



# Related Services, Assistive Technology and Visual Impairments

Addressing the unique educational needs of  
students



# Welcome & Overview

**Welcome!**

**Purpose:** Brief overview of available related services, assistive technology, visual impairments



# Expected Outcomes

- Understand what related services, assistive technology and visual impairment services are for students with an IEP
- Receive description of related services, assistive technology and visual impairment services
- Understand the process used to identify the need for related services, assistive technology, and visual impairment services
- Identify sources of data use to determine if a student is in need of these services



# What are Related Services?

Related services means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to

- assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education
- access the educational environment

*Adapted from NC Policies Governing Services for Students with Disabilities, Amended March 2018*



# The Process for Related Services

Related services discussions occur within the IEP process

- Teacher, specialist, or parent expresses concern
- IEP team meets to discuss concern
- IEP team may use existing data (e.g. observation, work samples) or request new data/assessments
- IEP team meets to discuss all data gathered
- IEP team determines need



# Physical Therapy (PT)

- School-based PT services are provided to develop and maintain performance levels, within an individual student's physical capabilities, for independent and safe access to educationally related activities.
- School-based PTs use the following data to support IEP team decision making about a need for PT support:
  - Assessment of functional mobility in the school environment
  - Teacher and parent input
  - Data on the need for specially designed instruction provided by a school PT
- School-based PTs:
  - Collaborate with school IEP team to address identified student needs.
  - Assist students in safely accessing the school campus.
  - Develop functional motor skills to increase independence with participation.
  - Provide adaptive equipment and training with staff for safety.



# Speech-Language Therapy



- Services for the habilitation of communication impairments, including form, content, and function of language.
- Speech-Language Pathologists (SLPs) gather the following data to assist IEP teams in determining a need for speech and language services:
  - Standardized assessments, teacher input, and observations across settings
  - Data from classroom performance including academic achievement and functional performance
  - Data on the need for specially designed instruction provided by an SLP
- SLPs address speech sound disorders, language impairments, voice disorders, and/or fluency disorders developing skills needed to access their education.



# Occupational Therapy (OT)

- School-based OT addresses the underlying skills required for independence in educational “occupations” (school-based activities).
- Educational “occupations” include: writing, cutting, circle time, meal time participation, organizing lockers/binders, specials, etc.
- Occupational Therapists gather a variety of data to identify needs.
  - Standardized assessments, teacher input, observations across settings, and review of work samples, student input
  - Data analysis to determine the need for specially designed instruction by a licensed OT





# Occupational Therapy (OT)

- School-based OT addresses the underlying skills required for independence in educational “occupations”, or meaningful school-based activities.
- Educational “occupations” include: writing, cutting, circle time, meal time participation, organizing lockers/binders, specials, etc.
- Occupational Therapists gather a variety of data to identify needs.
  - Standardized assessments, teacher input, observations across settings, and review of work samples, student input
  - Data analysis to determine the need for specially designed instruction by a licensed OT



# Audiology

- Educational audiologists support students with hearing loss to ensure they have access to auditory information in the classroom.
- Determine the need for support through data collection including:
  - audiological testing to determine the type and degree of hearing loss
  - functional listening assessments to help determine the need for assistive listening devices (hearing aids, speakers, DM systems)
  - teacher collected data on daily use of hearing aids/cochlear implants, and DM/Roger system
- Implement classroom accommodations to enhance access to instruction, including training of school staff on use and care of students assistive listening devices.



# Special Transportation

- Includes travel to/from and between schools and specialized equipment (such as adapted buses, lifts, and ramps) to provide special transportation for a child with a disability.
- Special Transportation service includes:
  - The bus stop (getting to and waiting at)
  - The ride (entering vehicle, sitting, riding)
  - Exiting transportation
- Accommodations must match the identified needs and describe the transportation environment or schedule.



Parent Brochure: <https://www.wcpss.net/Page/4309>

# Assistive Technology (AT)

- AT device: Any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of children with disabilities.
- AT service: Any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, and use of an assistive technology device.
- Within Wake County, AT is a special education support service.



# Assistive Technology (AT)

- AT devices are identified in the IDEA 2004 as:  
Any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of children with disabilities.
- As defined in IDEA, AT service is: Any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, and use of an assistive technology device.
- Within Wake County, AT is a special education support service.



