NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Students with Visual Impairments in North Dakota Schools

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The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction appreciates the time and effort spent by the task force members in contributing to the development of this guidance document.

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Special Note

“Unless otherwise specified, citations to ‘section’ or ‘sec.’ are citations to federal regulations implementing IDEA found in the Code of Federal Regulations at 34 CFR Part 300, which consists of 34 CFR secs. 300.1 through 300.818 and appendices A through E.”

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Introduction

The population of children who receive services under Part B because of blindness or visual impairment is extremely diverse. These children display a wide range of vision difficulties and varying adaptations to vision loss. With regard to degree of vision, the student population includes persons who are totally blind or persons with minimal light perception, as well as persons with varying degrees of low vision. For some individuals, blindness or visual impairment is their only disability, while for others, blindness or vision impairment is one of several identified disabilities that will affect, to varying degrees, learning and social integration. For example, some children who are blind or visually impaired also have hearing, orthopedic, emotional, or cognitive disabilities.

In addition, persons with similar degrees of vision loss may function very differently. A significant visual deficit that could pose formidable obstacles for some children may pose far less formidable obstacles for others. This is because adaptations to vision loss are shaped by individual factors, such as availability and type of family support and degree of intellectual, emotional, physical, and motor functioning. Therefore, in addition to the nature and extent of vision loss, a variety of factors needs to be considered in designing an appropriate educational program for a student with a visual impairment, and these factors could change over time.

The challenge for educators of students with visual impairments, including those with other disabilities, is how to teach skills that children without visual impairments typically acquire through vision. Students with visual impairments have used a variety of methods to learn to read, write, and acquire other skills, both academic and nonacademic. For example, for reading purposes, some students use braille exclusively; others use large print or regular print with or without low vision aids. Still others use a combination of methods, including braille, large print, low vision aids and devices with computer-generated speech, while others have sufficient functional vision to use regular print, although with difficulty.

In order to receive a free and appropriate public education under Part B, it is generally understood that students who are blind or visually impaired should be provided appropriate instruction in a variety of subjects, including language arts, composition, and science and mathematics. However, in order to be educated in these subject areas effectively, students with visual impairments should also be taught the necessary skills to enable them to learn to read and to use other appropriate technology to obtain access to information. It is also very important for students with visual impairments, including those with other disabilities, who need orientation and mobility services, to receive appropriate instruction in orientation and mobility as early as possible. Providing these children with needed orientation and mobility services at the appropriate time increases the likelihood that they can participate meaningfully in a variety of aspects of their schooling, including academic, nonacademic, and extracurricular activities. Once these individuals are no longer in school, their use of acquired orientation and mobility skills would greatly enhance their ability to move around independently in a variety of educational, employment, and community settings. These skills also would enhance the ability of students with visual impairments to obtain employment, retain their jobs, and participate more fully in family and community life.

Key Personnel: Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVIs)

Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVIs) are the trained and certified professional educators who assess the functional vision and learning media needs of students with visual impairments and who provide, within the scope of their training and expertise, specially designed instruction and accessible instructional methods and materials to meet students' assessed needs. They provide direct services to students with visual disabilities and serve in consultative roles with their educational teams. TVIs may be based at specialized schools or may teach students who attend local public schools.

TVIs are skilled in providing a wide range of specialized instruction and supports. Federal law (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]) requires that when the services of a TVI are written into a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), these services should be provided. It is best practice to include a TVI in the identification, referral, and evaluation process of a student with a suspected or confirmed visual impairment.

Identification of Students with Visual Impairments

Vision Concerns: The process of referring a student with a suspected visual impairment for school-based vision services may begin when there are concerns about a child's vision.

