

PROCEDURAL HANDBOOK

SECTION

7

Low Incidence Disabilities and Services

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Updated February 2024

Low-Incidence Disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Section 1462(c) defines low-incidence disabilities as :

- a visual or hearing impairment, or simultaneous visual and hearing impairments.
- a significant cognitive impairment; or
- any impairment for which a small number of personnel with highly specialized skills and knowledge are needed for children with impairments to receive early intervention services or a free appropriate public education.

Definition of Low Incidence Disabilities

Low Incidence Disability is defined as a severe disabling condition with an expected incidence rate of less than one percent of total statewide enrollment in special education. Ed code sections relevant to Low Incidence funding and accountability are listed below.

Code	Disability Category*
220	<p>Hard of Hearing (HH): Hard of Hearing means hearing impairment, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance, but that is not included under the definition of "deaf" in this section.</p>
230	<p>Deafness (DEAF): Deafness means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, which adversely affects educational performance.</p> <p>Hearing Impairment (HI): Hearing Impairment is a federal category of disability, which includes both hard of hearing and deaf individuals as defined above. (34 CFR §300.7(c)(3))250</p>
250	<p>Visual Impairment (VI): Visually Impaired, including blindness, means impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partially seeing and blind children. (34 CFR §300.7(c)(13))</p>
270	<p>Orthopedic Impairment (OI): Orthopedic Impairment means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by congenital anomaly (e.g., clubfoot, absence of some member, etc.); impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis, etc.); and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns which cause contractures)</p>

300	<p>Deaf-Blindness (DB): Deaf-Blindness means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness. (34 CFR §300.7(c)(2))</p>
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*If supporting a student with Multiple Disabilities and one eligibility is a Low Incidence disability, list the Low Incidence disability as Primary or Secondary Disability to generate funding.

Specialized Services for Low-Incidence Disabilities

Section 3051.16 Specialized Services for Low-Incidence Disabilities

(a) Specialized services for low-incidence disabilities may include:

(1) Specially designed instruction related to the unique needs of pupils with low-incidence disabilities provided by teachers credentialed pursuant Education Code section 44265.

(2) Specialized services related to the unique needs of pupils with low-incidence disabilities provided by qualified individuals such as interpreters, notetakers, readers, transcribers, and other individuals who provide specialized materials and equipment.

(b) An "educational interpreter" provides communication facilitation between students who are deaf or hard of hearing, and others, in the general education classroom and for other school-related activities, including extracurricular activities, as designated in a student's IEP.

An educational interpreter shall be certified by the national Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), or equivalent; in lieu of RID certification or equivalent, an educational interpreter must have achieved a score of 4.0 or above on the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA), the Educational Sign Skills Evaluation-Interpreter and Receptive (ESSE-I/R), or the National Association of the Deaf/American Consortium of Certified Interpreters (NAD/ACCI) assessment. If providing Cued Language transliteration, a transliterator shall possess Testing/Evaluation and Certification Unit (TEC Unit) certification or have achieved a score of 4.0 or above on the EIPA - Cued Speech.

(c) Specialized services for pupils with low-incidence disabilities shall be provided only by personnel who possess a credential that authorizes services in special education or clinical rehabilitation services in the appropriate area of disability.

Low Incidence (LI) Funding

Low Incidence (LI) funds are for use on behalf of students having a low incidence (LI) primary or secondary disability through the assessment and IEP process. The funds are provided to each SELPA through the California Department of Education and are listed with other special education entitlements on the Funding Exhibits. The allocation of LI funds to the SELPA is based on the prior year CALPADS Census submission in the categories listed above. The SELPA will allocate funds to districts based on current year CALPADS Census.

Education Code Section 56836.22 provides for funds to purchase “specialized” books, materials and equipment as required under the student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) for students with low incidence disabilities as defined in Section 56026.5

As a condition of receiving these funds, SBCSELPA and LEAs shall ensure that:

- The appropriate related service personnel, books, materials, and equipment are purchased.
- Training on the use of items is coordinated as necessary; and
- The books, materials and equipment are reassigned within SBCSELPA to other students with Low Incidence Disabilities once the student that originally received the items no longer needs them.

Low Incidence funds are for materials and/or services for students with an LI disability. SBCSELPA recommends that LEAs consider a tracking and monitoring system for equipment purchased with these funds.

ELIGIBILITY for Low Incidence Funding

Funds may be used for all students with the Low Incidence disabilities as defined in law, for both primary and secondary eligibility categories. Some students counted as having an orthopedic impairment may not be eligible because they do not have a “severe orthopedic impairment” as per the definition of Low Incidence disabilities in Education Code 56026.5. Students who have severe orthopedic impairments require highly specialized services, equipment, and materials per Education Code Section 5600.5(b).

Education Code Section 56320(g) requires that persons knowledgeable of that disability shall conduct the assessment of a student with a suspected low incidence disability. A low incidence disability does not guarantee the use of low incidence funds. The IEP team reviews assessment data and determines the most appropriate items or services needed to address the student’s unique educational needs. These items or services may or may not be “specialized.” Items, which are found in most classrooms, would not be acquired through low incidence funds.

Procedures for Purchasing Equipment and/or Services with Low Incidence Funding

The LEA may consider the following when purchasing equipment and/or funding services through LI Funding.

The equipment and services should be:

- appropriate to the eligibility category and appropriate services on their IEP required for the student to meet IEP goals and objectives.
- required for the student to access general education.
- specialized as it relates to a need or the needs of the LI disability.
- identified in a comprehensive evaluation completed by credentialed staff or a provider and who is knowledgeable of the LI disability area(s).

The Annual Budget Plan asks for estimated expenditures for:

- 1) Supplemental Aides and Services in a regular classroom (SACS Function 1130)
- 2) Low Incidence Expenditures

LEAs should consider utilizing codes to specify Low Incidence expenditures for services or personnel to have estimates for the Annual Budget Plan. There is no specific SACS code for Low Incidence, so it would need to be LEA defined.

IEP Service Codes

The IEP team determines the services for the student. A student must have a service code identified in their IEP that is appropriate to the service that is being provided. A student with a specified LI disability typically has one or more of the following as noted below, all of which are allowable services to be funded with LI funds:

Code	Service Description
710	Specialized Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services: These services include speech therapy, speech reading, auditory training and/or instruction in the student's mode of communication. Rehabilitative and educational services; adapting curricula, methods, and the learning environment; and special consultation to students, parents, teachers, and other school personnel may also be included. (CCR Title 5 §3051.16 and 3051.18)
715	Interpreter Services: Sign language interpretation of spoken language to individuals, whose communication is normally sign language, by a qualified sign language interpreter. This includes conveying information through the sign system of the student or consumer and tutoring students regarding class content through the sign system of the student. (CCR Title 5, §3051.16)

720	<p>Audiological Services: These services include measurements of acuity, monitoring amplification, and frequency modulation system use. Consultation services with teachers, parents or speech pathologists must be identified in the IEP as to reason, frequency, and duration of contact; infrequent contact is considered assistance and would not be included. (CCR Title 5 §3051.2)</p>
725	<p>Specialized Vision Services: This is a broad category of services provided to students with visual impairments. It includes assessment of functional vision; curriculum modifications necessary to meet the student's educational needs, including Braille, large type, and aural media; instruction in areas of need; concept development and academic skills; communication skills (including alternative modes of reading and writing); social, emotional, career, vocational, and independent living skills.</p> <p>Service may include coordination of other personnel providing services to the students (such as transcribers, readers, counselors, orientation and mobility specialists, career/vocational staff, and others) and collaboration with the student's classroom teacher. (CAC Title 5 §3030(d), EC 56364.1)</p>
730	<p>Orientation and Mobility: Students with identified visual impairments are trained in body awareness and to understand how to move. Students are trained to develop skills to enable them to travel safely and independently around the school and in the community. It may include consultation services to parents regarding their children requiring such services according to an IEP.</p>
735	<p>Braille Transcription: Any transcription services to convert materials from print to Braille. It may include textbooks, tests, worksheets, or anything necessary for instruction. The transcriber should be qualified in English Braille as well as Nemeth Code (mathematics) and be certified by the appropriate agency.</p>
740	<p>Specialized Orthopedic Services: Specially designed instruction related to the unique needs of students with orthopedic disabilities, including specialized materials and equipment. (CAC Title 5, §3030(e) & 3051.16)</p>
750	<p>Note Taking Services: Any specialized assistance given to the student for the purpose of taking notes when the student is unable to do so independently. This may include, but is not limited to, copies of notes taken by another student, transcription of tape-recorded information from a class, or aide designated to take notes. This does not include instruction in the process of learning how to take notes.</p>
755	<p>Transcription Services:</p>

	Any transcription service to convert materials from print to a mode of communication suitable for the student. This may also include dictation services as it may pertain to textbooks, tests, worksheets, or anything necessary for instruction.
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1. Low Incidence Funding Parameters

- a. Prior to requesting purchase of new equipment, the district/program should check other sources such as the SBCSELPA and Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology, and district office for any availability of the equipment at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/pn/sm/>.
- b. The purchase must relate to the unique educational needs resulting from the low incidence disability as indicated in the IEP of the eligible student.
- c. Equipment purchased with LI funds is the property of the State of California and is managed by the LEA and should remain within Santa Barbara County SELPA. If the equipment is specific to the student’s disability and non-transferrable, special arrangements could be made to send the LI equipment with the student to the receiving SELPA.

