



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

AUG 21 2017

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Dear Rebecca:

Thank you for your recent correspondence regarding the Office of Special Education Programs' (OSEP's) May 17, 2017 Memorandum 17-05, *Eligibility Determinations for Children Suspected of Having a Visual Impairment, Including Blindness under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*. We appreciate that you and so many other highly regarded professionals with expertise in the field of blindness and visual impairment took the time to share your thoughts about the Memorandum.

We are pleased to hear that the guidance provided in the Memorandum will be helpful to support appropriate eligibility determinations for children suspected of having a visual impairment, their families, and those who work so hard to support children in having successful educational experiences. Glinda Hill and Lisa Pagano of my staff appreciated having the opportunity to meet with you by phone on August 14, 2017 and were excited to hear of your organization's plan to collaborate with other groups to help the field appropriately apply the guidance.

Kimberly Richey, Acting Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, and I recently had the opportunity to meet with Anthony Stephens, Director of Advocacy and Governmental Affairs at the American Council of the Blind and Mark Richert from your organization. OSEP is always interested in learning about ways we can work together to improve outcomes for children with visual impairments through improved instruction, including instruction in Braille, better technology, and increased employment opportunities for youth and adults with visual impairments.

We look forward to continued communication with you and your colleagues in the field of blindness and visual impairment and hope you will continue to share your ideas, suggestions, and any concerns with us.

Sincerely,

Ruth E. Ryder
Acting Director
Office of Special Education Programs