

**TITLE 6            PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**  
**CHAPTER 61       SCHOOL PERSONNEL - SPECIFIC LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR**  
**INSTRUCTORS**  
**PART 10            TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH BLINDNESS/VISUAL IMPAIRMENT B-12**

**6.61.10.1            ISSUING AGENCY:** Public Education Department (PED).  
[6.61.10.1 NMAC - Rp, 6.61.10.1 NMAC, 8/1/2018]

**6.61.10.2            SCOPE:** Chapter 61, Part 10 governs licensure of teachers of students with blindness and visual impairment, birth through grade 12, for those persons seeking such licensure.  
[6.61.10.2 NMAC - Rp, 6.61.10.2 NMAC, 8/1/2018]

**6.61.10.3            STATUTORY AUTHORITY:** Sections 22-2-1, 22-2-2 and 22-10A-6, NMSA 1978.  
[6.61.10.3 NMAC - Rp, 6.61.10.3 NMAC, 8/1/2018]

**6.61.10.4            DURATION:** Permanent  
[6.61.10.4 NMAC - Rp, 6.61.10.4 NMAC, 8/1/2018]

**6.61.10.5            EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 1, 2018, unless a later date is cited in the history note at the end of a section.  
[6.61.10.5 NMAC - Rp, 6.61.10.5 NMAC, 8/1/2018]

**6.61.10.6            OBJECTIVE:** This rule governs licensure requirements in teaching of students with blindness and visual impairment, birth through grade 12, for persons seeking such licensure.  
[6.61.10.6 NMAC - Rp, 6.61.10.6 NMAC, 8/1/2018]

**6.61.10.7            DEFINITIONS:**

**A.            “Assistive technology”** means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

**B.            “Aural literacy skills”** means listening skills that must be developed for students who have an impaired visual system. These skills provide a solid foundation for learning, reading, mobility clues, social conversation, and interpretation of a variety of auditory signals received from the environment. These skills begin to develop in infancy and need to be sequentially and deliberately expanded during the school years. Listening becomes particularly important in secondary and post-secondary schools, when Braille or print reading assignments become long and laborious.

**C.            “Braille”** means a system of reading and writing that uses dot codes that are embossed on paper, developed by Louis Braille around 1829.

**D.            “Braillewriter”** means a machine used to produce embossed Braille symbols.

**E.            “Career education”** means a curriculum designed to teach individuals the skills and knowledge necessary in the world of work. This instruction may include field trips into the community to explore work opportunities and job requirements that would be gained by others with normal vision through incidental learning.

**F.            “Compensatory skills”** means any technique, habit, or activity that must be developed to overcome a severe visual impairment; e.g., daily living skills, social and emotional skills.

**G.            “Continuum of services”** means a full range of educational placements arranged in a stair step fashion, where one level of service leads directly to the next one.

**H.            “Daily living skills”** means skills that enable a visually impaired student to live independently.

**I.            “Educational placement”** means the location or type of classroom program (for example, resource room) arranged for a child’s education; the setting in which a student receives educational services.

**J.            “Functional vision”** means the presence of enough usable vision, giving the student the ability to use sight as a primary channel for learning. This term also means the total act of seeing and how the student uses sight to function educationally.

**K.            “Functionally blind”** means a student whose primary channels for learning are tactual and

auditory.

**L. “Least restrictive environment”** (LRE) means the environment, on the scale of a full continuum of services, where the student is given the maximum opportunity to learn.

**M. “Mobility”** means the ability to navigate from one’s present fixed position to one’s desired position in another part of the environment.

**N. “Nemeth”** means a system for reading and writing mathematical symbols based on the six-cell Braille cell and developed by Dr. Abraham Nemeth.

**O. “Orientation”** means the process of using the remained senses in establishing one’s position and relationship to all other significant objects in the environment.

**P. “Residual vision”** means the amount and degree of functional vision that one retains despite a visual handicap.

**Q. “Social interaction skills”** means that persons with normal vision most often learn social interaction skills social skills incidentally. The visual cues are not available for students with poor or no vision. These skills must be taught from infancy to adulthood in order for persons with visual impairment to gain the necessary skills.

**R. “Tactual skills”** means tactual awareness must be developed in infancy and need to be sequentially and deliberately expanded during the school years. These skills will become an effective method of literacy as well provide a method to gain information. This skill will have a major impact on concept development and future learning.

