



Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Outreach Programs

www.tsbvi.edu | 512-454-8631 | 1100 W. 45th St. | Austin, TX 78756

IEP Quality Indicators for Students who are Deafblind

Developed by the Texas Deafblind Project
for Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired
Outreach Programs

Revised 2023

IEP Quality Indicators for Students who are Deafblind

Student's Name:		DOB:	
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Date:		Person Completing Form:	
Date:		Person Completing Form:	
Date:		Person Completing Form:	

IDEA/Federal Definition of Deafblind: Deaf-blindness means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness. [34 CFR 300.8 \(c\) \(2\)](#)

Texas Education Agency Definition of Deafblind: Deaf-blindness. A student with deaf-blindness is one who has been determined to meet the criteria for deaf-blindness as stated in 34 CFR, §300.8(c)(2). In meeting the criteria stated in 34 CFR, §300.8(c)(2), a student with deaf-blindness is one who, based on the evaluations specified in subsection (c)(3) and (12) of this section:

(A) meets the eligibility criteria for a student who is deaf or hard of hearing specified in subsection (c)(3) of this section and visual impairment specified in subsection (c)(12) of this section;

(B) meets the eligibility criteria for a student with a visual impairment and has a suspected hearing loss that cannot be demonstrated conclusively, but a speech/language therapist, a certified speech and language therapist, or a licensed speech language pathologist indicates there is no speech at an age when speech would normally be expected;

(C) has documented hearing and visual losses that, if considered individually, may not meet the requirements for a student who is deaf or hard of hearing or for visual impairment, but the combination of such losses adversely affects the student's educational performance; or

(D) has a documented medical diagnosis of a progressive medical condition that will result in concomitant hearing and visual losses that, without special education intervention, will adversely affect the student's educational performance. [19 TAC §89.1040 \(c\) \(2\)](#)



The term “Individualized Education Program” (IEP) should be understood to include assessments and evaluations, student performance documentation, the entire IEP document (including goals and objectives, minutes, etc.), and other relevant records.

Purpose: This document is designed to help teams develop appropriate IEPs for students who are deafblind. Indicators not present may indicate a training need for the team. The presence of these indicators demonstrates a well-designed IEP in areas related specifically to the impact of dual sensory loss. Other factors indicating a quality IEP *in general* are not covered here.

Instructions: After reading the introduction for each of the ten areas, look in the student’s IEP for the listed quality indicators. If the indicator is present, mark “Y” on this form in the column to the right of the list of indicators. Circle “N” if the indicator is not present. If the item is not applicable for this student, circle N/A, and make a note in the comments section explaining why the indicator is not relevant at this time. The three columns to the right can be used over time to measure progress in IEP development.

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Ten Content Areas:

- Etiology
- Access to Information
- Social Issues
- Communication
- Calendar System
- Behavior
- Orientation and Mobility (O&M)
- Related and Supplemental Services
- Transition Planning
- A Teaming Process Plan



<p style="text-align: center;">IEP Quality Indicators for Students who are Deafblind</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ETIOLOGY</p>	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:
<p>1. Etiology: There are a number of syndromes that result in both a vision and hearing loss. This may have bearing on the best educational approaches to use with the student, or give direction to long-term medical follow-up. For example, a student with Charge Syndrome may be behind in experiential development due to numerous early hospitalizations, and may be at risk for retinal detachment associated with Coloboma.</p>	<p><u>Please Write Your Answer:</u></p> <p>Y = Yes N = No N/A = Not Applicable</p>		
<p>1.1 The student's etiology is indicated in the evaluation and assessment documents.</p>			
<p>1.2 Impact of the etiology on the student's educational needs is addressed during the development of the IEP.</p>			
<p>1.3 The student's etiology has been reported on the annual Deafblind Child Count.</p>			
<p>Comments on Etiology:</p>			





