

Getting Your Protégé Up and Running TETN #30902

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12:15-400 PM



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ORGANIZATION: TRAVELING DOCUMENTS

Examples of Contents of the Traveling Documents Folder

Mileage chart
District map
Campus phone numbers
District calendar
Middle school/high school bell schedule
Schedule of ESC workshops for TVI's
ECI contact information
Infant Development Chart
TAKS testing schedule
Sample of print sizes
Brief list of eye etiologies/terminology
VI service referral process information sheet
Legal Citations for VI Eligibility
Blank Contact Log forms
Blank Consultation Report forms

Blank ARD forms: Medical Eye Examination Report, VI IEP Addendum, Consent for

Release of Confidential Information from the Registration of Students with Visual Impairments
Blank modifications checklist
Braille and Nemeth Code Cheat Sheets

Examples of Contents of the Traveling Student Information Binder

Behind tabs for each student:

- Student Information Form

- FVE/LMA
- Student's modifications checklist from last ARD
- Low Vision Evaluation
- Eye report
- Current year IEP
- Student Schedule
- Pertinent team contact information: OT, PT, SLP, COMS
- Materials issued to school/student
- Books/audio tapes ordered

Examples of Contents of Individual Student Pocket Folders

Lesson Plans

Lesson Materials

Consultation Reports

Progress Notes forms

Examples of Documents for Teacher Packets

TVI Information

The Vision Itinerant's Role

Information on Monoculars

Classroom Adaptations for the Student w/ a Visual Impairment

VI Student Information and Contact Record

Name: _____ Birthdate: _____

School: _____ Grade: _____ Room: _____ Instructional Setting: _____

Teacher(s): _____ Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____ Work: _____

Address:

Email: _____

Visual Diagnosis: _____

Acuity: _____ Date of Eye Exam: _____

Ophthalmologist: _____ Phone/ Fax: _____

Low Vision Sp.: _____ Date of LV Exam: _____

Learning Media: _____ Low Vision Devices: _____

Other Disabilities: _____

PT/OT/SLP/AI: _____

VI/ O&M Schedule: _____

ARD: _____ **FVE:** _____ **O&M:** _____ **FIE:** _____

Developed by Beth Stark-TVI

Date	2008-2009										
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Code:

+ =Present

O =Student Absent

A=Therapist Absent

X= School Related
Conflict

H= School Holiday

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Consultation Report for Students With Visual Impairments

Student: _____ Date: _____

Teacher/Parent: _____

Discussion/Activities:

Materials Issued: _____

Date of next visit: _____

Agenda for visit: _____

LESSON PLAN

Student: _____

Objective(s): _____

DATE	PROCEDURE	OUTCOME

TVI INFORMATION

Student: _____

Vision Teacher: _____

Phone Number: _____

Scheduled Time to Work with Student: _____

Vision Teacher's Goals for the Student: _____

Classroom Modifications: _____

Observations:

In order to determine if my objectives are being used by this student in his/her classroom, I will ask to observe periodically. I will always notify you at least 2 days in advance to schedule a time convenient for you.

THE VISION ITINERANT'S ROLE

I will be coming into the school to do the following:

- Make sure the student has the materials he/she needs
- Touch base with you
- Work with the student directly

Visually impaired students require intensive instruction in areas outside of the "regular curriculum". In regards to program planning we operate from what we call a "unique curriculum", which includes the skills a visually impaired student needs to function in several environments, including home, restaurants, playgrounds, cafeterias, etc., as well as the classroom. Some examples of these are:

- Eating neatly with a fork and knife
- Using an abacus
- Learning to read and write Braille
- Playing safely on playground equipment
- Walking through the cafeteria line with a tray
- Selecting clothing that matches
- Typing using word processing software
- Using a watch to tell time
- Using a model to understand anatomy
- Using technology

(The list is quite long!! This just gives you an idea)

Some areas of the general education curriculum present trouble spots for visually impaired students because the concepts involved require a strong visual component (e.g. geometry, interpreting maps, charts, graphs, telling time, counting money).

I will work with you to prepare for these in advance of their introduction in your classroom.

So each day I work with the student I have my own lesson plans based on units designed by myself and other vision teachers. For this reason I am reluctant to interrupt my goals on the spur of the moment. In instances where you want me to re-teach a lesson that seemed too visual in nature for the student to grasp entirely, I will typically take what information you can give me, then prepare a lesson to be addressed at a later date. I'd like to stress here that vision teachers are not tutors, and if we see the student is not grasping concepts due to behavior and/or learning problems outside of the visual impairment, we will more than likely request additional testing by a psychological associated just as you would for any other student who was experience failure.