**S. “Visual efficiency”** means how well a person can use sight.

**T. “Visual impairments”** is overall term that refers to all levels of vision loss.

[6.61.10.7 NMAC - Rp, 6.61.10.7 NMAC, 8/1/2018]

#### **6.61.10.8 REQUIREMENTS:**

**A.** Persons seeking licensure to teach students with blindness and visual impairment pursuant to the provisions of this rule shall meet the requirements of Subsection A of 6.61.10.8 NMAC.

(1) Bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university and including, for those students first entering a college or university beginning in the fall of 2017, the following:

- (a) nine semester hours in communication
- (b) six semester hours in mathematics
- (c) eight semester hours in laboratory science
- (d) nine semester hours in social and behavioral science
- (e) nine semester hours in humanities and fine arts; and

(2) credits from a regionally accredited college or university which include 24 - 36 semester hours of professional education in a program of studies that prepares candidates to teach blind and visually impaired students, including completion of the PED’s approved functional areas and related competencies in professional education; and

(3) a mandatory student teaching or practicum component; and

(4) 24 - 36 semester hours in one teaching field such as mathematics, science(s), language arts, reading, or from among history, geography, economics, civics and government (or other social studies content related areas). Individuals must also complete the PED’s approved functional areas and related competencies in the teaching field; and

(5) in addition to the requirements specified in Paragraphs (1), (3), (4) and (6) of Subsection A of 6.61.10.8 NMAC, six hours of reading for those who have first entered any college or university on or after August 1, 2001 regardless of when they graduate or earn their degree; and

(6) passage of all required portions of the New Mexico teacher assessments (NMTA) or any successor teacher examination adopted by the PED.

**B.** Possess a valid certificate issued by the national board for professional teaching standards for the appropriate grade level and type.

[6.61.10.8 NMAC - Rp, 6.61.10.8 NMAC, 8/1/2018]

#### **6.61.10.9 REFERENCED MATERIAL:** Competencies for entry level teachers of blind and visual impairment.

**A.** Philosophical, historical, and legal foundations of special education for students with visual impairment. The teacher demonstrates his/her understanding of the unique role of the teacher of students with blindness/visual impairment including those with multiple impairment, through the knowledge of philosophical,

historical, and legal foundations of special education for students with visual impairment.

(1) Teacher understands federal entitlements (e.g., American printing house for the Blind quota funds).

(2) Teacher understands historical foundations for education of children with visual impairments, including the array of service options.

(3) Teacher understands current educational definitions of students with visual disabilities, including identification criteria, labeling issues, and current incident and prevalence figures.

**B.** Characteristics of the learner with blindness/visual impairment including those with multiple impairments to be addressed by the teacher:

(1) Teacher demonstrates an understanding of the unique learning needs of the child/student with blindness/visual impairment, including those with multiple impairment, through implementation showing knowledge of the unique characteristics of loss or impairment of vision;

(2) Teacher understands normal development of the human visual system;

(3) Teacher understands basic terminology related to the structure and function of human visual system;

(4) Teacher understands basic terminology related to diseases and disorders of the human visual system;

(5) Teacher understands development of secondary senses (hearing, touch, taste, smell) when the primary sense is impaired;

(6) Teacher understands the effects of a visual impairment on early development (motor system, cognition, social/emotional interactions, self-help, language);

(7) Teacher understands the effects of a visual impairment on social behaviors and independence;

(8) Teacher understands the effects of a visual impairment on language and communication;

(9) Teacher understands the effects of a visual impairment on the individual's family and the reciprocal impact on the individual's self-esteem;

(10) Teacher understands the psychosocial aspects of a visual impairment;

(11) Teacher understands effects of medications on the visual system;

(12) Teacher understands the impact of additional exceptionalities on students with visual impairments.

**C.** Implications of diagnosis, assessment and evaluation. The teacher effectively utilizes assessment techniques and procedures by understanding the implications of loss or impairment of vision.

(1) Teacher understands the impact of visual disorders on learning and experience.

(2) Teacher understands specialized terminology used in assessing individuals with visual impairments, both as it relates to the visual system and in areas of importance.

(3) Teacher understands ethical considerations and legal provisions, regulations, and guidelines (federal, state/provincial, and local) related to assessment of students with visual impairments (including the legal versus functional definitions of blindness and low vision.)

(4) Teacher understands specialized policies regarding referral and placement procedures for students with visual impairments.

(5) Teacher understands procedures used for screening, pre-referral, referral, and classifications of students with visual impairments, including vision screening methods, functional vision evaluation, and learning media assessment.

(6) Teacher understands alternative assessment techniques for students who are blind or have low vision.

(7) Teacher understands appropriate interpretation and application of scores obtained as a result of assessing individuals with visual impairments.

