DVI Quarterly

Division on Visual Impairments

Special Issue on Diversity

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The Voice and Vision of Special Education

Council for Exceptional Children
The voice and vision of special education

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Message from the Guest Editor

I am honored to be the guest editor for this *DVIQuarterly* issue on diversity and to collaborate with knowledgeable colleagues in the field who are also interested in this topic. Through our collaboration I believe we have created an issue that will provide essential information about the education of students with visual impairments who are from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CLDB) and their families.

The number of students from CLDB who are educated in America's schools is continually increasing. According to Grassi and Barker (2010), the number of school-aged students who speak a language other than English is projected to grow to 40% by the year 2030. Data from the field of blindness are similar to those of education in general. As we continue to see and work with more students and families from CLDB, our needs as professionals and to provide quality services will also intensify.

This issue begins with an article from Olaya Landa-Vialard about her experiences as a bilingual diagnostician and teacher of the visually impaired (TVI). She discusses the challenges when conducting assessments with students who are visually impaired and also from CLDB. Landa-Vialard also provides a checklist and resources that TVIs could use to better provide services to these students and their families.

In “Emergent Bilinguals with Visual Impairments: Guidelines for Instruction,” Madeline Milian provides an overview of the challenges educators face when trying to meet both the visual and language needs of emergent bilinguals with

visual impairments. In the article, Milian describes the labels used with these students and shares essential elements to guide their instruction.

When addressing the needs of blind and visually impaired students who are also from CLDB, it is critical that, as professionals, we work closely with family members. In our article, "Connecting with Families from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds: Reflecting as Practitioners on Our Own Beliefs and Values," my colleague Kim Zebehazy and I address the importance of including family members in the education of students from CLDB. We discuss the factors that affect family involvement and share a self-reflection questionnaire that teachers or other professionals could use to help them gain insight into a family's values, beliefs, and priorities while trying to avoid stereotypes.

This series of articles concludes with the results of a study conducted by Paula Conroy on the post-high school outcomes of students with visual impairments who are from diverse backgrounds. Conroy interviewed ten CLD students with visual impairments about their high school experiences and the skills gained to be successful young adults. In her article, she discusses the themes that emerged from her interviews and shares recommendations for the field.

The topic of CLD students and families is one that I am very interested in and passionate about. As a second language learner myself, I identify with many of the needs and challenges these students experience in the classroom. I really hope that this DVI-Q issue on diversity provides you with an opportunity to better identify and understand some of the challenges you may encounter when working with students with visual

impairments who are from CLDB and their families. I hope that you find resources you will use when providing services to this population. Happy readings!

Silvia M. Correa-Torres

References

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Your Vote Matters!

The 2013 CEC Division on Visual Impairments is going on now. You should have received an email with an individualized link to cast your vote. Voting takes less than 5 minutes but strengthens the viability of the organization.

If you have not received an email (or postcard if we do not have your email), then please contact Derrick Smith at derrick.smith@uah.edu.

NATIONAL FAMILY ASSOCIATION FOR DEAF-BLIND

Supporting persons who are deaf-blind and their families

Website: www.NFADB.org
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The National Family Association for Deaf-Blind (NFADB) is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization serving families of individuals who are deaf-blind since 1994.

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NFADB believes individuals who are deaf-blind are valued members of society and should have the same opportunities and choices as others in the community.

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Judy Byrd, *Volunteer Director*

770-317-2035

JudyByrd@gmail.com

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In 2010, Beep Kickball was founded in Atlanta by volunteer Judy Byrd while playing on a newly formed beep baseball team. She noticed all the baseball players were older teens and adults and wondered what team sport the kids played. Then it came to her...Kickball! Same rules, different ball!

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Judy Byrd's goal is that every person who is visually impaired or blind have the opportunity to benefit from playing a sport. Last summer, over 40 summer camps and schools for the blind across the nation played Beep Kickball.

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A Beep Kickball costs $130 and a set of kickball bases costs $100. To order, go to the website or call Judy Byrd.

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- Players develop trust and a willingness to risk
- All of these lead to self-confidence and independence
- All of these are useful in becoming a successful adult
- They all say "If I can do this, I can do anything!"

"I love how loud it is!"

8/14/11 Lauren Lieberman, PhD
Professor at SUNY Brockport, founder of Camp Abilities

"It is a very safe, enjoyable game for a wide range of ages and skill levels to play together. The rules are very basic and easy to learn, which gave the campers more time to play."

7/23/11 Aly Nagy
Teacher, South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind

"Our students loved it. They had a great success rate."

5/23/12 Robbin Keating
VRT for the state of Connecticut

"As a member of the National Beep Baseball Association since 1986, I am so impressed with the thought and effort put in to the development of Beep Kickball by friend and associate, Judy Byrd. Besides an excellent stand alone game for all ages, it's a fun, easy introduction to the sport of Beep Baseball, which uses the same equipment and many of the rules. I recommend it highly."

6/24/12 Janet Leonard
Lakewood, Colorado

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Judy Byrd, Director of the Beep Kickball Association, a 501c3 non-profit corporation

President's Message

Derrick Smith

For this special issue of the *DVIQuarterly*, the topic is diversity. Diversity is an incredibly interesting and timely topic as we as a society are becoming more diverse. While there are many things that I could write about diversity, I decided to focus on a more practical matter as it relates to the organization. A few years ago, with the urging of CEC, each division was asked to create a diversity statement and include it in its guiding documents. Therefore, DVI added its diversity statement in 2005 through the work of our Diversity Committee, led at the time by Phyllis Simmons. Since the creation of this statement, our Diversity Committee has been a persistent member of CEC's Diversity Committee. Many of DVI's members are also members of various CEC caucuses that focus on diversity. DVI member Lou Tutt even served on the CEC Board in the "Diversity" position. However, there is much more work for our Division to do in order to serve our diverse profession. We need to provide support for those who serve students with visual impairments, blindness, and deafblindness from diverse backgrounds while attempting to recruit, retain, and diversify our field. It is my sincere hope that this special issue will start a conversation within the field to support these concepts. With that being said, I believe our diversity statement provides a good starting point for this special issue:

DVI Diversity Statement

"In a willing effort to support CEC's Diversity Vision of "creating an inclusive culture where people of great diversity share the common value of advancing the educational outcomes of exceptional outcomes of exceptional children", DVI has established parameters to facilitate the mission. DVI will channel their efforts through governance, recruitment and retention, publications, nominations and awards. Governance incorporates representation of diverse groups among the membership including Officers and Committee Chairs. DVI will identify board members to represent matters of diversity. Recruiting and retaining members from diverse backgrounds will continue to be an ongoing goal for DVI. Supporting the ideology of an organizational culture which values diversity among its membership will ultimately serve as a mirror for creating effective educational strategies and outcomes for children who are blind or visually impaired, including those with multiple disabilities."

New!

SAM

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SAM is a kit for students with visual and multiple impairments and pre-school children with visual impairments who are just beginning to use symbols.

