**6A-6.03022** **Exceptional Student Education Eligibility and Assessments for Students Who Have ~~with~~ Dual Sensory Impairments.**

(1) Definitions.

(a) Dual sensory impairment is defined to mean having both deaf or hard of ~~concomitant~~ hearing and visual impairments, or an etiology or a ~~diagnosed~~ medical diagnosis ~~condition~~ that indicates a potential dual sensory loss, the combination of which adversely affects the student’s educational performance ~~impacts communication, independence, compensatory strategies, and other developmental and educational needs~~. The term includes congenital deafblindness, congenital visual impairment with acquired hearing loss, congenital hearing loss with acquired visual impairment, and acquired hearing loss and visual impairment including blindness, as defined in Rules 6A-6.03013(1) and 6A-6.03014(1)(a), Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). If a student is found eligible for both deaf or hard of hearing and visual impairments as primary or other exceptionalities, then the student should be made eligible for dual sensory impairment.

(b) Teacher of the deaf or hard of hearing means an individual who is certified in the area of deaf or hard of hearing in accordance with Rule 6A-4.0172, F.A.C. ~~Functional blindness is defined to mean that the physical structures of the eye may be functioning, but the student does not attend to, examine, or utilize visual information. This may include cortical visual impairment.~~

(c) Teacher of the visually impaired means an individual who is certified in the area of visually impaired in accordance with Rule 6A-4.0178, F.A.C. ~~Functional hearing loss is defined to mean that parts of the auditory system may be functioning but the student does not attend to, respond, localize, or utilize auditory information. This may include cortical hearing impairment or auditory neuropathy or auditory dyssynchrony.~~

(d) An intervener means an individual who provides specialized services and is trained in deafblind education and intervention strategies to ensure consistent access to instruction, communication, and environmental information via one-to-one support for individuals who are deafblind.

(e) An educational interpreter means a highly trained professional who facilitates communication between a student and others by interpreting spoken language into American Sign Language and vice versa, providing communication access by conveying classroom instruction, teacher and peer interactions, and other relevant sound information, such as schoolwide announcements, to ensure the student has equal access to educational opportunities comparable to their hearing peers.

(2) A full and individual evaluation must be conducted by a school district to identify a student with a dual sensory impairment as eligible for exceptional student education and consider the individual needs of a student with a dual sensory impairment when developing, reviewing, or revising an individual educational plan (IEP) in accordance with Rules 6A-1.09401(1)(k), 6A-1.09414, 6A-6.03028, 6A-6.0331 and 6A-6.03411, F.A.C. ~~General education interventions and activities. Prior to referral for evaluation the requirements in subsection 6A-6.0331(1), F.A.C., must be met.~~

(3) Eligibility determination. For a student who has, or who is suspected of having, a combination of a hearing loss and a visual impairment, or a medical diagnosis that indicates a potential dual sensory loss, the evaluation for eligibility must be conducted as described in Rules 6A-6.03013(3) and 6A-6.03014(3), F.A.C., unless one or more of the assessments is waived as provided in paragraph (3)(c). ~~Evaluation. In addition to the procedures identified in subsection 6A-6.0331(5), F.A.C., the minimum evaluation procedures for determining eligibility shall include all of the following:~~

(a) Deaf or hard of hearing evaluation. An evaluation for eligibility must include an audiological report, a functional listening assessment, and a communication and language assessment as described in Rule 6A-6.03013(3)(a)-(c), F.A.C. ~~A medical eye examination by a ophthalmologist or optometrist licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or 463, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is permitted in accordance with paragraph 6A-6.0331(3)(e), F.A.C., describing: etiology, diagnosis, treatment regimen, prognosis, near and distance vision, corrected and uncorrected acuity measures for left eye, right eye, and both eyes, measure of field of vision, and recommendations for lighting levels, physical activity, aids, or use of glasses, as appropriate;~~

(b) Visual impairment evaluation. An ~~audiological~~ evaluation~~;~~ for eligibility must include a medical report, a functional vision assessment, a learning media assessment, and an orientation and mobility screening as described in Rule 6A-6.03014(3)(a)-(d), F.A.C.