CLASSROOM ADAPTATIONS FOR THE STUDENT WITH A VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

General

- Your VI teacher should give you a copy of the Functional Vision Evaluation and Learning Media Assessment with detailed information about how your particular student uses his/her vision
- Students with low vision should be encouraged to use their eyes to the maximum. Residual vision is not damaged by use
- A student with albinism will be sensitive to the light and will sometimes require an adjustment period of about 10 minutes when he or she comes in from being in the sun
- Allow the child to adjust his/her work to a position that he/she is most comfortable with
- Do not use large print materials when regular print will suffice
- Whenever an assignment refers to a picture (as in math workbooks) allow the student to look at the picture in a regular print book. The large print process greatly distorts pictures

Reading the Blackboard

- Seat child near the board (within 3 to 5 feet) and in a central location, but within a group of students
- Verbalize as you write on board
- If possible, provide a copy of what you have written on the board to the child
- Have another student with good handwriting copy off the board (carbon or NCR paper can be used and the original can be given to the visually impaired student)
- Allow student to use a telescope supplied by the vision teacher (if this is done the student will probably need to be seated back away from the board to increase his/her visual field)
- A clean board makes a better contrast and is easier to read

Overhead Projectors/Video

- Seat child close to the screen
- Provide child with your overhead projector sheet or master copy so he or she can read and/or copy from it
- Use a dark (preferably black) Vis-à-vis pen on the overhead sheet
- Discuss films thoroughly afterwards to make sure the child understands major concepts presented
- A darkened room provides more contrast
- Move the projector closer to the screen to produce a smaller, more distinct image.
- Make a good photo copy of your master
- Do not use red ink
- Record the assignment, provided that the student can function as well with a recording
- Please be sure that your tests are completely legible. Ask the student to read parts of the test to you privately to be sure he or she can see all parts of the test
- Give the student a little extra time
- Avoid handing the student a paper and saying, "Do the best you can". This only cheats the child out of the continuity of your lesson and can be frustrating

Illumination

- Light intensity can be regulated by adjusting distance from the window or light source
- Artificial lights should be used whenever brightness levels become low in any part of the room.
- Avoid glares on working surfaces (a piece of dark colored paper taped to the entire desk surface diminishes glare off the desk)

Seating

- Avoid having students work in their own shadows or facing the light
- Students may need to change their seats whenever they desire more or less light

Contrast

- White chalk offers more contrast on a clean chalkboard
- Dry erase boards used with dark markers offer better contrast
- Soft lead pencils and felt-tipped pens with black ink are recommended for use on unglazed light and tinted paper
- Good contrast and white space between lines of print offer the best viewing comfort for lengthy reading assignments

Tests

- Tests should be dark and clear
- If there is a time element please remember that a person with poor sight will frequently be a slower reader than a person with normal sight of the same intelligence. His or her eyes will tire much faster, so last period tests can be particularly difficult to read
- On timed drills allow at least double the time for a student with low vision. Ideally they should be untimed
- If the student is comfortable performing orally, tests could be given orally by another person who fills in the blanks. Please be careful here, as some people are not auditory performers, and it is a misconception that all blind and low vision students can perform better auditorily.

Physical Education/Recess

- Check with TVI to see if there are any restrictions of activity or on visual fields
- Ball Sports: practice catching, kicking, and batting with students to check whether or not he/she can see the ball in time to catch, kick, or bat
- Use audible goals and/or balls (available from VI teacher) or use a radio as a goal locator (as in basketball)

Mobility and Orientation

- Allow student to explore your room during the first week and whenever you make any major changes
- Show student where his or her desk is, where materials are located, papers turned in, etc.
- Point out the restrooms, water fountains, library, office, cafeteria, gym, and bus stops and ask that Braille labels be placed outside each entry for blind students
- Contact O&M specialist for detailed information

Information for General Education Teachers: Monocular Telescopes

A monocular is a small telescope which enables a student with a visual impairment to see print, pictures, diagrams, maps, faces and demonstrations when (s)he is seated at his/her desk. The following are some facts and adaptations which need to be considered if a monocular is being used:

- A monocular severely restricts the visual field. The student will be taught by the TVI (teacher of students with visual impairments) to scan to pick up all visual information and increase visual memory so (s)he can copy more quickly and efficiently.
- A monocular is typically used for distance tasks only.
- Copying while using a monocular is laborious, and it will take the visually impaired child longer to copy from the board/charts, etc. You can adapt by modifying the length of the assignment. Some ways of doing this include:
 - a. assigning even or odd numbers of problems
 - b. allowing the student to write only the answers to questions rather than re-copy entire sentences, questions, and/or paragraphs
- When a student is using a monocular, walking up to the board/chart should be discouraged. This annoys other students and severely hinders speed, continuity of thought, and proficiency when reading or completing an assignment.
- Singling out a visually impaired student's desk (to place him/her closer to the board) is discouraged due to social reasons. A monocular will enable the child to sit within the group at all times.
- Monoculars break easily and should be worn around the neck when in use (EXCEPT in physical education and/or

while on the playground) and stored in a case otherwise. Please encourage your students to keep their monoculars out of sight when the room is empty.

- Encourage the student to take the monocular to other school events, e.g. assemblies, film presentations, athletic games.
- Do not allow other students to handle the monocular.
- Do not allow the monocular to be taken home with the student unless arrangements have been made with the TVI.
- A student who is using a monocular should be seated facing the boards/charts to allow straight-on viewing. This also enables the child to rest his/her elbow on the desk while he is looking through the monocular.

