



Indiana Content Standards for Educators

EXCEPTIONAL NEEDS—BLIND/LOW VISION

Teachers of students with visual impairments are expected to have a broad and comprehensive understanding of the knowledge and skills needed for this educator license, and to use that knowledge to help students prepare for the challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century. This requires the ability to identify, comprehend, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the basic principles, fundamental concepts, and essential content defined in these standards, and to apply that knowledge to the tasks of planning and delivering effective instruction and assessment.

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Exceptional Needs–Blind/Low Vision Educator Standards

Standard 1: Foundations of the Field of Visual Impairment

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of the historical, philosophical, ethical, and legal foundations of the field of visual impairment and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to effectively meet the needs of students with visual impairments.

Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and needs of students with visual impairments as well as factors affecting the learning and development of students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to effectively meet the needs of students with visual impairments.

Standard 3: Assessment

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of various types of formal and informal assessments and assessment procedures used in the field of visual impairment and demonstrate the ability to select, adapt, modify, administer, and interpret the results of assessments used with students with visual impairments.

Standard 4: Individualized Program Planning and Implementation

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of procedures for developing, implementing, monitoring, and amending individualized programs and demonstrate the ability to follow these procedures in planning and implementing individualized programs for students with visual impairments.

Standard 5: Learning Environments

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of a variety of learning environments for students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to plan, manage, and modify learning environments for students with visual impairments.

Standard 6: Instructional Planning and Delivery in the General Curriculum

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of effective, research-based instructional practices for students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to apply such practices to promote students' academic achievement.

Standard 7: Instructional Planning and Delivery in the Expanded Core Curriculum

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of strategies for fostering students' skills in the expanded core curriculum and demonstrate the ability to apply such strategies to help students with visual impairments achieve their individualized goals related to the expanded core curriculum.

Standard 8: Transitions

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of strategies for promoting successful life transitions for students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to help students with visual impairments make successful transitions.

Standard 9: Professional Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of their professional roles and responsibilities and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge by acting professionally and responsibly with regard to the education of students with visual impairments.

Exceptional Needs–Blind/Low Vision Educator Standards

Standard 1: Foundations of the Field of Visual Impairment

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of the historical, philosophical, ethical, and legal foundations of the field of visual impairment and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to effectively meet the needs of students with visual impairments, including:

- 1.1** historical and philosophical foundations of the education of students with visual impairments, including classic research studies, major contributors to the field of visual impairment, and traditional roles of specialized and public schools around the world
- 1.2** knowledge of current issues and trends related to knowledge and practice in the field of visual impairment
- 1.3** the ability to apply ethical guidelines related to the education of students with visual impairments
- 1.4** the ability to apply knowledge of state and federal rules, laws, regulations, and policies related to the field of special education and their application to the field of visual impairment, including Indiana's Article 7, Rules 32–47
- 1.5** the ability to apply knowledge of the rights, roles, and responsibilities of all stakeholders and organizations regarding the education of students with visual impairments, including access rights to specialized equipment for students with visual impairments
- 1.6** the ability to apply knowledge of educational and legal definitions, identification criteria, and current incidence and prevalence figures for individuals with visual impairments
- 1.7** the ability to apply knowledge of the impact of beliefs, traditions, and values that vary across cultures and that can affect relationships between schools and families of children with visual impairments
- 1.8** the ability to articulate a professional philosophy that draws on specialized knowledge of visual impairment and addresses students' needs within the continuum of instructional options

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Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and needs of students with visual impairments as well as factors affecting the learning and development of students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to effectively meet the needs of students with visual impairments, including:

