

# Standards for the Teachers of Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired [28.210]

## *STANDARD 1 - Foundations*

**The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands the philosophical, historical and legal foundations of special education and is able to incorporate this knowledge within the context of the educational system. [28.210(a)]**

**Knowledge** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands:*

- 1A. federal entitlements (e.g., American Printing House for the Blind Quote Funds) that relate to the provision of specialized equipment and materials for learners with visual impairments.
- 1B. historical foundations for education of children with visual impairments, including the array of service options.
- 1C. current educational definitions, identification criteria, labeling issues, and current incidence and prevalence figures for students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- 1D. **Performance** - The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired articulates the pros and cons of current issues and trends in special education for students who are visually impaired.

## *STANDARD 2 - Characteristics of Learners*

**The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands the impact that disabilities have on the cognitive, physical, emotional, social, and communication development of an individual and creates opportunities that support the intellectual, social, and personal development of all students. [28.210(b)]**

**Knowledge** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands:*

- 2A. the normal development of the human visual system.
- 2B. basic terminology related to the structure and function of the human visual system.
- 2C. basic terminology related to diseases and disorders of the human visual system.
- 2D. the development of secondary senses (hearing, touch, taste, and smell) when the primary sense is impaired.
- 2E. the effects of a visual impairment on early development (motor system, cognition, social/emotional interactions, self-help, and language).
- 2F. the effects of a visual impairment on social behaviors and independence.
- 2G. the effects of a visual impairment on language and communication.
- 2H. the effects of a visual impairment on the individual's family and the reciprocal impact on the individual's self-esteem.
- 2I. the psychosocial aspects of a visual impairment.
- 2J. the effects of medication on the visual system.
- 2K. the impact of additional exceptionalities on students with visual impairments.

- 2L. **Performance** - The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired develops individual programs based on general development and academic, social, career and functional characteristics of students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.

### *STANDARD 3 - Assessment, Diagnosis, and Evaluation*

**The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands the educational assessment process and utilizes various assessment strategies to support the continuous development of all students. [28.210(c)]**

**Knowledge** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands:*

- 3A. the impact of visual disorders and additional disabilities on learning and experience.
- 3B. specialized terminology used in assessing students with visual impairments, both as it relates to the visual system and in areas of importance.
- 3C. the ethical considerations and legal provisions, regulations, and guidelines (federal, state, and local) related to assessment of students with visual impairments (including the legal versus functional definitions of blindness and low vision).
- 3D. specialized policies regarding referral and placement procedures for students with visual impairments.
- 3E. procedures used for screening, pre-referral, referral, and classifications including vision screening methods, functional vision evaluation, and learning media assessment of students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- 3F. alternative assessment techniques for students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- 3G. appropriate interpretation and application and other evaluative information of scores obtained as a result of assessing students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- 3H. relationships among assessments, IEP development, and placement as they affect vision-related services.

**Performance** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired:*

- 3I. interprets eye reports and other vision-related diagnostic information.
- 3J. uses disability-specific assessment instruments appropriately.
- 3K. adapts and uses a variety of assessment procedures appropriately when evaluating students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- 3L. creates and maintains disability-related records for students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- 3M. gathers background information about academic, medical, and family history as it relates to the student's visual status for students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- 3N. uses assessment data to develop individualized instructional strategies to enhance instruction, including modifications of the environment, adaptations of materials, and disability-specific methodologies for students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.

## *STANDARD 4 - Instructional Content and Practice*

**The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners. The teacher understands instructional planning and designs instruction based on knowledge of the discipline, students, community, and curriculum goals. [28.210(d)]**

**Knowledge** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands:*

- 4A. grade 2 Braille and Nemeth code.
- 4B. Braille codes and resources for foreign language and music.
- 4C. methods to develop modified communication skills for students with visual impairments, including:
  - i) low-vision modifications for print reading and writing,
  - ii) listening skills and compensatory auditory skills,
  - iii) written communication skills including handwriting,
  - iv) use of a broad range of assistive technology for individuals with visual impairments, and
  - v) awareness of augmentative communication used by students with multiple disabilities.
- 4D. methods to develop visual efficiency, including:
  - i) use of visual skills,
  - ii) use of optical and other adaptive devices,
  - iii) modification of the environment, and
  - iv) functional application of these skills.
- 4E. methods for developing modified academic skills, including:
  - i) use of an abacus,
  - ii) use of a talking calculator,
  - iii) interpretation of tactile graphics (including maps, charts, tables, etc.), and
  - iv) use of adapted science and math equipment.
- 4F. methods to develop alternative reasoning and decision-making skills in students with visual impairments.
- 4G. methods for developing alternative organization and study skills for students with visual impairments.
- 4H. methods for preparing students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities, for structured pre-cane orientation and mobility assessment and instruction.
- 4I. methods for developing tactual perceptual skills for students who are or will be primarily tactual learners.
- 4J. methods for teaching human sexuality to students with visual impairments, using tactual models that are anatomically accurate.
- 4K. methods for developing adapted physical and recreation skills for students with visual impairments.
- 4L. methods for developing social and daily living skills that are normally learned or reinforced by visual means.
- 4M. preschool-specific concepts and methods of teaching those concepts to young children with visual impairments.
- 4N. strategies for developing career awareness in and providing vocational counseling for students with visual impairments.
- 4O. strategies for promoting self-advocacy in students with visual impairments.
- 4P. functional life skills instruction relevant to independent, community, and personal living and employment for individuals with visual impairments, including:
  - i) methods for accessing printed public information,
  - ii) methods for accessing public transportation,
  - iii) methods for accessing community resources, and
  - iv) methods for acquiring practical skills (e.g., keeping personal records,
  - v) time management, personal banking, emergency procedures).