<p style="text-align: center;">IEP Quality Indicators for Students who are Deafblind</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SOCIAL ISSUES</p>	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:
<p>3. Social Issues: A dual sensory impairment impacts the ability to form relationships and respond to interactions with others in typical ways. For example, a lack of environmental information makes it difficult to identify people, locate them, know what they are doing, or understand what they want. Many ordinary interactions may seem threatening, negative, or confusing to the student. In turn, the student’s need to gather information by close viewing and/or touch can offend others. It is not unusual to see withdrawal and problems with bonding. It is important to consider that difficult social interactions for a student who is deafblind are often the result of an on-going lack of essential information. The psychological impact of changes in vision and hearing experienced by a student who is deafblind may need to be addressed in the IEP.</p> <p>3.1 When evaluating social skills, the team considers the effects of dual sensory loss and lack of information before developing intervention strategies to address delays in social skills.</p> <p>3.2 The IEP includes a method to orient the student to new individuals.</p> <p>3.3 The IEP addresses a way to locate and identify people in the environment.</p> <p>3.4 The IEP acknowledges the student’s need to bond and build trust in order to learn and addresses whether there is a need for assigning an intervener to the student.</p> <p>3.5 Strategies are developed to increase the number and quality of serve and return interactions and relationships for the student.</p> <p>3.6 Strategies are developed to improve the ability to initiate meaningful and socially appropriate self-directed activities during free time.</p> <p>3.7 The IEP addresses how a dual sensory loss affects sexuality, including: language related to sexuality and body parts; needs unique to gender; sexual health; and appropriate touch.</p>	<p><u>Please Write Your Answer:</u></p> <p>Y = Yes N = No N/A = Not Applicable</p>		
<p>Comments on Social Issues:</p>			





IEP Quality Indicators for Students who are Deafblind COMMUNICATION	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:
<p>4. Communication – A combined vision and hearing loss can profoundly impact the development of both receptive and expressive communication. A lack of informal and/or formal communication creates a barrier affecting all areas of learning. Many students who are deafblind have difficulty finding and engaging potential communication partners without support from someone (e.g. intervener, interpreter, TDB) who can bridge between the student’s unique communication system. Without this support the student is cut off from accessing both instruction and conversational interactions that are key to learning.</p>	<p><u>Please Write Your Answer:</u></p> <p>Y = Yes N = No N/A = Not Applicable</p>		
4.1. An appropriate communication evaluation has been completed.			
4.2. The IEP incorporates communication evaluation and strategies that appropriately reflect the student’s developmental level in the areas of:			
a. Communicative Forms: (touch cues, object symbols, pictures, gestures, sign, speech, print, Braille etc.);			
b. Social Aspects: functions (request, reject, label, comment, report, etc.) and social interactions(bonding with primary caregivers, initiating interactions, maintaining joint attention, turn taking, etc.);			
c. Vocabulary and pacing: targeted vocabulary reflects the student’s conceptual understanding;			
d. Content: topics (gym, eating lunch, music, etc.), meaning categories (objects, actions, people, places, etc.) and contexts (here and now, the next activity, something occurring			
4.3. Literacy issues are considered, including the following elements:			
a. are alternative static communication forms (objects, tactile symbols, pictures, print, etc.) used for a variety of functions (lists, letters, experience books, etc.)?			
b. can the student spell or fingerspell?			
c. if braille is used or considered, should uncontracted braille be used?			
d. is language complexity right for a student whose primary language is sign, not English?			



Comments on Communication:



<p style="text-align: center;">IEP Quality Indicators for Students who are Deafblind</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CALENDAR SYSTEM</p>	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:
<p>5. Calendar System – Calendars provide contexts in which students who are deafblind can develop meaningful back and forth communication and time concepts. Calendars and calendar discussions also support deafblind individuals emotionally through the security that comes with anticipation of upcoming events, knowledge about changes in routine, and trust in an adult’s commitment to follow through on scheduled activities.</p>	<p><u>Please Write Your Answer:</u></p> <p>Y = Yes N = No N/A = Not Applicable</p>		
<p>5.1 The student has a calendar system that incorporates developmentally appropriate components related to:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">a. Time frame - (anticipation of “next step” in familiar routines, anticipation of next event, daily, weekly, multi-weekly, monthly);</p>			
<p style="padding-left: 40px;">b. Representational Symbols - (objects, parts of objects, drawings of objects, pictures, print, tactile symbols, and braille .);</p>			
<p style="padding-left: 40px;">c. Calendar-Related Concepts and Language - (time, sequencing, choice making, etc.).</p>			
<p>5.2 The calendar is used as a methodology to support goals and objectives in curricular areas such as communication, social/emotional, recreation/leisure and behavior.</p>			
<p>Comments on Calendar System:</p>			