- 2.1** the ability to recognize typical and atypical human growth and development, including the cognitive, physical, sensory, linguistic, and social-emotional domains
- 2.2** similarities and differences among students with and without disabilities, educational implications of various disabilities, effects of disabilities on multiple aspects of an individual's life (e.g., education, career, vocation, social relationships, recreation, adult life roles), and strategies for working closely with professionals with expertise in other disability areas
- 2.3** the ability to apply knowledge of family systems and the roles families play in supporting learning and development
- 2.4** knowledge of the influence of cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic factors on the development, learning, and identification of students with visual impairments; and knowledge of how these factors can influence the overrepresentation of individuals from diverse groups in disability categories
- 2.5** the ability to use basic terminology related to the function of the human visual system and diseases and disorders of the human visual system
- 2.6** the ability to apply knowledge of the types, degrees, and etiologies of visual impairments and their causes, characteristics, and implications
- 2.7** the ability to apply knowledge of the structures and processes of the human visual system, characteristics of and sequences in the normal development of vision and visual perception, and the development of secondary senses when vision is impaired
- 2.8** the ability to recognize the effects of visual impairments on development in the cognitive, physical, sensory, linguistic, and social-emotional domains
- 2.9** the ability to recognize the effects of visual impairments on learning, experience, and receptive and expressive literacy and communication
- 2.10** the ability to apply knowledge of the effects of common medications (e.g., stimulant, antidepressant, antiepileptic) on the visual system and visual functioning, and the impact of additional exceptionalities on the development and learning of students with visual impairments, including students who are deaf-blind

Exceptional Needs–Blind/Low Vision Educator Standards

Standard 3: Assessment

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of various types of formal and informal assessments and assessment procedures used in the field of visual impairment and demonstrate the ability to select, adapt, modify, administer, and interpret the results of assessments used with students with visual impairments, including:

- 3.1** basic terminology used in assessment and specialized terminology used in the assessment of students with visual impairments
- 3.2** measurement theory and the implications of measurement theory for selecting, administering, and scoring assessments and interpreting assessment results
- 3.3** the characteristics, uses, and limitations of various formal and informal assessments, including functional evaluations related to the expanded core curriculum
- 3.4** the ability to apply the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) in regard to the assessment of students with visual impairments
- 3.5** the ability to select, adapt, and modify assessments to accommodate the unique abilities and needs of students with visual impairments, including students who are nonverbal, students for whom English is a new language, and students who are from culturally diverse backgrounds
- 3.6** the ability to perform functional vision assessments and functional literacy assessments
- 3.7** the ability to apply knowledge of screening, prereferral, referral, and identification procedures
- 3.8** the ability to apply knowledge of strategies and procedures for administering assessments, including strategies for using technology, strategies for establishing rapport with students, strategies for collaborating with families and other stakeholders in the assessment process, procedures for providing accommodations in the testing area, and procedures to avoid bias during the assessment process
- 3.9** the ability to select, adapt, and use assessment information when tests have not been validated on students with visual impairments and to participate in the standardization process for local and state assessments
- 3.10** the ability to interpret information from various formal and informal assessments, including vision-related assessments, curriculum-based assessments, and background information and family history related to a student's visual status
- 3.11** the ability to evaluate instruction, monitor progress, and make instructional changes to support student learning
- 3.12** the ability to interpret, report, and communicate assessment results to all stakeholders using paper-based and digital formats

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Standard 4: Individualized Program Planning and Implementation

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of procedures for developing, implementing, monitoring, and amending individualized programs and demonstrate the ability to follow these procedures in planning and implementing individualized programs for students with visual impairments, including:

- 4.1** the ability to use assessment information to make eligibility, program, and placement decisions for students with visual impairments, including students with additional disabilities and students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- 4.2** the ability to apply knowledge of the continuum of placement and services for students with visual impairments, the types of supports needed to facilitate students' inclusion in various settings, and advantages and disadvantages of various placement options and programs for students with visual impairments
- 4.3** components of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
- 4.4** the ability to apply knowledge of the relationships between assessment, the development of an IEP, and placement as they affect vision-related services
- 4.5** roles and responsibilities of multidisciplinary team members and Case Conference Committee (CCC) members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and amending individualized programs, including IEPs, transition plans, technology plans, sensory stimulation programs, and individualized health-care plans
- 4.6** the ability to involve students with visual impairments and their families in developing individualized programs, setting instructional goals, and monitoring progress
- 4.7** the ability to apply strategies for incorporating and implementing instructional and assistive technology into IEPs to facilitate student learning, including strategies for addressing how to provide accessible instructional materials at the CCC meeting and procedures for using the statewide Indiana Center for Accessible Materials (ICAM) system to register students and order accessible materials per students' IEPs
- 4.8** the ability to apply strategies for prioritizing areas of the general education curriculum for students with visual impairments and for sequencing, implementing, and evaluating learning objectives based on the expanded core curriculum for students with visual impairments