- 4Q. sources of specialized materials for students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- 4R. techniques for modifying instructional methods and materials for students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities, and assisting classroom teachers in implementing these modifications.

**Performance** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired:*

- 4S. interprets and uses unique assessment data, including learning media assessment, for instructional planning with students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- 4T. develops individualized instructional strategies to enhance instruction, including modifications of the environment, adaptations of materials, and disability-specific methodologies for students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities.
- 4U. chooses and uses appropriate technologies to accomplish instructional objectives for students with visual impairments and integrates the technologies appropriately into the instructional process.
- 4V. sequences, implements, and evaluates individual disability-related learning objectives for students with visual impairments.
- 4W. uses strategies for facilitating the maintenance and generalization of disability-related skills across learning environments for students with visual impairments.
- 4X. teaches students with visual impairments to use thinking, problem-solving, and other cognitive strategies to meet individual learning and vision needs.

## **STANDARD 5 - Planning and Managing the Teaching and Learning Environment**

**The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation. [28.210(e)]**

**Knowledge** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands:*

- 5A. a variety of input and output enhancements to computer technology that address the specific access needs of students with visual impairments in a variety of environments.
- 5B. model programs, including career-vocational and transition, that have been effective for students with visual impairments.

**Performance** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired:*

- 5C. prepares modified special materials (e.g., in Braille, enlarged, outlined, and highlighted) for students with visual impairments.
- 5D. obtains and organizes special materials to implement instructional goals for students with visual impairments.
- 5E. designs learning environments that are multi-sensory and encourage active participation by students with visual impairments in a variety of group and individual learning activities.
- 5F. creates a learning environment that encourages self-advocacy and independence for students with visual impairments.
- 5G. formats, transcribes, proofreads, and interlines materials in Grade 2 Braille and Nemeth code.
- 5H. uses the Braille writer, slate and stylus, and computer technology to produce Braille materials.

## *STANDARD 6 - Managing Student Behavior and Social Interaction Skills*

**The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands that attitudes and behaviors can affect student behavior and prepares students to deal with a variety of attitudes and behaviors in social situations. [28.210(f)]**

6A. **Knowledge** - The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands that teachers' attitudes and behaviors affect the behaviors of students with visual impairments.

**Performance** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired:*

- 6B. prepares students with progressive eye conditions to achieve a positive transition to alternative skills.
- 6C. prepares students with visual impairments to access information and services from the community at large.
- 6D. prepares students with visual impairments to respond to societal attitudes and actions with positive behavior, self-advocacy, and a sense of humor.

## *STANDARD 7 - Communication and Collaborative Partnerships*

**The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired uses knowledge of effective written, verbal, nonverbal, and visual communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction among professionals, parents, paraprofessionals, and students. [28.210(g)]**

**Knowledge** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired knows*

- 7A. strategies for assisting parents and other professionals in planning appropriate transitions for students with visual impairments.
- 7B. sources of unique services, networks, and organizations for students with visual impairments.
- 7C. the roles of paraprofessionals who work directly with students with visual impairments (e.g., sighted readers, transcribers, aides) or who provide special materials to them.
- 7D. the need for role models who have visual impairments and are successful.

**Performance** - *The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired:*

- 7E. helps parents and other professionals understand the impact of a visual impairment on learning and experience.
- 7F. reports disability-related results of evaluations to students with visual impairments, their parents, administrators, and other professionals in clear, concise, and understandable terms.
- 7G. manages and directs the activities of paraprofessionals or peer tutors who work with students with visual impairments.
- 7H. uses communication styles that are appropriate for students with visual impairments.

## *STANDARD 8 - Professionalism and Ethical Practices*

**The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands teaching as a profession, maintains standards of professional conduct and provides leadership to improve student learning and well-being. [28.210(h)]**

- 8A. **Knowledge** - The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired understands consumer and professional organizations, publications, and journals relevant to the field of visual impairment.
- 8B. **Performance** - The competent teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired participates in the activities of professional organizations relevant to the education of students who are blind or visually impaired.