2. Procedures for purchasing equipment with LI funding

- a. Determine Eligibility: The IEP team determines eligibility for a low incidence disability. The Low Incidence eligibility must be documented on the IEP as a primary or secondary disability.
- b. Determine Student Needs: The IEP team determines the student’s educational needs for item(s) through educational assessments and/or documentation.
- c. Educational Assessment: The personnel who assess the student shall prepare a written report, or reports as appropriate, of the results of each assessment. The report shall include, but not be limited to, the need for specialized services, materials, and equipment for students with low incidence disabilities consistent with guidelines established pursuant to §56136.
- d. IEP Documentation: The specialized equipment must be written into the (IEP5) Special Factors page including the descriptors:
 - How the item will assist the student’s instruction in accordance with the IEP.
 - How often the item will be used or is needed.
 - How the item facilitates participation in the classroom.
 - Specific projected student outcomes.
 - Justification statement that is related to the student’s unique educational needs as identified in the assessment information.

e. Assessments, goals, and objectives are correlated to the justification statement of need.

f. (IEP2B) Present Level of Performance indicates language that reflects assessment information and need for equipment or service support.

- Recommendation: abstain from using specific brand names for purchase.
- Recommendation: Special Factors should be addressed generically. The IEP shows the student has a unique educational need directly related to the low incidence disability and that this need can only be met with specialized books, materials, equipment, and or services.
- Goals must be written to address the unique educational needs, not the desired items or service.
- If the annual IEP goals do not specifically address this educational need, then an amendment IEP with goals that reflect the need for specialized books, materials, and equipment must be written and submitted.

3. Submission of IEP to LEA for purchase of equipment:

a. IEP Team ensures the following documents are completed to support the approval of low incidence equipment or service by the LEA Special Education Administrator:

1. (IEP2) IEP Eligibility
2. (IEP3B) Annual Goals
3. (IEP5) Special Factors page of student IEP
4. (SELPA85) Low Incidence Equipment Purchase form (Optional)

4. Submission of Low Incidence Equipment Purchase Reimbursement from LEA to SBCSELPA

a. After review of the LEA Special Education Administrator, the LEA Special Education Administrator will notify in writing the SBCSELPA Designee for approval of purchase or service using Low Incidence funding LEA Allotment.

LEAs may choose to submit the (SELPA 85) Low Incidence Purchase form to accompany the notification in writing to the SBCSELPA Designee.

b. SBCSELPA Executive Director/ SBCSELPA Designee will provide approval of the LI equipment or service to the LEA Special Education Administrator via email.

c. The LEA purchases equipment and or service and provides an invoice of purchase to SBCSELPA for reimbursement using LI funding allotment.

5. Recommendation: Labeling of Low Incidence Equipment

Once the low incidence equipment is purchased and received by the LEA, the LEA could add a bar code to the equipment. It is recommended to the LEA that the bar code and equipment item be added to a low incidence inventory spreadsheet housed in the LEAs Special Education database.

Student Movement/Transfer

1. If a student moves into SBCSELPA:

When a student moves into the LEA with low incidence equipment already purchased for the student in their last placement, the new LEA will document the equipment using the existing bar code from the prior district to the low incidence inventory spreadsheet housed in the LEA Special Education database.

If no bar code exists, a bar code will be assigned to the equipment and documented to the low incidence inventory spreadsheet housed in the LEA Special Education database.

2. If a student moves to an LEA within SBCSELPA:

Arrangements from LEA to new LEA can be made to send the equipment with the student to the new LEA within SBCSELPA.

3. If a student moves out of SBCSELPA:

Per CDE FAQs about Low Incidence funds: “if the books, materials, and equipment are still needed by other students with low incidence disabilities in your SELPA, there is no requirement to send it with the student who moved. Providing these resources is the responsibility of the SELPA where the student now resides.

If, however, books, materials and equipment purchased with low incidence funds are unused, SELPAs are encouraged to plan with other LEAs in the current SELPA and neighboring SELPAs to share the unused equipment, books, and materials.

If needing to move on unused equipment, please notify SBCSELPA with a picture and description of the equipment to be determined if it could use elsewhere by another LEA in Santa Barbara County.

4. Student graduates from high school:

A graduating high school student or student aging out of special education who has a low incidence disability cannot use the specialized equipment purchased for him by his SELPA through low incidence funds in college. To do so would be a gift of public funds which is a violation of law. Pursuant to Education Code 56822 “Books, materials and equipment purchased with low incidence funds remain the property of the state.”

Since the student has graduated from high school or is aging out of special education, they are no longer eligible to receive special education services. If the LEA no longer has use for the books, equipment or materials, the other LEAs in the SELPA should be notified of the available equipment to be used for another student within the SELPA. If the student needs similar equipment upon graduating or aging out, he/she should contact the Department of Rehabilitation.

Equipment Maintenance

1. Lost or stolen equipment will not be replaced using low incidence funds. The LEA is responsible for replacement of equipment. Reimbursement to districts for the cost of replacing lost or stolen equipment can be requested if money is available at the end of year.
2. Item No Longer Needed: If the item(s) has been purchased for one student and is no longer being used by that student, notify the LEA Special Education office. The item can be reassigned to another student who is LI eligible. The IEP for that student must indicate the need for LI equipment.

Reference Education Codes

EC §56320(g) requires that: "The assessment of a pupil, including the assessment of a pupil with a suspected low incidence disability, shall be conducted by persons knowledgeable of that disability. Special attention shall be given to the unique educational needs, including, but not limited to, skills and the need for specialized services, materials, and equipment consistent with guidelines established pursuant to §56136."

EC §56327(h) states, "The personnel who assess the pupil shall prepare a written report, as appropriate, of the results of each assessment. The report shall include, but not be limited to, all the following: "The need for specialized services, materials, and equipment for pupils with low incidence disabilities consistent with guidelines established pursuant to §56136."

EC §56345(b)(5) states, "When appropriate, the individualized educational program shall also include...For pupils with low incidence disabilities, specialized services, materials, and equipment, consistent with guidelines established pursuant to §56136."

EC §56206 states, "As a part of the local plan submitted pursuant to §56200, each SELPA shall describe how specialized equipment and services will be distributed within the local plan area in a manner that minimizes the necessity to serve pupils in isolated sites and maximizes the opportunities to serve pupils in the least restrictive environment."

EC §56363(b)(16) states the Related Services "may include but not be limited to: Specialized services for low incidence disabilities, such as readers, transcribers, and vision and hearing services."

These services are further defined in California Code of Regulations, Title 5, §3051.16: "Specialized Services for low incidence disabilities may include: (b) Specialized services related to the unique needs of pupils with low incidence disabilities provided by qualified individuals such as

interpreters, note takers, readers, transcribers, and other individuals who provide specialized materials and equipment."

EC § 56364.1 Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 56364.2, pupils with LI disabilities may receive all or a portion of their instruction in the regular classroom and may also be enrolled in special classes taught by appropriately credentialed teachers who serve these pupils at one or more school sites. The instruction shall be provided in a manner which is consistent with the guidelines adopted pursuant to Section 56136 and in accordance with the individualized education program.

FORMS TO BE USED

- (IEP2B) Present Level of Performance page of student IEP
- (IEP3B) Annual Goals
- (IEP5) Special Factors page of student IEP
- (SELPA85) Low Incidence Equipment Purchase form (Optional)

E = *ENGLISH* and S = *SPANISH*

Sample copies of all SELPA forms referenced in this handbook are included in SIRAS Systems www.sirassystems.org.

THE LAW

The regulations implementing the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act include a provision regarding the proper functioning of hearing aids and surgically implanted medical devices. This requirement states that: “Each public agency must ensure that the hearing aids and external components of surgically implanted medical devices worn in school by children with hearing impairments, including deafness, are functioning properly.” 34 CFR 300.113.

In this document, hearing aids and surgically implanted medical devices, including but not limited to cochlear implants and/or surgically implanted Bone Anchored Hearing Aids (BAHA), will here after collectively be referred to as “Hearing Devices.”