(8) Teacher understands relationships among assessment, IEP development, and placement as they affect vision-related services.

**D.** Instructional content and practice. The teacher demonstrates the skills required to plan for and teach students with blindness/visual impairment, including those with multiple impairments, by understanding current instructional content and practices.

(1) Teacher understands methods for the development of special auditory, tactual, and modified visual communication skills for students with visual impairments, including:

(a) Braille reading and writing;

(b) handwriting for students with low vision and signature writing for students who

are blind;

- (c) listening skills and compensatory auditory skills;
- (d) typing and keyboarding skills;
- (e) the use of unique technology for individuals with visual impairments;
- (f) the use of alternatives to nonverbal communication.

(2) Teacher understands methods to acquire disability-unique academic skills, including, but not exclusive to:

- (a) the use of an abacus;
- (b) the use of a talking calculator;
- (c) tactile graphics (including maps, charts, tables, etc.);
- (d) adapted science equipment

(3) Teacher understands methods for the development of basic concepts needed by young students who do not learn visually.

(4) Teacher understands methods for the development of visual efficiency, including instruction in the use of print adaptations, optical devices, and non-optical devices.

(5) Teacher understands methods to develop alternative reasoning and decision-making skills in students with visual impairments.

(6) Teacher understands methods to develop alternative organization and study skills for students with visual impairments.

(7) Teacher understands methods to prepare students with visual impairments for structured pre-cane orientation and mobility assessment and instruction.

(8) Teacher understands methods to develop tactual perceptual skills for students who are or will be primarily tactual learners.

(9) Teacher understands methods to teach human sexuality to students who have visual impairments, using tactual models that are anatomically accurate.

(10) Teacher understands methods to develop adapted physical and recreation skills for individuals who have visual impairments.

(11) Teacher understands methods to develop social and daily living skills that are normally learned or reinforced by visual means.

(12) Teacher understands strategies for developing career awareness in and providing vocational counseling for students with visual impairments.

(13) Teacher understands strategies for promoting self-advocacy in individuals with visual impairments.

(14) Teacher understands functional life skills instruction relevant to independent, community, and personal living and employment for individuals with visual impairments including:

- (a) methods for accessing printed public information;
- (b) methods for accessing public transportation;
- (c) methods for accessing community resources;
- (d) methods for acquiring practical skills (e.g., keeping personal records, time management, personal banking, emergency procedures).

(15) Teacher understands sources of specialized materials for students with visual impairments.

(16) Teacher understands techniques for modifying instructional methods and materials for students with visual impairments, and assisting classroom teachers in implementing these modifications.

**E.** Planning and managing the teaching/learning environment.

(1) The teacher demonstrates the ability to plan and managing the teaching/learning environment.

(2) Teacher understands a variety of input and output enhancements to computer technology that address the specific access needs of students with visual impairments in a variety of environments.

(3) Teacher understands model programs, including career-vocational and transition, which have been effective for students with visual impairments.

**F.** Managing student behavior and social skills. The teacher is able to manage student behavior and social interaction skills of students with loss or impairment of vision.

(1) Teacher understands teacher attitudes and behaviors that affect the behaviors of students with visual impairments.

(2) Teacher creates an atmosphere conducive to the promotion of positive student

involvement and self-concept.

**G.** Communication and collaborative partnerships. The teacher promotes communication and collaborative partnerships.

(1) Teacher understands strategies for assisting parents and other professionals in planning appropriate transitions for students who have visual impairments.

(2) Teacher understands sources of unique services, networks, and organizations for students with visual impairments.

(3) Teacher understands roles of paraprofessionals who work directly with students who have visual impairments (e.g., sighted readers, transcribers, aids) or who provide special materials to them.

(4) Teacher understands the need for role models who have visual impairments, and who are successful.

**H.** Professionalism and ethical practices. The teacher demonstrates professionalism and ethical practices.

(1) Teacher understands the consumer and professional organizations, publications, and journals relevant to the field of visual impairment.

(2) Teacher adheres to the code of ethics for teachers of students with visual impairments.  
[6.61.10.9 NMAC - Rp, 6.61.10.9 NMAC, 8/1/2018]

**History of 6.61.10 NMAC:**

6.61.10 NMAC, Teachers of Students with Blindness/Visual Impairment B-12, filed 8/15/2003, was repealed and replaced by 6.61.10 NMAC, Teachers of Students with Blindness/Visual Impairment B-12, effective 8/1/2018.

**History of Repealed Material:**

6.61.10 NMAC, Teachers of Students with Blindness/Visual Impairment B-12, filed 8/15/2003 - Repealed effective 8/1/2018.