

Chapter 5 Programs and Services

5.1 A Eligibility for Service - Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired

Policy Statement

Students, ages 0 – 21, eligible for services shall have a diagnosis from a licensed eye specialist within the last 12 months as having at least one of the following:

- Visual acuity of 20/70 or less, at near or distance, in the better eye with best correction or, for difficult-to-test children or youth, an estimated acuity and/or visual behavior which is significantly abnormal from what is developmentally age-appropriate.
- Visual field of 20 degrees or less, or a diagnosis of *hemianopsia* or bilateral scotomas.
- Congenital or degenerative condition.
- Medical diagnosis of Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) made by an ophthalmologist, or neurologist.
- Temporary eye conditions such as post-operative retinal detachment or patching where service for a limited time is required (at the discretion of the Provincial Supervisor).

Students must also demonstrate one of the following functional implications:

- Reduced or variable visual acuity due to eye condition, environmental factors or visual fatigue.
- Limited ability to visually access the full range of program-appropriate media and materials.

Policy Objectives

- (i) To ensure students are placed on the APSEA registry in a manner that is clear and consistently applied.
- (ii) To ensure students who are eligible for APSEA services receive appropriate supports.

Application

This policy applies to all students under the jurisdiction of the Departments of Education of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick (Anglophone) and Prince Edward Island.

Policy Directive

Directors are responsible to ensure that only eligible students are on the APSEA registry.

Accountability, Monitoring and Review

- The Superintendent of APSEA is accountable to the APSEA Board of Directors for compliance with this policy.
- The Superintendent of APSEA or his/her designate will review this policy annually.

Approval Dates

This policy replaces Policy 302 Eligibility for Service from APSEA Centre (Pupils who are Blind or Visually Impaired).

Approved: 19 June 2015

Revised:

Communication/Enquiries

For information about this policy, please contact the Superintendent (902/424-8500, apsea@apsea.ca).