

VISION SERVICES

Description

A student with a visual impairment is one whose visual functioning is not sufficient for the student to participate with ease in everyday activities. The impairment interferes with optimal learning and achievement and results in a substantial educational disadvantage. Adaptations are made in methods of presenting learning opportunities, in the nature of the materials used and in the learning environment. It is not intended to include students described as having visual perceptual difficulties unless they have a visual loss.

Visually impaired students follow the curriculum with adaptations in content or methods. (When necessary) The curriculum is modified or adapted to reflect individual needs. **The Vision Teacher (TVI)** provides support to students and schools in this area.

Service

The (TVI) Vision teacher serves in an itinerant role and provides direct teaching as well as consultative services to sensory impaired students in the regular classrooms and resource rooms.

Specific duties of this position include:

- teacher in-service on the problems of the sensory impaired student (including the adaptation of materials, use of visual aids, and technological devices);
- program development for sensory impaired students;
- parent/school/community liaison;
- referral service to medical specialists in vision;
- direct instruction to sensory impaired students who require assistance beyond that which is supplied by the local school. The Teacher of the Visually Impaired is an ongoing member of specific student's IEP teams.

Identification, Planning, and Programming

The student's educational requirements and special measures that are taken in order to help meet requirements must be documented in a formal Individual Education Plan.

In developing the Individual Education Plan the following needs must be considered in addition to the provincial curriculum:

- ☞ orientation and mobility skills;
- ☞ vision skills; visual/memory, visual efficiency, and function;
- ☞ specialized skills in reading (e.g. Braille, taped books, enhanced print, CCTV);
- ☞ specialized skills in mathematics (e.g. Abacus, Nemeth Code);
- ☞ specialized technology;
- ☞ daily living skills;
- ☞ study skills and note-taking strategies;
- ☞ concept development;

- 👁️ social skills;
- 👁️ transition (including elementary to secondary, secondary to post secondary, and vocational planning);
- 👁️ compensatory skill development; which may include listening skills, visual efficiency, spelling, comprehension.

Referral Process

Students meeting the medical criteria outlined in the Ministry guidelines by an ophthalmologist, optometrist, orthoptist, or BC Children's Hospital are referred to the Teacher for the Visually Impaired using the Vision Referral Form. If a medical assessment does not confirm visual impairment but signs and symptoms continue the student is referred to the Learning Assistance Teacher for a visual perception assessment.