

6A-6.03014 Exceptional Student Education Eligibility for Students Who Are Visually Impaired.

(1) Definition. Students who are visually impaired include the following:

(a) A student who is blind, has no vision, or has little potential for using vision;

(b) A student who has low vision;

(c) A student who has a visual impairment after best correction that adversely affects the student's educational performance; and,

(d) A student who has been diagnosed with a progressive condition that will most likely result in a visual impairment or no vision after best correction.

(2) Activities Prior to Referral. Prior to referral for evaluation, the requirements in Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C., must be met.

(3) Procedures for student evaluation.

(a) The minimum procedures necessary for determining eligibility shall include:

1. A medical eye examination describing: etiology, diagnosis, treatment regimen, prognosis, near/distance, corrected/uncorrected acuity measures for left eye, right eye and both eyes, measure of field of vision, and recommendations for lighting levels, physical activity, aids, prescribed low-vision aids, or use of glasses or contact lenses, as appropriate. For students who are otherwise unable to be assessed, a medical assessment describing visual functioning shall be documented when standard visual acuities and measure of field of vision are unattainable; and,

2. A comprehensive assessment of skills known to be impacted by visual impairment, which shall include, but is not limited to:

a. A functional vision evaluation that includes an assessment of skills known to be impacted by vision impairment that are aligned with the special skills referenced in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., and include assistive technology, compensatory skills, career education, recreation and leisure, sensory efficiency, self-determination, social skills, and independent-living skills,

b. A learning media assessment; and,

c. An orientation and mobility screening.

(b) Reevaluation shall occur at least every three (3) years and shall include a minimum of a medical eye examination within the last calendar year; a comprehensive assessment of skills known to be impacted by visual impairment as required for determining initial eligibility; and, if appropriate, any other formal evaluations addressed in the initial evaluation in accordance with Rule 6A-6.0331, F.A.C. The medical aspect of a reevaluation for students with bilateral anophthalmia may be waived by a written recommendation of a physician.

(4) Criteria for eligibility. A student is eligible for special education and related services if the following medical and educational criteria are met:

(a) Medical. A licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist has documented an eye condition that causes an impairment as manifested by at least one of the following:

1. A visual acuity of 20/70 or less in the better eye after best possible correction,

2. A peripheral field so constricted that it affects the student's ability to function in an educational setting,

3. A diagnosis of visual impairment after best correction, or

4. A progressive loss of vision that may affect the student's ability to function in an educational setting.

(b) The student needs special education as defined in Rules 6A-6.0331 and 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.

(5) Supportive services.

(a) The district shall make available the professional services needed to support the program. This shall include registration of all students who are visually impaired for services from the Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired.

(b) Other support services may include, but are not limited to:

1. Provision of specialized textbooks, learning materials, assessment materials, and equipment; and,

2. Cooperative planning with the Division of Blind Services, including parent involvement activities.

Rulemaking Authority 1001.02, 1001.42(4)(l), 1003.01(3)(a), (b), 1003.57 FS. Law Implemented 1001.02, 1003.57, 1011.62(1)(c) FS. History—New 7-1-77, Amended 7-13-83, Formerly 6A-6.3014, Amended 2-12-91, 3-1-08, 8-23-17.