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- **Symbol and Referent Analysis:** Academic Vocabulary
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- **Curriculum-based Gap Inventory:** Early Academic Skills & Basic Concepts

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Assessing Students with Visual Impairments who are from Diverse Backgrounds: My Experience as a Bilingual Diagnostician and a TVI

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Planning an assessment for a student who is visually impaired could be a daunting task for professionals who don't have experience working with this population or knowledge about its unique needs. This task could be even more intimidating when the student is from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background (CLDB). In this article, I will share my practice-based experience as a bilingual educational diagnostician and teacher of students with visual impairment in evaluating students from CLDB. Information about different assessments and suggestions on informal evaluations that could be used with this population will also be shared.

It would be appropriate to start out this "how-to" article by asking the following questions: *What tests are available for use when assessing students who are visually impaired? What assessments can be used with students from CLDB who are visually impaired?* While there have been attempts to create standardized tests to use with students with visual impairments, there are no instruments available that have been normed and designed for this diverse and unique population. Because of this, educational diagnosticians often have no other option than using tests that are not specifically designed for students with visual impairments. When a test is designed specifically for these students, the test results could provide

useful information to assist with appropriate planning and placement. Though these tests may be considered valid, cautionary statements should accompany all tests administered (Loftin, 2005). For example, in contrast to traditional methods of determining learning disabilities, no single academic test is available that would adequately assess the academic skills of students with visual impairments who are from diverse backgrounds. Therefore, information must be gathered from various sources in order to make appropriate decisions and recommendations for these students.

Traditional assessment practices with students could be hard to implement by the presence of a visual impairment and when the child's native language is not English. This is often the case when conducting comprehensive evaluations with students who are from CLDB. Schon, Shaftel, and Markham (2008) suggested that reliability, validity, cultural and language biases, language demands, and native-language testing are among the many factors to consider when evaluating students from CLDB. Bias in testing occurs because tests can be culturally loaded or contain "cultural content or culturally specific knowledge embedded in both the test items and in the testing method that may differentially influence the ability of individuals of diverse backgrounds to perform" (Warren, 2006, p. 106). Students who have not had sufficient exposure to the mainstream culture in the U.S., more often than not, do poorly on traditional standardized assessments. In light of this issue, educational diagnosticians and school psychologists are often left with having to supplement standardized data with informal assessments. Utilizing informal assessments is seen as an "…attempt at meaningful assessment of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is a movement toward authentic, performance-based assessment techniques such as portfolio assessment" (Gargiulo,

2012, p. 109). Informal data is doubly relevant when working with students with visual impairments who are from CLDB. In a guide to assessing English Language Learners (ELLs), Rhodes, Ochoa, and Ortiz (2005) suggested that informal methods are needed to supplement the data from normed assessments. The authors also indicated that information from the normed assessments might not take into consideration possible variations in dialect that could result in false assumptions that language is used in a similar way within and across languages.

As the population of linguistically diverse learners increases, the challenges educational diagnosticians face with evaluating students with visual impairments from CLDB also increase. The use of informal assessment procedures along with criterion-reference including curriculum-based measures is especially important for this population of students as many times, in my experience, standardized assessments tell us more about what the student cannot do and not so much about what they can. Some combinations of formal and informal assessments that I have used in my practice when assessing visually impaired students who are from CLDB can be found in Table 1. It is important to note that many of the assessments with the alternative languages that are available from the publishers may not be readily available in school districts. In cases where the assessments are not available in the student's primary language, the evaluator may have to resort to translating the assessment. This is **not** ideal and should be used as a last resource; however, this may be the only alternative available in order to get an informal estimate of the student's current functioning level.

As part of the alternative assessment procedure, interviews with the classroom teacher and team members, as well as collaboration and consultation with the teacher of the visually impaired

(TVI) to supplement the information provided by the criterion-reference and curriculum based assessments are invaluable. This approach gives the evaluator and the assessment team a sense of what the student is doing in the classroom, which is something the team may not be able to document by using standardized assessments alone. When assessing a young student or a student with significant support needs who is from CLDB, the assessments are primarily comprised of observations and checklists that can be completed most efficiently and meaningfully by interviewing or gathering data from all the professionals who work with the student. In addition, interviewing the parent/caregiver or family members in the home language will provide additional insight into the ability of the student that will assist in determining the present level of performance and areas of need to be addressed in the individual education plan. This is one of

Type of Assessment	Name of Assessments
Criterion-Referenced Assessments	*Brigance Assessment of Basic Skills -Revised, English and Spanish Edition* (available in other languages; use with accommodations from the LMA/FVE) *Battelle Developmental Inventory-II (BDI-II), Spanish Edition* (available in other languages; use with accommodations from the LMA/FVE)
Curriculum-Based Assessments	*Oregon Project for Preschool Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired* (available in Spanish; observations in multiple settings, and interviews with the classroom teacher, service providers, the teacher

of the visually impaired and the parent/caregiver in the native language via interpreter

Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs (assessment log and developmental progress chart available in Spanish, with adaptations for children with visual impairments and the LMA/FVE)

Carolina Curriculum for Preschoolers with Special Needs (assessment log and developmental progress chart available in Spanish, with adaptations for children with visual impairments and the LMA/FVE)

Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC) (Available in English only; can be administered via observation, interview and directly)

Norm-Referenced Assessments/ Inventories

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Fourth Edition (WISC-IV) Spanish version (VIQ and WMI, performance based indexes should be used for clinical purposes and should not be used to calculate FSIQ; WISC has been translated or adapted and normed for different languages)

Wechsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence- Third Edition (WPPSI-III) (with translation of the VIQ subtests-take caution when reporting results via use of translation if not using the Spanish version when not available in the school district; the WPPSI-III has been

translated and adapted for use with students who speak languages other than English)

Woodcock-Johnson- Batería-III Pruebas de habilidades cognitivas (recommended subtests for students with Low Vision and subtests for students with Blindness; a shortened version of the *Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities–Revised* in four European languages (Slovak, Hungarian, Latvian, and Czech).

Bilingual Verbal Ability Test (BVAT) (Oral Vocabulary and Verbal Analogies Tests) (It is available in 15 languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Haitian-Creole, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, Turkish, and Vietnamese.)

Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development, Third Edition (Bayley-III) (via translation by the evaluator or interpreter- take caution when reporting results via use of translation.) Bayley III is available in English only, however, a study has been conducted where it was translated into Malay (Zakaria, Seok, Sombuling, Ahmad, and Iqbal, n.d.) *Reynell-Zinkin Developmental Scales for Young Children with Visual Impairments* (with translation with the student- -take caution when reporting results via use of translation by the evaluator/interpreter)

Bayley-Scales of Infant and Toddler Development, Third Edition (Bayley-III) Adaptive Behavior and Socio-Emotional subtests, Spanish, French, and Chinese forms

Infant-Toddler Social and Emotional Assessment (ITSEA) and Brief Infant-Toddler Social and Emotional Assessment (BITSEA)-English/ Spanish forms only available

Scales of Independent Behavior-Revised, Short Form for the Visually Impaired (with translation for the parent/caregiver- take caution when reporting results via use of evaluator or interpreter translation)

Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales-II, Parent Rating Scale- English/ Spanish forms only available

Adaptive Behavior Assessment System-II, Parent Form-English/ Spanish forms only available

Woodcock-Johnson-III Tests of Academic Achievement-NU (Available in English, large print and braille versions.)