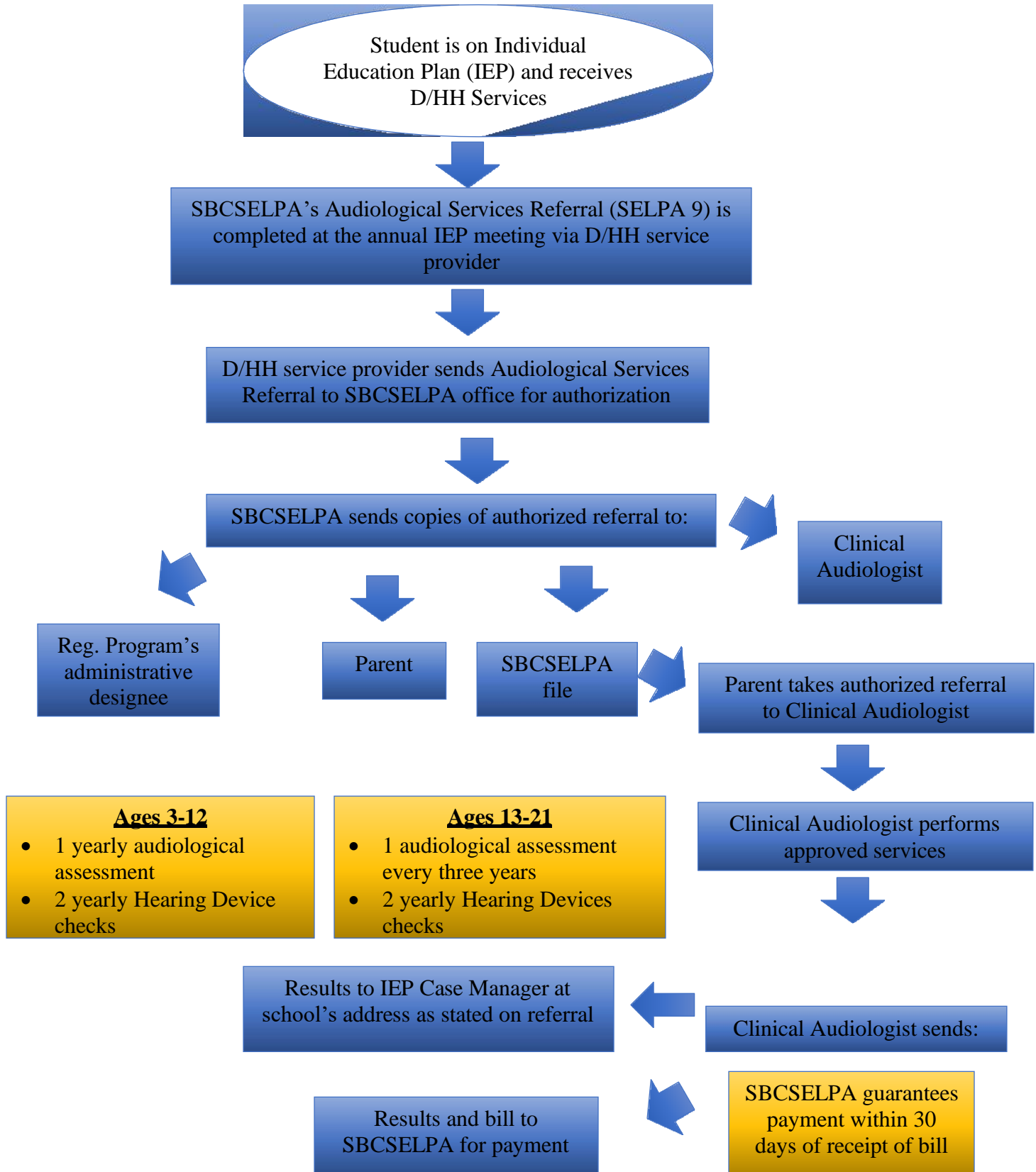
PROCEDURES FOR HEARING DEVICE CHECKS

Individual Hearing Devices worn by students with hearing loss are checked as the students arrive at school each morning. The general education or Special Day Class teacher (or designated staff member), as appropriate, is responsible for checking each morning to ensure the students’ individual Hearing Devices are functioning properly. Students with the capability to monitor their own Hearing Devices performance (generally beginning in 2nd grade) are asked if their Hearing Devices are working properly. Replacement batteries for students’ Hearing Devices will be kept at school for use as needed.

For students who receive D/HH services, the D/HH Specialist is responsible for training each child’s general education or Special Day Class teacher in the procedures to be used to check the Hearing Devices of children with hearing loss enrolled in general education or Special Day Class programs.

If a child’s Hearing Device is not working properly, it is the responsibility of the general education or Special Day Class teacher to contact the child’s D/HH Specialist as soon as possible. The D/HH Specialist and/ or the student’s case manager is responsible for notifying the child’s parent and Educational Audiologist (as needed) regarding the Hearing Device malfunction.

Annual Audiological Assessment and Hearing Device Checks Referral Process



'South' and 'North' D/HH Services in Santa Barbara County

The Santa Barbara D/HH 'South' County referral process differs from the Santa Barbara D/HH 'North' County process. Please refer to the following pages and flow charts for instructions on D/HH Services throughout 'South' and 'North' Santa Barbara County.

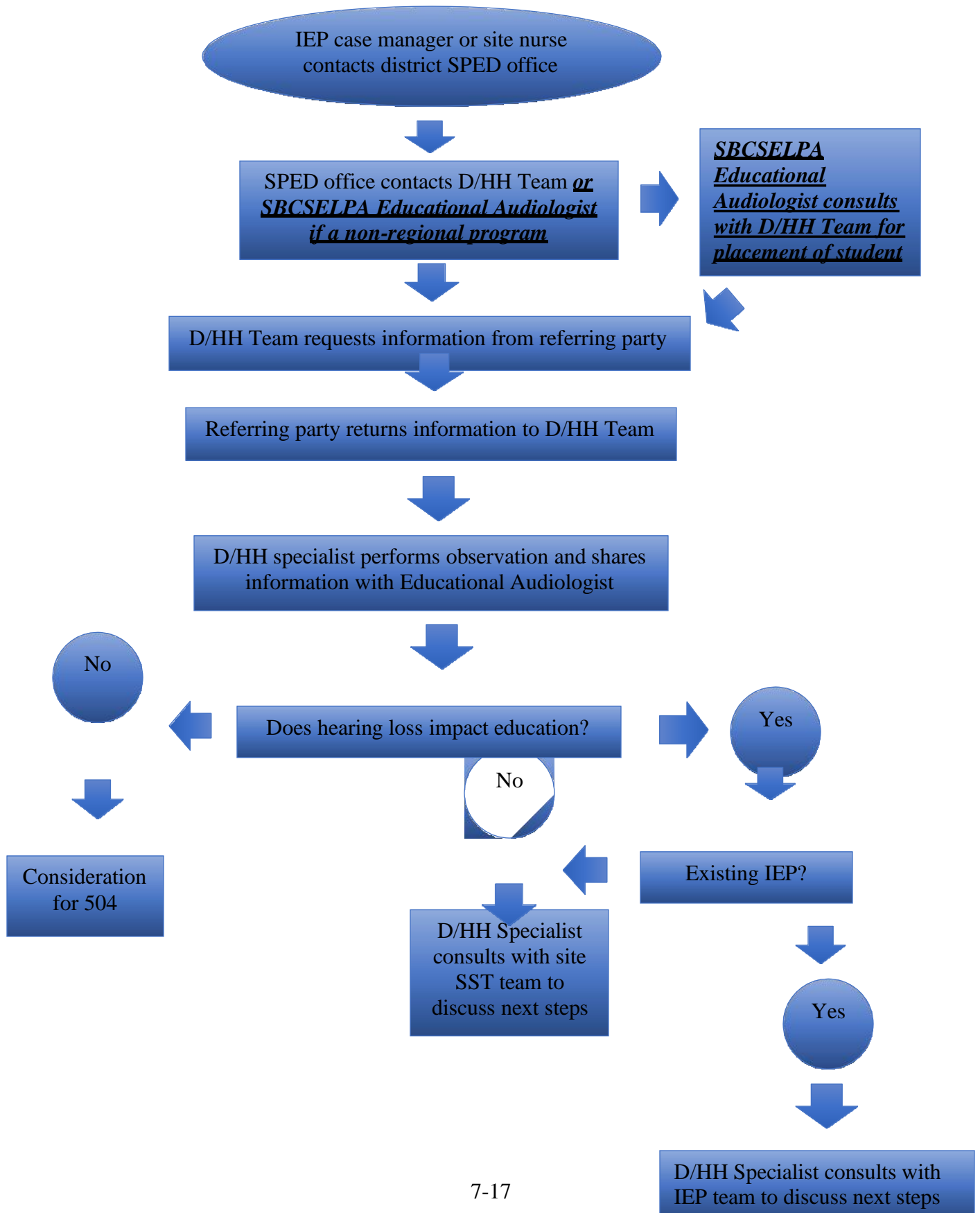
Santa Barbara 'South' County D/HH Services

Santa Barbara 'South' County encompasses the districts of Carpinteria Unified School District, Santa Barbara Unified School District, Montecito Union School District, Cold Springs School District, Adelante Charter School, Santa Barbara Charter School, Goleta Union School District, and the Santa Ynez Valley Consortium.

Santa Barbara 'North' County D/HH Services

Santa Barbara 'North' County encompasses the districts of Guadalupe Union School District, Orcutt Union School District, Santa Maria Joint Union High School District, Santa Maria Bonita School District, Lompoc Unified School District, and Cuyama Unified School District.

Santa Barbara County D/HH 'South' County Procedures: D/HH Request for Consultation (RFC)



Referral process for Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Specialist and Educational Audiology services in
'South' Santa Barbara County

The Santa Barbara 'South' County D/HH program offers regional D/HH services through the districts' D/HH Specialists and SBCSELPA Educational Audiologist.

The Santa Barbara 'South' County Program offers a regional Total Communication Elementary Program, in addition to students being served through itinerant services on district campuses. Total Communication is an approach to communicating that aims to make use of several modes of communication such as signed, oral, auditory, written, and visual aids, depending on the needs and abilities of the student.

Upon receiving a student to a 'South' county district with D/HH Services, the IEP Case Manager or District nurse will contact the Special Education Office to notify the district of the D/HH service.

If receiving a student to a 'South' county non-regional district program, such as Cold Springs School District, Hope School District, Santa Barbara Charter School, Montecito Union School District, Adelante Charter School, the Santa Ynez Valley Special Education Consortium, or Carpinteria Unified School District, the SBCSELPA Educational Audiologist will be sent the referral (s) to review.

In collaboration with South County D/HH Specialists, the SBCSELPA Educational Audiologist will determine which D/HH Specialist will be assigned to the student (s), based on current case management and service time.

The Special Education District Office will contact the D/HH Specialists Team to share the student information. The D/HH Specialists Team requests the following information from the referring staff (case manager or nurse):

- The current IEP and Multidisciplinary Report.
- A recent audiogram from the student's physician/clinical audiologist, preferably from within the past six months, but no older than 12 months.
- Audiological/medical records.

The D/HH Specialist presents to the parent or guardian the 'Request for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Observation Consent' (SELPA41) to observe the student to gather further information on the student's academic performance with the hearing loss and their access to all environments within the school setting.

The information from the observation is shared with the Educational Audiologist as needed to collaborate on next steps for the student. Through the collaboration, the D/HH Specialist determines if the hearing loss impacts the educational performance of the student.