The following is a list of the ABC's of vision concerns:

Appearance

- One or both eyes turn inward or outward, or one is slightly higher or lower than the other eye
- Crusty or red eyelids or red eyes
- Eyes that are in constant, rapid motion
- Drooping eyelid(s)
- Pupils of different sizes, or different reactions to light and accommodations
- Glands that are enlarged, inflamed, or otherwise infected
- Excessive tearing, light sensitivity, lid spasms

Behavior

- Lack of or reduced eye contact
- Shows poor eye-muscle coordination
- Covers or closes one eye for critical seeing
- Thrusts head forward to see distant objects
- Tilts head to one side for critical seeing
- Tries to "brush away" a blur
- Rubs eyes often or blinks often while reading or looking at books
- Frowns or squints when looking at or trying to see distant objects
- Stumbles often over objects, is awkward
- Holds book, toy, or picture too close or too far away

Complaints

- Sensitivity to light
- Burning or itching of eyes or eyelids
- Seeing double, or blurred vision
- Headaches, usually after a critical visual task
- Nausea or dizziness
- Eyestrain, fatigue

Other School Related Vision Concerns:

- Difficulty copying from the board
- Difficulty with handwriting
- Confuses similar words
- Needs more light to read than expected
- Reading comprehension deteriorates with time
- Doesn't read to the end of a sentence before going to the next
- Head moves instead of eyes when reading or looking at pictures
- Loses place when reading and skips lines
- Needs to use finger as a line marker
- Difficulty solving maze puzzles and word searches
- Math errors due to misalignment of numbers

A child should be examined by an optometrist or ophthalmologist as soon as a vision concern is suspected. Some of these concerns may be related to other medical conditions or medications. It is always best to address any concerns with the student's pediatrician as well. If a school suspects any vision concerns, the school should work with the parents or guardians to have their child examined by an optometrist or ophthalmologist.

1. **Vision Examination:**

   A child should be examined by an optometrist or an ophthalmologist if there is a concern regarding a child's vision. An optometrist is a Doctor of Optometry (O.D.) who specializes in the examination and treatment of conditions or impairments of the visual system. Optometrists prescribe glasses and are trained to detect problems with vision, eye diseases, and other abnormalities. An ophthalmologist is 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.

2. **Visual Acuity:**

   Visual acuity is an important aspect of a complete eye exam. Visual acuity refers to the clarity or clearness of one's vision, a measure of how well a person sees. The numerator indicates the distance (in feet) from the chart that the subject can read. The denominator indicates the distance at which a normal eye can read.

For example:

- A person with a distance visual acuity of 20/20 is said to have “normal” vision. If a person with a distance visual acuity of 20/20 stands 20 feet from an object, he sees the object as well as others with “normal” vision standing 20 feet from the same object.
- A person with low vision, with a distance visual acuity of 20/100 would need to stand 4 feet from an object to see it as well as a person with “normal” vision standing 20 feet from the same object. (4/20 = 20/100)
- A person who is legally blind, with a distance visual acuity of 20/200 would need to stand 2 feet from an object to see it as well as a person with “normal” vision standing 20 feet from the same object. (2/20 = 20/200)

3. Definitions of Visual Impairments:

The definition provided for Visual Impairment found in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA, states that: 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 (low vision) and blindness (300.8(c)(12)).

Low vision is defined as a mild to moderate visual impairment; visual acuity as measured between 20/70 and 20/200. A student with low vision is one whose vision can be used as a primary channel for learning, but the low vision impacts daily activities. People with severe low vision may be classified as partially sighted and/or legally blind.

Legally blind is when the best corrected visual acuity is 20/200 or less or the person's visual field is 20 degrees or less. Legally blind is generally used to enable a person to access services funded by the government.

Blindness can range from students having unreliable vision and relying primarily on other senses, to being totally without sight and relying exclusively on other senses.

Some common causes of ocular visual impairments include:

- Aniridia
- Albinism
- Cataracts
- Coloboma
- Glaucoma
- Hemianopsia
- Lebers Congenital Amaurosis
- Macular Degeneration
- Nystagmus
- Optic Nerve Atrophy (ONA)
- Optic Nerve Hypoplasia (ONH)
- Retinitis Pigmentosa
- Retinopathy of Prematurity

4. **Neurological Visual Impairment (NVI):**

   A neurological visual impairment (NVI), also referred to as cortical visual impairment or cerebral visual impairment (CVI), is a brain-based visual impairment not caused by any abnormality of the eyes. It is a temporary or permanent visual impairment resulting from damage within the brain, often within the visual cortex of the brain. NVI or CVI is frequently seen in children who were born prematurely, have neurological disorders, or have acquired brain injury. The degree of vision impairment can range from severe visual impairment to total blindness. The damage prevents the individual from adequately receiving and interpreting what the eyes see.

