

# The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) for Students with Visual Impairments

# What is the ECC?

Students with visual impairments need to learn the general core curriculum like all students do. However, due to their visual impairments, those students won't be able to access the general core curriculum the same way as sighted students will.

In order to read about, become familiar with, and learn the general core curriculum, students with visual impairments need to be able to access it. To do so, they need to be provided instruction in specialized techniques and skills. Those techniques and skills are encompassed in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC).

The ECC is a framework developed for students with visual impairments to be able to access and master the general core curriculum expected for all students.

The ECC encompass 9 areas, each one is as important as the others, and are taught by a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI) and an Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS).

# How each area integrates for students' success?

Compensatory Access

Sensory Efficiency

Assistive Technology

Orientation and Mobility

Independent Living

Social Interaction

Recreation and Leisure

Career Education

Self-Determination

# Compensatory Access

This area is critical for students for ensuring access to academic learning and information about the world, to be able to communicate, and to be literate and successful in school.

This area teaches students techniques to access information, write and communicate, use braille, audio or large print.

This area teaches students methods to address others in conversations and comprehend what is said.

This area teaches students how to use adapted and specialized educational materials.

# Sensory Efficiency

This area develops the ability of students to process information and stimuli.

This area is critical for students with visual impairments and multiple disabilities.

This area helps students use their visual, auditory and tactile senses to access information.

This area helps students develop all their senses at their maximum.

## **In Preschool and Elementary School**

This area helps students discriminate between different shapes and textures.

## **In Middle and High School**

This area helps students develop their tactile discrimination.

# Assistive Technology

This area allows students to have access to printed information, and to communicate.

This area increases, maintains, or improves the functional capacities of students.

## **In Preschool and Elementary School**

This area helps students to work toward success in reading material, writing information, completing assignments, and reviewing what has been read or written.

## **In Middle and High School**

This area helps students to maintain academic learning, manage personal information, and participate in communication, using the skills learned in early grades.

# Orientation and Mobility

This area helps students to orient and move as independently and safely as possible in familiar and unfamiliar environments.

## **In Preschool and Elementary School**

This area helps students learn basic body parts and body awareness, practice movement to develop good gross and fine motor skills, use available vision for orientation and movement in school and in the classroom, and practice general safety techniques.

## **In Middle and High School**

This area helps students expand knowledge learned to independently travel in and around the school, practice with cane to travel safely and confidently in familiar and unfamiliar environments.

# Independent Living

This area helps students manage their everyday life, and maintain their living environment.

The skills learn in this area are usually learned through observation and imitation by sighted children.

## **In Preschool and Elementary School**

This area helps students to become more independent, dress, eat, organize their environment in the classroom, understand privacy and personal hygiene.

## **In Middle and High School**

This area helps students organize their environment in the classroom, maintain school notes and materials, maintain personal hygiene, clothing care, eating, cleaning their environment, and time and money management.



# Social Interaction

This area encourages students to participate in social situations, prevent social isolation, and increase the likelihood of academic and employment success.

## **In Preschool and Elementary School**

This area helps students learn appropriate body language, to keep hands for themselves, to face a person who is speaking, and to cooperate and interact with others.

## **In Middle and High School**

This area helps students learn to maintain appropriate eye contact, to face a person who is speaking, to communicate efficiently, to cooperate and and interact with others, and to develop friendships and relationships.

# Recreation and Leisure

This area focuses on the development of interests and skills involved in physical and leisure activities.

## **In Preschool and Elementary School**

This area develops in students their interests for games, sports, and physical activities.

This area develops in students their awareness of the different sports that exist.

This area develops the ability of students to play games and sports with others as a team.

## **In Middle and High School**

This area develops in students their interests in fitness, individual sports, team and spectator sports, leisure activities and hobbies.

This area develops in students their awareness for health and healthy habits.

# Career Education

This area focuses on competences and skills needed to prepare students for all the roles they will play throughout their lives.

Lack of preparation in career education is the major cause of unemployment and underemployment facing adults with visual impairment.

## **In Preschool and Elementary School**

This area develops in students an awareness and understanding of the world around them, and the roles they play in it as students and later as members of the community.

This area helps students differentiate between work and play.

Provide opportunities for students with visual impairments to play different roles in the school and in the classroom, like sighted students.

## **In Middle and High School**

This area helps students to make informed choices about future employment and education.

This area helps students prepare resumes, complete applications, and participate in interviews.

# Self-Determination

This area develops the ability of students to advocate for their own needs and desires, and to make independent choices about personal preferences.

This area develops in students an understanding of their own visual impairment, and the adaptations and environmental modifications needed.

This area develops the ability of students to explain their visual impairment to others.

Encourage students with visual impairments to participate with other classmates in school to enable them to become integrated more effectively.

## **In Preschool and Elementary School**

This area helps students to politely tell others what they want to do, where they want to go, or when they are ready for an activity.

## **In Middle and High School**

This area helps students to develop more advanced methods of negotiation, and determination of their own needs to prepare for becoming independent adults.

This area allows students to be in control of their live.