VI TEACHER INFORMATION

For Student with Multiple and Visual Impairment

VI TEACHER: Name:
Phone:
[email:](#)

SCHEDULE OF VI SERVICE: 60 minutes a month

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The VI service delivery model for _____ is consultative.
Examples of activities I will be doing consist of:

- Providing information to the team regarding the nature of _____'s visual impairment
- Providing information regarding programming suggestions for students with a cortical visual impairment (CVI)
- Helping to determine _____'s likes and dislikes
- Helping to design and model routines
- Helping to design and model an anticipation calendar
- Setting up an active learning center (i.e. "Little Room", and providing objects for this device
- Providing data collection forms for the Little Room to help the team determine the extent to which _____ is responding to objects
- Attending ARD meetings (my presence is required, so please let me know at least 3 weeks in advance so that I can schedule these)
- Keeping a contact record of consultative interactions with the classroom, team, _____, her family, and the DARS-Department of Blind Services children's caseworker

Student Data

	D.O.B.	FVE/LMA (Date)	Eye Report (Date)	FIE (Date)	Annual ARD (Date)	ARD Updates	LV Eval. (Date)	O&M	OT	Speech	PT	Monocular	Magnifier	Consent Form	Amount of VI Service	
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2.																
3.																
4.																
5.																
6.																
7.																
8.																
9.																
10.																

Scheduling for the Itinerant Caseload

Step 1

Review student folders to locate the following information:

- FVE/LMA recommendations
- IEP with amount and type of VI service
- Eye exam report
- School and grade assignment
- Educational settings (general education, self-contained, resource, content mastery)

Here is an example of a chart with the information you will need to begin drafting a schedule:

Student	Acuity	VI Service	School/Grade	Setting
John	20/200	1 hr/wk direct	Harper/3 rd	General
Lindsey	20/100	1 hr/wk direct	Harper/5 th	General
Joella	Nil ONH	2 hr/wk direct	Highschool/11 th	Life skills
Sandy	20/100	1 hr/wk direct	Highschool/9 th	General
Rebecca	20/80	2 hr/mo consult	Sloan/5 th	General + resource
Frank	Nil	5 hr/wk direct 2 hr/wk consult	Sloan/1 st	General
Scott	20/100 w/ 5 ^o field OU	2 hr/wk direct	Riley/8 th	General + resource
Stephanie	Nil ROP	1 hr/wk direct 1 hr/mo consult	Rowe/Pre-School	PPCD
Chip	CVI	2 hr/mo consult	Rowe/Pre-School	PPCD
Ross	CVI	2 hr/mo consult	Rowe/Pre-School	PPCD

The acuity, diagnosis, and etiology gives you some guidance on how the amount/type of service was determined by the previous TVI.

Step 2

- Secure a copy of the district map showing the locations of schools.
- Open up an 8½x11 file folder and write the days of the week across the top (excluding the weekend).
- Using 2 different colored small Post-It Notes, write the name of each student on one note, using one color for direct and a different color for consult.
- If the student's VI time is separated out (e.g., 2 hours split out into one hour slots 2 times a week), make two Post-It Notes for the same student.
- Begin to place these student names on your file folder/calendar, spread out over the week.
- Using a 3rd color Post-It Note, schedule time slots for lunch, observing students, performing assessments, writing progress notes, lesson planning, and materials preparation.
- Allot time to travel between campuses: Your draft schedule might look like this:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
John (D) Lindsey (D) Planning	Joella (D) Frank (D)	Frank (D)	Joella (D) Sandy (D)	Frank (D) Stephanie (D) Stephanie (C) Chip (C) Ross (C)
Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Rebecca (C) Frank (D) Frank (C)	Scott (D) Planning	Planning, Conduct FVE's etc.	Frank (D) Planning	Scott (D) Planning

Keep in mind that until you complete Step 3 (meeting with the schools) this schedule is tentative.

Step 3

- Call school office to get names of teachers for elementary students, and ask the school secretaries or counselors to fax a copy of the course schedule for middle school and secondary students.
- Call teachers to set up a brief meeting to introduce yourself, share information from the FVE/LMA recommendations section, and discuss possible time slots to work with your student (refer to Itinerant Scheduling Tips document). For high school students, it may be impossible to meet with all the teachers at this point, unless the student is in a self-contained setting. An alternative is to meet with the students' counselors to find the best time to work with the student, based on their class/course schedule.
- As you talk to teachers, use one index card per student to fill in VI service scheduling opportunities (days of the week and a variety of specific times). Use a highlighter to mark these times on each card. For example:

Lindsey Ms. Smith		5 th Grade Harper
8-8:30	Opening	
8:30-10:00	Language Arts	
10:00-11:30	Science/Social Studies (alternating days)	
11:30-12:00	Lunch	
12:05-1:30	Math	
1:35-2:35	Specials (PE, art, music)	
2:40-3:30	Computer Lab	
3:35-3:45	Closing	

Scott		8 th grade Riley
English	8-9:00	Anderson
Algebra	9:05-10:05	Clark
History	10:10-11:10	Ptosky
B Lunch	11:15-11:45	
P.E.	11:50-12:50	Stearns
Spanish	12:55-1:55	Ramirez
Advisory	2:00-2:55	Anderson
Keyboarding	3:00-3:45	Pruett