<p style="text-align: center;">IEP Quality Indicators for Students who are Deafblind</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BEHAVIOR</p>	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:
<p>When students who are deafblind engage in distressed behavior, they do so because they do not have a better way to communicate their complex feelings (Schultz and Hurst). These expressions may be results of feeling isolated, having reduced access to information from others and the environment, having limited abilities to anticipate what will happen to them, and ongoing medical related issues. In addition, others may have difficulty recognizing the child's communication and affirming their topics which can lead to feelings of frustration and difficulties trusting and bonding with others. It can also be the result of frustration about being ineffective in communicating about important topics in more socially acceptable ways. The student's difficulty in recognizing, trusting, and bonding with others can have an impact on behavior. Additionally, behaviors may result from the student's need to stimulate or regulate sensory input, or they may be in response to pain associated with medical conditions like glaucoma or ear infections.</p>	<p><u>Please Write Your Answer:</u></p> <p>Y = Yes N = No N/A = Not Applicable</p>		
<p>6.1 Evaluation of behavior includes a functional behavior analysis addressing the sensory needs met by the behaviors in question and/or their communicative intent.</p>			
<p>6.2 The team has evaluated whether discomfort related to medical conditions or features associated with the student's etiology are impacting the behaviors in question.</p>			
<p>6.3 When behavior is a concern, the IEP includes goals for improving the student's ability to communicate ideas and concerns in more socially acceptable ways.</p>			
<p>6.4 When behavior is a concern, the IEP includes strategies for providing the student with more understandable information about activities, surroundings, and expectations.</p>			
<p>Comments on Behavior:</p>			





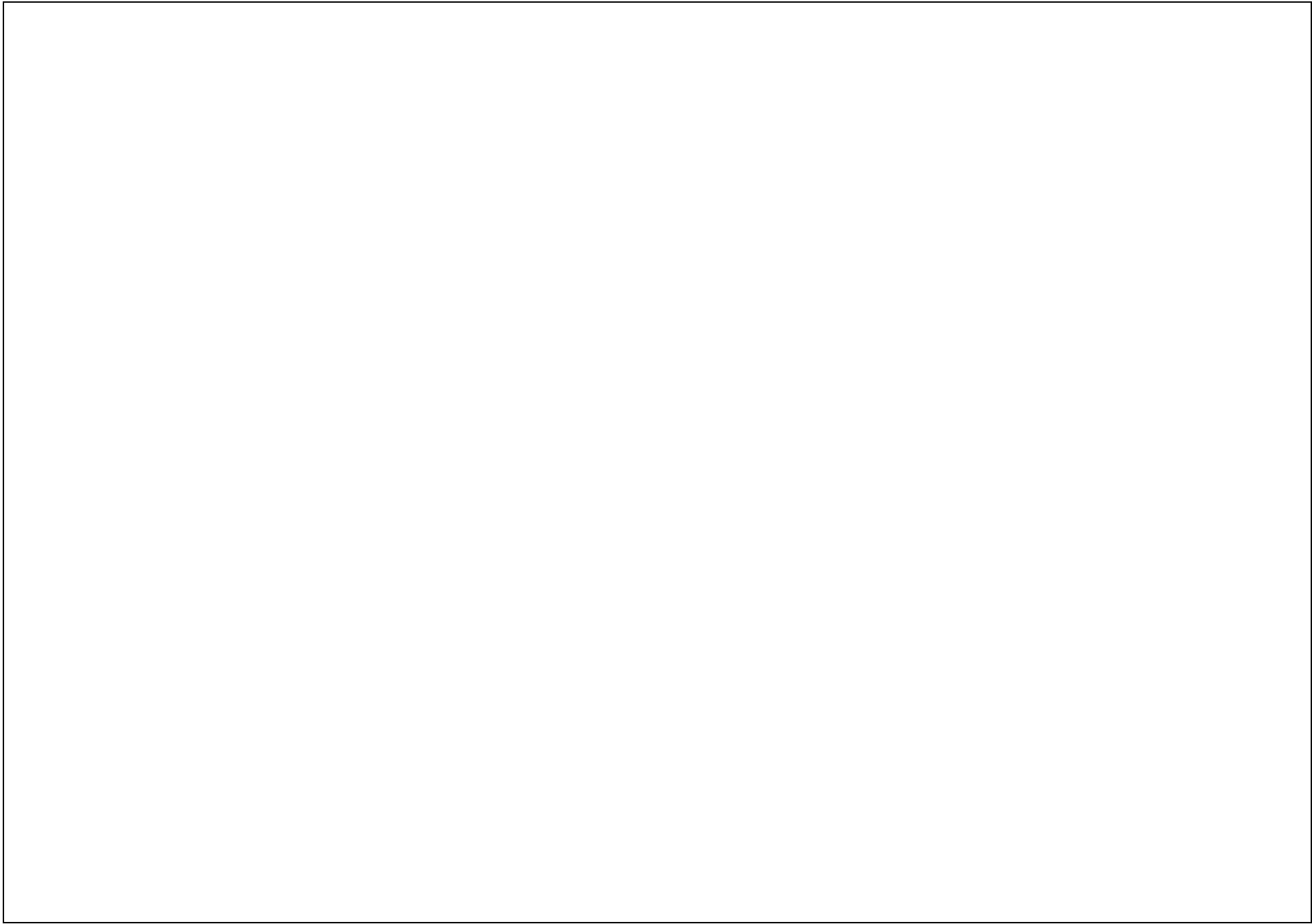
<p style="text-align: center;">IEP Quality Indicators for Students who are Deafblind</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RELATED AND SUPPLEMENTAL SERVICES</p>	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:
<p>8. Related and Supplemental Services – Certain related services and supports are designed for students with sensory impairments, and should be considered for all students who are deafblind. For example, an intervener is a paraprofessional with special skills and training who is designated to work individually with a student who is deafblind. Sign language interpretation and O&M are also examples of specialized services. Additionally, the effects of a dual sensory loss should be considered in assessments, evaluations and delivery of all related services provided to the student. For example, optimal positioning for communication access should be considered by the physical therapist. Counselors may need to address changes in vision and hearing experienced by a student who is deafblind.</p>	<p><u>Please Write Your Answer:</u></p> <p>Y = Yes N = No N/A = Not Applicable</p>		
8.1. The student’s sensory access to instruction has been evaluated, and the need for an interpreter or intervener to effectively meet IEP goals has been considered.			
8.2. There has been an O&M evaluation that addresses the effects of hearing loss in combination with the vision impairment in determining the need for services. (Refer to Section 7 on Orientation and Mobility.)			
8.3. The effects of a dual sensory loss have been assessed in a communication evaluation, and services of a speech/language pathologist have been considered.			
8.4. Assessments, evaluations and delivery of all related and supplemental services take into account the effects of a dual sensory loss.			
8.5. The IEP addresses training for the family and staff on issues related to dual sensory loss.			
<p>Comments on Related and Supplemented Services:</p>			





