

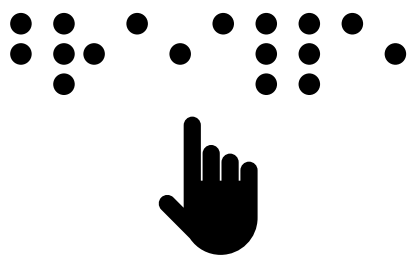
HAPPY NEW YEAR

Office of Special Education

Newsletter

2023

World Braille Day



JANUARY 4, 2023

Disability Highlight: *Visual Impairment*

Adapted from Center for Parent Information & Resources

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines “*visual impairment including blindness as an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child’s educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.*”

Vision impairments are very common for individuals at all ages including children. There are many different causes of visual impairment and thus, the degree of impairment a child may experience can range from mild to severe.

The degree of impairment will depend on the following criterion:

- *The particular eye condition a child has;*
- *What aspect of the visual system is affected; and*
- *How much correction is possible through glasses, contact lenses, medicine and/or surgery*

Sensory learning is an effective method for students with visual impairments to acquire information. Touch through hands as well as the other senses of smell, touch, taste and hearing are information-gathering tools for students with visual impairments. Examples of how to support students with visual impairments:

- *“Mmmm. Do you smell dinner?” appeals to the student’s sense of smell.*
- *“Listen to that bird singing outside” calls to the student’s hearing.*

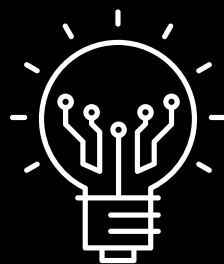
IEP FOCUS

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

- Assistive technology is defined as *"any item, piece of equipment, or product system whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities"*
- As a result of the broad definition, the potential range of assistive technologies is large. Thus, "high tech" and "low tech" devices are included under this category
- Assistive technology can be listed as a related service or as program modifications/accommodations on a student's IEP

Examples of Low Tech

- PENCIL GRIPS
- RAISED LINED PAPER
- WEIGHTED PENCILS
- TACTILE LETTERS
- VISUAL SCHEDULES
- GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS



Examples of High Tech

- SPEECH RECOGNITION SOFTWARE
- TEXT-TO-SPEECH (TTS)
- TOUCH SCREEN DEVICES (TABLETS)
- AAC DEVICE

Celebrating

Elementary Special Education

Our elementary special education teaching staff is composed of 39 educators. They provide services to approximately 267 students across our five elementary buildings as well as our nonpublic schools in grades Kindergarten through sixth. They provide the continuum of services, ranging from our co-teaching classrooms to our more specialized educational programs. They spend countless hours collaborating with colleagues and support staff in order to meet the holistic needs of each individual student. Their hard work and dedication to their students is commendable!

Thank You



Elementary

SPECIAL EDUCATION

STAFF 2022-2023

Elizabeth Casselman	Bredley Beardsley	Joscelyn Walczyk
Renee Cardinale	Erika Bragg	Colleen Welch-
Andrea Chiaramonte	Mary Bushallow	Walawender
Erin Colella	Kelly Engle	Elizabeth Lader
Stephanie Festa	John Fiermonte	Stefanie Coleman
Jessica Monahan	Sarah Portipilo	Amanda Coursey
Angela Carnicelli	Lisa Sobus	Haley Geis
Ettie Barry	Crystal Ross-Metarko	Sean Gerritse
Nicole Iversen	Tracy Barbuto	Joseph DeCarlo
Julia Henrey	Jamie Corey	Harmony Pidlypchak
Seth Molloy	Laura Daniels	Sara Perrigo
Bret Wrixon	Sherry Genkos	Melissa Nicolini
Colleen Shay	MaryBeth Weaver	Irene White-Varga
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