If the student's hearing loss does not impact the educational performance of the student, the D/HH Specialist will recommend to an SST Team the consideration of support through a 504. If there is evidence that the hearing loss does impact the student's educational performance, the following actions may occur if the student does or does not have an existing IEP:

No existing IEP:

- If there is evidence that the hearing loss may have an educational impact on the student's performance and the student does not currently have an IEP, the D/HH Specialist will contact the school's SST team to determine next steps for support of the student.

Existing IEP:

- If there is evidence that the hearing loss may have an educational impact on the student's performance and the student currently has an academic IEP, the D/HH Specialist will discuss next steps with the IEP Team.
- If there is evidence that the hearing loss may have an educational impact on the student's performance and the student currently has a Speech only IEP, an IEP meeting will need to be held to discuss the need for a psychoeducational assessment plan, to include D/HH Specialist, School Psychologist, and Special Education Teacher to determine if factors besides the hearing loss may be impacting the student's learning.

SBCSELPA Educational Audiology Services

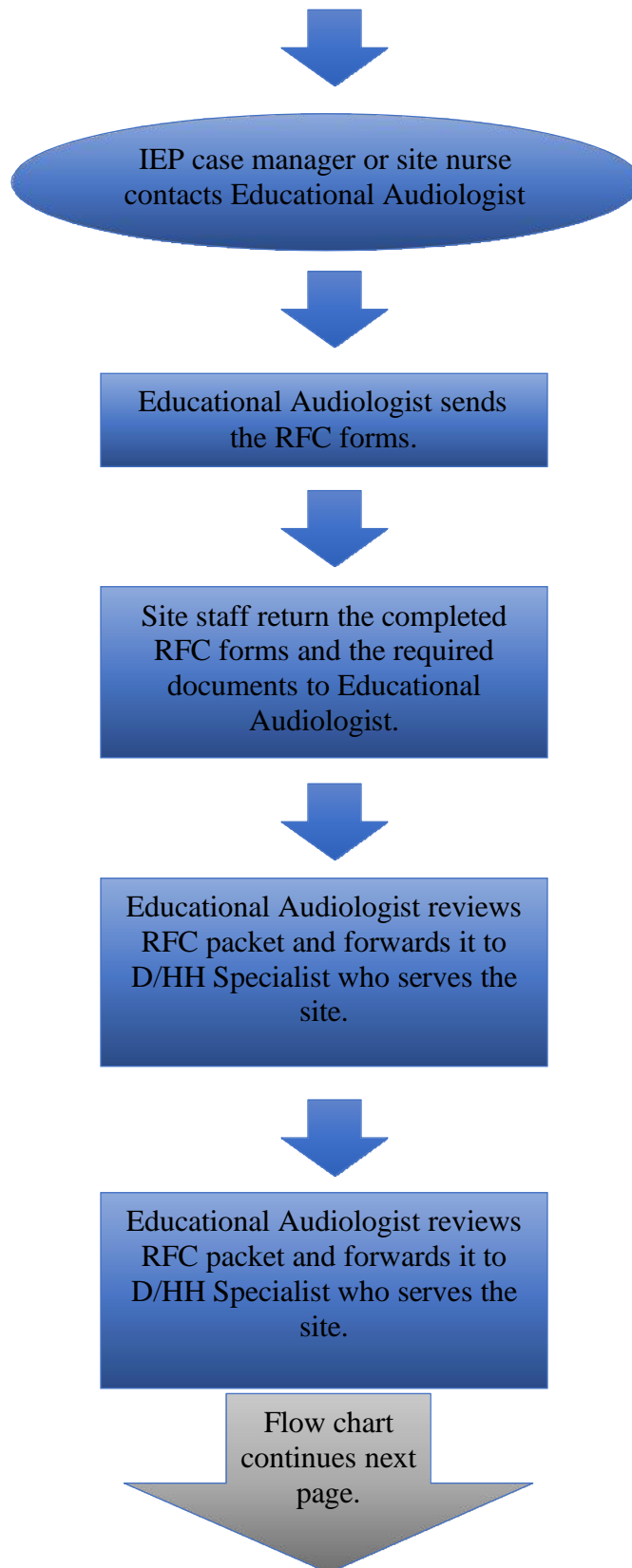
Not all students served by D/HH Specialists receive Educational Audiology services. The Educational Audiologist does not work with every student with Hearing Devices. Students who require Hearing Assistance Technology ('HAT', formerly known as 'FM equipment') to gain auditory access to the curriculum will require occasional support from the SBCSELPA Educational Audiologist.

- If a student's hearing loss is significant enough to require HAT, then the IEP Team would convene to discuss next steps for Hearing Assistance Technology (HAT) and would also include D/HH Specialist support in the IEP, due to the educational impact of the hearing loss on the student's performance.
- SBCSELPA Educational Audiology is a support service, unlike D/HH Specialist services, which is a direct instructional service. No goals are written or worked on by the Educational Audiologist, and therefore Educational Audiology cannot be a "stand alone" service in the absence of other goal-based direct instructional services.

Within Santa Barbara County, Educational Audiologist positions are funded through Special Education, and therefore the service cannot be provided to general education students or students with

504 Plans. In addition, HAT equipment is purchased with Low Incidence funding which cannot be accessed for students without Special Education service.

Santa Barbara County D/HH 'North County' SBCEO Procedures: D/HH Request for Consultation (RFC)



Flow chart continued from previous page.

D/HH Specialist and Educational Audiologist schedule and perform an observation.

Is there evidence that the hearing loss is impacting education?

No

Yes

Lack of evidence that the hearing loss is impacting education, decision made NOT to move forward.

Is there an existing IEP?

No

Yes

D/HH Specialist provides written summary for student file.

D/HH Specialist attends full-team SST meeting to discuss plan forward.

IEP team meeting scheduled to discuss need for an Assessment.

Referral process for SCBEO Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Specialist and Educational Audiology services in 'North' Santa Barbara County

The Santa Barbara 'North' County D/HH Programs offer D/HH and Educational Audiology through SBCEO.

The Santa Barbara 'North' County Program offers a regional Total Communication Program, with D/HH Special Day Class settings from Pre-K through High School, in addition to students being served through itinerant services on district campuses. Total Communication is an approach to communicating that aims to make use of several modes of communication such as signed, oral, auditory, written, and visual aids, depending on the needs and abilities of the student.

When a student with a known hearing loss and academic performance concerns is received in a 'North' Santa Barbara County district, the student's case manager or the school site nurse would complete the 'Request for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consultation' (SELPA40).

The parent or guardian will be asked to sign the 'Request for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Observation Consent' (SELPA41), giving permission for the D/HH Specialist and Educational Audiologist to observe the student.

The student's case manager submits the 'Request for Deaf and Harding Consultation' (SELPA40) and the 'Request for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Observation Consent' (SELPA41) to the SBCEO Educational Audiologist,

Additional information required to be included with SELPA 40, SELPA 41 would be the following:

- A recent audiogram from the student's physician/clinical audiologist, preferably from within the past six months, but no older than 12 months. The SBCEO Educational Audiologist does not do testing for the required audiogram.
- The school nurse or case manager would gather audiological/medical records.

For students with an active IEP, if an IEP meeting will be held soon, the case manager will provide the 'Request for Consult' packet forms (SELPA 40 and SELPA 41) to the parent or guardian at the meeting, discuss the forms and seek consent to the consultation and observations. Upon parent or guardian consent, the 'Request for Consult' packet will be sent to the SBCEO Educational Audiologist.

Once the SBCEO Educational Audiologist reviews the completed 'Request for Consult' packet and accompanying required documents, the packet and documents will be given to the D/HH Specialist who is assigned to the student's school site.

Upon receiving and reviewing the packet and documents, the D/HH Specialist and Educational Audiologist will observe the student. After the observation, one of the following will take place:

- If it is determined that there is a lack of evidence that the hearing loss has an educational impact on the student’s performance and therefore there is no need to move forward with possible D/HH services, a written summary will be provided for the student’s file.
- If there is evidence that the hearing loss may have an educational impact on the student’s performance and the student does not currently have an IEP, the D/HH Specialist will attend a full-team SST meeting to discuss a plan to move forward.
- If there is evidence that the hearing loss may have an educational impact on the student’s performance and the student currently has an academic IEP, the D/HH Specialist will discuss the need for an assessment plan with the case manager.
- If there is evidence that the hearing loss may have an educational impact on the student’s performance and the student currently has a Speech only IEP, an IEP meeting will need to be held to discuss the need for a psychoeducational assessment plan, to include D/HH Specialist, School Psychologist, and Special Education Teacher to determine if factors besides the hearing loss may be impacting the student’s learning.

SBCEO Educational Audiology Services

After performing the student observation, if the student appears to have issues with auditory access in the educational setting, Audiology will be added to assessment plan.

An audiological assessment includes:

- performing a classroom observation
- performing a “Functional Listening Evaluation”
- gathering input from the classroom staff

This classroom-based assessment process does not include audiometric testing that would be performed by a Clinical Audiologist.

If the Educational Audiologist’s assessment indicates that the service is indicated, Educational Audiology will be added to the IEP.

Not all students served by D/HH Specialists also receive Educational Audiology services, as some students with a hearing loss have their hearing “corrected” by their amplification devices to a degree that they have appropriate auditory access in the classroom. The Educational Audiologist does not work with every student with hearing aids.

Students who need extra help with auditory access to the curriculum, via use of Hearing Assistance Technology (‘HAT’, formerly known as ‘FM equipment’) will require Educational Audiology support. The Educational Audiologist as a rule only works with students who need or use HAT.

