Visual Impairments

What's Required

If a visual impairment is suspected, the evaluation process must include a report by a licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist that states the visual loss in exact measures of visual field and corrected visual acuity at a distance and at a close range in each eye; or if exact measures cannot be obtained, provides best estimates of the visual loss, and includes a prognosis whenever possible; a functional vision evaluation completed by a teacher of students with visual impairments or a certified orientation and mobility specialist; and learning media assessment completed by a teacher of students with visual impairments to determine if services from a teacher of students with visual impairments are appropriate 89.1040(c)(12).

In Texas, students with visual impairments who qualify for services from a teacher of students with visual impairments are required to receive instruction in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC), which is required for the child to succeed in classroom settings and derive lasting, practical benefits from the education by the Local Education Agency (LEA). The term Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) is used to define concepts and skills that often require specialized instruction with students who are blind or visually impaired in order to compensate for decreased opportunities to learn incidentally by observing others. In addition to the general education core curriculum that all students are taught, students with visual impairments, starting at birth, also need instruction in the ECC. The ECC areas include (A) needs that result from the visual impairment that enable the student "to be involved in and make progress in the general education curriculum; and (B) other educational needs that result from the child's disability" as required by IDEA (34 CFR 300.320 (a)(2)(A)(B)).

With the passage of Senate Bill 39 in 2013 (Texas 83rd Legislative Session), evaluation in all areas of the ECC is required for students with visual impairments. Priority needs must be identified by the Individual Education Plan (IEP) team and instruction provided in these areas.

The Admission Review Dismissal (ARD) committee must specify the appropriate instructional arrangement/setting as set forth in 19 TAC 89.63(c).

What We Do

Continuum of options

- General education classroom with consultative support from a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI)
- General education classroom with direct instructional services from a teacher of students with visual impairments
- A combination of general education and self-contained special education classes with consultative and/or direct instructional services from a teacher of students with visual impairments
- Self-contained special education classroom with the consultative and/or direct instructional services from a teacher of students with visual impairments
- Residential placement - Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI)

Components of services for students with Visual Impairment

- Determined by the ARD/IEP Committee
- Based upon individual needs of student
- May include related services of Orientation and Mobility (O&M) as determined by the ARD/IEP Committee
- May include instruction in braille as determined by the learning media assessment
- Includes technology support

Personnel have knowledge and competencies in the following areas

- Extent to which significant visual loss impacts access to the general curriculum, career education, compensatory skills, independent living skills, orientation and mobility, recreation and leisure, self-determination, sensory efficiency, and social skills
- Specially designed instruction
- Accommodations and modifications, including but not limited to assistive technology, access to the appropriate learning media as determined by learning media assessment

Parent Resources

Region 13 Resource Information
Resource Links

August 2022

TSBVI Parent Information

The links below are for internal use only. Requests for access are undeliverable.

High Incidence Program Information

Low Incidence Program Information

Early Childhood Special Education Information

Speech Services Information

Behavior Services Information

Evaluation Services Information

Transition Services Information

Related Services Information

Vocational Instruction (VAC and 18+) Information

Assistive Technology Information

In-Home and Parent Training

Transportation Information

Community Based Instruction and Work Based Learning

Homebound Information