

## ***VISUALLY IMPAIRED***

### **Early Childhood and Early Childhood through Late Adolescence/Adulthood Birth through Third Grade, PreK-12**

#### **Standard #1 The teacher of the visually impaired demonstrates understanding of philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of education for individuals who are blind or visually impaired.**

##### **Knowledge**

1. The teacher has a working knowledge of federal and state entitlements, laws and state regulations that relate to the provision of specialized equipment, materials, and services for learners with visual impairments. The teacher can identify major legislation related to the above.
2. The teacher has knowledge of Braille literacy issues, history, and laws.
3. The teacher has knowledge of historical foundations for the education of children with visual impairments, including those with deaf-blindness and multiple disabilities.
4. The teacher understands the current educational definitions of students with visual impairments, including identification criteria, labeling issues, and current incidence and prevalence figures.
5. The teacher is aware of current issues in early intervention, special education and visual impairment.
6. The teacher is aware of visual impairment consumer advocacy issues.
7. The teacher understands the components of appropriate, high quality service delivery models for infants and children with visual impairments and their families and knows how to advocate for their provision within the school bureaucracy.

##### **Performance**

1. The teacher articulates a personal philosophy of education related to instructing infants and children who are visually impaired and their families.
2. The teacher safeguards due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement for infants and toddlers who are visually impaired.
3. The teacher conducts instruction and other professional activities in accordance with the requirements of federal and state law and local district policies and procedures.

#### **Standard #2 The teacher of the visually impaired demonstrates understanding of learners' diversity and provides support for students' cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development.**

##### **Knowledge**

1. The teacher understands the functional and educational implications of eye conditions and the ways they affect student learning.
2. The teacher knows about the normal development of the human visual system.
3. The teacher knows the basic terminology related to the structure and function of the human visual system.
4. The teacher knows the basic terminology related to diseases and disorders of the human visual system.
5. The teacher knows how visual impairment affects the development and use of the secondary senses.
6. The teacher knows the effects of a visual impairment on human development.
7. The teacher understands the implications of dual sensory impairments and other disabilities on the learning and development of infants and children with visual impairments.
8. The teacher understands the psychosocial aspects of a visual impairment.
9. The teacher understands the effects of medications on the visual system and on learning.
10. The teacher has knowledge of visual and perceptual processes in learning the utilization of low vision.

##### **Performance**

1. The teacher communicates with parents, educators, and others, in easily understood language, the implications of an infant or a child's visual impairment upon the learning experience and the psychosocial aspects of the child's life, and ensures that instructional strategies across the school address these implications.
2. The teacher collaborates with children, parents, and the instructional team to ensure that individual learning styles and characteristics and their interface with visual impairments are considered in the development of instructional strategies.

**Standard #3            The teacher of the visually impaired demonstrates assessment, diagnostic, and evaluation knowledge and skills related to infants and children who are visually impaired and their families.**

**Knowledge**

1. The teacher understands how visual impairments affect learning and experience.
2. The teacher understands specialized terminology used in assessing individuals who are visually impaired.
3. The teacher understands the ethical considerations and legal provisions, regulations, and guidelines (federal, state, and local) related to assessment of individuals with visual impairments, including the legal, as compared to functional, definitions of blindness and low vision, and the reliability issues of instruments not designed for individuals with visual impairments.
4. The teacher understands the relationships between assessment, individualized education program (IEP) development, placement and instruction as they affect vision impairment related services.
5. The teacher is knowledgeable of disability-specific assessment instruments and procedures, and understands the many areas of functioning, i.e., communication skills, technology, orientation and mobility, social/emotional, etc., that should be considered.
6. The teacher knows how to obtain necessary resources to organize an assessment process for infants and children with visual impairments that have dual sensory loss or additional disabilities and their families.

**Performance**

1. The teacher interprets eye reports and other vision-related diagnostic information.
2. The teacher adapts and uses various assessment procedures appropriately when evaluating individuals with visual impairments.
3. The teacher gathers and interprets background information about academic, medical and family history, as it relates to the infant or child's visual impairment.
4. The teacher assesses communication skills and develops instructional strategies from these evaluation results.
5. The teacher assesses disability-specific technology needs.
6. The teacher identifies instruments and techniques appropriate for transition planning for infants and children with visual impairments.
7. The teacher performs the procedures used for screening, pre-referral, and referral of infants and children who are visually impaired, including functional vision evaluations, and learning media assessments. The teacher ensures that the recommendations indicated by the screening, assessment and evaluation data form the basis of the vision-related intervention strategies used across the learning environment.
8. The teacher collaborates with health professionals as needed to ensure that school-wide vision screening efforts benefit from the teacher's knowledge of specialized assessment techniques.

