



Quarterly Newsletter

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Data Collection for Students with Low Vision

Angel Black M.S.Ed., TSVI, COMS, SESA Vision/O&M Specialist

It is difficult to know where you are going if you don't know where you have been. This simple statement sums up the importance of collecting data for all students. Data collection is a vital part of evidence-based educational practice. It forms the basis for evaluating student learning outcomes and the effectiveness of our teaching practices. Regardless of what data collection you use, be sure that when taking data for a student with low vision/blindness, all necessary accommodations are being made, so the student has the best possible opportunity to be successful. Without necessary accommodations, the data collected would be very skewed and possibly invalid. When choosing accommodations, they should be based on the most up-to-date individualized needs:

- Reduce the effect of the disability to access the current curriculum;
- Be specific about where, when, who, and how the accommodations will be provided;
- Include current input from parents, teachers, students, and therapists;
- Be based on current specific needs in each content area.

Changes in the medium used:

- braille
- large print
- audiotape
- electronic text
- oral testing/scribing

Changes made in the way materials are presented

- Copies of overhead projector/smartboard activities to be viewed at his/her desk as needed.
- The teacher or presenter should verbalize all information as it is written on the board or overhead.
- Information presented on the board should be in a high-contrast color.
- Use a slant-board to position papers appropriately for reduced visual strain and to avoid glare.
- The computer screen should be at eye level and tilted to avoid glare.
- Use recorded text as needed.
- Classroom recording of lectures/instruction by the student.
- Large Print textbooks/materials.
- Braille textbooks/materials.
- Clear, dark copies of worksheets.
- Use a reading guide to assist in keeping place while reading and completing worksheets.
- Present materials against a plain background
- Use a good contrast background and present it on a contrasting tray or mat.

Time requirements:

- Time and a half or double time
- Consideration for the student's reading/writing speed
- Consideration for the time needed to use adaptive equipment

- Consideration for eye fatigue and scanning ability

Changes in the way students demonstrate learning

- Modified assignments (when appropriate and needed) to accommodate visual fatigue (extended time and/or shortened amount of assignments).
- Avoid activities requiring extensive visual scanning.
- Avoid visually cluttered materials.
- Allow students to use (a bold marker, 20/20 pen, mechanical pencil, or another unique writing tool) to complete assignments.
- Use of bold line paper.
- Use of raised line paper.
- Abbreviated homework assignment (includes all concepts, just fewer items).
- Shorter written assignment.
- Oral testing.

Changes in Setting:

- Preferential seating in the classroom for all films, assemblies, and demonstration lessons.
- Seated facing away from windows.
- Permission to move about the room as needed to see information presented away from his/her desk.

Changes in the Setting: Environment

- Avoid glare in general from overhead lights. Consider placing light filters on fluorescent lights.
- Open and close doors fully (a half-open door can be a dangerous obstacle).
- Eliminate unnecessary background noise. Consider isolation headphones.
- Eliminate clutter from the room, particularly in aisles and movement paths.
- Place materials in consistent places so that students know where particular items are always located.
- Preferential locker position and locks with keys vs. combination locks.
- Use of task lighting as needed.

The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) is also an essential area to keep data in when working with students with low vision/blindness. Why is the Expanded Core Curriculum so important? The foundational skills children with low vision/blindness need for daily life in school, at home, and in the community must be strategically taught and integrated into all aspects of their education due to the lack of incidental learning. The reason is simple: The payoff for this work lasts a lifetime and will affect every area of a student's life. The nine areas of the ECC include:

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|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Assistive Technology | 5. Orientation and Mobility (O&M) |
| 2. Career Education | 6. Recreation and Leisure |
| 3. Compensatory Skills | 7. Self-Determination |
| 4. Independent Living Skills | 8. Sensory Efficiency |
| | 9. Social Interaction Skills |

Here are two links to ECC assessment tools that will help guide your data collection:

<https://earubric.com/expanded-core-curriculum-needs-screening-tool/>

<https://www.pattan.net/getmedia/10962180-c040-4236-ae7f-1f7f78de5007/ho%2011.%20ecc%20screening%20tool%20for%20school%20aged>

Additional Resources:

[Perkins School for the Blind – Student Assessment Data Collection / Self-Paced Online Course \(payment required\)](#)

[Assessment of Braille Literacy Skills: Unified English Braille \(UEB\) Digital Product Only \(payment required\)](#)