuli. Often a forerunner of amblyopia.

Telebinocular - Any stereoscopic instrument used for vision screening.

Tonometer - An instrument for measuring pressure inside the eye.

Tracking - The ability of the eye or eyes to follow systematically an object of regard; e.g., print or ball.

Trailing - Information-gathering and direction-taking techniques using the hand or cane.

Trauma - Injury, wound, or shock, or the resulting condition.

Tunnel vision - Contraction of the visual field to such an extent that only a small area of central visual acuity remains, thus giving the affected individual the impression of looking through a tunnel.

Vision - The art or faculty of seeing.

Visual acuity - The measurement of the sharpness of vision in respect to the ability to discriminate detail. A visual acuity measurement is not useful for determining a career choice, classroom situation, or training program. Visual acuity should not be used to predict one's visual function or educational performance.

Visual efficiency - The level of visual function.

Visual processing - How one uses or processes the images acquired by the act of seeing.

Vitreous humor - Transparent, colorless mass of soft, gelatinous material filling the space between the lens and retina.

Vitreous turbidity - Cloudiness or haze in the vitreous humor.