The Educational Audiologist does not work with students who do not have D/HH Specialist services.

- If a student's hearing loss is significant enough to require HAT, then the IEP Team would convene to discuss next steps for Hearing Assistance Technology (HAT) and would also include D/HH Specialist support in the IEP, due to the educational impact of the hearing loss on the student's performance.
- Educational Audiology is a support service, unlike D/HH Specialist services, which is a direct instructional service. No goals are written or worked on by the Educational Audiologist, and therefore Educational Audiology cannot be a "stand alone" service in the absence of other goal-based direct instructional services.

Within Santa Barbara County, Educational Audiologist positions are funded through Special Education, and therefore the service cannot be provided to general education students or students with 504 Plans. In addition, HAT equipment is purchased with Low Incidence funding which cannot be accessed for students without Special Education service.

FORMS TO BE USED

The following forms should be used:

- SELPA9: Audiological Services Referral (E & S)
- IEP7A: Services (E & S)
- SELPA12: D/HH Program Components (E&S)
- SELPA40: Request for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consultation
- SELPA41: D/HH Observation Consent Form

NOTE

E = *ENGLISH* and **S** = *SPANISH*

IEP Forms referenced in this handbook are included in our county's on-line SIRAS Systems www.sirassystems.org website.

Introduction to Visual Impairment (VI)

These guidelines are developed in response to the California Education Code EC 56136, Guidelines for Low Incidence Disability Areas. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) are to provide technical assistance to parents, teachers, and school personnel in support of all students with vision impairments. The guidelines shall clarify the following:

- Identification and referral,
- Assessment,
- Planning and provision of specialized services to students with vision impairments,
- Describe the monitoring of programs serving students with vision impairments.

California Education code (34 CFR §300.7(c)(13)) defines a Visual Impairment as follows:

- Impairment of vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance.
- The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

To be eligible for O&M services, a student must have a medically diagnosed visual impairment that meets the legal standard for either legally blind or partially sighted. In addition, their vision loss must adversely affect their academic performance [CCR, Title V, § 3030 (d)].

Types of Visual Impairments

Congenital or Adventitious Visual Impairments

The terms congenital and adventitious identify the time of onset of a visual impairment. A student with a congenital visual impairment has had a visual impairment since birth or early infancy and generally has difficulty with concepts and skills that are visual in nature. A student with an adventitious visual impairment has a visual impairment that was acquired after birth or early infancy; the student already has some visual concepts and skills, depending on the age when the onset of the visual impairment occurred. This student may need to integrate and acquire new visual concepts and may have needs relating to his or her adjustment to the visual impairment.

Neurological Visual Impairment

The definition of students with visual impairments includes students with neurological visual impairments who are functionally blind or who have low vision, even with best correction.

Students who solely have visual perceptual or visual motor dysfunction, such as from a learning disability, may not meet the eligibility criteria for visual impairment.

Vision Therapy and Educational Visual Impairment Services: What's the Difference?

<https://www.pattan.net/CMSPages/GetAmazonFile.aspx?path=~%5Cpattan%5Cmedia%5Cmaterials%5Cpublications%5Cfiles%5Cvision-therapy-ed-visual-svcs-5-22-wbl.pdf&hash=263ddaf48bc5628291195cef6e246ba0c4df29ab3ab97fe519f5acec3339285a&ext=.pdf>

Students with Visual Impairments who have Additional Disabilities

The assessment of students with visual impairments who have additional disabilities requires systematic observation and an understanding of the implications of the additional disabilities on growth, development, and learning. An awareness of age-appropriate developmental and educational expectations is critical for identifying and assessing unique educational needs.

When a student with a visual impairment has other known or suspected disabilities, it is important to understand and keep in perspective several variables. These variables will influence the interpretation of assessment results which include:

- the determination of necessary instructional strategies,
- goals or objectives, or both,
- and the recommendations to the educational team for appropriate educational placement and related services.

The unique educational needs of students with visual impairments requires careful consideration of specialized curriculum.

While students with visual impairments require instruction in all areas of the California Common Core Curriculum, (Reading, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies), they also need specialized instruction in the Expanded Core Curriculum (Hatlen, 1996) This curriculum includes nine areas of curriculum content that all teachers of students with visual impairments (TSVI) are responsible for assessing and teaching.

The nine areas include:

- Compensatory Skills (braille instruction, listening skills, study and organizational skills, abacus) and functional academics.
- Orientation and Mobility
- Social Interaction Skills
- Independent Living Skills
- Recreation and Leisure Skills
- Career Education
- Use of Assistive Technology
- Self Determination
- Sensory Efficiency

Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) Areas	Curriculum Content/Description (Should include but are not limited to description in box.)
Compensatory Skills	<p>Braille Instruction Alternative modes for instruction in reading and writing with the use of learning media and specialized equipment and materials to help with communication.</p> <p>Instructional Strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing reading skills with use of specialized equipment to pursue all interests. • Developing writing skills with use of specialized equipment for all forms of writing • Keyboarding skills • Operation of technology <p>Listening Skills Listening skills support the collection of information, auditory discrimination, the interpretation of auditory cues, and the sound association to events and people.</p> <p>Listening skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing listening skills appropriate for the student functioning, including the development of auditory reception, discrimination, memory, sequencing, closure, and association skills. • Developing auditory comprehension. • Understanding and hearing facts, figures, and details <p>Learning and developing efficient study and organizational skills provide successful participation in classroom and community activities.</p> <p>Study and Organizational Skills</p> <p>Study and Organizational skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing school materials • Developing note taking skills • Organizing time commitments <p>Functional Academic Skills include communication modes.</p> <p>Skills allow students to access learning equivalent to sighted peers.</p> <p>For students with multiple disabilities, the development of functional skills allows for meaningful and active participation in all areas of work and play.</p> <p>Concept Development includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding real world objects and environments

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct teaching of concepts that sighted individuals learn incidentally. • Spatial, directional, and positional concepts • Developing good sense of body image • Understanding object permanence and relation of part to whole • Tactile discrimination • Understanding of nonverbal cues, social gestures, and expressions • Understanding time concepts <p>Sensory and Motor Skills Gross and fine motor skills needed for sensory discrimination and sensory integration skills for posture, balance, strength, and movement.</p> <p>Sensory and Motor skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movement • Identifying textures and objects • Identifying and discriminating indoor and outdoor environments
Orientation and Mobility	<p>Orienting to various environments through movement, travel, and play including sensory motor functioning.</p> <p>Orientation and Mobility skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing understandings of space and environment • Movement throughout known and unknown environments • Using specialized equipment to support traveling skills. • Emergency procedures and who to contact in the event of an emergency. • Navigating transportation systems • Navigating hazards in the community • Using technology to support directional movement.
Social Interaction Skills	<p>The support of developing social interaction skills and relationships with peers and adults requires the support of educators and families.</p> <p>Social Interaction skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding appropriate social behavior • Being aware of nonverbal communication • Understanding appropriate body movement and positioning around people • Recognizing people’s feelings and emotions • Understanding peer pressure and safety with social interactions • Self- advocacy • Human sexuality • Understanding and accepting visual impairment and how to interact with others.
Independent Living Skills	<p>Independent Living Skills is a goal for many students.</p> <p>Independent Living Skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal hygiene

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dressing skills • Caring for one’s own clothing and housekeeping. • Food preparation and eating • Money management • Written and telecommunication skills. • Daily schedules and time management • Basic organization of daily living and activities
Recreation and Leisure Skills	<p>Physical activity is a lifelong investment in personal health.</p> <p>Recreation and Leisure Skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical activities such as sports • Leisure activities such as hobbies • Online communities, social activities, or events • Direct Instruction in adapted physical education.
Career Education	<p>Guidance in career awareness and vocational education lead to future employment.</p> <p>Career Educational Skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the uniqueness of oneself • Job interests and work exploration • Organizing digital information to apply for a job. • Volunteering in one’s community. • Interacting with others within a work setting • Looking for and receiving support through a job coach within a job • Organizing materials and time management • Obtaining and maintaining financial assets
Use of Assistive Technology	<p>The utilization of technology in supporting students in the classroom and beyond enables opportunities for students to enhance access to their surroundings.</p> <p>The use of Assistive Technology includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of Braille displays • Use of computers/tablets and specialized software • Use of mobile devices and applications • Interacting with social media platforms and the internet • Use of Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV)

Self Determination	<p>Self Determination encompasses encouraging students to create appropriate goals for themselves, monitor their progress, and develop problem solving skills. Students are encouraged to self-direct their behaviors, decisions, and practice skills of independence.</p> <p>Self Determination includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and explaining one’s abilities and disability. • Identifying one’s own strengths and limitations. • Developing choices based on preferences, interests, needs, and wants. • Problem solving • Setting goals and monitoring progress • Self-advocacy
Sensory Efficiency Skills	<p>Sensory Efficiency Skills refer to how a student can leverage tactual, auditory, olfactory, and sense of taste input to counter the loss of visual information.</p> <p>Sensory Efficiency Skills include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optical devices- special lenses • Use of hearing aids • Communication systems • Identifying, discriminating, tracking, and using continuous and intermittent auditory sources indoors and outdoors

All instruction and services provided to students with visual impairments must be planned and coordinated to meet the specific needs and strengths of each student.