- Lay the cards out and arrange a tentative schedule

Step 4

- Create a sample of a calendar month format.
- Use your district map to estimate travel time/distance between campuses.
- Using the information from your weekly schedule pencil in an entire month, skipping spaces between schools. It might look like this:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	John (D) Lindsey (D) Planning Rebecca (C) Frank (D) Frank (C)	Joella (D) Frank (D) Scott (D) Planning	Frank (D) Planning, Conduct FVE's ↓	Joella (D) Sandy (D) Frank (D) Planning	Frank (D) Stephanie (D) Chip (C) Ross (C) Scott (D) Planning
Week 2	John (D) Lindsey (D) Planning Frank (D) Frank (C)	Joella (D) Frank (D) Scott (D) Planning	Frank (D) Planning, Conduct FVE's	Joella (D) Sandy (D) Frank (D) Planning	Frank (D) Stephanie (D) Stephanie (C) Scott (D)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 3	John (D) Lindsey (D) Planning Frank (D) Frank (C)	Joella (D) Frank (D) Scott (D) Planning	Frank (D) Rebecca (C) Planning, Conduct FVE's	Joella (D) Sandy (D) Frank (D) Planning	Frank (D) Stephanie (D) Chip (C) Scott (D) Planning
Week 4	John (D) Lindsey (D) Planning Frank (D) Frank (C)	Joella (D) Frank (D) Scott (D) Planning	Frank (D) Planning, Conduct FVE's	Joella (D) Sandy (D) Frank (D) Planning	Frank (D) Stephanie (D) Ross (C) Scott (D) Planning

Chrissy Cowan
Mentor Coordinator

Itinerant Scheduling Tips

Students with Low Vision

- As a general rule, most students with low vision will require on hour of instruction per week.
- Avoid removing a student from a core curricular area for individual instruction, as you may be creating a deficit in that area
- Generally speaking, students in middle and high school have less flexibility in their schedule. If applicable, content mastery or resource room time is a good time to work with these students.

Students who are Functionally Blind

- Depending on the area of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) you are working on, allow time to work with the student, chat briefly with the teacher, and adapt last minute assignments.
- If you are teaching contracted Braille, schedule during the language arts block and pull your student aside when the class is working on independent work. If you are working on abacus/Nemeth Code as well, alternate days between math and language arts.
- Consult time, in the form of planning with the teacher, should be scheduled as such when students are not in the room.
- Allow time in the schedule at least once a week to observe social skills and independence in the cafeteria, P.E., art, and/or other areas of the ECC.

Students in Self-Contained Classrooms

- Consider scheduling at times when you can co-teach with therapists, teachers, and teaching assistants so that you can model visual strategies and modifications.
- Schedule time during each grading period for a team meeting.

- When you have more than one student in the same classroom, you must still address each individual's IEP.

General Information

- Direct service time with students is sacred. There are times, however, when conflicts cannot be avoided. To deliver the amount of service stipulated in the students' Individualized Education Plan, reschedule missed sessions.
- Your schedule is "fluid", meaning you may have to change student times to accommodate IEP meetings, student observations, team meetings, and assessments. You are responsible for the service outlined on the IEP, unless the student misses due to an absence.
- To avoid multiple trips to your office, use space on individual campuses for planning/paperwork. A laptop is an essential tool for a TVI.
- Out of courtesy for the classroom teachers, meetings should be arranged around their schedules, during planning periods and after students leave. Avoid popping in unannounced, unless given specific permission by the teacher to do so.
- Never discuss student progress/concerns within earshot of any students or during class instruction. This includes students with significant cognitive disabilities.
- Refer to the document "Observations Guidelines" in the QPVI Pre-Service class guide (Key Component 2) for information regarding observing students.

Observation Guidelines

(Developed by Chrissy Cowan, Region XIII Education Service Center)

Observing Classroom Functions

- Organization of materials, furniture, extra work-space, walkways, desk layouts, maps, placement of educational "prompts" (e.g.: alphabet, number line, colors, periodic chart of elements), class rules, placement of chalkboards, overhead screen.
- Discipline: are rules clearly posted, does teacher have a system of discipline, does teacher follow the system with all students, particularly the VI student, are students respectful of the system.
- Classroom (group) behaviors: are students on task, can most keep up, are more than just a few "fooling around" when they shouldn't be, do students get up to turn in papers, get materials, go to the bathroom, do they wait for cues from the teacher to move from one activity to another or do they do so independently, are most attentive during the teacher's presentations, is the activity in the room constructive

Observing an Activity

- Does the teacher present or introduce lessons or is there an established routine the children perform automatically?
- Are tangible objects used to demonstrate concepts where applicable?
- Does everyone need to follow along in a book?
- Does the activity involve a concept, which is very visual in nature, e.g.: adding with carrying?
- Are visual materials used, e.g.: maps, charts, diagrams?
- Is the chalkboard or overhead screen used frequently?
- Is a dictionary used by students?

- Is the pace fast, slow, medium?
- What do students do when the activity is completed?
- Are materials Brailled for an activity?

Observing Student Functioning

- Is student on task?
- Does student look in teacher's general direction?
- Is student able to get out all materials on time?
- Is student using low vision devices, or other necessary apparatus she/he has been taught to use?
- In what condition is the student's desk?
- Does the student know how to access the educational "prompts" posted around the room?
- Is the student organized?
- Can the student maintain the pace of the lesson presented?
- Does the student get up to get his/her own material?
- Do other students help the student in any way?
- Could the student be acting more independently than she/he is?
- Does the student raise his/her hand to participate and ask questions?
- Does the student interrupt inappropriately?
- Does the student have any distracting mannerisms?
- How does the student ask for and accept assistance from peers and others?
- Is the student displaying age-appropriate skills?
- Does the student use his/her time wisely?
- What does she/he do when work is finished?