5. **Ocular Motor Impairment:**

   An ocular motor impairment is thought to be the result of miscommunication between the brain and eye muscles (NIH, 2019). Examples of ocular motor impairments include convergence insufficiency and oculomotor dysfunction. Convergence Insufficiency (CI) is a binocular (using both eyes) vision disorder that results in symptoms such as eyestrain, headaches, and diplopia (double vision) when looking at a near target (Georing, et al., 2022). Oculomotor dysfunction occurs when there is a developmental delay, trauma to the brain, or disease that affects the central nervous system and interferes with the brain's ability to coordinate the eyes to move with accuracy and control.

6. **Educational Impact of a Visual Impairment:**

   Visual impairments can result in delayed concept development which, without effective intervention, may severely impact the student's social, emotional, cognitive, academic, language, motor, and vocational development. When a visual impairment is present from birth (congenital) it will likely have a more significant impact on development and learning than if the visual impairment is acquired later in life (adventitious).

   Students with visual impairments are typically limited in acquiring information through incidental learning since they are often unaware of subtle activities in their environment. They may require individualized instruction relating to specialized skills as well as specialized books, materials, access technology, and equipment for learning through alternate modes.

Referral and Evaluation Process:

7. **Multidisciplinary Team:**

   During the referral and evaluation process, a multidisciplinary team is formed. If a vision concern is suspected or confirmed, a referral to a TVI should be made. As stated in the DPI *Guidelines: Evaluation Process* (May 2014), "persons knowledgeable in each disability should be included." When there is a vision concern, the specialist is a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI). The teacher with this training has knowledge and experience in conducting and interpreting assessments for students with visual impairments. This is also true

for children who may have other disabilities in addition to a visual impairment. Students with additional disabilities should be carefully assessed from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

8. **Role of a TVI in a Multidisciplinary Team:**
    - Consult with other team members about factors that could impact assessment, including eye conditions, educational implications, ability to access visual information, accommodations, and modifications.
    - Determine appropriateness of assessments
    - Interpretation of assessments
    - Provide knowledge of the expanded core curriculum that could include skill development relating to alternative communication modes (i.e., braille, large print), social interaction, recreation & leisure, use of assistive technology, orientation and mobility, independent living, career education and visual efficiency.
    - Provide knowledge of specialized curriculum and materials to address deficits identified in the assessment process.

> Section 300.304(c)(1) **Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child under this part** - (i) Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;(ii) Are provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer; (iii) Are used for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable; (iv) Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and (v) Are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.

Unique Factors to be Considered by the Multidisciplinary Team of a Student with a Visual Impairment

- Cause and age of onset of visual impairment
- Degree of visual impairment
- Other disabilities and medical conditions
- Family and cultural characteristics
- Physical and psychological maturity of student
- Environmental characteristics
- Sensory development (visual, auditory, tactual, kinesthetic)
- Social development
- Concept development and reasoning
- Listening skills and study skills
- Leisure and recreation
- Orientation and mobility

- Use of media for literacy in reading and writing
- Career education
- Visual efficiency skills
- Motor development
- Independent Living skills
- Assistive technology devices and services
- Communication modes
- Academics
- Low vision aids

9. What is a Functional Vision Assessment?

Visual acuity is an important component of a clinical evaluation, but it conveys limited information. For instance, we may know that a student has 20/100 distance acuity, but the preferred or optimal print size for reading may not be apparent to the parents or teacher. The Functional Vision Assessment is a detailed expansion of the clinical vision evaluation. This assessment provides a description of the student's typical use of vision during everyday tasks in various environments like the student's classroom and home. The information provided through the Functional Vision Assessment will define the current effects of the student's visual impairment and potential use of vision by the student in certain conditions.

It is important to note that a Functional Vision Assessment should be conducted prior to other assessments so that other team members are able to consider visual factors unique to each student before conducting their assessments.