Woodcock-Johnson Batería-III Pruebas de aprovechamiento (with accommodations recommended by the LMA/FVE-large print version not available. I made my own on a copier using large print paper. Consult with the TVI. I also typed out a version of the student response booklet according to the print size recommended for the student on the LMA/FVE.)

Learning Disabilities Diagnostic Inventory (LDDI) (Interview form/ checklist completed by the service providers and teachers of the student who is CLD with a visual impairment.) (Available in English only.)

the successful practices I have employed when assessing students with a visual impairment who are from CLDB.

Another suggestion that I would provide for those assessing students from CLDB is to translate assessment documents to the student's native language. In the past, I have translated prompts for assessments such as the WPPSI-III for students whose primary language is Spanish and who were too young to have the Spanish version of the WISC-IV administered. Translation of prompts will provide a measure of receptive ability and allow the evaluator to measure the skill being performed. However, the evaluator must be aware that cognitive measures do not transfer from one language to another; therefore, any data collected through translation should be reported clinically and not through the use of standard scores or overall scores and used for informational purposes only.

In addition to the validity issues mentioned earlier, assessment professionals should have general knowledge of the developmental patterns of children who are blind or visually impaired and the language acquisition stages of those students who are from a diverse language background. Consultation with the student's bilingual or English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher is critical for the evaluator to gain information on how the student's diverse background or language may impact test performance. Additionally, consultation with the TVI is critical, not only for best practice but because it is also required by federal code. I am a certified bilingual teacher as well as a diagnostician who is certified as a teacher of the visually impaired and I still consult and collaborate heavily with the student's classroom teacher, parents/family, and other teachers of the visually impaired when planning assessments of my students with visual impairments who are from CLDB. States have varying guidelines for

evaluating students with visual impairments, but all guidelines must reflect the federal regulations under the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act. Furthermore, specific best practice guidelines when conducting assessments have been developed by the *American Educational Research Association*, *The Council on Testing Measurements* and the *American Psychological Association* to address the testing of bilingual students.

Below are the steps that I usually follow as a diagnostician and guidelines that I recommend when assessing students with visual impairment who are from CLDB:

Identify students whose evaluations are due that school year.

Immediately seek out the diagnostician/Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) or the TVIs for the school where the student will be attending.

Set up a meeting with that diagnostician/LSSP or TVI to review the student's case and determine whether or not another formal Learning Media Assessment (LMA)/Functional Vision Assessment (FVA) is needed prior to any other testing.

During this meeting, review the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) folder. This folder will inform the evaluator as the TVI as to the home language and language dominance of the student to be assessed.

Once the LPAC folder has been reviewed, decide if the student requires a foreign language interpreter to assist with testing or if the evaluator speaks the language of the student then a decision as to what assessments will be given in terms of the availability of testing instruments in the student's dominant language.

Interview the parent/caregiver, the student, the student's classroom teacher, and observe the student in multiple settings.

As part of the parent/caregiver interview, investigate information pertaining to the student and family's history with language: primary language spoken at home and in the community, other languages spoken in the home, the family's country of origin, the length of time the family has lived in the U.S., the student's age at first exposure to English, if anyone in the family speaks English, and how fluently they speak it. This is important to assist with interpretation of assessment results.

After relevant information has been collected (accommodations/modifications, data from the LPAC folder, interviews and classroom observation) the diagnostician/LSSP and the TVI could refer to the information from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI) website regarding suggested tests, etc., for students with visual impairments. Taking all of the previous information into account, the diagnostician/LSSP, make a decision based on the combined suggested guidelines from the Council on Testing Measurements and the American Psychological Association, the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE), and the assessment suggestions from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired website in order to plan what assessments and procedures will be implemented in the assessment of the student who is CLDB with a visual impairment. The TSBVI website is: http://www.tsbvi.edu/attachments/EducatingStudentswithVIGuidelinesStandards.pdf

Combining the above guidelines when assessing students from CLDB is not only critical in planning appropriate assessments that lead to making the evaluation accessible (in language and learning

medium) but also meaningful in making informed decisions regarding programming and placement of these students.

Evaluators may not agree with my practices as the bilingual educational diagnostician for students with visual and multiple disabilities in a school district that houses one of the largest population of students with visual impairments from CLDB. Disagreeing is fine, but what are the alternatives? The alternative to not test and fill out thce Full and Individual Evaluation/ Comprehensive Individual Assessment (FIE/CIA) with the words “untestable,” “no tests available,” etc., is not an acceptable option. Evaluators have an ethical, moral, and legal responsibility to complete an assessment that will inform educational plans for students and set them up for success. Students who are from CLDB in the U.S. have the right to receive and experience effective, appropriate, high-quality assessments under assessment conditions that support their learning and development (NAEYC, 2005). It is my hope that the information contained here will assist all evaluators of students who are CLDB with visual impairments in providing the highest quality assessments that will inform best practice in educational planning, programming, and placement.

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Updated 10/14/2013

Emergent Bilinguals with Visual Impairments: Guidelines for Instruction

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"We thought Camilo was learning enough English to go to college, but he has not been able to do well on the standardized tests. We never taught him how to read Spanish because we thought he would get confused; now he may not know English well enough for college and he does not know how to read Spanish either" (Camilo's Mother).

A few years ago, I was having a conversation with Camilo's mother, Estrella, who was reflecting on her son's education in the United States. Her two children had received their entire K-12 educations in the United States. At the time, Camilo, who is blind, was in the 11th grade and Lourdes was in the 9th grade." Her two children, Camilo, who is blind, and was then in 11th grade, and Lourdes who was then in 9th grade, had received their entire K-12 education in the United States. She was examining the positive and negative aspects of educating her children outside their native country and in a language that was new to them. Estrella and her husband, Roberto, came to the United States from Mexico with their children after they realized that the services available for young blind children in their community back home were not adequate to meet Camilo's future educational needs. At the time of their arrival, Camilo was 3 years old and I met them when he enrolled in a local early intervention program. Since then, I have been in contact with the family and have learned much from

their experiences with the educational system. Our conversations often remind me of the additional challenges faced by parents and educators when students who are blind and visually impaired enter the educational system speaking a language other than English and are being educated in an English-only environment, which is commonly the case in our public schools.

Teachers who specialize in the education of blind and visually impaired students are highly qualified in meeting the educational needs of these students that result from their visual difficulties, but often have limited preparation related to second language learning and teaching. Similarly, educators who receive preparation in teaching English as a second language (ESL) as well as many general education teachers depend heavily on the use of visual materials and gestures when delivering instruction and find it challenging to change their teaching styles when confronted with a student who does not use vision as their primary vehicle for learning. Consequently, meeting both the visual and language needs of emergent bilinguals with visual impairments requires that educators with different professional preparations share their knowledge and skills to create successful educational experiences for these students.

