

Ohio State School for the Blind

Outreach Program and Services

Mission Statement

The mission of Outreach Program & Services is to provide technical assistance, professional development, materials and resources to families and local school districts serving children who are blind and visually impaired including those with multiple disabilities

Educational Assessment Clinic

A multidisciplinary team conducts weekly educational assessments at OSSB for children with visual impairments, ages three through twenty-one. The evaluation is free of charge and will provide assessment information and suggested interventions regarding the student's educational programming. Appointments are made upon receipt of a completed referral packet, which includes consent of the superintendent or designee from the student's school district of residence. Referral applications are processed, and an appointment date is sent to the parent and to the district contact person responsible for the referral.

For more information call: 614-752-1374.

Infant/Preschool Outreach Services

Infant/Preschool Outreach is designed to support families and their early intervention/preschool teams throughout Ohio. Staff, licensed in visual impairments with specialization in the areas of early childhood, deafblindness and multiple disabilities, may provide the following vision related services at no cost to families or programs:

- Information on visual impairments and early development.
- Identification of visual impairment resources and area service providers.
- Functional vision, orientation and mobility and developmental assessments.
- Suggestions for environmental adaptations at home and at preschool.
- Ideas for motivational toys, learning materials and early literacy experiences.
- Staff in-service trainings on visual impairment related topics.

School Age Outreach Services

The School-Age Outreach Program is designed to provide consultation to school districts throughout Ohio for eligible students with vision loss. The team is

comprised of two individuals, both certified as Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI) and Orientation & Mobility Specialists (COMS). As needed, other professionals may be consulted to assist with specific Outreach requests.

Services offered include the following:

- Functional Vision Assessment
- Orientation and Mobility Assessment
- Environmental Analysis
- Learning Media Assessment
- Staff In-Service Training
- Consultation on adaptations, instructional strategies and technology for students with visual impairments

Deafblind Outreach Services

A deafblind consultant will provide assessment and consultation for children, ages zero through twenty-one, who have a combination of a visual and hearing impairment. (Deafblindness is not necessarily completely deaf and blind.) In the educational assessment clinic or through outreach services, the following services may be provided:

- Functional vision, functional hearing, tactual and developmental assessment and implications
- Ideas for social, communication, movement and

- learning strategies
- Suggestions for environmental adaptations and materials
- Staff in-service trainings on topics related to visual impairment in combination with hearing impairment and/or multi-disabilities

Parent Mentor Services

A Parent Mentor is a parent of a child with a disability, who provides support and resources to families of children with disabilities, and the professionals who serve them statewide. All services are provided free of charge.

A Parent Mentor may:

- Act as a liaison between families of children with visual impairments and school personnel
- Connect families to District Parent Mentors, where available, or to Regional Parent Advocates
- Provide information regarding education laws, statewide programs and/or services as well as community resources
- Work in partnership with the OSSB Educational Assessment team

Center for Instructional Supports and Accessible Materials (CISAM)

The Center for Instructional Supports and Accessible

Materials (CISAM) is a statewide project serving students with print disabilities, including students who are blind and visually impaired. CISAM promotes excellence in educational opportunities for students with print disabilities and their families by providing access to and the availability of quality accessible instructional materials (AIM), professional development/ learning opportunities, and technical assistance.

Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM)

- Annual Federal Quota Registration of Blind Students
 - Registered students determine a per capita amount of money designated for the purchase of AIM through the American Printing House for the Blind, Inc.
- Assistance to school districts in locating AIM
- Accessible Materials Production Center (AMPC)
 - Production of AIM – textbooks and other core print instructional materials in alternate formats for eligible students in Ohio (braille, large print, digital, and audio)
 - Scanning and formatting for braille, large print, and digital texts
 - Tactile Graphics production

- National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) implementation
- Professional Development/Learning Opportunities
 - Professional development/learning opportunities for parents, students, and educators
 - Regional workshops
 - Online Internet Modules
- Technical Assistance
 - Braille repair through a CISAM volunteer
 - Incidental Braille Production Centers in school districts
 - Listservs for parents, educators, and requestors of AIM
 - Resource information
 - Technical assistance to school districts

For more information contact:

Dorsey Vandecar
Administrative Professional
614-752-1374
dvandecar@ossb.oh.gov

Jenni Remeis, B.A., TVI
Infant/Preschool Outreach Consultant
614-728-8805

Shannon Cuniak, M.Ed., COMS
School Age Outreach Consultant
614-387-0183
scuniak@ossb.oh.gov

Danene Fast, MA, BSEd, COMS
School Age Outreach Consultant
614-995-0405
dfast@ossb.oh.gov

Bernadette Van Den Tillaart, M.A., TVI, THI
Deafblind Outreach Consultant
614-728-8742
bvandentillaart@ossb.oh.gov

Lauri Kaplan, Parent Mentor
614-728-1567 or 800-310-3317
lkaplan@ossb.oh.gov

Paula Mauro, Project Coordinator
Center for Instructional Supports and Accessible
Materials (CISAM)
614-644-8465
pmauro@cisamoh.org

Ohio State School for the Blind
Cynthia M. Johnson, M.A.
Superintendent
5220 N. High Street

Columbus, Ohio 43214

Phone: 614-752-1374

Fax: 614-752-1504

www.ossb.oh.gov