Some of the specific aspects of a Functional Vision Assessment include:

- Appearance of the eyes
- Pupillary reflexes
- Eye preference
- Acuity
- Field of vision
- Color vision
- Scanning
- Tracking
- Possible use of optical aids
- Optimal print size
- Reading distance

Additional assessments may also be administered by qualified personnel including, but not limited to, a learning media assessment, assessment of the expanded core curriculum, orientation and mobility assessment, or assistive/access technology assessment.

10. If a student with a visual impairment is not eligible for services under the IDEA, what further involvement should a teacher of students with visual impairments have in the education of that student?

If a student with a visual impairment is determined to be eligible under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the TVI may be involved as a consultant in the development of the 504 Plan.

The teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI) can provide valuable information to assist in the success of the student in the general education classroom. Teams implementing 504 Plans for students who have a visual impairment should always consider the list of Unique Factors listed previously in this document.

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Planning Process

Most children learn incidentally, without specific instruction, because they have watched someone else do something, or because they associate what they have seen with what they have heard. Children with blindness and visual impairment do not have this advantage and often must be specifically taught what other children learn incidentally. For example, think about a toddler standing in line at the store. He reaches for candy at the cash register, runs after a plastic ball in the toy aisle or grabs for a colorful magazine at checkout. He sees mom or dad unload their cart, item by item, and pay. All that time, he's absorbing information about the world around him — completely incidentally. He's making connections: a ball bounces, money is used to pay, a magazine has pages you can flip. Children with visual impairments don't have those opportunities for incidental learning.

11. **Should a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI) serve as a member of the IEP team of a student with a visual impairment?**

    A teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI) should be part of the IEP team of a student with a visual impairment. IEP teams must consider the full range of skills necessary to enable the student with a visual impairment to learn effectively. A TVI is knowledgeable about vision impairments and their functional, developmental, and educational implications.

    In addition to being part of the IEP team, a TVI may:
    - Provide training to staff who are directly working with the student
    - Collaborate with the general educator, family, or other members of the team to discuss the progress and adaptations for the student
    - Provide direct services to the student
    - Work with family members as a liaison between school and home
    - Make referrals for additional services
    - Be the liaison between eye doctors and the IEP team
    - Create or secure adaptive materials

    Section 300.321 **IEP Team** (a) General. The public agency must ensure that the IEP Team for each child with a disability includes - (1) The parents of the child; (2) Not less than one general education teacher of the child (if the child is, or may be, participating in the general education environment); (3) Not less than one special education teacher of the child, or where appropriate, not less than one special education provider of the child; (4) A representative of the

public agency who - (i) Is qualified to provide, or supervise the provision of, specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities; (ii) Is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum; and (iii) Is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the public agency. (5) An individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the team described in paragraphs (a)(2) through (a)(6) of this section; (6) At the discretion of the parent or the agency, other individuals who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate; and (7) Whenever appropriate, the child with a disability.

12. What is the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC)?

The core curriculum is comprised of the academic subjects which a student should complete prior to high school graduation. In addition to the core curriculum, students without visual impairments learn a large amount of valuable information through casual observation of their environment. Students with visual impairments should be provided direct training through the expanded core curriculum to receive these same experiences.

The expanded core curriculum is defined as “expanded” because it encompasses not only the essential elements of the standard curriculum but also includes instruction of additional areas of need that are a direct result of the student’s visual impairment. The expanded core curriculum should be systematically and sequentially taught by professionals with specialized skills. The professionals may be a teacher of students with visual impairments, an orientation and mobility specialist, or other service provider.

Components of the expanded core curriculum could include instruction in:

- Compensatory skills—critical skills that students need to be successful in school, such as concept development, organizational skills, speaking and listening, and communication skills such as braille or print reading and writing.
- Orientation and mobility—skills to orient children who are visually impaired to their surroundings and travel skills to enable them to move independently and safely in the environment, such as:
    - Human guide techniques (also known as sighted guide)
    - Using standard and adaptive canes
    - Recognizing cues and landmarks
    - Moving through space by walking or using a wheelchair
    - Requesting assistance
- Social interaction—skills needed to respond appropriately and participate actively in social situations, such as:
    - Shaking hands
    - Turning toward others when speaking or being spoken to
    - Using language to make a request, decline assistance, or express a need

    - Expressing emotion and affection appropriately
    - Participating appropriately in conversations in various situations

- Independent living—skills needed to function as independently as possible in school and at home, including personal grooming, time management, cooking, cleaning, clothing care, and money management.