Labels Used for These Students

As with the case of students with special needs, the field of education in the United States has also used multiple labels to refer to students who begin schools speaking a language other than English. A term that was first used starting in 1975 was Limited English Proficient (LEP) due to the LAU v. NICHOLS case (1974). This term was not viewed favorably by educators because it emphasized what students were not able to do instead of what students were learning. As a result, the term English Language Learners (ELLs) emerged to describe those K-12 students who

were learning English as a new language in our public schools. More recently, Garcia and Kleifgen (2010) argued that a more appropriate label for these students should emphasize what they are becoming, which is emergent bilingual, since the process of learning English is a transitional one that will result in becoming bilingual.

Essential Elements to Guide Instruction

When considering the complexity of educating emergent bilinguals with visual impairments, it will be helpful for educators to consider the following essential instructional recommendations to guide their instruction. Most of these recommendations are applicable to all emergent bilinguals, while a few are only applicable to those with visual impairments (Herrera, Murry, & Morales Cabral, 2007; McIntyre, Kyle, Chen, Kraemer, & Parr, 2009; Milian, 2012; Milian & Conroy, 2001; Wright, 2010).

We are all language teachers.

- Academic content and language learning cannot be separated, particularly at the beginning stages of second language acquisition. Consequently, language instruction is always taking place when we are working with emergent bilinguals.
- Educators need to focus on both the content taught and the language used in each lesson. The following question always needs consideration: What language needs to be understood by the student to facilitate the understanding of the content?
- Academic language - that is, the language of content areas - needs to be specifically taught and explained.

Recommendation:

- Become familiar with the English Proficiency Standards in your state. It will help you
-

understand the English proficiency level of your students and assist you in planning your instruction.

Information on native language academic levels is key to English instruction.

- Students with strong native language skills will make an easier transition into English academic language.
- Aspects of native language can be used to support the learning of English. For example - cognates can assist in vocabulary development.
- Use of native language can facilitate adaptation into the new school setting.

Recommendations:

- When grouping students, take into consideration their English language proficiency. Groups should have students from different proficiency levels so that they can help each other.
- Allow students to help each other in their native languages as needed to understand an important content area concept or other important information.

Collaboration is key for academic growth.

- All educators are responsible for teaching emergent bilinguals, regardless of English language proficiency levels.
- Effective collaboration will prevent fragmented instruction, which often interferes with academic growth.
- Each educator has professional knowledge that is essential to the academic growth of emergent bilinguals.
- Family members and key members of the students' cultural group can provide valuable information and support goals at home or in the community.

- Help educators understand cultural differences that may be important to consider.

Recommendation:

- Develop a good relationship with the ESL teachers. Collaboration related to teaching and assessment strategies based on vision and language needs can be shared. Also, you can share materials and other resources that may be needed by the student.

Ongoing classroom assessments, observations, and performance assessments are critical for teachers to use.

- Standardized tools often offer limited information to guide us with instruction for emergent bilinguals, particularly for those with visual impairments because of problems with design and inappropriate accommodations.
- It is difficult to separate knowledge of language from content knowledge.
- Emergent bilinguals are “moving targets” in terms of language fluency, so results of formal assessments given once per year are used in a limited .
- Frequent, informal assessments that include observation in different settings and performance assessments provide more useful information while ELLs are not yet fluent English speakers.

Recommendations:

- Analyze the language of your tests to determine if your tests contain language that is too advanced for the proficiency level of your emergent bilingual students. Is the test a content test or a language test?
- Consider different ways of obtaining information about students’ academic growth that are not always based on language.

Native language support provides short and long term benefits for emergent bilinguals.

- Native language support can facilitate transition into the new educational environment.
- Students can continue developing content area knowledge while they are learning English.
- Knowledge in the native language can support the learning of English as skills can transfer from one language to the other.
- Bilingual skills will be beneficial for professional goals.

Recommendation:

- Gather information about the students' native language, including the braille code in the native language in which the students are braille users. Are the students proficient in their own native language? Are they functioning at grade level in the native language? Family members may be able to provide school records from previous educational experiences that could provide essential information about native language proficiency and academic levels. Other support personnel may also be able to help obtain this type of information and may be able to provide a source for native language materials.

Cultural Knowledge will help with teacher, student, and family interactions.

- Beliefs and practices, including understandings of disability, vary within cultural groups. Factors such as number of years in the U.S., age, religion, and levels of education can influence the way a specific family may acculturate to the new community and school environment.
- It is impossible to learn everything about every culture, but we can develop a "framework" that

can guide us to ask important questions.

- Instead of interpreting behaviors from your own cultural personal perspective, ask questions when you do not understand.
- Examine your own cultural beliefs to help enhance your acceptance and understanding of others, and explain differences. The question "Why do I perceive things the way I do?" will help facilitate your understanding of the world and encourage reflection.

Recommendation:

- Learn about important factors of your students' culture. The more you understand the students' cultures, the more you will be able to incorporate them into the curriculum. You will also have a better understanding of your students' behaviors and world views.

When first encountered with emerging bilinguals with visual impairments, educators who work with these students may feel challenged or even overwhelmed by the additional teaching skills required to meet the linguistic and academic needs of these students. However, teaching students who are visually impaired and are becoming bilingual also presents multiple opportunities for professional and personal growth that may lead to becoming a more knowledgeable and sensitive educator. For Camilo's teachers, who have seen him grow from a 3-year-old who had not yet mastered his own native language to a young man who is now enrolled in a local community college, the rewards have been immense.

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Post High School Outcomes of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students with Visual Impairments

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Culturally and linguistically diverse students who have a visual impairment (CLD/VI) can cause challenges for teachers in schools in the United States who seek to prepare their students for the world after high school. Traditionally, students in U.S. schools complete an academic core that prepares them for independence in post-school life. American culture generally values independence as a measure of success. This may or may not be in alignment with how students and families from diverse backgrounds who have immigrated to the United States view success. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the experiences of young adult CLD/VI learners who graduated from the U.S. educational system. Identification of significant factors and supports that resulted in positive outcomes will help teachers promote positive outcomes after school is over and these CLD/VI students face adulthood.

Methods

Qualitative interviews were used to probe into the experiences of ten CLD/VI students in U.S. schools and how well they were prepared for skills they needed as young adults. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 23 years (mean age of 21) and had been in the United States for nine to 16 years (mean=12.6). All of the participants graduated from high school within five years of this study and received services from a teacher of

students with visual impairments (TSVIs). The visual conditions of the participants varied as did their amount of vision, ranging from 20/200 to total blindness. Each participant shared their immigration story as it related to their individual family and personal background including information about their visual impairment.

Findings

Themes that emerged from these interviews were identified by participants as essential in contributing or impeding success in school. These themes included language, culture, personal satisfaction, family, and goals for the future.