# Assistive Technology (AT)



- Several special education departments provide AT devices and services.
- The abilities and needs of the student, educational environments, and specific tasks and activities required of the student are considered when making AT decisions.
- There is a continuum of technology from low to mid to high tech.
- AT specialists support the school staff with implementing recommended supports – devices, services, strategies, accommodations, modifications, etc.





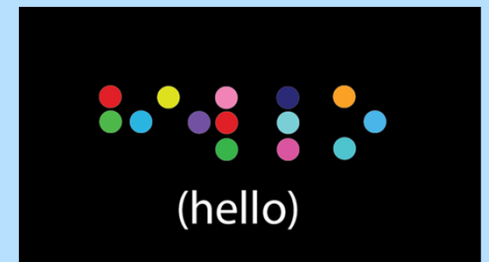
# Visual Impairment (VI)

- VI including blindness means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.
- Teachers of students with VI and Orientation & Mobility instructors conduct assessments, review current eye reports, and data to determine if a student is in need of services to access the educational curriculum
- Teachers of students with VI service provide:
  - Instruction (Braille, low vision aides, expanded core curriculum)
  - Accommodations (e.g. large print)
  - AT (related to vision)
  - Support for other teachers and services providers
  - Recommendations for accommodations/modifications



# Visual Impairment (VI)

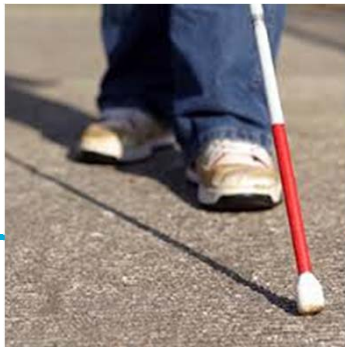
- VI including blindness means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.
- Teachers of students with VI and Orientation & Mobility instructors conduct assessments, review current eye reports, and data to determine if a student is in need of services to access the educational curriculum
- Teachers of students with VI provide:
  - Braille instruction
  - Large print (accommodation)
  - Assistive technology (related to vision loss)
  - Expanded Core Curriculum
  - Support to other teachers and service providers
  - Instruction with low vision devices
  - Recommendations for accommodations and modifications to address the





# Orientation & Mobility (O&M)

- Orientation and Mobility helps students orient and move safely in school, home, and community
- O&M instructors teach students the following, as appropriate:
  - Use of information received by the senses to establish, maintain, or regain orientation and line of travel
  - To use the long cane or a service animal to supplement visual travel skills or as a tool for safely negotiating the environment for students with no available travel vision;
  - To understand and use remaining vision and distance low vision aids; and other concepts, techniques, and tools.



# Orientation & Mobility (O&M)

Orientation and Mobility helps students orient themselves and move safely in school, home, and community.

O&M instructors teach students the following skills that are appropriate:



- Use of information received by the senses (such as sound, temperature and vibrations) to establish, maintain, or regain orientation and line of travel (e.g., using sound at a traffic light to cross the street);
- To use the long cane or a service animal to supplement visual travel skills or as a tool for safely negotiating the environment for students with no available travel vision;
- To understand and use remaining vision and distance low vision aids; and other concepts, techniques, and tools.

# Reflection

Based on the information you have heard, what questions do you have for your child's case manager and/or related service provider?

You can use the handout to help you structure your questions.

Questions I have for the IEP team about my child's related service, AT and/or VI needs...

- How will I know this plan (for \_\_\_\_\_) is working?
- Could you please share the data about \_\_\_\_\_?
- Could you give me more specifics about \_\_\_\_\_?
- How was the progress (in \_\_\_\_\_) you mentioned measured?
- Could you share the research on the effectiveness of that way for addressing \_\_\_\_\_)?
- Could you give a few examples of \_\_\_\_\_?



# Who to Contact

## 1 ADDRESS AT THE CLASSROOM LEVEL



Talk to your child's teacher about your concerns.

## 2 ADDRESS AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL



Talk with the administration at your child's school.

## 3 ADDRESS WITH ASSISTANCE FROM SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES



If you need information about Special Education Services, contact Family & Community Connections at 919-431-7334 or e-mail [faccc@wcpss.net](mailto:faccc@wcpss.net)