- Recreation and leisure—skills to ensure students' enjoyment of physical and leisure-time activities, including:
    - Making choices about how to spend leisure time
    - Actively participating in physical and social recreational activities
    - Trying new leisure activities
    - Following rules in games and activities at an appropriate level
    - Maintaining safety during leisure activities

- Sensory efficiency—skills that help students use the senses, including any functional vision, hearing, touch, smell (olfactory), and taste (gustatory).

  Examples of sensory efficiency skills your child may learn include using:
    - Optical aids
    - Augmentative and alternative communication devices
    - Touch and vision to identify personal items
    - Sense of smell to know when nearing the school cafeteria

- Use of technology—skills to use devices such as computers or other electronic equipment that make it easier to function effectively in school, at home, and in the workplace.

- Career education—skills that enable students who are visually impaired to move toward working as an adult, including:
    - Exploring and expressing preferences about work roles
    - Assuming work responsibilities at home and school
    - Understanding concepts of reward for work
    - Participating in job experiences
    - Learning about jobs and adult work roles at a developmentally appropriate level

- Self-determination—skills to enable students to become effective advocates for themselves based on their own needs and goals.

13. What IDEA Special Factors should the IEP team consider when creating an IEP for a student with a visual impairment?

The IDEA includes a list of *special factors* that must be considered by every child's IEP team. There are two *special factors* that focus specifically on students with visual impairments. These two *special factors* are the instruction and use of braille and consideration of assistive technology and devices.

Considerations for braille and assistive technology

Section 300.324(a)(2) **Consideration of Special Factors**. The IEP team must - (iii) In the case of a child who is blind or visually impaired, provide for instruction in braille and the use of braille unless the IEP team determines, after an evaluation of the child's reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media (including an evaluation of the child's future needs for instruction in braille or the use of braille), that instruction in braille or the use of braille is not appropriate for the child; and (v) Consider whether the child needs assistive technology devices and services.

14. What factors need to be considered in defining the appropriate media for literacy for a student with a visual impairment?

When a student with a visual impairment is ready to read or write, an evaluation is needed to determine the appropriate media for literacy. As part of this process, the team must consider the need for braille instruction and provide reasons if this instruction is not included in the IEP.

There are many factors that should be considered when making this determination. One factor to consider is the student's visual condition. For example, a child who is totally blind will usually read using braille, whereas a student with low vision may need ongoing assessment in his/her reading and writing skills to determine when to use large print and/or braille.

Additional factors to consider are:

- Age
- General ability
- Visual and tactual functioning
- Visual prognosis
- Motivation
- Academic/non-academic demands
- Environmental conditions
- Career goals

15. Why should assistive technology or access technology be considered for a student with a visual impairment?

Assistive technology increases the independence and freedom of choice for students with visual impairments. The appropriate assistive technology allows students with a visual impairment access to the world of information available to their sighted peers.

Students with visual impairments now have a variety of assistive technology tools which allow them to access the instructional information that is needed to be successful in school.

To determine the appropriate assistive technology needs, the student's multidisciplinary team must provide appropriate evaluations of the student's

technology needs by knowledgeable professionals. The DPI *Guidelines: Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities* (September 2015), provides detailed information relating to assistive technology devices and services.

16. What adaptations of educational services might be needed for a student with a visual impairment?

To enable students with visual impairments to have full access to information within the school setting, appropriate classroom adaptations and use of technology should be considered during the evaluation and IEP process. There are a variety of accommodations, adaptations, modifications, supports, and adjustments that will enable students with visual impairments to participate as fully as possible in the general curriculum and other school offerings.

Possible adaptations could include:

- Large print textbooks/worksheets
- Recorded textbooks/notes
- Preferential seating
- Copy of class notes
- Recorded lectures
- Braille transcription of books and materials
- Magnification device to access materials
- Adequate lighting
- Talking calculators/dictionary/tape measure, etc.
- Computers with speech (i.e., text to speech, speech to text)
- Magnification software for computers
- Modified tests/assignments
- Extra time for tests and assignments

17. What related services may benefit a student with a visual impairment?

Some children require related services to achieve their IEP goals and objectives. The types of related services needed by a child with a visual impairment will vary with each child. Possible related services include but are not limited to reader assistance, braille transcription, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and orientation and mobility.