<p style="text-align: center;">IEP Quality Indicators for Students who are Deafblind</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TRANSITION PLANNING</p>	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:	Date of IEP:
<p>9. Transition Planning – As a student enters the teen years and nears graduation, there are considerations for both educational programming and community services. The need for experientially based vocational assessment and instruction in real-world environments is heightened when sensory issues affect access to environmental information and practical experience. The ability to initiate and sustain meaningful leisure activities is impacted by the capacity to learn through modeling and gather environmental cues. Being an effective self-advocate about communication and access to information is essential for success in higher education, employment, and other community settings. Additionally, referrals to community services designed for people who are deafblind lead to better adult outcomes (e.g. community intervener, support service provider, interpreter, specialized residential & vocational support).</p>	<p><u>Please Write Your Answer:</u></p> <p>Y = Yes N = No N/A = Not Applicable</p>		
<p>9.1. Vocational assessment and instruction are based on the student’s language and conceptual development, and includes sampling a variety of job experiences in work settings.</p>			
<p>9.2. The student’s ability to engage in meaningful, enjoyable, and productive self-directed leisure activities has been assessed, and the IEP includes goals to improve the student’s ability to make choices and participate in activities during unstructured time as needed.</p>			
<p>9.3. The IEP reflects development of self-advocacy skills related to communication style and sensory needs in education, work, and social settings.</p>			
<p>9.4. The IEP includes assessment and instruction related to communication and travel in various community settings and situations.</p>			
<p>9.5. The student has been referred to appropriate services, including the deafblind specialist at Health and Human Services, Texas Workforce Commission, the Deaf-Blind Multiple Disabilities Medicaid Waiver Program, and the Helen Keller National Center.</p>			
<p>Comments on Transition Planning:</p>			







References:

Alsop, L., Robinson, C., Goehl, K., Lace, J., Belote, M., Rodriguez-Gil, G. (2007). Interveners in the Classroom: Guidelines for Teams Working with Students Who are Deafblind. Logan, UT: SKI-HI Institute.

Minnesota Deafblind Technical Assistance Project (2005). Quality Indicators for Students with Deafblindness for IEP Development.



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