



SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Policy Manual



SUBJECT: South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Mission Statement

NUMBER: 1:10:8

A. PURPOSE

The South Dakota Board of Regents governs the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SDSBVI) was established in 1900 to serve children identified as blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind. SDSBVI's mission is to be a partner in educational success for children from birth through high school graduation or (up to age 21). SDSBVI has an on campus educational program as well as an outreach consultation services throughout the state of South Dakota. SDSBVI serves as a resource by providing informed, evidence-based consultation to families, schools, and educational teams statewide.

The principles outlined in this policy serve as overarching policy directions for the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The functions of the SDSBVI will align with Board of Regents strategies to advance students. Therefore, SDSBVI is devoted to delivering specialized educational services and resources for South Dakota children who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind, leading to their full and active participation. This shall be carried out through cooperative efforts with all appropriate state agencies, educational cooperatives, local education agencies, and colleges and universities.

B. DEFINITIONS

- 1. Board of Regents:** Defined as the constitutional body responsible for governing the Unified System of Public Higher Education including the special schools in South Dakota, which encompasses its supervision, coordination, management, and regulation. Board of Regents Policy 1:0, 1:1 and SDCL § 13-61 provides the authority to govern the SDSBVI.
- 2. Institution:** Defined as one of the two (2) special schools: South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SDSBVI) and South Dakota School for the Deaf (SDSD).
- 3. Statutory Mission:** The institutional mission defined under South Dakota Codified Law (SDCL § 13-61-1).

C. SOUTH DAKOTA SCHOOL FOR BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SDSBVI) was granted the responsibility to serve the children of this state in the 1900. South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired home office is physically located in Aberdeen, South Dakota. The institution also has many other outreach offices throughout the state.

D. ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING

- 1. Residential Program:** SDSBVI offers a residential program. Residential placement is provided to families where distance makes a daily commute unfeasible, or the child would benefit in the residential setting from educational services warranted. If residential accommodations are to be considered for a child enrolled at the SDSBVI, it will be done as a part of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. Residential housing shall be considered and reviewed based on documented student's needs. The IEP team will consider all options and work with families during that review.
- 2. Direct Services:** SDSBVI offers direct services at its educational environment during the regular school year as well as during the summer sessions. Students served on campus in Aberdeen during the school year receive academic instruction which includes special education and the expanded core curriculum incorporating skills of blindness. Students who meet SDSBVI qualifications can attend SDSBVI during the summer to learn specialized skills of blindness from the school's expanded core curriculum.
- 3. Outreach Program:** Children living in the state of South Dakota who have been professionally identified as blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind may be eligible for consultation services through the SDSBVI Outreach Program. These no-cost services can continue until graduation or at the completion of the qualified age limit.
- 4. Student Evaluations:** External evaluations are available for educational agencies that serve students who are blind, visually impaired, or deaf-blind. These evaluation services include initial evaluations, three-year re-evaluations, and on an as-needed basis. Evaluations provide eligibility determination information, student-specific recommendations, and educational resources.
- 5. Transition Services:** SDSBVI offers a transition service for the state of South Dakota. This transition service focuses on efforts with the local school district and families to develop and implement transitional and educational services as the student transitions into adulthood. SDSBVI also offers on campus programming during the school year to transitions student that are ages 18 – 21. The Learning to be Equipped for Adulthood Program (L.E.A.P.) provides students an opportunity to develop skills from a secondary educational setting into a postsecondary environment. The program utilizes the nine areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) for students with visual impairments, with a focus on real-life practice and application.

FORMS / APPENDICES:

None

SOURCE:

BOR March 1991; BOR May 1996; BOR December 2003; BOR May 2011; BOR October 2019.; BOR October 2022.