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Standard 5: Learning Environments

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of a variety of learning environments for students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to plan, manage, and modify learning environments for students with visual impairments, including:

- 5.1** recognition of how teacher attitudes and behaviors can affect students with and without visual impairments and the ability to apply strategies for developing and maintaining rapport with all students
- 5.2** the ability to apply strategies for creating a safe, positive, equitable, and supportive classroom climate that fosters respect for diversity and positive interactions among all students
- 5.3** the ability to apply the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) in regard to planning learning environments to support the inclusion of students with visual impairments
- 5.4** the ability to apply strategies for planning, managing, and modifying the teaching and learning environment within the classroom and/or the itinerant model, including strategies for using technology, strategies for designing and managing consistent classroom routines, and strategies for using instructional time effectively
- 5.5** the ability to design multisensory learning environments to encourage students' active participation, meaningful engagement, and independence in individual and group activities in school and community-based settings, and the ability to provide students with visual impairments with opportunities for incidental learning
- 5.6** the ability to organize the classroom environment to include specialized materials, equipment, and technology
- 5.7** recognition of barriers to accessibility and to the acceptance of students with visual impairments and the ability to apply strategies for adapting the physical environment to meet individual needs and provide optimal learning opportunities
- 5.8** the ability to use and maintain educational and assistive technologies used specifically with students with visual impairments to facilitate student learning
- 5.9** the ability to use performance data and information from all stakeholders to make or suggest modifications to learning environments
- 5.10** the ability to apply strategies for modifying the learning environment to manage behaviors, to apply knowledge of the principle of using the least intrusive behavior-management strategy consistent with the needs of students with disabilities, and to apply strategies and procedures for crisis prevention and intervention
- 5.11** the ability to use universal precautions in maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment

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Standard 6: Instructional Planning and Delivery in the General Curriculum

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of effective, research-based instructional practices for students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to apply such practices to promote students' academic achievement, including:

- 6.1** national, state, and local curricula standards and the scope and sequence of the general curriculum
- 6.2** the ability to prepare lesson plans, prepare and organize materials to implement daily lesson plans, provide instructional accommodations and modifications, and make responsive adjustments to instruction based on ongoing observation
- 6.3** the ability to apply the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) in regard to instructional planning and delivery for students with visual impairments
- 6.4** the ability to apply strategies for developing and selecting instructional content, resources, technologies, and strategies that respond to students' age, visual impairment, and visual prognosis; primary learning media; cultural, linguistic, and gender differences; learning strengths; and academic and social abilities, attitudes, interests, and values
- 6.5** sources of specialized materials, including accessible instructional materials; curricula; technologies; and other resources for students with visual impairments, including the American Printing House for the Blind, Bookshare.org, Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D), the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS), the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC), the Indiana Center for Accessible Materials (ICAM), and other state and national resources
- 6.6** the ability to select, adapt, and apply instructional strategies and materials according to the characteristics of students with visual impairments, including students with additional exceptionalities
- 6.7** the ability to apply strategies for teaching literacy skills to students with visual impairments, including students with additional exceptionalities
- 6.8** the ability to read and write literary Braille and Nemeth Braille Code for mathematics and an awareness of specialized Braille codes
- 6.9** the ability to select and adapt materials in Braille, accessible print, and other formats for students with visual impairments and the ability to teach the use of the Braille writer, slate and stylus, and computer technology to produce Braille materials
- 6.10** the ability to teach the use of the abacus, talking calculator, tactile graphics, and adapted science equipment; and the ability to adapt pictorial content into tactual form using nationally recognized best practices
- 6.11** the ability to apply strategies for teaching students with visual impairments to use self-assessment, problem-solving, and other cognitive strategies to meet their own needs, and the ability to apply strategies for teaching organization and study skills
- 6.12** the ability to apply strategies for teaching new concepts and for facilitating students' maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments

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Standard 7: Instructional Planning and Delivery in the Expanded Core Curriculum

