

Considerations for student placement at an Education Services for the Deaf and Blind (ESDB) School

The purpose of this document is provide guidance to IEP Teams who are considering an ESDB school as a placement for students with a hearing or vision impairment. This document is for guidance and support purposes only and does not negate the team's responsibility to follow the North Carolina Policies Governing Students with Disabilities and IDEA.

Placement decisions are based on multiple data sources as well as input from the student, parent, teachers and related service providers. Below is a list of potential data sources to use when considering an ESDB school as a placement for a student; however, there may be additional data sources unique to the student not outlined in this document. Teams should always consider any data that provides information on the student's current academic and functional present levels and unique needs.

****Reminder:** Any formal evaluation needed, including observations of the student, requires initiating the re-evaluation process and parental consent**

Potential data sources to consider specific for students with visual impairments:

- Functional vision assessment
- Learning media assessment
- Orientation and Mobility assessment
- Medical evaluation: current eye doctor report, any diagnosis, stable or progressive
- Low vision report
- History of placements and effectiveness
- Use of Braille and effectiveness
- Type and intensity of current services
- Accommodations/modifications use and effectiveness in current placement
- Progress on IEP goals and general education curriculum
- Use and effectiveness of assistive technology devices
- Behavior data
- Data related to need within categories of the Expanded Core Curriculum
- Consideration of other disabilities that may affect the student's ability to be able to generalize skills
- Cognitive abilities
- Observational data

Potential data sources to consider for students with hearing loss:

- Most recent audiological results
- Functional listening assessment
- History of use of various communication modes and their effectiveness
- History of placements and effectiveness
- Communication used in the home
- Use of amplification
- Type of and intensity of current services
- Accommodations/modifications use and effectiveness in current placement
- Progress on IEP goals and general curriculum
- Medical evaluation

- Level of access/mode of communication in the past, current and consistency
- Consideration of other disabilities that may affect the student's ability to be able to generalize skills
- Behavior data
- Use and effectiveness of assistive technology devices
- Cognitive abilities
- Observational data

Questions to consider when reviewing the data and input for teachers, parent and student:

1. Is the student making academic and functional progress?
2. Is the student showing any regression? If so, in what area?
3. What is the student's language delay in comparison to typically developing peers?
4. What is the student's need for accommodations and/or modifications?
5. Describe the accommodations and/or modifications and the effectiveness.
6. Describe how the student interacts with their peers and teachers.
7. What strategies/interventions have been tried and what was the effectiveness?
8. How does the student self-identify with their disability? What are their desires in being a part of a specific community? (deaf culture/hearing culture or blind/sighted culture)
9. Is the student able to keep up with instruction (curriculum) in general education and/or special education classrooms similar to their non-disabled peers?
10. Does the student have behavioral support? If so, what is the type of support and its effectiveness?
11. Does the student have school, community, and/or peer support in current placement? If not, how have these supports been addressed?
12. Does the student require residential placement in order to access the educational program?
 - a. If yes, what are the child's residential needs?

Specific questions for students with visual impairments:

1. Does the student use braille?
2. If not braille, what medium is the student currently using (regular print, large print, regular print with magnification, digital audio, pencil, dictation) and has a learning media assessment been completed?
3. What were the results of the use of sensory channels? (visual, tactile, auditory, combination)
4. What were the results of the basic reading inventory? (reading rate, comprehension)
5. How do basic reading inventory results compare with peers?
6. What AT is the student using to access print and produce work?
7. If the student is not using AT to access print and produce work, has a LMA and AT evaluation been completed?
8. If an AT evaluation was completed, what tools (standard, AT, accommodations) were recommended?
9. Is the student efficient with use of AT? Describe?
10. How does the student navigate his/her environment? Does student require devices to travel in school setting?

Specific questions for students identified as deaf-blind:

1. How does the student communicate (speech, ASL, tactile sign)?
2. Does the student need braille instruction?
3. What additional accommodations does the student need to access classroom instruction (seating, interpreter, note taker, etc)
4. If the student has a significant hearing and visual loss, will the school be able to fully meet the needs of the student (braille, communication, O&M, etc.).

****Specific questions for students with hearing loss are located on the Communication Plan Worksheet****