

PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE: VISUALLY IMPAIRED OR BLIND

AVON MAITLAND
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

A Publication of Learning Services

*Glasses alone may not be the answer for a student
who is experiencing vision difficulties.*

Information for Parents/Guardians & School Personnel

Who We Are:

The Vision Resource Department consists of:

- teachers of students who are blind or have low vision

Our Goal:

- to provide service and support for students who have been identified as Low Vision, or Visually Impaired, or Tactual, Auditory Learners (due to inability to use vision), or Developmentally Challenged and Visually Impaired.
- to make it possible for them to function successfully in an inclusive classroom setting with withdrawal for one-on-one instruction as necessary.

Support May Include:

- functional vision assessments
- vision stimulation programs
- various vision related activities such as visual motor and visual discrimination programs
- suggestions for specialized material support and program adaptations
- withdrawal for one-on-one instruction in specialized skills such as braille
- consultation support for teachers, and staff working with identified students.

Who is Eligible for this Program?

A child who:

- is of school age
- is visually impaired, low vision or blind (tactual and auditory learner).

Role of the Teacher of Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

- work with the student in the classroom
- provide individualized programming and one-on-one instruction as required offer consultations and support to classroom teachers, support staff and parents
- supervise brailers and educational assistants involved with the student
- help to order braille/large print texts and tapes
- conduct functional vision assessments

- provide suggestions for visual accommodations for low vision students
- the itinerant teacher works closely with classroom teachers and therefore depends on classroom teachers to provide information regarding the themes, concepts, goals and expectations for students in their classroom, in order to ensure specialized support materials, such as Braille texts, notes, etc are prepared in time for class.
- consults with other professionals in order to coordinate services (ie. Optometrists, Occupational therapists, physical therapists, Orientation and mobility specialists, W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind, C.N.I.B.)
- arranges Orientation and Mobility instruction through the C.N.I.B.

Signs of Possible Vision Problems in Students:

- rubs eyes excessively
- shuts or covers one eye
- tilts head or thrusts head forward
- yawns or avoids close work
- squints, blinks
- has trouble anticipating fast moving objects
- bumps into things
- has difficulty identifying things at a distance

Appearance:

- crossed eyes
- eyes appear to be vibrating
- eyes appear to drift up, down or inwards
- red rimmed, encrusted or swollen eyelids
- inflamed or watery eyes
- unusual appearance of one or both eyes e.g. bigger pupil, “foggy”, “bulging”.

Complaints:

- eyes itch, burn or feel scratchy
- cannot see well
- dizziness, headaches, or nausea following close eye work
- blurred or double vision

If these or other concerns are expressed or demonstrated, parents should have their child’s eyes checked by an optometrist or ophthalmologist.

What Do We Offer?

We provide:

- support to students who are blind, or low vision or developmentally challenged with visual impairment
- support of a teacher of the blind and low vision
- specialized equipment
- strategies and techniques to classroom teachers and support staff
- specialized instruction and support

- liaison with W. Ross Macdonald School for the Blind
- liaison with CNIB
- support to parents

Whom to Contact:

- Principal of your school
- Teacher of the Blind
- Superintendent of Education, Learning Services

Specialized support by teachers experienced in working with students with visual impairment may be required to help ensure that the student is able to achieve success in school.