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of strategies for fostering students' skills in the expanded core curriculum and demonstrate the ability to apply such strategies to help students with visual impairments achieve their individualized goals related to the expanded core curriculum, including:

- 7.1** the ability to sequence, implement, and evaluate learning objectives based on the expanded core curriculum for students with visual impairments, and the ability to integrate affective, social, and life skills with academic curricula
- 7.2** the ability to use technology and adaptations specific to visual impairments to teach compensatory or functional academic skills, including communication modes
- 7.3** the ability to prepare students for sighted guide and pre-cane orientation and mobility instruction
- 7.4** the ability to apply strategies for teaching social interaction skills, including strategies for using, responding to, and understanding the implications of nonverbal communication
- 7.5** the ability to apply strategies and techniques for teaching daily living and functional life skills, including strategies for integrating individualized health-care plans into daily programming
- 7.6** the ability to apply strategies for teaching adapted physical, recreational, and leisure skills
- 7.7** the ability to apply strategies for teaching career and vocational skills and providing vocational counseling
- 7.8** the ability to teach the use of assistive technology, including print adaptations, optical devices, nonoptical devices, and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) systems
- 7.9** the ability to apply strategies for teaching visual efficiency skills, tactual perceptual skills, and listening and compensatory auditory skills
- 7.10** the ability to apply strategies for increasing students' self-awareness, self-management, self-control, self-reliance, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-advocacy skills

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Standard 8: Transitions

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of strategies for promoting successful life transitions and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to help students with visual impairments make successful transitions, including:

- 8.1** the ability to apply strategies for preparing students with visual impairments to live harmoniously and productively in a culturally diverse world
- 8.2** the ability to select, administer, and interpret transition assessments
- 8.3** the ability to apply knowledge of resources, strategies, and techniques for promoting successful life transitions for students with visual impairments before and throughout the school years and into postsecondary and adult settings
- 8.4** familiarity with model career, vocational, and transition programs for students with visual impairments
- 8.5** the ability to apply strategies for preparing students to attend institutions of higher education or other postsecondary programs
- 8.6** familiarity with services, networks, publications, and organizations for individuals with visual impairments
- 8.7** the ability to apply strategies for assisting families and other transition team members in transition planning that will support successful postsecondary outcomes
- 8.8** recognition of the importance of providing students with visual impairments with opportunities to interact with role models who have visual impairments
- 8.9** the ability to apply strategies for preparing students with progressive eye conditions to achieve a positive transition to alternative skills

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Standard 9: Professional Roles and Responsibilities

Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of their professional roles and responsibilities and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge by acting professionally and responsibly with regard to the education of students with visual impairments, including:

- 9.1** the ability to communicate and collaborate with students with visual impairments and their families to help students achieve desired learning outcomes, including students from diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds
- 9.2** the ability to communicate, collaborate, and consult with general education teachers, other school staff members, representatives of community agencies, and other stakeholders to provide learning opportunities for students with visual impairments
- 9.3** the ability to communicate with families of students with visual impairments, general education teachers, related services providers, and other staff members about the problems caused by eye conditions and strategies for addressing these problems across settings
- 9.4** the ability to provide consultative support to promote students' literacy and communication skills within the general curriculum and the expanded core curriculum
- 9.5** the ability to apply strategies for selecting, planning, and coordinating the activities of related services providers for students with visual impairments and to integrate related services into the instructional program without disrupting the educational process in the general education classroom setting
- 9.6** the ability to supervise and work with paraeducators, volunteers, and tutors
- 9.7** engagement in professional development activities and professional organizations relevant to teaching students with visual impairments; the ability to advocate for educational policy related to the field of visual impairment; and knowledge of professional resources, organizations, and publications for enhancing one's professional skills and for engaging in lifelong professional development
- 9.8** the ability to apply knowledge of how to practice within the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Code of Ethics, federal and state laws, and other standards of the profession, including legal and ethical guidelines for using digital information and technologies
- 9.9** the ability to apply strategies for engaging in reflection and self-assessment activities to address one's own strengths and weaknesses, to become aware of one's own cultural biases and differences and dispositions toward students with visual impairments and their families, to improve instruction, and to determine personal goals for professional growth
- 9.10** the ability to advocate for students with visual impairments and their families and encourage students with visual impairments and their families to become active participants on the educational team
- 9.11** the ability to apply strategies for using digital tools and resources to collaborate and communicate with others effectively and for teaching students with visual impairments to use technology to achieve desired learning outcomes