- Does the student interact appropriately with peers in the room, on the playground, in the cafeteria?
- How does the student get around?
- How does the student go through the cafeteria line and to the table?
- What are the student's eating skills?
- Does the student's appearance blend with the group?
- Does the student have friends?
- What does the student do during free time and on the playground?
- Does the student speak before the class, such as in show and tell?
- If the student fails to complete his/her seat work, is it due to lack of understanding, poor work habits, or inability to keep up with the pace?
- How does the general quality of the student's work compare to peers?
- Does the student talk too much to neighbors?
- Are the student materials placed so as to be accessible to him?
- Are games, toys, materials available for the student to use in interactive play during free time?
- Are lighting and desk location appropriate?
- Are any of the student's materials or equipment inconveniencing another student?
- Can the student fully operate any equipment given to him/her?
- Is a system in place for the student to correct malfunctioning equipment?
- Can the student manage equipment and/or materials through class changes?

Observing Teacher Behaviors

- Does the teacher move about the room or remain fairly stationary?
- Does the teacher's voice carry well?
- Are chalkboard/overhead screen/charts used frequently; does the teacher read aloud what she's writing?
- Will a student teacher be taking the class?
- How does the teacher handle misbehavior and off-task behavior?
- Does the teacher check for understanding and how does she do this with the VI student?
- If Brailled materials are to be handed out, does the teacher have the materials ready?

Observation Tips

- At the initial conference with the teacher, generally during the first week of school, give her a sheet with your schedule, telephone number, objectives for the student, and a statement on why you will be observing (e.g.: "Observations will be scheduled so that I can see how Nathan functions in a variety of situations and also to determine if my objectives are transferring to your classroom.").
- Always call or send a letter a few days in advance with the message that you will be coming to observe at a particular date and time. The teacher should call if the date and time are not convenient.
- Observe and entire activity; don't arrive late and leave early.
- Sit quietly and unobtrusively, away from the student. This is not an instructional opportunity.

- Take notes.
- Do not interact with the students. If they ask for your assistance, shake your head “no” and act as if you’re writing.
- Be sure to write down problems you see with your VI student, so you can address them later. Also write down any ideas you may have on supplementing a concept if it seems particularly visual and difficult for the VI student.
- If students are given time to complete a written assignment independently, get up and slowly circulate through the room looking at all the students’ work. Avoid the temptation to stop too long at the VI student’s desk, as this may be embarrassing to them.
- Resist any urge you may have to make remarks to the teacher concerning her lesson or presentation. Keep remarks focused on student’s behaviors, e.g.: expectations the teacher has, is the student’s behavior typical of his normal behavior, what problems does the teacher see, etc.
- Never interrupt a teacher when you are coming or going.
- Keep in mind the fact that many teachers are unclear as to your role and that the act observing can be uncomfortable to them. You want to assure the teacher by your actions before, during, and after an observation that you are there as a partner in an effort to help the VI student perform successfully in the classroom and school.
- If something needs to be discussed, leave a message on the teacher’s desk or in her box on your way out.
- If the teacher has been complaining about your VI student’s behavior, observe that behavior as well as what the other students are doing. Observe how the teacher applies behavioral methods to see if she applies the same methods to the VI child.

- If you see a concept being taught for which you have tangible learning materials, offer to loan these to the teacher—leave a note.
- Save your notes as documentation.
- Discuss your observations with the student during your next visit with him/her, then see if together you can come up with some solutions to problem areas, if applicable.
- Don't discuss your observations with other school staff.
- If you're concerned about a teacher behavior, think it through carefully before discussing it first with the teacher, and if necessary the principal. When talking with a principal, it is beneficial to avoid blame or criticism. You may start by saying, "I'm having difficulty communicating with Ms. X, could you give me some suggestions on how I can best work with the situation?" Keep your comments focused on your student and the problem(s) she/he's having with the classroom.

Services Provided by VI Professionals

Assessment (includes reports and ARD paperwork)

- Functional

- LMA

- O&M

- All other areas of the ECC

Direct instruction

- individual

- group

Indirect instruction (consulting)

- observe

- diagnostic teaching

- support

- communicate/record

- evaluate

Supervise VI paraprofessionals

Manage materials

- create/modify

- obtain

- maintain

Case management/service coordination

- child-centered

- family-centered

Professional development

Other duties as assigned

Role of the TVI Across Content Areas

Adapted from
*Foundations of
Education,*
2nd Edition, AFB Press

Physical Education and Health

- Providing consultation to the physical education teacher on the student's eye condition, functional vision skills, restrictions on physical activities, and other factors that will affect the student's involvement in physical education;
- Recommending modifications of physical activities that will allow full or, when appropriate, partial participation of the student in physical education;
- Providing direct instruction (using appropriate special training methods) in prerequisite or disability-specific skills that the student needs to acquire before he or she can be fully involved in physical activities;
- Supplying adapted physical education equipment or information on where the equipment can be obtained;
- Advocating for a student's active and sustained involvement in physical education programs;
- Providing consultation to health education teachers on modifications needed for a student;
- Instructing a student in a separate setting for sensitive health topics (such as some aspects of sexuality education and personal hygiene); and
- Informing parents about the strategies that will be used to instruct the student in sensitive health topics.