**Standard #4            The teacher of the visually impaired demonstrates knowledge and skill in planning and implementing effective instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, child needs, the general curriculum goals, school environment, and community.**

**Knowledge**

1. The teacher understands that the visual system is heavily relied upon for learning, conceptualization, problem solving, and knows alternative techniques to maximize student access to developmentally appropriate activities (for young children) and to the general education curriculum (for school-aged children).
2. The teacher knows what constitutes an appropriate, disability-specific curriculum for visually impaired individuals and how to individualize that curriculum to meet student needs within the context of the general educational curriculum.
3. The teacher understands the educational implications of deaf-blindness and multiple disabilities, and knows how to address the vision impairment related learning needs of such individuals.
4. The teacher knows teaching methods for the development of special auditory, tactual, and modified visual communication skills for infants and children who are visually impaired, including Braille reading and writing, including slate and stylus, handwriting, listening skills and compensatory auditory skills, typing and keyboarding skills; and technology for individuals with visual impairments. The teacher is also aware of current best practices utilized in the general curriculum to teach reading and communication arts.

5. The teacher knows disability-unique teaching methods and tools to assist learners to acquire compensatory academic skills, including the use of an abacus and talking calculator, tactile graphics, adapted science equipment, and tape recorders, etc.
6. The teacher knows alternative methods to develop basic concepts needed by infants and children who do not learn visually.
7. The teacher knows methods to teach visual efficiency skills, including instruction in the use of print adaptations, optical devices, and non-optical devices for students who have usable vision.
8. The teacher knows methods to develop alternative organization and study skills for students who are visually impaired.
9. The teacher knows methods to prepare students who are visually impaired for structured orientation and mobility assessment and instruction, and understands the limits of intervention by non-orientation mobility certified personnel.
10. The teacher knows methods to develop tactual perceptual skills for students who are or will be primarily tactual learners.
11. The teacher knows methods to teach human sexuality to students who are visually impaired, using tactual models and other appropriate instructional materials.
12. The teacher knows methods to develop adapted physical and recreational skills for infants and children who are visually impaired.
13. The teacher knows methods to develop social and daily living skills as needed by students with visual impairments, with an emphasis on family input and participation.
14. The teacher knows strategies for developing career awareness for students who are visually impaired.
15. The teacher knows strategies for promoting self-advocacy and responsibility in students who are visually impaired.
16. The teacher knows functional life skills instruction strategies relevant to independent community and personal living, and employment for individuals who are visually impaired including methods for accessing printed public information, methods for accessing community services, methods for accessing public transportation, and methods for acquiring practical skills.
17. The teacher knows techniques for modifying instructional methods and materials for students who are visually impaired and how to assist regular classroom teachers in implementing these modifications.
18. The teacher knows methods to communicate instructional objectives in ways that enhance the abilities of visually impaired learners to conceptualize key elements, particularly concepts generally presented in a visual format.
19. The teacher knows strategies for fostering higher level thinking and problem solving, including alternative reasoning and decision making skills appropriate for students with visual impairments.
20. The teacher knows how to obtain specialized instructional materials for students with visual impairments.

### **Performance**

1. The teacher interprets and uses assessment data to plan instruction for infants and children with visual impairments.
2. The teacher selects and uses appropriate technologies to accomplish instructional objectives for infants and children who are visually impaired, and integrates the technologies into the instructional process, including the production of tactile or visually enhanced graphics, the use of adaptive technology devices, and other instructional tools.
3. The teacher can modify instruction to the individual needs of infants and children with visual impairments and additional disabilities.
4. The teacher sequences, implements, and evaluates individual disability-related learning objectives for infants and children with visual impairments and their families.
5. The teacher implements and collaborates with other service providers on techniques related to the development of ocular-motor skills in infants and children with visual impairments such as focus, tracking, accommodations, and eye-hand coordination.
6. The teacher utilizes strategies such as concept mediation, organization skills and hands-on, realistic experiences to enhance learning opportunities for students with visual impairments.
7. The teacher demonstrates proficiency in writing, transcribing, proofreading, and interlining Grade II Braille and Nemeth Code Braille materials, using slate and stylus, braillewriter, and computer technology in order to provide students with visual impairments literacy skills and access to text materials at the same level as their sighted peers, and in a manner appropriate to students' individual

learning objectives.

