

MARIN COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION VISUALLY IMPAIRED PROGRAM

TEACHERS

The Marin County Office of Education's Visually Impaired Department is staffed by Educational Specialists with credentials in visual impairments / orientation and mobility.

DESCRIPTION OF A VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

To be eligible for special education a pupil must have a visual impairment, which, even with correction, adversely affects a pupil's educational performance. The term visually impaired includes for educational purposes:

- Functionally blind students who because of the severity of their visual impairment rely basically on senses other than vision as their major channels for learning
- Low vision students who use vision as a major channel for learning

A visual impairment does not include visual perceptual or visual motor dysfunction resulting solely from a learning disability.

REFERRAL/ELIGIBILITY

In order to process a referral, the referral packet should be accompanied with a current report (within one year) from an examination by an ophthalmologist or optometrist. The eye report should include:

- Near and distant acuity, with and without best possible correction
- Field of vision, including peripheral field
- The etiology and prognosis of the visual impairment
- The eye specialist's recommendations

SERVICES

VI/O&M services may include:

- Adaptations in curriculum, media and the environment as well as instruction in special skills
- Consultative services to pupils, parents, teachers and other school personnel

UNIQUE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

The following areas may be addressed when related specifically to the student's visual impairment.

- Concept development and academic needs
- Communication needs
- Social/emotional needs
- Sensory/motor needs
- Orientation and mobility needs
- Career/vocational needs
- Daily living skills needs

CHECKLIST FOR A REFERRAL TO THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED PROGRAM

To make a referral, please submit the following **required** documents to Laura Trahan, Program Manager at MCOE.

The **District operating the program** in which the student is participating **initiates** the referral packet. The referral packet should include:

- Completed "Referral for Special Education Services" form indicating that this is an "additional assessment" and specify "VI/O&M".
- Signed "Release and Exchange of Information" for the MCOE Department for the Visually Impaired and the eye specialist (please indicate under "Other")
- Current IEP with goals and objectives if student is enrolled in a special education program
- Current eye report (exam completed within the past year) from a licensed eye specialist, either an ophthalmologist or optometrist

Please Note

This request must be signed by an administrator/the special education administrator for the district operating the program in which the student is participating. If the student's district of residence is different, then an administrator from the residence district must also sign the request.

If you have any questions, please contact Laura Trahan at 499-5858 or by fax at 491-6621.