



PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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April 15, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Directors, Exceptional Children Programs
Directors, State Residential Schools
Directors, State Operated Programs
Lead Administrators, Charter Schools

FROM: William J. Hussey, Director
Exceptional Children Division

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "WJH", written over the printed name of William J. Hussey.

SUBJECT: Changes to Assessment Support from Consultants for Vision Impairment

Historically, the Consultants for Vision Impairment and Orientation and Mobility in the Exceptional Children Division have provided support to public school systems through the administration of non-medical assessments such as a Functional Vision Assessment, Learning Media Assessment, vision specific assistive technology evaluations and Orientation and Mobility evaluations. Beginning July 1, 2015, LEAs should plan to have these assessments administered by a Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI) or Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS) in the school system or through a contract with another LEA or agency that employs these professionals, should the IEP Team determine the need for an assessment.

Although each professional's experience providing assessments will vary, such are trained to administer non-medical assessments that address visual or mobility needs for students with visual impairment. A Clinical Low Vision Evaluation is a medical evaluation that a TVI or COMS does not administer; rather, a certified low vision optometrist conducts the evaluation in order to determine the need for optical and non-optical devices for students with low vision. The prescribed devices assist the student in accessing print more efficiently within the educational environment. The EC Division currently provides low vision clinics across the state depending on need. The Division will continue to provide these clinics; however, a stakeholder group is being assembled to address specific concerns brought to our attention by LEAs.

In order to help build capacity to sustain best practices and provide customized support for LEAs, state level Consultants for Vision Impairment and Orientation and Mobility can provide coaching support in the administration of assessments and reporting information to the IEP Team. Professional development opportunities that address assessment will be offered beginning in the 2015-2016 school year. More information will be forthcoming regarding this professional development.

For more information or questions, contact your regional Consultant for Vision Impairment, <http://ec.ncpublicschools.gov/directory/regional-consultants>.

EXCEPTIONAL CHILDREN DIVISION

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