Language and Maintenance

All of the participants in this study learned English when they came to the United States and did not speak English in their native country. Languages represented were Somali, Arabic, Spanish, Hmong, Vietnamese, Tagalong, Chinese, and Japanese. Participants received language instruction while at school in the U.S. and practiced a great deal. Immersion helped them learn English as did the television and radio. Factors that contributed to the speed and quality of the second language acquisition were age when they came to the United States, personal motivation, family support, and encouragement by teachers.

All participants maintained their native language by using it at home or with a community that used that language. None received instruction in their native language at school in the U.S. The participants did not have access to educational materials in any medium (braille/large print) that supported the maintenance of their native language. The participants reported that their teachers in the U.S. did not encourage them to use their native language at school, nor did teachers attempt to communicate with students in their native language.

Five participants felt they were bilingual

speakers as young adults. Four reported they could read and write braille in their native language. The ability to speak and read/write in braille depended greatly on the age of the participant when he/she immigrated to the U.S. In general, the older the participants were when they came to the U.S., the better they felt they were able to speak, read, and write in their native languages. Every participant rated language as the most important factor in their post-school success. However, school-based language services were phased out within two years for all participants. Those who felt they were not proficient in English found school and employment difficult.

Culture

It was difficult for the participants to separate culture from their religion, especially for participants who were Muslim. None of the participants received exposure or education about their native culture at school with the exception of “All Cultures Day” and special holiday celebrations. Teachers made an effort to learn about the culture and religion in all but two of the cases. Maintenance of the native culture depended upon the family and its level of acculturation to mainstream American culture. Feelings of misunderstandings and isolation were reported by many of the participants.

Personal Satisfaction

All participants reported that they were highly satisfied with the educational services they received in the U.S. They all got an education in the United States that they would not have received in their native country, both in core content and specifically for their needs due to their visual impairment. Although the instructional time from the TSVIs was reported as less than one hour per week, participants were grateful for this time, as the alternative was no services from a specially trained TVI in their native country.

Family

Families supported the wishes of their children and encouraged them to do well in school and to work as young adults. The family members of all participants expressed the desire to see their children happy as the top priority. Families acknowledged that there were more opportunities for their children to obtain an education in the U.S., especially in consideration of the participant's visual impairment. Many participants reported that their families had no expectations of them at all. Education of family members about life after school is over is essential. Teachers must teach the family about having high expectations and giving their children choices. This will help young adults develop independence and self-determination skills.

Goals for the Future

All but two of the participants lived with their family or relatives. The two participants without family lived with friends from their cultural group. All participants expressed their desire to work but said they had no pressing need to work as they were supported financially by others. Their desire to gain employment was due to boredom, rather than necessity. However, they all had an intrinsic desire to be independent. This independence was not defined by living on their own or away from their family; rather, it was independence in life skills and personal management. For instance, getting their own apartment wasn't a goal, but being able to cook, shop, and take care of their personal hygiene was a priority.

Conclusion

All of the participants had rich and interesting stories of how they entered the United States and their process of acculturation. Of interest is that the needs of CLD students with visual impairments are not much different those who are not from a CLD background, but it is important to note that the issues may be more complex. Find-

ings from this study showed that participants were not encouraged to maintain their native language or culture in their schooling in the United States. Participants felt a pressure to learn English quickly and felt lucky to have the educational opportunities that they were given. It is evident that teachers need to understand and support the second language acquisition of students who come from CLD backgrounds as participants in this study found language to be the main barrier to employment and success in post-secondary education.

The TSVIs provided between 15 minutes and one hour per week of support for instruction in areas related to the visual impairment, including the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). More individualized instruction in the ECC areas is essential as young CLD/VI students may not have the background knowledge necessary for developing independent living skills, so learning these skills could take longer. This intense instruction may have helped the participants in this study to develop the skills necessary to be more independent as young adults. Teachers must work with the families of CLD/VI students, as they may not view the need for their child to develop independence and self-determination skills as a priority. Perhaps most importantly, teachers need to be realistic about the requirements of different post-school options and must give honest feedback about student performance. This information and honesty will help promote successful post-secondary outcomes for culturally and linguistically diverse young people who also have visual impairments.

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Connecting with Families from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds: Reflecting as Practitioners on Our Own Beliefs and Values

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As the number of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CLDB) continues to increase in today's classrooms, teachers are expected to demonstrate culturally responsive teaching and practices. Teachers who are in tune to being culturally responsive strive to gain knowledge about cultural diversity and incorporate cultural material and sociocultural contexts into instruction in order to validate and empower learners (Gay, 2000). Rapport and involvement of family is also intimately linked with culturally responsive teaching practices (Araujo, 2009).

As teachers of students with visual impairments (TSVIs) and orientation and mobility (O&M) specialists, the work we do with students is directly tied to their daily lives. For example, we attribute greater success of our students in the different areas of the expanded core curriculum (ECC) as being dependent on how frequently the skills they are learning are used not only in their school lives, but also their home lives. Families are powerful partners in making instruction of the ECC meaningful to their children. Our ability to

acknowledge the insight families have and to understand and respect their points of view will lead to stronger collaborations. As practitioners, more than in other professions, we are naturally connected to families. However, in today's multicultural society, we may not always be as keen in truly understanding, recognizing, and validating cultures different from our own. Being able to establish rapport with families from CLDB is a skill we can further develop by being aware of our own beliefs, personal biases, and family values (Marshall, 2001) through self-study (Chen, Nimmo, & Fraser, 2009) and by establishing ways to learn from and about the families with whom we work. In this article, we explore some of the factors that research suggests are important to consider when working with families from CLDB. We also share a two-part reflection questionnaire that can be used to strengthen our insight into the needs of these families.

Factors Affecting and Promoting Family Involvement

The more we can break down barriers that stand between a family from CLDB and the instructional culture, the stronger collaboration we will have with families. When interviewing families from Hispanic backgrounds who had a child with visual impairment, Correa-Torres and Zebehazy (2010) found that families wanted to be more involved in the education of their children. However, logistic barriers such as language, transportation, and resources sometimes reduced their ability to do so. Families expressed a desire for support in understanding the opportunities that were available to them, referring to overwhelming amounts of written information sent home in English. In addition, some families felt that practitioners did not understand their culture. Greene, Powers, and Lopez-Vasquez (2005) found other barriers that prevented parents from CLDB to be involved in the education of their children with disabilities,

more specifically in planning for their transition. Some of these barriers were: “(a) power imbalance; (b) psychological or attitudinal; (c) logistics; (d) information; (e) communication; (f) SES and contextual factors; and (g) cultural influences” (p. 4).

Araujo (2009) discusses four best practices that have been shown to be successful when working with families from CLDB. These practices are: “(a) incorporating funds of knowledge, (b) practicing culturally relevant teaching, (c) fostering effective communication, and (d) extending and accepting assistance” (p. 116). “Funds of knowledge” refers to the knowledge and skills that students learn at home that they bring with them to the school environment (Moll, Amante, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992). By understanding your students holistically within the context of their family dynamics, you can incorporate the knowledge they bring into your instruction in order to bridge their two worlds: school and home.

