**The Expanded Core Explained**

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**What is the**

**Expanded Core?**

Students who are blind or that have visual

impairments need specialized instruction in

order to understand concepts in our visual

world. The Expanded Core (EC) is a

guideline for students with visual

impairments to enhance the learning in

academic settings. There are many things

children with typical vision pick up just by

observation. The Expanded Core covers

skills in areas important to a student’s

functional living in order to participate with

other classmates in school and in the

community.

**What areas does the Expanded Core**

**cover?**

*Compensatory Access-* This will help your

student learn about the world around them.

Compensatory access lessons tend to cover

ideas such as; organization skills, time

management, and teaching the abacus

(calculator for the blind).

*Sensory Efficiency-* A student may need

instruction on maximizing their use of

vision, and identifying textures tactually and

underfoot. Lessons may focus on tracking,

visual motor activities, scanning, and visual

discrimination.

*Assistive Technology-* The majority of

students who are blind or visually impaired

will need some form of assistive technology.

Assistive technology comes in many forms

such as apps, braille writers, tablets, screen

readers, screen magnifiers, and audio books.

*Orientation and Mobility (O&M)* - It is

imperative for students with visual

impairments to learn to move safely,

independently, and efficiently through all

environments. We have three of the best

O&M specialists on staff. Kirsten Davies,

Pat Draheim, and James Baird.

*Independent Living* - This involves skills that

people perform to manage their home and

personal life. The following lessons are in

place to instill responsibility and

independence: dressing and clothing

management, mealtime independence,

housekeeping, money skills, and time

management.

*Social Interaction-* Having reduced vision

makes it difficult for students to acquire

information about their social environment.

Lessons for this could include, teaching

non-verbal communication, self-concept,

and other social skills.

*Recreation and Leisure -* This area focuses

on development of interest and skills

involved in physical and leisure activities.

Lessons for this area could include, play,

physical activity, health and fitness, team

and spectator sports, and leisure activities

and hobbies.

*Career Education-* This area includes

self-awareness and career exploration

activities. Lessons that teach subjects such

as career awareness, career exploration,

career preparation, and career placement

would all support this area.

*Self Determination-* This refers to the child’s

ability to advocate for his or her own needs

and desires to make choices for oneself. This

helps promote independence and successful

functioning in society. Self determination

can be reinforced through teaching

self-knowledge, awareness of individual

rights and responsibilities, how to make

informed choices, problem solving skills,

self-advocacy, and empowerment.