Mathematics

- Use formal and informal strategies to assess mathematics concepts and skills, particularly those that are unique to students who are visually impaired (such as calculation with an abacus or braillewriter and the use of tactile displays);
- Teach students specialized computation methods, using an abacus, braillewriter, talking calculator, and mental math;
- Teach students the Nemeth Code sequentially and in meaningful contexts;
- Teach students to interpret and use tactile graphs, charts, and other displays;
- Provide consultation to general education teachers on appropriate methods for teaching mathematics to students who are Visually impaired; and
- Provide general education teachers and students with appropriately modified learning materials and equipment for mathematics instruction, including tactile graphics.

Independent Living Skills

- Conduct assessments of independent living skills to determine skill areas that need to be included in a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP);
- Collaborate with a student's parents and other caregivers, other specialists, and general education teachers to develop strategies for teaching independent living skills;
- Provide direct instruction in independent living skills in natural environments as specified in a student's IEP;
- Gather resources and adapted materials for teaching independent living skills to share with the parents and other members of the student's educational team; and
- Explore and plan additional opportunities to expand a student's opportunities for instruction in independent living skills, such as home-based instruction and attendance at a summer camp.

Literacy

- Provide initial and ongoing assessments of students' needs for literacy media;
- Collaborate with and model for family members and others the strategies needed to facilitate the development of emergent literacy in students who are blind and students with low vision;
- Provide direct, consistent, daily instruction in prebraille skills and beginning, braille literacy skills throughout preschool and the early elementary grades;
- Provide direct instruction in unique literacy skills, including slate and stylus skills, signature writing, aural reading (gathering information from audiotaped materials), live reader services, keyboarding, word processing, and technology skills;
- Provide direct instruction in braille reading and writing for students who are learning braille as a complementary medium to print or who are moving from print to braille;
- Teach the integrated use of vision skills and the use of optical and nonoptical devices to students with low vision; and
- Collaborate with general education teachers and others to integrate students with visual impairments in literacy instruction within general education classrooms.

Arts Education

- Advocates with other members of the educational team, administrators, and teaching staff for the appropriate participation of students with visual impairments in all arts activities.
- Collaborates with art teachers to adapt lessons and decide on possible modifications of instruction.
- Ensures that the art teachers and students have the appropriate materials, resources, and adaptations to allow the students to participate in arts activities.
- Exposes students to ideas, concepts, activities, and experiential learning that will enhance their understanding of the arts.
- Preteaches art skills (such as a dance step or the use of a tool) or specialty skills (such as braille music notation) as needed to prepare students for lessons in art disciplines.
- Narrates or describes performances and works of art.

Social Studies and Science

- Collaborate with general education teachers and content-area teachers in science and social studies to provide guidance on including students with visual impairments in their classes;
- Provide adapted materials, models, and equipment for the students to use;
- Prepare tactile maps, charts, and diagrams when these materials are unavailable from other sources; and
- Teach the prerequisite skills and compensatory academic skills needed in science and social studies (such as reading a tactile map or using adapted measuring devices) before lessons are taught in the content-area classroom.

Career Education

- Work with parents of young students to encourage household responsibilities;
- Assess each student's awareness of occupations;
- Provide opportunities for a student to explore a variety of jobs and to meet adults with a visual impairment who are employed;
- Assist the student in keeping a portfolio that includes interest inventories and information on a variety of career paths;
- Participate in the ITP team;
- Collaborate with the rehabilitation counselor for students with visual impairments;
- Collaborate with the school job coach and/or orientation and mobility specialist for on the job training opportunities.

Early Childhood

- Participate in and facilitate the initial screening, comprehensive assessment, and ongoing assessments;
- Participate in the development of the child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP);
- Collaborate with families and other caregivers, early childhood intervention specialists, medical personnel, and others concerning the impact of a visual impairment on development and learning and concerning appropriate intervention strategies;
- Provide resources, information, and referrals to families and others who are involved in the child's early education;
- Provide direct instruction in areas of the expanded core curriculum (such as concept development and prebraille skills) as appropriate; and
- Ensure a coordinated transition from home to school-based programs and from preschool to kindergarten.

Social Skills

- Work with parents of infants and preschoolers in their homes and in school programs to promote early social behaviors and skills;
- Assess each student's social skills using a variety of strategies to determine areas in which instruction is needed;
- Work with the other members of a student's educational team to design and plan an intervention program for increasing social skills;
- Provide direct and targeted instruction in social skills;
- Provide accurate and constructive feedback on each Student's social skills and competence to the student and his or her family;
- Implement strategies to ensure that social skills that are learned in specialized settings will generalize to other environments (school, home, and community);
- Work with other members of the educational team, including the family to facilitate and reinforce appropriate social skills in all environments;
- Provide opportunities for a student to participate in a variety of experiential learning activities throughout the student's educational career;
- Provide opportunities for a student to meet and interact with role models and mentors who are visually impaired; and
- Ensure that social skills instruction is written into a student's educational program.

Visual Efficiency

- Conduct functional vision assessments to determine students' levels of skill and to identify the types of instruction that, students need to increase their visual efficiency;
- Provide direct instruction in the use of optical low vision devices;
- Provide instruction and consultation in the use of nonoptical devices, environmental modifications, and other techniques;
- Ensure that visual skills instruction is integrated, as appropriate, throughout students' educational programs;
- Promote, provide corrective feedback on, and reinforce students' choices in using a visual approach, nonvisual approach, or a combination of approaches to perform tasks; and
- Continuously monitor and evaluate students' use of visual skills and future needs.