Culturally responsive teachers build a learning community by demonstrating cultural caring. Characteristics include an ability to develop cultural knowledge, design culturally relevant materials, understand cross-cultural communication, and translate this into cultural responsive instruction (Brown, 2007). A key starting point to cultural relevance is guarding against “deficit thinking” and viewing different cultures and backgrounds as inferior or in need of fixing (Weiner, 2006). As practitioners, engaging in self-reflection and becoming aware of our biases can be a powerful exercise in broadening our acceptance of cultural differences and highlighting ways we can bring our students’ life experiences into instruction. In discussing the four best practices, Araujo (2009) summarizes research that found bringing families from CLDB into the classroom had a positive impact on students as well as the families themselves who viewed educators as caring about

their language, culture, and values. As TSVIs and O&M specialists, we could collaborate to design ECC lessons that involve a family member. Since many of the skills we teach link to the home, this can be a natural addition to our instruction.

One aspect of fostering effective communication is making sure that accurate language interpretation is available for families. Hart, Cheatham, and Jimenez-Silva (2012) discuss factors of quality language interpretation. These include ensuring that the interpreter is trained and fluent in both languages, knows basic special education terminology, upholds confidentiality, and displays cultural competence. Maintaining consistent ongoing communication versus "just when needed" communication is also an important component for families feeling informed and valued (Grassi & Barker, 2010). The use of cultural liaisons has also been recommended when working with families from CLDB. A cultural liaison is someone who is from the same cultural or linguistic background as the student or family and can interpret cultural norms as well as language (Grassi & Barker, 2010).

In terms of "extending and accepting assistance," Araujo (2009) emphasizes how assistance is reciprocal. Schools and practitioners can help families find resources that will support their needs. Families, in turn, can provide cultural information and help to incorporate native language and customs into instruction. By accepting assistance and learning from the strengths and knowledge of the family, we create more culturally relevant ECC lessons and also validate the importance of the family's role in their child's education.

Understanding Culture without Stereotyping

As practitioners, we may not be able to influence all the factors that impact a family's sense of validation and engagement with their child's learning, but we can make an effort to enhance our understanding of culture and diversity so we

can positively shape our instructional methods. In an attempt to expand our cultural knowledge, it is important to remember that there is a fine line between understanding a family's culture and viewpoints and stereotyping (Erin, 2001). While learning about typical cultural characteristics and beliefs can be helpful in starting to think about how viewpoints may differ, it is important to remember that each family is individual, even when they are from similar cultural backgrounds. Even within their own culture, families are on a continuum. Different regions, rural vs. urban lifestyles, socioeconomic means, educational backgrounds, etc., all factor into a family's perspective on life. A teacher's involvement in the local community (Rychly & Graves, 2012) is one way that is suggested for gaining a more intimate knowledge of culture beyond what static lists of characteristics can convey. When considering richer involvement of family, Santamaria (2009) illustrates use of the concept of "funds of knowledge" by suggesting that the teacher enters a student's home as a learner and engages the family in interviews and observation. After reflecting on this engagement, teachers can collaborate with families regarding instruction. Similarly, as TSVIs and O&M specialists, we can strive to be more culturally responsive without over-generalizing by asking input from the family instead of relying on assumptions.

The Family Rapport Reflection Questionnaire

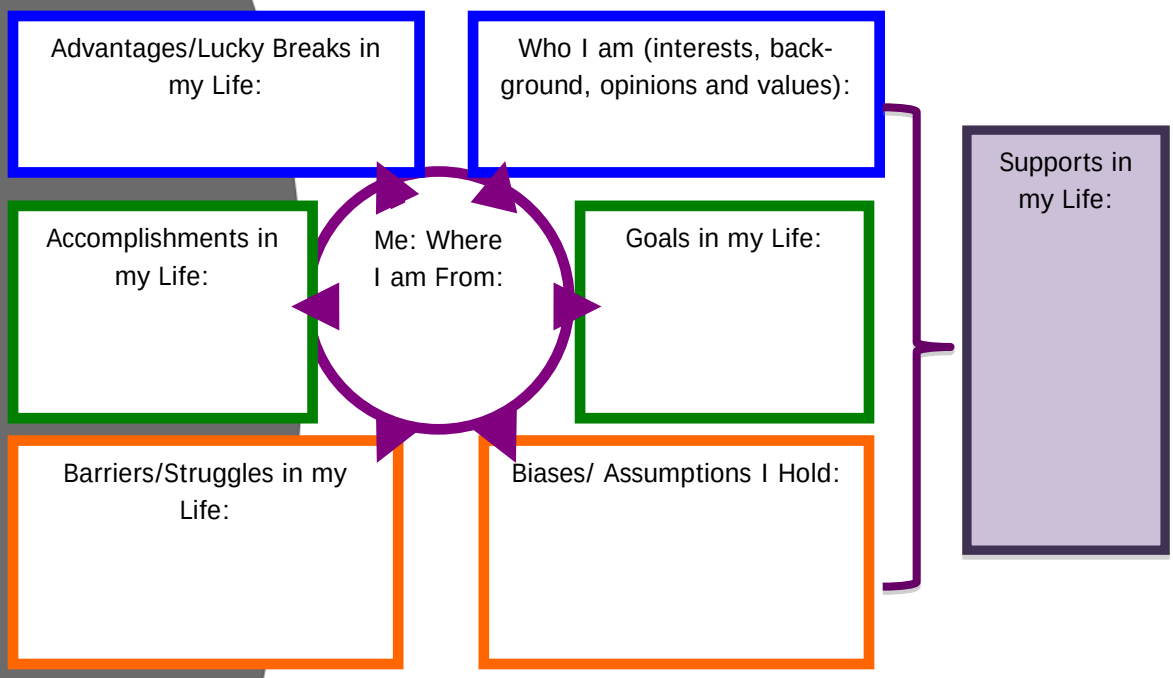
We developed the reflection questionnaire below based on findings from the literature for use by professionals in the area of visual impairment to help them gain insight into a family's values, beliefs, and priorities while trying to avoid stereotypes. It draws upon the various points mentioned in the previous sections with an added visual impairment twist. Some of the questions are worded to try and gain information related to a family's perspective on some of the ECC areas of instruction. Particular focus, however, is on re-

flecting as practitioners on our own beliefs and biases. Another area to pay particular attention to is how to engage families by learning about their culture, their needs, and their values through interviews.

This questionnaire is a work in progress. We plan to conduct future research on it and welcome any feedback and comments you may have. The first section of the questionnaire is a way for us as practitioners to self-evaluate our own worldview and how in-tune we are to cultural relevance in our teaching and work with families. The second part of the questionnaire is a way to gather information from families to learn more about their thoughts, beliefs, and values by asking them directly instead of relying on sweeping generalizations about a specific culture.