(c) Assessment waiver. If one of the assessments described in paragraphs (3)(a) and (b) provides sufficient information to determine a student who has a dual sensory impairment is eligible for exceptional student education, the other assessments will be waived for the purpose of determining eligibility. However, the assessments that were waived must be conducted during the IEP development process. ~~A comprehensive assessment of skills known to be impacted by hearing and vision impairments, to include: functional hearing assessment; an assessment of social development; evaluation of receptive and expressive communication by a speech and language pathologist; functional vision evaluation; learning media assessment; and, if appropriate, orientation and mobility assessment and sign language assessment; and,~~

~~(d) If available, a medical report from a physician licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or 463, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is permitted in accordance with paragraph 6A-6.0331(3)(e), F.A.C., describing the etiology or diagnosis of the student’s medical condition that does, or has the potential to, result in dual sensory loss.~~

(4) Once a ~~Criteria for eligibility. A~~ student with a dual sensory impairment is determined eligible for exceptional student education, the district must conduct the following assessments: ~~when either of the following criteria is met.~~

(a) Any assessment waived for the eligibility determination as provided in paragraph (3)(c); and ~~For students diagnosed with a medical condition having the potential for dual sensory loss:~~

~~1. A medical report from a physician licensed in Florida in accordance with Chapter 458 or 463, F.S., unless a report of medical examination from a physician licensed in another state is permitted in accordance with paragraph 6A-6.0331(3)(e), F.A.C., confirming the existence of such a diagnosis, its prognosis, and the potential for dual sensory loss; and,~~

~~2. The student needs special education as defined in Rule 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.; or~~

(b) A special skills assessment. A special skills assessment evaluates skills aligned with content knowledge as described in Rule 6A-1.09401(1)(k), F.A.C. This assessment must be conducted by a teacher of the deaf or hard of hearing and a teacher of the visually impaired and may include a range of team members to include an intervener, interpreter, and other related services providers to evaluate the special skills areas for both the hearing loss and the visual impairment. ~~For students with vision and hearing impairments:~~

~~1. The student meets criteria listed in subsection 6A-6.03014(4), F.A.C., or has functional blindness;~~

~~2. The student meets criteria listed in subsection 6A-6.03013(4), F.A.C., or has functional hearing loss; and,~~

~~3. The student needs special education as defined in rule 6A-6.03411, F.A.C.~~

(5) Once a student has been determined eligible under both deaf or hard of hearing and visual impairments, the eligibility category must be updated to dual sensory impairment. The student is then required to receive support and services from both the teacher of the deaf or hard of hearing and the teacher of the visually impaired.

(6)~~(5)~~ The school districts are required to include s~~S~~tudents ~~identified~~ with ~~a~~ dual sensory impairments ~~shall be included~~ in the state’s annual census report for the national child count of children and youth. These students must be registered with the American Printing House (APH) for the Blind and the National Deaf Blind Census Registry. Parental consent is required for registration with APH ~~who are both deaf and blind and be registered to receive materials from the Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired~~.

(7)~~(6)~~ Reevaluation. Reevaluation of students with dual sensory impairments must comply with Rule 6A-6.0331(7), F.A.C., and must include: ~~shall occur at least every three (3) years and shall include, a comprehensive assessment of skills known to be impacted by hearing and vision impairments, to include: functional hearing assessment; an assessment of social development; evaluation of receptive and expressive communication by a speech and language pathologist; functional vision evaluation; learning media assessment; and, if appropriate, orientation and mobility assessment and sign language assessment.~~

(a) An audiological report and evaluation of all skills, described in paragraphs (3)(a) and (4)(a) and (b), known to be impacted by the hearing loss and as required for determining specially designed intruction. The audiological report may be wavied by the IEP team, including a teacher of the deaf or hard of hearing or an audiologist, or both, if the team agrees that there is a no suspected change in hearing.

(b) A medical report and an evaluation of all skills, described in paragraphs (3)(b) and (4)(a) and (b), known to be impacted by a visual impairment as required for determining specially designed instruction. The medical report may be waived by the IEP team, including a teacher of the visually impaired, if:

1. The team agrees that there is no suspected change in visual functioning; or

2. The team is provided a physician’s written recommendation to waive the medical report for students with bilateral anopthalmia.

(8) Supportive services. The district must make available referral forms, links, and technical support contacts for services to students with dual sensory impairments and their parents. These resources include:

(a) Auditory-Oral Clarke School and Bridge to Speech Clarke School;

(b) Auditory-Oral University of Miami (UM) Debbie School and Bridge to Speech UM Debbie School;

(c) Critical Initiatives in Visual Impairment Project Florida State University (CIVI-FSU);

(d) Educational Interpreter Project (EIP);

(e) Florida Division of Blind Services (DBS);

(f) Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR);

(g) Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired (FIMC-VI);

(h) Florida Low Vision Initiative (FLVI);

(i) Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB); and

(j) Resource Materials and Technology Center for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing (RMTC-DHH).

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