Orientation and mobility which address travel and orientation within the environment is a necessary related service for many students with visual impairments. Orientation and mobility specialists have the necessary knowledge and skills to assist students and staff with this service.

Some of the responsibilities of the orientation and mobility specialist are:

- Orient the student to the school environment
- Teach independent travel in the community
- Consult with the staff who are directly working with the student
- Teach cane use or the use of optical devices
- Provide in-service training to school personnel and family members
- Participation as a member of the evaluation and IEP teams

Section 300.34 **Related Services** (c)(7) Orientation and mobility services— (i) Means services provided to students with visual impairments by qualified personnel to enable those students to attain systematic orientation to and safe movement within their environments in school, home, and community; and (ii) Includes teaching children the following, as appropriate: (A) Spatial and environmental concepts and use of information received by the senses (such as sound, temperature and vibrations) to establish, maintain, or regain orientation and line of travel (e.g., using sound at a traffic light to cross the street); (B) To use the long cane or a service animal to supplement visual travel skills or as a tool for safely negotiating the environment for children with no available travel vision; (C) To understand and use remaining vision and distance low vision aids; and (D) Other concepts, techniques, and tools.

18. What accommodations could be made when a student with a visual impairment participates in statewide assessments?

As stated in the DPI *Guidelines: Individualized Education Program Planning Process*, the purpose of accommodations is to help each student show what he or she knows and can do and to lessen the impact of the disability. The intent is to provide an equal opportunity, not to give an unfair advantage over other students. Accommodations should not change what concept or skills the test is assessing. For a student who has a visual impairment, some possible accommodations might be braille, large print, optical devices, illumination, reader assistance, assistive technology, increased time, and/or graphic interpretation.

19. When considering the least restrictive environment for a child with a visual impairment, what potential harmful effects should be considered?

The determination of the least restrictive environment (LRE) for a child with a visual impairment is made only after an IEP has been written that addresses the full range of the child's unique needs. A full array of services and continuum of placements should be considered as part of the IEP process. The options could include instruction in regular classes, special classes, special schools, home instruction, and instruction in hospitals and institutions.

As part of the decision-making process regarding least restrictive environment, the IEP team discusses and documents potential harmful effects of a placement on the child or the quality of services the child needs. The IEP team for a child with a visual impairment must consider the potential harmful effect a placement may have in key areas.

These areas could be in alternative learning media, independent living skills, orientation and mobility, assistive technology, social interaction, recreation and leisure, and career education. Failure to consider these areas may lead to inappropriate placements.

The child who is placed in the educational setting that will be most beneficial in addressing his educational potential is the least restrictive environment for that child. Students with visual impairments have the capability to grow up to be adults who are literate, mobile, social, employable, and independent. Appropriate services, including serious consideration of placement, will determine whether the student receives adequate instruction so that all these attributes are attained.

20. What options must be considered when determining the least restrictive environment (LRE) for a student with a visual impairment?

The determination of the least restrictive environment (LRE) should be based on the identified and unique needs of the child with a visual impairment. Each child's IEP team should fully consider ways to remove obstacles to educating the child with a visual impairment in less restrictive settings before proceeding to more restrictive setting. Each local education agency should consider the full continuum of educational settings to meet the needs of a child with a visual impairment.

Teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs) can provide services in a variety of LREs. Some typical service delivery models include consultative, itinerant, and resource room.

General education setting with consultation only—students who receive only consultation require minimal, or no direct services from a TVI. In the consultative model, the service is provided to the adults that work with the student on behalf of the student with a visual impairment. In this model, the TVI provides intermittent observations of the student within their educational environment to determine if they are receiving the most appropriate adaptations to their materials, environment, and instruction and to collaborate with teachers and therapists.

Itinerant services—students in the general education program or those assigned to a self-contained classroom for students with multiple disabilities may require itinerant direct services from a TVI. The time that the itinerant TVI spends with the student should be based only on the time required to meet the special education goals identified in the IEP and may vary from daily instruction to biweekly or weekly instruction. While some skills are best addressed in the general education classroom, others require privacy or a quiet environment.