Part I: Self-Evaluation:

This graphic organizer can be used to engage in a self-reflection about your values, biases, and influences that have shaped your thinking. After filling out the organizer, consider how your answers may factor into your teaching and interaction with families - either positively or negatively. We all have biases, and understanding what they are will help us be flexible and open to cultural diversity. The graphic is also meant to help you consider how privilege plays a role in your own life. Dominant culture results in privileges more readily available to some groups than others (Harbour, Middleton, Lewis, & Anderson, 2003). Depending on the context, we all benefit from advantages or privileges at certain times. If we are open to recognizing that things are not always equal, then we will be more open to understanding the perspectives of families from CLDB.



Description of organizer: A center circle says "Me and where I am from" and points to six boxes surrounding it. The top two boxes are labeled: "Advantages/Lucky Breaks in my Life" and "Who I am (interests, background, opinions and values)." The center two boxes are labeled: "Accomplishments in my Life" and "Goals in my Life." The bottom two boxes are labeled: "Barriers/Struggles in my Life" and "Biases/ Assumptions I Hold." Off to the right of all the boxes is a bracket that points to a box labeled: "Supports in my Life."

To continue your self-reflection, consider the following statements related to culturally relevant teaching and working with families from CLDB. For each question, think about your current practice and interactions with families of the students on your caseload. Indicate whether you agree, are neutral, or disagree with the statement. Reflect on your answers in light of how rich you feel the rapport is with each of the families with whom you work. For each item in which you mark

neutral or disagree, consider ways you may attend to these aspects more frequently.

1 = Agree
2 = Neutral
3 = Disagree

Statement	Response	Notes to Self:
I communicate with families on a regular basis in an accessible format/ language.	1 2 3	
I invite families to give input into their child's instruction.	1 2 3	
I show interest in learning about the family's culture (ask questions, etc.).	1 2 3	
I seek assistance from the family to make my instruction culturally relevant.	1 2 3	
I work with the team to make sure a quality translator or cultural broker is available to best include families in meetings and activities.	1 2 3	
I help families find resources to meet their needs.	1 2 3	
I make connections between what I am teaching and family routines and customs.	1 2 3	
I am sensitive to how societal stereotypes of a culture may affect a family's perspective.	1 2 3	
I am focused on the strengths of my students and their families.	1 2 3	
I recognize when my biases may be influencing my reactions.	1 2 3	

Part II: Family Questionnaire (To be translated or delivered in the family's preferred language)

This questionnaire was designed to gather information from families that can give you insight into their culture and life priorities as well as to provide you with information that can help you make your teaching more culturally relevant to your students.

Scale:

1 = Agree
2 = Neutral
3 = Disagree
N/A = not applicable

Statements	Response
I am comfortable reading material sent home in English.	1 2 3 N/A
I have support in translating materials sent home from school.	1 2 3 N/A
I am comfortable at school activities and meetings.	1 2 3 N/A
I feel included by the school and teachers.	1 2 3 N/A
I would like to be more involved with school activities.	1 2 3 N/A
I would like to know about opportunities and activities available to our family and child with a visual impairment.	1 2 3 N/A
I feel that my child with a visual impairment has the supports he/she needs in school.	1 2 3 N/A
I understand the visual condition my child has.	1 2 3 N/A
I am comfortable with the fact that my child has a visual impairment.	1 2 3 N/A
My community accepts my child with a visual impairment.	1 2 3 N/A
The school accepts my child with a visual impairment.	1 2 3 N/A
It is important to me that the school and teachers understand my culture.	1 2 3 N/A
I feel that the school and teachers already understand my culture.	1 2 3 N/A
ECC Related Statements:	
I want my child with a visual impairment to learn to travel independently.	1 2 3 N/A
I am comfortable with my child with a visual impairment using a cane.	1 2 3 N/A
I want my child with a visual impairment to help out at home.	1 2 3 N/A
I want my child with a visual impairment to be part of family routines.	1 2 3 N/A
I give my child with a visual impairment chores/jobs at home.	1 2 3 N/A
It is important to me that my child with a visual impairment learns to do the same things as their peers at school.	1 2 3 N/A
I envision my child with a visual impairment living on his/her own one day.	1 2 3 N/A
It is important that my child with a visual impairment has friends from school.	1 2 3 N/A
I am interested in devices and technology that my child with a visual impairment might use.	1 2 3 N/A
I want my child with a visual impairment to be involved in recreation and leisure activities outside the home.	1 2 3 N/A
It is important that my child with a visual impairment has opportunities to make his/her own decisions.	1 2 3 N/A
I think there are a lot of career choices available to my child with a visual impairment.	1 2 3 N/A

Open-Ended Questions to consider:

Who spends the most time with your child with a visual impairment?

What are some customs that are very important to your family?

What does a typical day look like in your family (e.g. routines)?

What are some of your favorite family activities?

What do you wish the school understood about your family and culture?

What are your future aspirations for your child with a visual impairment (e.g. living situation, work/career, etc.)?

Additional Resources

In addition to the self-reflection tool and family rapport survey we are developing, there are many good resources to further your understanding about culturally relevant teaching and working with families from CLDB. Below we share just a few to get you started in your search!

Checklist:

Goode, T. D. (2009). Promoting cultural diversity competency: Self-assessment checklist for personnel providing services and supports to children with disabilities & special health needs and their families. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development: http://nccc.georgetown.edu/documents/ChecklistCSHN.pdf

Self-reflection Tool:

Chen, D. W., Nimmo, J., & Fraser, H. (2009). Becoming a culturally responsive early childhood educator: A tool to support reflection by teachers embarking on the anti-bias journey. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *11*(2), 101-106. doi:10.1080/15210960903028784

Websites:

Teaching Tolerance: http://www.tolerance.org/tdsi/

crp_why

Teaching Diverse Learners: Equity and Excellence for All: http://www.alliance.brown.edu/tdl/tl-strategies/crt-principles.shtml

Dr. Tracy Mueller's All About Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Families module: http://www.unco.edu/cetl/TracyMueller/Cultural/awareness.html

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☐ Do not share my contact information with other education organizations and companies.

2. CEC Dues

Please select the appropriate combined CEC International and State/Province dues rate for the contact information provided above.

States/Provinces not listed below	$117 ☐
UT	$120 ☐
MD	$121 ☐
AZ, CT, FL, IL, IN, MA, OH, SC, WA, WI	$122 ☐
ID, ME, MI, NC	$123 ☐
KS, VA	$124 ☐
NH, WY	$125 ☐
NY	$126 ☐
CO, GA, OR, TX	$127 ☐
MN, MO	$128 ☐
NE, PA,	$129 ☐
VT	$130 ☐
CA	$133 ☐
AK	$138 ☐
All non-U.S./Canada locations	$176 ☐

Information on Student membership can be found at: www.cec.sped.org/studentmembership. Please do not use this application to enroll as a Student member.

3. Choose Your Special Interest Division(s)

Please select all divisions you wish to join.
Only CEC members qualify for membership in CEC Divisions.