Identification

The eligibility for special education services under the low incidence disability of a student with a visual impairment describes the student as “a student that has a visual impairment which, even with correction, adversely affects the student’s educational performance.” (California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Education Section 3030 (d). If the assessment determines the student qualifies for vision and mobility services, the student is provided with instruction, specialized services, materials, and equipment in accordance with his or her Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Variables to be considered include but are not limited to:

- The need to determine, during a functional vision assessment, whether observed or reported difficulties reflect an inability to see compared with an inability to interpret what is seen, e.g., a visual impairment compared with a visual perceptual or visual motor dysfunction or both. (The size, distance, contrast, lighting, or other visual variables should be varied to help make this determination.)
- The nature and extent of other disabilities (sensory, cognitive, physical, health, or behavioral) and the way each one, individually or in combination, has an adverse developmental/educational impact.

- The fact that the visual impairment may not correctly account for, or completely explain, the present levels of developmental and/or educational functioning observed.
- Special assistive materials, devices, and/or equipment needed to address the adverse impact of another disability.
- Adaptive or medically required positioning of the student as necessary to allow physical access to instructional materials or equipment or both.
- Instructional methods, modifications or both needed to address the impact of another disability.
- Alternative placement and/or positioning of materials or equipment that enables or enhances access to instruction and learning.
- Additional factors that may affect learning, performance, and progress, such as attention span, range of motion, inappropriate behaviors, mood, and motivation.

When a student with additional disabilities is being assessed, it is important to consult with educational specialists, related service providers, parents, and eye care specialists to find the most appropriate services and support for the student.

Assessment of Students with Visual Impairments

Reports on Vision

The diagnosis of a visual impairment will be made by an appropriate medical professional (ophthalmologist or neurologist). The assessment should begin with the report of an examination by an ophthalmologist. It is important to acquire as much information about the student's visual functioning from the eye specialist as possible.

The eye report should include the following:

- Near and distance acuity, with and without best possible correction
- Field of vision, including peripheral field
- The etiology, diagnosis, and prognosis of the visual impairment
- The eye specialist's recommendations for school personnel and parents, including when the student should be reexamined. (Eye Report for Students with Vision Impairments, Ed Code 5062 /Rev 07.09 Department of Education)

Functional Vision Assessment

A functional vision assessment is conducted by the teacher of students with visual impairments and may or may not include the orientation and mobility specialist and the student's family to determine the student's functional vision.

Functional Vision assessments provide:

- a. Information to the educational team about the extent of the need for specialized services related to the visual impairment.

- b. Information about how the student uses their functional vision and if it adversely affects their access to the core curriculum and expanded core curriculum.
- c. Details about the student's ability to move efficiently, safely, and independently in multiple environments.
- d. Targeted areas for necessary support in instructional accommodations, specialized materials and learning media, and technology to support the student with the visual impairment in all settings.
- e. Additional information for the family and the educational team to best support the student with the visual impairment in all settings (school and community)

When a functional vision assessment is conducted, other known or suspected disabilities should be considered. Vision functioning in conjunction with other disabilities may interfere with learning. An education and parent team approach are recommended to understand behaviors and performance throughout the assessment. Through the team approach during assessment, the appropriate educational interventions will be collaborated upon and put into the student's assessment report and Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Learning Media Assessment

A Learning Media Assessment may be a separate assessment or embedded in the functional vision assessment. It is used to determine the student's primary means for accessing materials to achieve academic and functional success in areas such as reading, writing, mathematics, and functional skills.

A Learning Media Assessment is conducted for a student with a visual impairment to determine the appropriate learning media, including the possible need for braille and braille instruction.

Learning Media Assessments provide:

- Information about how the student gathers and uses sensory information from various sensory channels.
- Information about the types of learning media and literacy media the student could use for learning tasks such as reading and writing.

The assessment of a student's learning media should include observation of a student's use of sensory information in a variety of settings such as home, school, recreational activities, and in the community.

Determining the literacy medium or media refers to the modality (visual, tactile, or auditory) that is used consistently to enable the student to have direct access to print, including reading and other information in written language. Braille and print are literacy media that enable the student to develop and acquire reading and writing skills. Audible input is a learning medium that enables or supports the student's access to written language that may be a primary alternative learning modality.

Orientation/Mobility Assessment may include:

- Background information: Visual diagnosis, Relevant Health information, Additional disabilities, Family, and teacher input

- Present level of mobility
- Present level of orientation
- Concept development (should include concepts related to independent travel)
- Visual information

Santa Barbara County Identification and Referral Process

Santa Barbara County provides services and supports to all students who are found eligible under assessment for a student with a visual impairment.

When a student is referred for a possible visual impairment in an LEA in Santa Barbara County:

The coordinator organizes the paperwork needed for a vision observation per parent/guardian consent. The coordinator also requests from the parent/guardian a copy of the most recent vision report, preferably from an ophthalmologist dated within the last twelve months.

‘South’ and ‘North’ Vision Services in Santa Barbara County

For Vision Services in Santa Barbara County, please refer to the following pages and flow charts for instructions.

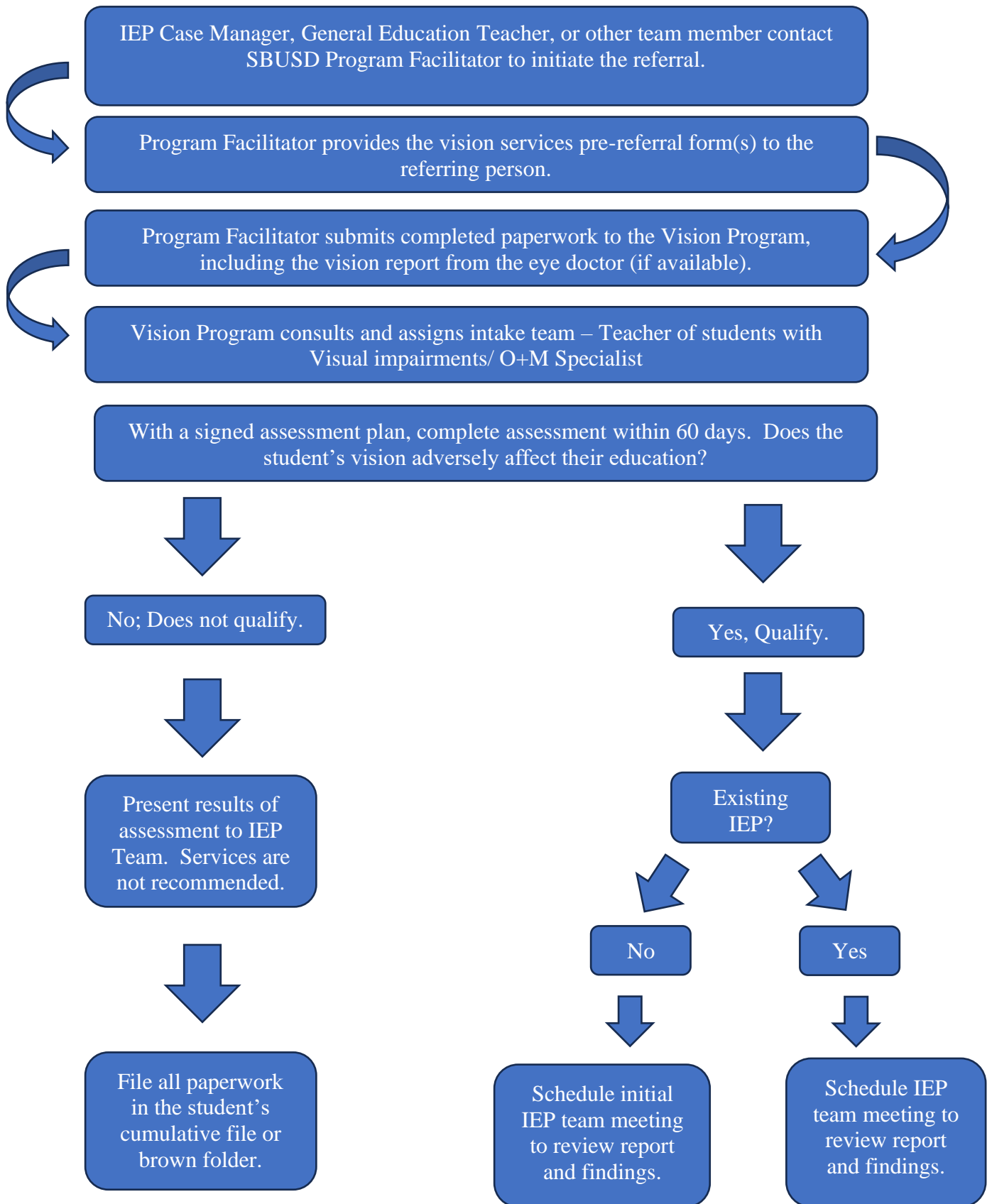
Santa Barbara ‘South’ County Vision Services

Santa Barbara ‘South’ County Vision services encompasses the districts of Carpinteria Unified School District, Santa Barbara Unified School District, Montecito Union School District, Cold Springs School District, Adelante Charter School, Santa Barbara Charter School, Goleta Union School District, Hope School District, ‘South’ Santa Barbara County Infant Programs, and ‘South’ County Preschool programs.

Santa Barbara ‘North’ County Vision Services

Santa Barbara ‘North’ County Vision services encompasses the districts of Guadalupe Union School District, Orcutt Union School District, Santa Maria Joint Union High School District, Santa Maria Bonita School District, Lompoc Unified School District, Cuyama Unified School District, the Santa Ynez Valley Special Education Consortium, Blochman School District, Family Partnership, and ‘North’ County Preschool programs.

**Santa Barbara County 'South' for Vision and Orientation & Mobility Services
(Flowchart)**



Santa Barbara County 'South' for Vision and Orientation & Mobility Services

Referral Process

The Santa Barbara 'South County Vision and Orientation and Mobility offers services to districts.