Resource room setting—designed for students who require daily support from a TVI. In this model, students could attend a school that has been designated as a "magnet" school for students similarly aged with visual impairments who need daily contact with a TVI. A TVI is based at the

magnet school to be accessible to the students and their teachers throughout the school day.

21. What types of programs are offered through the ND Vision Services/School for the Blind?

The mission of ND Vision Services/School for the Blind, NDVS/SB, is to function as a statewide comprehensive resource center. NDSV/SB works cooperatively with related agencies in providing a full range of services to all persons who are blind or visually impaired, including those with multiple disabilities. A combination model of outreach and center-based services is provided.

Regional outreach services and center-based programs are provided to persons of all ages: infants and their families, students, and adults. These services include evaluation, consultation, and instruction in the expanded core curriculum areas. Center-based short-term programs include Specific Skills, Compensatory Skills, and Adult Weeks. The Vision Resource Center provides adaptive materials and equipment, large print and braille textbooks, descriptive videos, and access to information.

Also offered are summer camps, an independent living skills program, and in-service training for parents, teachers, and others working with people with visual impairments. The school provides statewide leadership works with related entities ensuring that the specialized needs of persons of all ages who are blind or visually impaired are met. For more information, go to www.ndvisionservices.com/

Reference List

Department of Public Instruction Guidelines: Evaluation Process, May 2014

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Department of Public Instruction Guidelines: Assistive Technology for Students with Disabilities, September 2015

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Contact List

Office of Specially Designed Services
Department of Public Instruction
600 East Blvd. Ave., Dept. 201
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440
701-328-2277
https://www.nd.gov/dpi

North Dakota Vision Services/School for the Blind
500 Stanford Road
Grand Forks, ND 58203
701-795-2700 or 1-800-421-1181
http://www.ndvisionservices.com/

American Foundation for the Blind
11 Penn Plaza
Suite 300
New York, NY 10001
800-232-5463 or 212-502-7600
http://www.afb.org

American Printing House for the Blind
1839 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206
1-502-895-2405 or 1-800-223-1839
http://www.aph.org

ND Assistive
450 Coleman St., Suite 107
Bismarck, ND 58503
701-258-4728
or
3240 15th St. S., Suite B
Fargo, ND 58104
701-365-4728
1-800-895-4728
https://ndassistive.org/

North Dakota Dual Sensory Project
500 University Avenue West
Memorial Hall
Minot, ND 58707
1-800-233-1737or 701-308-0993
https://ndcpd.org/dualsensory-2/

Program of Study—Visual Impairment Specialization in Special Education

University of North Dakota
231 Centennial Dr Stop 7189
Grand Forks ND 58202
701-777-3239
Visual Impairment Specialization in Special Education | University of North Dakota (und.edu)

Resource List

Assistive Technology Resources:
Bookshare
https://www.bookshare.org/cms/

National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled – Library of Congress
https://www.loc.gov/nls/

ND Assistive
https://ndassistive.org/

Paths to Technology
https://www.perkins.org/resource/technology/

Caseload Analysis Tools:
PRCVI Caseload Analysis Process
https://www.prcvi.org/resources/prcvi-caseload-analysis-process/

Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired – Administrator's Toolbox
https://www.tsbvi.edu/statewide-resources/professional-development/publications/admin-toolbox

Online Learning Resources:
Perkins School for the Blind – eLearning
https://www.perkins.org/perkins-elearning/

Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired – Professional Development
https://www.tsbvi.edu/statewide-resources/professional-development

Service Intensity Resources:
Michigan Department of Education – Low Incidence Outreach – Severity Rating Scales
https://mdelio.org/blind-visually-impaired/educator-support/severity-rating-scales

VISSIT: Visual Impairment Scale of Service Intensity of Texas
https://www.tsbvi.edu/statewide-resources/professional-development/publications/vissit

Teaching Strategies:
Paths to Literacy
https://www.pathstoliteracy.org/

Teaching Students with Visual Impairments
https://www.teachingvisuallyimpaired.com/