Divisions	U.S./Canada	Outside U.S./Canada
Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)	$60 ☐	$80 ☐
Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD)	$25 ☐	$65 ☐
Division for Research (CEC-DR)	$29 ☐	$39 ☐
CEC Pioneers Division (CEC-PD)	$20 ☐	$20 ☐
Council for Educational Diagnostic Services (CEDS)	$25 ☐	$45 ☐
Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD)	$30 ☐	$45 ☐
Division for Communicative Disabilities and Deafness (DCDD)	$30 ☐	$42 ☐
Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT)	$20 ☐	$42 ☐
Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (DDEL)	$30 ☐	$33 ☐
Division for Early Childhood (DEC)	$35 ☐	$50 ☐
Division of International Special Education and Services (DISES)	$29 ☐	$15 ☐
Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD)	$25 ☐	$50 ☐
Division for Physical, Health and Multiple Disabilities (DPHMD)	$25 ☐	$33 ☐
Division on Visual Impairments (DVI)	$25 ☐	$31 ☐
The Association for the Gifted (TAG)	$25 ☐	$55 ☐
Technology and Media Division (TAM)	$30 ☐	$50 ☐
Teacher Education Division (TED)	$35 ☐	$35 ☐
SUB TOTAL	_____	_____

4. Calculate My Dues Rate

CEC Dues* $ ___ *(from Section 2)*

CEC Division Total Dues $ ___ *(from Section 3)*

My Total Dues $ ___ U.S.

Promotion Code: WEBAPP

Dues Subject to Change After December 31, 2013

FORM CEC036 (REV 1/13)

5. Payment Options

☐ Check (in U.S. funds) (All returned checks are subject to a $35 U.S. return fee)
☐ Purchase Order (U.S. and Canada only - must submit with application)
☐ Credit Card (credit card transactions in U.S. funds)
☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Card # Expiration (MM/YY) CVC/CID

Signature _____

☐ Bill entire amount ☐ Bill via Dues Installment Plan**

Send this form and payment to:
Council for Exceptional Children, P.O. Box 79026, Baltimore, MD 21279-0026

**Dues Installment Plan: One third of your total dues will be charged to your credit card when you join/renew. Your second installment will be charged automatically to your credit card on the first day of the next month. The final installment will be charged automatically to your credit card on the first day of the second month following the month you joined/renewed.

*CEC dues include a $2.00 tax deductible contribution to the *Yes I Can!* Program.
Dues rates are valid through December 31, 2013 and are subject to change.
Annual membership dues in CEC include $24 for subscription to *Exceptional Children* and $36 for *TEACHING Exceptional Children;* CCBD includes $8 for *Behavioral Disorders;* and DADD includes $8 for *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities.* This information is given in order to meet postal regulations. Please do not use as a basis for payment.

CEC Membership Benefits

CEC provides you with the tools and resources you need to be a more effective educator. As a CEC member, you'll have access to:

Information—CEC is your #1 source for comprehensive, cutting edge information on reaching and teaching children and youth with disabilities and/or who are gifted. Members receive *TEACHING Exceptional Children,* bi-monthly; *Exceptional Children,* quarterly; and *CEC Today,* six issues annually. You'll stay up-to-date on the news in the special education field through your CEC Web site at www.cec.sped.org.

Participation—CEC membership provides you with direct access to state/provincial and local resources, contacts, and opportunities to affect education policies and practices in your community.

Impact—You'll be part of CEC's advocacy efforts to improve the educational success of children with exceptionalities, foster legislation that addresses their needs, and create better teaching conditions.

Professional Growth and Development—CEC's continuing education programs, including the Annual Convention & Expo, provide you with groundbreaking information, state-of-the-art resources, and new ways of reaching students.

Specialization—Deepen your expertise by joining any of CEC's 17 special-interest divisions and gain access to the in-depth critical information they supply.

Career Opportunities—CEC's Career Center is the only online resource devoted solely to special education careers. It's your source for job information as a prospective employee or employer.

Networking—CEC provides you with a wealth of opportunities to make valuable contacts, share advice and resources, and advance your career.

Member Discounts—Enjoy member discounts – up to 30% – on CEC's publications and professional development events. You'll also have the added advantage of professional liability, health, and other insurance plans at group rates, and other money-saving programs.

Support—Whether it's access to the latest information, development opportunities, or other membership benefits, let us know how we can help. CEC is there for you!

CEC Professional Divisions

CEC Divisions are special organizations which concentrate on a particular exceptionality of children or unique aspect of special education. Divisions publish journals and newsletters and hold conferences and workshops for members. Only CEC members are eligible for membership in CEC Professional Divisions.

- **Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)**–members receive the *Journal of Special Education Leadership* two times each year and four newsletters.
- **Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD)**–members receive four issues of *Behavioral Disorders*, three issues of *Beyond Behavior*, and six newsletters.
- **Division for Research (CEC-DR)**–members receive the *Journal of Special Education* and a newsletter, quarterly.
- **CEC Pioneers Division (CEC-PD)**–members receive three newsletters and an annual Membership Directory (upon request). Membership in CEC-PD is open only to persons who have been members of CEC for 20 years or more.
- **Council for Educational Diagnostic Services (CEDS)**–members receive *Assessment for Effective Intervention* and a newsletter, quarterly.
- **Division on Autism and Developmental Disabilities (DADD)**– members receive *Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities, Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities,* and a newsletter, quarterly.
- **Division for Communicative Disabilities and Deafness (DCDD)**–members receive four issues of *Communication Disorders Quarterly*.
- **Division on Career Development and Transition (DCDT)**–members receive three issues of *Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals* and two newsletters.
- **Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Exceptional Learners (DDEL)**–members receive two issues of *Multiple Voices for Ethnically Diverse Exceptional Learners* and two newsletters.
- **Division for Early Childhood (DEC)**–members receive the *Journal of Early Intervention, Young Exceptional Children*, and a newsletter, quarterly.
- **Division of International Special Education and Services (DISES)**–members receive two issues of the *Journal of International Special Needs Education* (online) and three newsletters.
- **Division for Learning Disabilities (DLD)**–members receive *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice* quarterly and three newsletters.
- **Division for Physical, Health and Multiple Disabilities (DPHMD)**–members receive *Physical Disabilities: Education and Related Services* twice yearly and two newsletters.
- **Division on Visual Impairments (DVI)**–members receive the DVI newsletter quarterly.
- **The Association for the Gifted (TAG)**–members receive the *Journal for the Education of the Gifted* and a newsletter, quarterly.
- **Technology and Media Division (TAM)**–members receive the *Journal of Special Education Technology* (online) and a newsletter, quarterly.
- **Teacher Education Division (TED)**–members receive *Teacher Education and Special Education* quarterly and three newsletters.

The Council for Exceptional Children

Council for Exceptional Children
The voice and vision of special education

CEC is an international community of educators who are the voice and vision of special and gifted education. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for individuals with exceptionalities and their families worldwide through professional excellence and advocacy.

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