



Preschool to School-Age Transition:

Considerations for Children Who Are
Blind/Visually Impaired

An important part of the school age transition team's discussion for children who are Blind/Visually Impaired must include the unique learning and environmental needs. Please review the following list of questions and considerations as a preplanning tool for initial and ongoing discussions between the parents or guardians and school personnel. Considerations of the unique factors and questions prior to review and revision of the individualized education program (IEP) will ensure the child's needs are addressed appropriately upon entrance into a school-age program and will initiate communication between parents or guardians and the local educational agency (LEA) personnel.

Vision Loss/Medical Information

- Description of child's vision loss (age of identification, degree of loss, congenital versus acquired, cortical versus structural)
- Is there a prognosis for continued vision loss or is the vision stable?
- Is there a hearing loss?
- Are there any intellectual or physical concerns?
- What is the effect of the vision loss and/or any additional issues that may affect learning?

Access to Materials/Learning Media

- Is Visual Access (Print/Pictures) the preferred mode of completing tasks?
- Is Auditory Access the preferred mode of completing tasks?
- Is Tactile Access (Braille/Graphics) the preferred mode of completing tasks?
- Does the student use a Combination of access and/or accommodations?
- What is the child's level of proficiency reading braille?
- What font size has been recommended for this child?
- Is there a pattern of reliance on vision, touch, or other senses to gather information?

- Is the student able to read his/her own handwriting?
- Does the student have a portable method of reading, writing, and computing?
- Is the student's academic progress impeded by the current method of reading, writing, and computing?
- Is the student's academic and functional skills progress commensurate with same-age peers?
- Does the student require assistive devices for getting and giving information?
- Who will be responsible for adapting materials?

Assessments/Curriculum

- Has the child had a Functional Vision Assessment, and if so, what were the results?
- Has the child had a Learning Media Assessment, and if so, what were the results?
- Has the child had a Listening Skills Assessment, and if so, what were the results?
- Has the child had an Orientation and Mobility Assessment, and if so, what were the results?
- Have the child's needs been considered in the Expanded Core Curriculum (compensatory skills, sensory efficiency, orientation and mobility, assistive technology, social skills, independent living skills, recreation and leisure skills, career education, self-determination)? What were the results?
- Does the child currently use any audiobook players (e.g., NLS Player)?
- Does the student have a Bookshare account?

Personnel Providing Related Services

- Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI)
- Teacher of the Hearing Impaired
- Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist
- Speech and Language Clinician
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Behavior Specialist
- Intervener
- Paraprofessional
- Audiologist
- Other

Assistive Technology/Equipment Needs

- Has the child had an Assistive Technology Assessment, and if so, what were the results?
- What assistive technology devices/equipment does the child use in the preschool program?
- What equipment needs to be considered in the school age program?
 1. Identify the staff who will check the equipment.
 2. Identify school staff responsible for equipment maintenance, purchases, and emergencies.
 3. Introduce the Vision Supervisor and TVI to school support staff so they can be contacted as needed.
 4. Develop procedures that will be in place to repair equipment and to contact family if equipment breaks down.

Environmental Considerations

- What is the student's duration tolerance for short and sustained tasks?
- How does the student transition from one activity to another?
- Does the student complete tasks, including functional skills tasks, independently and in a timely manner while in group or individual oriented activities?
- How will the proposed classroom environments address the visual, auditory, and tactile needs of the child?
- Does the proposed classroom have adequate storage for adapted materials?
- Identify additional adaptations and supports that may be needed.
- Based on results of Orientation and Mobility Assessment, are adaptations needed regarding safety and independent travel?

Staff training

- What level of experience do team members have with children who are visually impaired?
- What training will be given to staff concerning the student's visual impairments, technology, and environmental conditions?
- Will the training include all staff that may interact with the child, including transportation, cafeteria, office, and recess staff, as well as gym, art, and specials?
- Who will develop and share the protocol for emergency situations with all staff?
- Who will organize ongoing professional development for the staff?

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Tom Wolf, Governor

Department of Education

Pedro A. Rivera, Secretary

Matthew Stem, Deputy Secretary, Elementary and Secondary Education

Ann Hinkson-Herrmann, Director, Bureau of Special Education