Santa Barbara 'South' County vision services encompasses the districts of Carpinteria Unified School District, Santa Barbara Unified School District, Montecito Union School District, Cold Springs School District, Adelante Charter School, Santa Barbara Charter School, Goleta Union School District, Hope School District, 'South' Santa Barbara County Infant Programs, and 'South' County Preschool programs.

Step 1: An IEP Case manager, General Education Teacher, or other team member in collaboration with South County Vision and Orientation and Mobility Specialists will contact the SBUSD Program Facilitator to initiate the referral.

Step 2: The Program Facilitator will provide the vision services pre-referral form to the referring person.

Step 3: The Program Facilitator submits completed paperwork to the Vision Program including the vision report from the eye doctor if available.

Step 4: Vision Program consults and assigns intake team. Teacher of students with Visual Impairments and O&M Specialist.

Step 5: With a signed assessment plan, the assessment is completed in 60 days.

From assessment results:

- If the student's vision does not adversely affect their education, the student will not qualify for services.

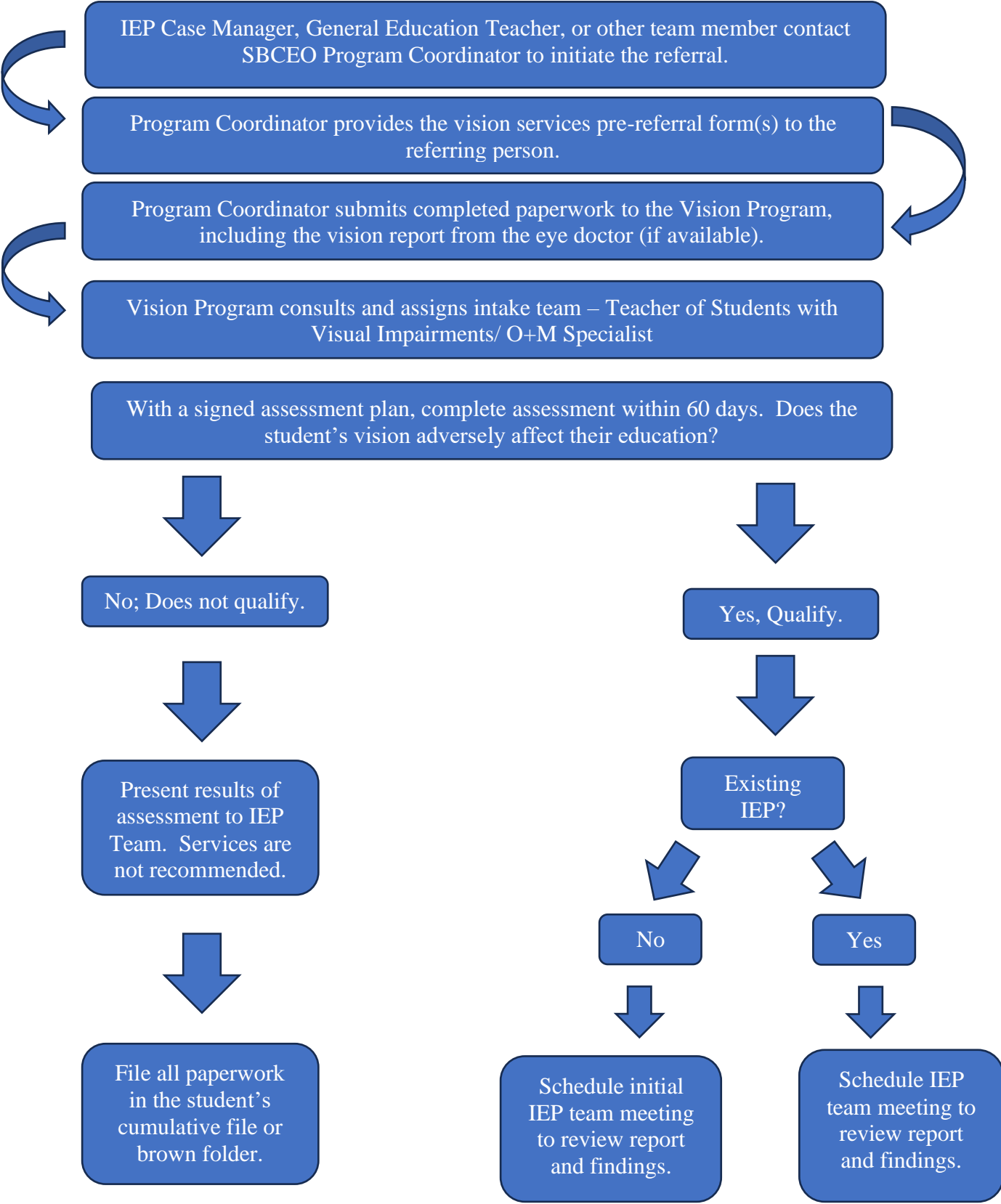
Results of assessment are presented to IEP Team and Services are not recommended. All paperwork is filed into the students cumulative file or brown folder.

- If the student's vision does affect their education, the student will qualify for services.

If the student does not have an existing IEP, an initial IEP Team Meeting will be scheduled to review report and findings.

If the student does have an existing IEP, an IEP Team Meeting will be scheduled to review report and findings.

Santa Barbara County ‘North’ for Vision and Orientation & Mobility Services (Flowchart)



Santa Barbara County ‘North’ for Vision and Orientation & Mobility Services

Referral Process

The Santa Barbara ‘North’ County Vision and Orientation and Mobility offers services to districts.

Santa Barbara ‘North’ County Vision services encompasses the districts of Guadalupe Union School District, Orcutt Union School District, Santa Maria Joint Union High School District, Santa Maria Bonita School District, Lompoc Unified School District, Cuyama Unified School District, the Santa Ynez Valley Special Education Consortium, and ‘North’ Infant Programs, and ‘North’ County Preschool programs.

Step 1: An IEP Case manager, General Education Teacher, or other team member in collaboration with North County Vision and Orientation and Mobility Specialists will contact the SBCEO Program Coordinator to initiate the referral.

Step 2: The Program Coordinator will provide the vision services pre-referral form to the referring person.

Step 3: The Program Coordinator submits completed paperwork to the Vision Program including the vision report from the eye doctor if available.

Step 4: Vision Program consults and assigns intake team. Teacher of students with Visual Impairments and O&M Specialist.

Step 5: With a signed assessment plan, the assessment is completed in 60 days.

From assessment results:

- If the student’s vision does not adversely affect their education, the student will not qualify for services.

Results of assessment are presented to IEP Team and Services are not recommended. All paperwork is filed into the students cumulative file or brown folder.

- If the student’s vision does affect their education, the student will qualify for services.

If the student does not have an existing IEP, an initial IEP Team Meeting will be scheduled to review report and findings.

If the student does have an existing IEP, an IEP Team Meeting will be scheduled to review report and findings.

Supporting Visual Impairments through Age Groups

Infants and Preschool Children

Infants and preschool children who are visually impaired have differentiated educational needs. It is critical, therefore, that services begin as soon as a child is identified as having a visual impairment. Specialized support services need to be provided by staff members who have training and expertise in working with children with visual impairments.

Infants and preschool children who are sighted learn through imitation and modeling. Therefore, young children with visual impairments need opportunities for experiential learning using their other senses, such as associating sounds, shapes, and objects with their purpose—a process that often occurs incidentally with sighted children. Because research studies have shown that the first five years of a child's life are the most important for developing a foundation for learning, special emphasis must be given to the infant and preschool child whose opportunities to gain experience through visual observation are limited or nonexistent.

Elementary School Students

Students in an elementary school program may have the same needs as those described in the Infants and Preschool Children section, particularly if these students have developmental delays or have not received needed instruction and services at the infant or preschool level.

Elementary school students should be provided intensive instruction in the specialized skills required to function independently in the general education classroom. (See 9 ECC categories) Students with visual impairments may receive instruction in a variety of settings.

Secondary School Students

Students in a secondary school program should be encouraged to self-advocate for their educational needs, including obtaining necessary adapted classroom materials, equipment, and technology and selecting and using readers. Secondary students should receive instruction and services focused on skills that will enable the students to function independently as adults, particularly in all 9 areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum.

Secondary school students should, as much as possible, meet the standards for all students, including the requirements of the prescribed course of study and the proficiency standards for graduation. These students should be provided appropriate modifications and accommodations (such as additional time, large print, auditory, digital, or braille) to meet the proficiency standards, alternative standards, or both, as determined by the individualized education team.

Students Who Are Functionally Blind or Have Low Vision

Functionally blind students will have needs related to using their other senses as primary channels for learning. Reading and writing in braille are particularly important. Students should not rely solely on vision when it is not efficient or effective for reading or writing. Students who have low vision will have needs related to using their vision as a primary channel for learning. The low vision and functional vision assessment information will be particularly useful in identifying and meeting these needs. Students with low vision may use their auditory and tactile skills (braille) to access reading and writing materials.

Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments and O&M Specialist may collaborate with other Specialists on the IEP Team such as:

- Adapted Physical Education
- Assistive Technology

When an Assistive Technology/ Augmentative Alternative Communication (AT/AAC) assessment is requested by the IEP Team, the Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments and the O&M Specialist will work collaboratively as a member of the team.

- Behavior Specialist
- Occupational Therapist
- Nurse
- Physical Therapist
- School Psychologist
- Speech and Language Specialist
- And other school specialists as needed.