Selected Bibliography of Standards and Sources Related to Exceptional Needs—Blind/Low Vision

State and National Standards and Curriculum Frameworks

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9. Sacks, S. Z., & Wolffe, K. E. (Eds.). (2006). *Teaching social skills to students with visual impairments: From theory to practice*. New York: AFB Press.
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Alignment of Educator Standards with State and National Standards

Indiana Educator Standards for Exceptional Needs–Blind/Low Vision	CEC Standards: Initial Special Education Teachers of Individuals with Exceptional Learning Needs Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired	ISTE National Educational Technology Standards
<p><u>Standard 1: Foundations of the Field of Visual Impairment</u></p> <p>Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of the historical, philosophical, ethical, and legal foundations of the field of visual impairment and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to effectively meet the needs of students with visual impairments.</p>	CEC 1, CEC 8	
<p><u>Standard 2: Development and Characteristics of Students with Visual Impairments</u></p> <p>Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and needs of students with visual impairments as well as factors affecting the learning and development of students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to effectively meet the needs of students with visual impairments.</p>	CEC 1, CEC 2, CEC 3, CEC 4, CEC 6	
<p><u>Standard 3: Assessment</u></p> <p>Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of various types of formal and informal assessments and assessment procedures used in the field of visual impairment and demonstrate the ability to select, adapt, modify, administer, and interpret the results of assessments used with students with visual impairments.</p>	CEC 7, CEC 8, CEC 10	2d, 3a–3d
<p><u>Standard 4: Individualized Program Planning and Implementation</u></p> <p>Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of procedures for developing, implementing, monitoring, and amending individualized programs and demonstrate the ability to follow these procedures in planning and implementing individualized programs for students with visual impairments.</p>	CEC 1, CEC 5, CEC 7, CEC 8, CEC 10	2a, 2c

Alignment of Educator Standards with State and National Standards

Indiana Educator Standards for Exceptional Needs–Blind/Low Vision	CEC Standards: Initial Special Education Teachers of Individuals with Exceptional Learning Needs Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired	ISTE National Educational Technology Standards
<p><u>Standard 5: Learning Environments</u></p> <p>Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of a variety of learning environments for students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to plan, manage, and modify learning environments for students with visual impairments.</p>	CEC 4, CEC 5, CEC 7	2a–2d, 3a–3b
<p><u>Standard 6: Instructional Planning and Delivery in the General Curriculum</u></p> <p>Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of effective, research-based instructional practices for students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to apply such practices to promote students' academic achievement.</p>	CEC 3, CEC 4, CEC 7	1a–1d, 2a–2d, 3a–3d
<p><u>Standard 7: Instructional Planning and Delivery in the Expanded Core Curriculum</u></p> <p>Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of strategies for fostering students' skills in the expanded core curriculum and demonstrate the ability to apply such strategies to help students with visual impairments achieve their individualized goals related to the expanded core curriculum.</p>	CEC 4, CEC 5, CEC 6, CEC 7	2a–2d, 3a–3b, 4b
<p><u>Standard 8: Transitions</u></p> <p>Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of strategies for promoting successful life transitions for students with visual impairments and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge to help students with visual impairments make successful transitions.</p>	CEC 4, CEC 5, CEC 10	

Alignment of Educator Standards with State and National Standards

Indiana Educator Standards for Exceptional Needs–Blind/Low Vision	CEC Standards: Initial Special Education Teachers of Individuals with Exceptional Learning Needs Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired	ISTE National Educational Technology Standards
<p><u>Standard 9: Professional Roles and Responsibilities</u></p> <p>Teachers of students with visual impairments have a broad and comprehensive understanding of their professional roles and responsibilities and demonstrate the ability to apply this knowledge by acting professionally and responsibly with regard to the education of students with visual impairments.</p>	<p>CEC 1, CEC 2, CEC 3, CEC 5, CEC 6, CEC 7, CEC 9, CEC 10</p>	<p>3a–3d, 4a–4d, 5a–5d</p>