**Standard #5 The teacher of the visually impaired promotes learning by working in collaboration with other educators, professionals, and parents, to establish school and classroom learning environments conducive to learning by infants and children with visual impairments.**

**Knowledge**

1. The teacher understands the appropriate duties and responsibilities of paraeducators and other related service personnel who work directly with and/or provide special materials to infants and children who are visually impaired.
2. The teacher understands how to integrate specialized technologies and approaches to instruction into the larger school environment by working collaboratively with various instructional team members involved in educating students with visual impairments.
3. The teacher is sufficiently familiar with the computer technology and other devices used by students with visual impairments to support their usage throughout the school environment.
4. The teacher understands the requirements of the general education curriculum sufficiently to support students with visual impairments accessing that curriculum, and knows how to ensure that the disability-specific curriculum works in unison with general education.

**Performance**

1. The teacher collaborates with other instructional team members to create learning environments that develop and encourage self-advocacy and independence in students who are visually impaired.
2. The teacher prepares, obtains, organizes, and efficiently provides modified learning materials for students who are visually impaired, including the management and supervision of paraprofessionals and other related service personnel assigned to assist in the process.
3. The teacher creates learning environments that are multi-sensory and accessible to students with visual impairments, including those with dual sensory loss or additional disabilities.
4. The teacher plans and conducts community-based learning experiences beneficial to learners who are visually impaired.
5. The teacher develops plans to identify, assess, and teach daily living skills necessary for independence of infants and children who are visually impaired and their families.

**Standard #6 The teacher of the visually impaired demonstrates knowledge and skill in addressing behavioral concerns, facilitating problem solving, and developing the social skills of infants and children with visual impairments.**

**Knowledge**

1. The teacher understands that infants and children with visual impairments may face unique challenges within the social environment of the home, school, and community, and knows how to address such issues.
2. The teacher understands common behavioral issues associated with visual impairments, and knows how to help infants and children, parents, and instructional teams address such concerns.

**Performance**

1. The teacher collaborates with infants and children, parents, and instructional teams on strategies to increase social interactions between individuals with visual impairments and their peers in school and community.
2. The teacher provides strategies to students with visual impairments for dealing with real and perceived discriminatory attitudes on the part of individuals who are non-disabled.
3. The teacher collaborates with students, parents, and instructional teams to provide experiences that enhance the development of positive self-esteem and self-advocacy skills in students with visual impairments.
4. The teacher coordinates interventions that address the psycho-social needs of infants and families with visual impairments and their families.
5. The teacher uses strategies for promoting responsibility in students with visual impairments regarding the management of their schoolwork and arranging for materials and supports as needed.
6. The teacher serves as a resource to students, parents, and instructional teams in meeting the behavioral and social needs of students with dual sensory impairments or additional disabilities.
7. The teacher assists students with degenerative eye conditions to achieve a smooth transition to alternative skills.

**Standard #7 The teacher of the visually impaired demonstrates effective communication and collaborative skills and knowledge related to working with parents, instructional teams, and other**

**professionals and service providers to address the overall educational, social, and health needs of infants and children with visual impairments.**

**Knowledge**

1. The teacher knows how to work collaboratively across the learning environment with parents and instructional teams to ensure that infants and children with visual impairments receive adequate support.
2. The teacher has knowledge of disability advocacy organizations, support groups, and professional organizations and their importance as resources to assist in learning outcomes and transition planning for students with visual impairments and their families.
3. The teacher understands the current importance of parents as partners in educational planning for infants and children with visual impairments, and knows how this collaboration can be used to achieve greater learning outcomes for students.

**Performance**

1. The teacher creates opportunities for students, parents, and instructional teams to access networks of adults with visual impairments and disability-related organizations that may support student learning objectives and transition planning.
2. The teacher uses the skills of collaborative teaming to assist the school as a whole in all aspects of educating a student who is blind or visually impaired.
3. The teacher uses strategies for collaborating with parents and other professionals in planning appropriate transitions for individuals who are visually impaired.
4. The teacher of the visually impaired accesses specialized resources in planning for the instruction and transition of infants and children with dual sensory impairments or additional disabilities.
5. The teacher serves as a liaison, as appropriate, between parents and eye care professionals to help ensure infants and children receive needed health services and to promote greater understanding of treatment plans on the part of infants and children, parents, and instructional team members.
6. The teacher creates opportunities for inclusion of infants and children with visual impairments in extra-curricular activities with non-disabled and disabled peers.

**Standard #8 The teacher of the visually impaired demonstrates professional and ethical practices consistent with the highest standards of pedagogy, confidentiality, and commitment to continued professional growth.**

**Knowledge**

1. The teacher understands the responsibilities inherent in entering the field of blindness and visual impairments, and paramount among these responsibilities is the duty to ensure that all infants and children with visual impairments have access to the same quality of education offered their peers who are not visually impaired.

**Performance**

1. The teacher actively seeks to keep skills and knowledge current by participating in continuing education and professional development opportunities and in professional and consumer organizations related to visual impairments.