

Role of Instructional Team Members

The instructional team working with your child may consist of several staff members offering individualized services in specific areas. Below is a list of possible team members and a description of the role each person plays on the team. You might find it helpful to identify members specific to your child so the general education teacher knows who will serve your child and the different capacities with which he/she will do so.

Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI): The role of the TVI is to assess, provide instruction to students with visual impairments in the areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC), and collaborate with the instructional team. See attached “Services Provided by the TVI” and the “ECC Flyer”.

Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS): The role of the COMS is to assess, provide instruction to students with visual impairments, and collaborate with the instructional team. The focus of instruction is in the use of their senses for the purpose of orienting oneself in an environment and in the safe movement from one place to another. See attached “Services Provided by the COMS.”

Occupational Therapist (OT): The role of the OT is to support students in gaining access to the general education curriculum and to their learning environments. Students who qualify for OT services have undergone an evaluation identifying deficits in the areas of fine motor, visual motor, self-regulation and sensory responses, and/or self-help skills. Services are often provided in the student’s learning environment and during naturally occurring routines to ensure meaningful practice opportunities for the student, but in some cases, individual or group sessions may be necessary. The OT may consult with general education teachers about how the classroom environment can be modified to improve student attention and the ability to complete tasks successfully.

Physical Therapist (PT): The role of the PT is to prepare students for further education, employment, and independent living by addressing assessed needs in the areas of motor development and the student’s participation in everyday routines and activities which are part of the educational program. The PT performs therapeutic interventions focusing on functional mobility and safe, efficient access and participation in activities and routines in the natural learning environment, but in some cases, individual or group sessions may be necessary. The PT may also collaborate with the student and team to make appropriate recommendations or modifications regarding equipment, such as leg braces, walkers, or wheelchairs.

Paraprofessional: The paraprofessional, sometimes referred to as a Teacher’s Assistant (TA) or Educational Assistant (EA) may be assigned to work with a student through the day in a variety of educational settings. Under the direction of certified teachers and related service providers, the paraprofessional supports implementation of

goals and objectives outlined in the student's IEP. The paraprofessional must take great care to provide adequate services while encouraging peer relationships within the classroom.

Speech & Language Pathologist (SLP): The role of the SLP is to work with school children who have communication problems that affect their participation in classroom activities, social interaction, literacy, or learning. Communication disorders can involve the areas of language, articulation, voice, or fluency (i.e. stuttering). SLPs can also work with students who have difficulty with swallowing. Students who qualify may receive services in individual or group therapy sessions, or by having the SLP act as a consultant in the classroom. Teachers or parents with concerns about a student's communication development can meet with the SLP and request a screening.

Resource Specialist: The role of the Resource Specialist is to provide services, instruction and support as needed for students who are identified through the IEP process. Services may be provided in the classroom or outside of the classroom in a group setting or one-on-one situation. The Resource Specialist may also provide support, consultation and informational materials to parents and educational staff, such as the classroom teacher, to support the assessed educational needs of the student.

Services Provided by Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI)

Assessment (includes reports and IEP paperwork)

- Functional Vision Assessment
- Learning Media Assessment
- Assessment in all areas of the expanded core curriculum (ECC)
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Direct instruction with students

- Individual
- Group
- Co-teach

Collaboration (indirect instruction)

- Observe student in variety of settings
- Diagnostic teaching
- Support to school staff and families
- Collect data/evaluate

Share information (consult)

- Implication of vision loss on assessment
- Implications of vision loss for education
- Implications of vision loss on family/community life
- With eye medical professionals, especially low vision clinics

TVI is responsible for coordinating and procuring the low vision tools for the classroom

Manage materials

- Create/modify
- Obtain
- Maintain

Case management/service coordination

Attend meetings

- IEP / ARD meetings
- Transdisciplinary team
- Other district VI staff meetings (collaboration, transition and professional development)

Supervise VI paraprofessionals

Provide professional development on the topic of visual impairments in schools and classes

Services Provided by Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS)

Assessment (includes reports and IEP paperwork)

- Orientation and Mobility Assessment
- Assessment in the expanded core curriculum (ECC)

Direct instruction with students

- Individual
- Group
- Co-teach

Collaboration (indirect instruction)

- Observe student in variety of settings
- Diagnostic teaching
- Support to school staff and families
- Collect data/evaluate

Share information (consult)

- With educational team and family concerning implications of vision loss on orientation and mobility in home, school, and community
- With educational team and family concerning implications of vision loss for accommodations to student travel strategies
- With eye medical professionals, especially low vision clinics

Manage materials

- Create/modify
- Obtain
- Maintain

Attend meetings

- IEP/ARD meetings
- Transdisciplinary team
- Other district O&M staff meetings (collaboration, transition and professional development)
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Provide professional development on the topic of orientation and mobility in schools and classes