Role of Teachers for Students with Visual Impairments and Orientation & Mobility

Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments

The teacher of students with visual impairments has the following roles and responsibilities:

- May provide for specialized instruction and services required to meet the unique educational needs of students with visual impairments including all areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum
- Possesses the skills and abilities necessary to provide and coordinate this instruction
- Assists the student, family, special and general education personnel, and sighted peers in:
 - Understanding the unique educational needs and learning characteristics of visually impaired students
 - Becoming aware of services and support available from local, regional, and statewide programs for visually impaired students. Acquiring information regarding local, state, and national resources in the education of students with visual impairments
 - May help explain the student's specific eye condition, the educational implications of the visual impairment, and the results of functional vision assessments to all staff and the student's family

- Confers regularly with the classroom teacher, other general and special education personnel, families, and others to coordinate programs and services for the student with a visual impairment
- Supports the classroom teachers in the identification of instructional areas in which the student requires assistance
- Assists the site administrator and teachers in making environmental adjustments for the student in the school situation and in the improvement of practices and procedures
- Selects and or obtains large print, recorded, or braille textbooks, supplementary materials, educational aids, and equipment needed by the student with a visual impairment and the classroom teacher to ensure the student's maximum participation in all classroom activities (Appropriate educational materials may be obtained from educational, clerical, or transcriber services; or they may be prepared or adapted by the teacher of students with visual impairments)
- Provides specialized instruction to the student with a visual impairment, school personnel, and families in the use of necessary educational aids and equipment including the use of mainstream and assistive technology, and low vision devices. Provides instruction to the student with a visual impairment in the development and maintenance of skills related to the visual impairment designed to meet students' unique educational needs in the following areas, as indicated in the IFSP, IEP, or the ITP:
 - Concept development and academic skills in coordination with the classroom teacher and other staff
 - Sensory/motor skills in coordination with the physical education instructor, occupational and physical therapist, and the orientation and mobility specialist
- Communication skills in coordination with the general education teacher and the language, speech, and hearing specialist. These skills may include:
 - Teaching reading and writing in braille, use of the slate and stylus, and use of the abacus to complete mathematical calculations
 - Developing skills in the use of appropriate assistive technology including screen readers, scanners, braille displays, magnification software, and use of Smart Phone and tablets
 - Developing skills in teaching organization of materials and personal belongings
- Career/vocational education skills in coordination with career/vocational education staff and rehabilitation counselors
- Social/emotional skills and abilities in coordination with the counselors, psychologists, and classroom teachers

- Independent living skills in coordination with the orientation and mobility specialist, classroom teacher, and family
- Collaborates with physical education and adaptive physical education teachers to provide meaningful sports and recreational programs for students in school and in the community.
- Provides information and creates instruction to maximize a student's use of vision in the classroom and in the community using low vision devices, video magnification devices, and assistive technology
- Provides information to classroom teachers, paraeducators, and other specialists on the best ways to maximize visual functioning for students with visual impairments and additional disabilities with respect to positioning, classroom organization, presentation of materials, and environmental modifications (e.g., lighting, visual clutter)
- Provides assistance to the classroom teacher in academic subjects and activities of the classroom that, as a direct result of the visual impairment, require adaptation or reinforcement
- Provide information to the classroom teacher about the physical organization of the classroom to maximize the student's efficient use of vision and independence within the classroom environment
- May provide assistance for other assessments
- May conduct the functional low vision assessment in coordination with the orientation and mobility specialist
- Shares responsibility for initial and ongoing assessments, program planning, and scheduling with parents; the student, when appropriate; the classroom teacher; principal; counselor; and other school personnel
- Schedules adequate time for assessment, instruction, planning, preparation of materials, travel, and conferences with relevant school and other key individuals (Scheduling should be flexible to meet the varying needs of each student.)
- Maintains ongoing contact with families to assist them in the development of a realistic understanding of the child's abilities, progress, and future goals.
- Provides in-service training programs for school personnel, students, and community groups and education for parents regarding the needs, adaptations, programs, and services for visually impaired students
- Provides on-going training and support to paraeducators who provide services to students with visual impairments including students with visual impairments and additional disabilities

Orientation and Mobility Specialist

The orientation and mobility specialist has the following roles and responsibilities:

- Instructs students with visual impairments in the development of skills and knowledge that enable them to travel independently, to the highest degree possible, in accord with the students' assessed needs and the students' IFSP/IEP/ITP
- Teaches students to travel with proficiency, safety, and confidence in familiar and unfamiliar environments
- Provides consultation and support services to families, general and special education teachers, other school personnel, and sighted peers human guide and appropriate travel techniques
- Confers regularly with families, classroom teachers, physical education teachers, and/or other special education personnel to assist in home and classroom environmental modifications, adaptations, and considerations and to ensure reinforcement of appropriate orientation and mobility skills that will encourage the student with a visual impairment to travel independently in these settings
- Works with the teacher of students with visual impairments to conduct the functional vision assessment as it relates to independent travel
- Develop and implement comprehensive O&M assessment that includes:
 - Spatial concepts
 - Awareness of body parts
 - Directionality
 - Use of human guide
 - Protective techniques for dropped objects and movement through space
 - Knowledge of cardinal directions
 - Use of the long cane (e.g., constant contact, two-point touch)
 - Knowledge of campus locations
 - Knowledge of organization of neighborhoods, including street address systems
 - Knowledge of various intersections
 - Use of public transportation systems including bus, paratransit, rideshare services, and trains
 - Ability to travel safely in neighborhoods

- Ability to travel in small business areas
- Ability to travel in busy and complex shopping areas
- Has a time management system
- Keeps a schedule
- Makes purchases in the community
- Is responsible for teaching safe techniques to use across different environments while fostering maximum independence. Provides orientation and mobility instruction, where appropriate, in the following areas:
 - Body image and movement
 - Laterality
 - Directionality
 - Environmental concepts
 - Gross and fine motor skills related to independent travel
 - Sensory awareness, stimulation, and training
 - Spatial concepts
 - Compass direction concepts
 - Human guide procedures
 - Basic protective and information gathering technique
 - Orientation skills
 - Map skill
 - Cane skills
 - Use of residual vision for travel
 - Low vision devices related to travel skills
 - Residential travel
 - Travel in business districts and shopping areas
 - Procedures for crossing streets, including traffic control signal
 - Procedures for use of electronic devices for information gathering and for emergencies
 - Time management systems and keeping track of a schedule

- Evaluates students' progress on an ongoing basis
- Keeps progress notes on each student
- Participates in necessary parents' conferences and meetings
- Provides in-service training to general and special education personnel, sighted peers, and family members concerning the orientation and mobility needs of the student with a visual impairment and appropriate methods and procedures for interacting with the individual who is visually impaired that will foster maximum independence and safety.

Glossary

Accommodation: The adjustment of the eye to focus on different distances, accomplished by changing the shape of the crystalline lens through action of the ciliary muscle.

Adapted Physical Education: A diversified program of developmental activities, physical fitness, games, sports, and rhythms suited to the needs, interests, capacities, and limitations of students who may not safely or successfully engage in unrestricted participation in the vigorous activities of the general physical education program.

Assistive Technology: Any item, piece of equipment, or system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities.

Binocular Vision: The ability to use the two eyes simultaneously to focus on the same object and to fuse the two images into a single perception.

Blindness: The inability to see. An absence or severe reduction of vision.

Blind Spot: A “blank” area in the visual field, corresponding to the position of the optic nerve (a physiological blind spot). May also be an area of absent or reduced sensitivity anywhere in the visual field.

Braille: A system of raised dots that follows print to enable some functionally blind students to read by touch.

Color deficiency: Partial or complete inability to discriminate the ordinarily differentiated hues.

Daily Living Skills: Skills that enable student with a visual impairment to live independently. This content area is also known as independent living skills.

Distance vision: The ability to see objects clearly from a distance.

Expanded Core Curriculum: A disability specific curriculum that includes nine content areas of instruction for students with visual impairments.

Functional Vision: The presence of enough usable vision, giving the student the ability to use sight as a primary channel for learning. This term also means the total act of seeing and how the student uses sight to function educationally.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP): A written plan for a special education student that is developed and implemented in accordance with the IEP Team and that is designed to meet the assessed needs of the student.

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP): A plan developed to meet the requirements to Part H of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Individualized Transition Plan (ITP): A plan created when a student turns 16 to organize transition services and transition language in the IEP as required by IDEA.

Large print or type: Print which is larger than type commonly found in magazines, newspapers, and books. Originally print is 6 to 11 points in height (about 1/16 to 1/8 of an inch). Large type is 14 to 18 points (3/16 to 1/4 of an inch) or larger.

LEA: Local Education Agency or district.

Legally Blind: Central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye after best correction with conventional spectacle lenses; or visual acuity better than 20/200 if there is a field defect in which the widest diameter of the visual field is no greater than 20 degrees.

Low Vision: A student whose vision can be used as a primary channel for learning sometimes referred to as partial sight.

Mobility: A term used to denote the ability to navigate from one's present fixed position to one's desired position in another part of the environment.

Near Vision: The ability to see objects distinctly at the required reading distance.

Orientation: The process of using the remaining senses in establishing one's position and relationship to all other significant objects in the environment.

SELPA: Special Education Local Plan Area.

Sensory/Motor: Relating to or functioning in either sensory or motor aspects or both bodily activities.

Vision: The art or faculty of seeing.

Visual Acuity: The measurement of sharpness of vision in respect to the ability to discriminate detail. A visual acuity measurement is not useful for determining a career choice, classroom situation, or training program. Visual acuity should not be used to predict one's visual function or educational performance.

Visual Processing: How one uses or processes the images acquired by the act of seeing.

FORMS TO BE USED

SELPA? Vision Services Pre-Referral Form

All forms are in the SIRAS Systems.org 'Added Forms' section of SIRAS under Vision Category.

References

Adapted from Guidelines for Programs with Visual Impairments: <https://www.csbcde.ca.gov/resources/standards/documents/viguilines-2014edition.pdf>

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