Recreation and Leisure

- Expose students to a variety of recreation and leisure activities so they can choose those that best match their individual interests;
- Provide direct instruction in recreation and leisure activities or their prerequisite skills, as appropriate;
- Provide consultation to recreation, specialists that will allow the students to participate in regular, community recreation programs; and
- Create meaningful links with the academic curriculum to foster the development of enjoyable recreation and leisure skills.

Assistive Technology

- Guide the provision of assistive technology services with the assistance or collaboration of general technology specialists or assistive technology specialists in the schools;
- Advocate for the provision of various types of technology and technology instruction for all students on their caseloads;
- Conduct appropriate assistive technology assessments with the assistance or collaboration, if necessary, of the schools' technology specialists or specialists in assistive technology;
- Advise school district officials on the purchase of appropriate assistive technology;
- Guide the IEP team in determining the appropriate goals and instructional benchmarks with regard to assistive technology;
- Design and provide direct instruction in the use of the chosen assistive technology or train other school staff (such as a general technology specialist, assistive technology specialist, or paraeducator);
- Provide ongoing assessment of a student's skills, as well as changing needs; and
- Consult with the general education teachers to facilitate the inclusion of assistive technology in the general curriculum.

TVI Role Students with Visual and Multiple Impairments

TVI Role is to educate others about...	Why	How
Educational implications of student's vision loss	Educators will need information on specific modifications to materials and methods due to impaired vision	Performing FVE/LMA
Contributing to the development of IEP's	Due to the complexity of this population and the need for consistent programming, team members will benefit from input from all teachers, therapists, parents, and paraeducators	Assessments that can be planned by the team, with IEP development based on assessment information. Examples: Communication Matrix, Infused Skills Assessment
Missing concepts	Vision loss interferes with student's ability to derive information from his surroundings	Hands-on experiences Actual objects instead of models Obtaining specialized materials related to visual impairment
Making things accessible Fostering exploration Pairing vision with touch and/or sound	Motor impairment makes it difficult to explore	Create safe environment Organize learning materials/toys Hand-under-hand techniques

TVI Role is to educate others about...	Why	How
Starting with the concrete (hands-on) and then moving to abstract learning	Learning must involve expansion from immediate sensory information to skills that involve memory, generalization, and understanding of concepts	Routines Task analysis Sensory learning (kit)
Building communication	Student may not seem interested in social interactions because of sensory loss; Communication symbol systems typically chosen for non-verbal students rely heavily on pictures	Modified symbol system Organization styles for symbols Communication charts Assistive devices
Student's sensitivity to unannounced touch	Student may not see or hear someone approaching	Hand-under-hand techniques Communication charts with touch cues
Program for developing visual efficiency	To assist the student in combining vision with other senses to perform activities in the most efficient way	Secure updated eye information Facilitate eye glasses program Teaching specialized skills
Organizing environments in school, home, and workplace	Vision loss interferes with student's ability to derive information from his surroundings	Active learning Calendar/Anticipation Systems

A "Cheat Sheet" for New Teachers of the Visually Impaired Working with Infants

By Nancy Toelle, Coordinator, Quality Programs for Students with Visual Impairments and Ann Rash, Teacher Trainer, TSBVI, VI Outreach

One of the factors that makes working with students with visual impairments an interesting undertaking is the range of ages we serve in Texas. Teacher of the Visually Impaired's (TVI) work with visually impaired students from birth to age 22. Each age has its own considerations, rewards, and concerns. This article will outline a beginning approach to providing services for infants.

The first step in providing educational services for any student is determining eligibility. Eligibility criteria differ for infants. They are eligible based on the existence of a documented eye condition and suspicion of future VI needs rather than on current demonstrated needs. Eligibility is decided by the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) team based on assessments and the wishes of the family. IFSP = Individualized Family Service Plan and is equivalent to the IEP, but differs radically in content. If an infant is eligible for vision services, be sure to go through the typical enrollment procedure for your district. It is important for your district's funding that they are included in PEIMS and are on the TEA Annual Registration of Students who are Visually Impaired.

The TVI's role in determining eligibility

- Receive the screening for visual impairment and current eye exam report from ECI.
- Perform the FVE and LMA (Functional Vision Exam and Learning Media Assessment), address the need for an O&M evaluation, functional blindness, a low vision evaluation, assistive technology and devices, other services, and identify appropriate learning media.
- Assist with developmental assessment and share with the ECI assessment staff information about the impact blindness/low vision has on normal development.
- Ensure that screening for deafness is performed by ECI staff.
- Ensure that a Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (formerly known as Texas Commission for the Blind) children's caseworker is involved with the family.

- Maintain an eligibility folder in the district.

Working in coordination with ECI agencies, TVIs participate in the referral process, and are part of the IFSP team. We work within their system as an adjunct to their services.

How the role of the TVI working with infants differs from the role with students aged 3-22

- Time considerations: The calendar for this process moves very quickly. Service cannot be interrupted for more than 2 weeks at a time during the course of a calendar year, unless parent requests it.
- Year-round service: service continues at the same frequency decided upon at the annual IFSP meeting through the summer months unless a change is requested by parents.
- Documentation: Service must be documented according to ECI requirements, with copies provided to ECI and the parent.
- Transition: The process for transitioning to post ECI programming goes according to a fixed schedule and sequence and starts 90 days before the child's third birthday. The child may or may not transition to a PPCD program (Preschool Program for Children with Disabilities a public school program). The program that's selected should best meet the child's needs.

The TVI's role in developing an IFSP

- The TVI helps analyze and share the results of the child's FVE and LMA with ECI staff.
- It's important to provide ECI staff with information on early intervention related to vision.
- The TVI must attend all IFSP meetings.
- In an IFSP meeting, parents select and prioritize what they want for their child. The IFSP is not based solely on assessed educational needs.

The TVI's role in providing services to family and infant

- Bring in information and resources related to the child's visual impairment, act as part of the instructional team to implement IFSP, enable parents and other caregivers to follow through with child by "role releasing."

- Observe child with caregivers to see what's currently being done.
- Stress from the beginning that change/learning occurs in direct relation to the frequency of the infant's instruction/opportunity to learn and use new information and skills.
- Share with the team members the relationship between concept development and opportunities to move and actively interact with the environment and community.
- Work as a team with ECI staff serving the student, including the occupational therapist, physical therapist, speech therapist, instructional staff and case manager. Provide them with your expertise and learn from theirs.
- Coordinating team time can be difficult, but working together will promote a holistic approach to the child's needs. This should include anything from feeding issues to problems with sleep habits and growth.
- Research the child's eye condition if it is unfamiliar, so you can inform the team of current or future educational or medical implications.
- As needed, attend eye medical appointments and/or low vision clinical visits to learn more and help parents understand their child's eye condition.

Resources helpful to TVIs

- **INSITE Developmental Checklist Instructional Manual:** This checklist assesses all areas of development. It contains illustrations based on normal development with adaptations for children with sensory impairments and multiple disabilities. The checklist can be used by teachers and caregivers to develop appropriate goals and activities for the parent. Call Hope, Inc. at (435) 245-2888 or check their website at <www.hopepubl.com>.
- **Blind Children's Center Publications:** These educational booklets are written for teachers and parents. They cover topics on nurturing, feeding, movement, etc. Call them at (800) 222-3566 or check their website at <www.blindcntr.org/bcc/pubs.htm>.
- Visit the TSBVI website, <www.tsbvi.edu>, and conduct searches for topics you need. From there, you can access links that contain pertinent, infant-specific information. You may also want to search the archives of the *SEE/HEAR* Newsletter for topics such as potty training, communication, Little Rooms, and concept development.

Tips from old teachers to new ones

- Hold and play with the baby so the two of you can bond. Make your time with the child pleasurable. You will be a more effective service provider and might give parents some useful ideas about bonding with their baby.
- Stress that you are providing parent/infant training as a team: the parents with expert knowledge of their child and you with expert knowledge of visual impairments.
- Shoot for the stars with every infant; maintain an "anything is possible" attitude.
- Visit the child often enough to make a difference.
- If the child is not responding as much as you would like, become a detective and search out possible reasons (time of day you visit, previous therapies that day, seizure activity, medications, etc.).
- Be reliable about appointments and encourage your parents to do the same.
- Assist parents in developing self-advocacy skills by providing resource information to them.
- Play an active role in the child's transition to public school. Coach parents about the ARD/IEP process.

If this is the first infant you've become involved with, seek assistance from a mentor teacher. If one is not available, keep in mind that every TVI has a long list of firsts in his or her career: first braille student, first student with severe multiple disabilities, first gifted low vision student, first adaptive technology user, AND first infant. You will feel inadequate, but competency will develop over time. One of the hallmarks of successful TVIs is that we seek out resources, conduct research to find answers to pressing questions, and feel comfortable taking responsibility for jumping in and doing things we've never done before. The determination to willingly accept that responsibility is critical to developing the array of skills needed by a typical itinerant TVI.

TEXAS ADMINISTRATIVE CODE RELATING TO ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

19 T.A.C. §89.1040. Eligibility Criteria.

(c) Eligibility definitions.

(12) Visual impairment.

(A) A student with a visual impairment is one who has been determined to meet the criteria for visual impairment as stated in 34 CFR, §300.7(c)(13). The visual loss should be stated in exact measures of visual field and corrected visual acuity at a distance and at close range in each eye in a report by a licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist. The report should also include prognosis whenever possible. If exact measures cannot be obtained, the eye specialist must so state and provide best estimates. In meeting the criteria stated in 34 CFR, §300.7(c)(13), a student with a visual impairment is one who:

(i) has been determined by a licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist:

(I) to have no vision or to have a serious visual loss after correction; or

(II) to have a progressive medical condition that will result in no vision or a serious visual loss after correction.

(ii) has been determined by the following evaluations to have a need for special services:

(I) a functional vision evaluation by a professional certified in the education of students with visual impairments or a certified orientation and mobility instructor. The evaluation must include the performance of tasks in a variety of environments requiring the use of both near and distance vision and recommendations concerning the need for a clinical low

vision evaluation and an orientation and mobility evaluation; and

(II) a learning media assessment by a professional certified in the education of students with visual impairments. The learning media assessment must include recommendations concerning which specific visual, tactual, and/or auditory learning media are appropriate for the student and whether or not there is a need for ongoing evaluation in this area.

(B) A student with a visual impairment is functionally blind if, based on the preceding evaluations, the student will use tactual media (which includes Braille) as a primary tool for learning to be able to communicate in both reading and writing at the same level of proficiency as other students of comparable ability.