CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

TONY THURMOND
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

CALIFORNIA SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND
ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
500 Walnut Avenue, Fremont, CA 94536
(510) 794-3800

February 26, 2025

Re: Kaleb Ceebtsheej Xiong
DOB: 3/13/2020

Dear IEP Team:

Attached is the report of the hybrid assessment for Kaleby Xiong conducted on December 10, 11, 17, and 18 2024, by the California School for the Blind Assessment Team. Please distribute the report to any individuals who will benefit from reviewing it.

We enjoyed working with Kaleb's team. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Herlich, MA

California School for the Blind Assessment Center Coordinator;
Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments/Orientation & Mobility Specialist
Office: 510-936-5524
Cell: 510-320-2995
sherlich@csb-cde.ca.gov
pronouns: she/her (why)

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This report is provided to assist the student, parent/guardian, and the IEP Team to determine present and future goals. This report may not be shared with any individual or agency not directly involved with the student's education without the parent/guardian or the of-age student's permission.

Hybrid Field and Center Evaluation Report

Date of Report:	February 26, 2025
Evaluation Dates:	December 10, 11, 17, and 18, 2024
Student:	Kaleb Ceebtsheej Xiong
Date of Birth:	3/13/2020
Chronological age:	4 years, 9 months (at the time of the evaluation)
Parents:	Mary and Yang Xiong
School:	John Ehrhardt Elementary School
District:	Elk Grove Unified School District
Grade:	TK
Assessment Team	Shelby Zimmerman, MA, COMS; T*eacher of Students with Visual Impairments, Orientation and Mobility Specialist* Rebecka Henry, MS, CCC-SLP; *Speech and Language Pathologist* May Nguyen, MS, LEP, NCSP, ACUE; *Licensed Educational Psychologist*
Educational Team:	Chris Peterson, *Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments* Sharon Gendelman-Wilson, *Orientation and Mobility Specialist* Christa King, *Classroom Teacher* Gabriela Ruiz, *Speech-Language Pathologist* Holly McKee, *Occupational Therapist* Michelle Wallner, *Program Specialist* Micaela Cantu, *School Psychologist* Kelly Park, *Coordinator* Stefani Fontana, *APE Teacher* Katie Adams, *Speech-Language Pathology (private)*

Kaleb Ceebtsheej Xiong
Date of Birth: 3/13/2020
Chronological Age: 4 years, 9 months (at the time of the evaluation)

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Background Information

Medical

Prenatal, Birth, and Postnatal History
Kaleb was born via emergency C-section at 38 weeks gestation due to maternal high blood pressure and possible placenta eruption. He remained in the hospital for approximately two days. He was diagnosed with bilateral Persistent Hyperplastic Primary Vitreous, also known as Persistent Fetal Vasculature (PVF). PVF occurs when the vascular structures during eye development fail to regress. This persistence of fetal vasculature leads to abnormal eye development and, thus, the loss of vision. Kaleb underwent multiple eye surgeries within the first year of his life.

Per parent report, Kaleb met most of his motor milestones within expectations but had delays in communication and developmental milestones. He is not yet fully potty trained or feeding himself and has continued communication difficulties.

Kaleb Ceebtsheej Xiong
Date of Birth: 3/13/2020
Chronological Age: 4 years, 9 months (at the time of the evaluation)

Health History

At Kaleb's three-year-old physical, his parents expressed their concerns that he may have autism to their pediatrician, who concurred and recommended a developmental evaluation. The psychological assessment through the Alta Regional Center on 12/13/2023 found that Kaleb met the diagnostic criteria for the following:

- Autism spectrum disorder with language impairment and cognitive impairment, level 3 "requiring very substantial support" for social communication, and level 2 "requiring substantial support" for restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior (F84.0),
- Language disorder (F80.2),
- And global developmental delay (F88).

Family history is notable for autism spectrum disorder and developmental delay on both sides of the family. One of his sisters had IEP services for auditory processing disorder.

In addition, Kaleb regularly has sleep difficulties.

Medications and Allergies

Kaleb has no current medications and no known allergies.

Current Medical and Community Supports

Kaleb currently receives support from his pediatrician and ophthalmologist. His medically provided services include the following:

- Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services for two hours twice a week,
- Occupational therapy for one hour once a week,
- And speech-language therapy for one hour once a week

Kaleb's community supports include Alta Regional Center, California Children's Services (CCS), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medi-Cal, and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS). Due to Kaleb's limited safety awareness and blindness, the family expressed a strong desire to continue to receive IHSS.

Vision

Due to persistent hyperplastic primary vitreous (PVF), Kaleb has no light perception (i.e., blindness) in both eyes. He also has keratopathy (i.e., corneal degeneration). He receives regular eye health care through Kaiser Permanente.

Education

Kaleb Ceebtsheej Xiong
Date of Birth: 3/13/2020
Chronological Age: 4 years, 9 months (at the time of the evaluation)

Kaleb received Early Intervention through Alta Regional Center before attending Preschool at Foulks Ranch Elementary. Kaleb has been enrolled at John Ehrhardt Elementary School since August 2024.

Current Environments

Home

Kaleb lives at home with his mother, father, and four of his siblings. While Hmong is spoken, English is the primary language spoken in the home and is Kaleb's primary language.

School

Kaleb initially qualified for an Individualized Education Program (IEP) on 5/9/2023 under the eligibility categories of visual impairment (primary) and speech-language impairment (secondary). He is enrolled in a mild-moderate Special Day Class (SDC) composed of transitional kindergarten and kindergarten students at John Ehrhardt Elementary. Kaleb's 5/1/2024 IEP includes 12 goals addressing functional, pre-academic, fine motor, and communication skills.

- Tactile discrimination: finding a tactile shape that is different in a field of four shapes
- Braille pre-reading: using a light touch to track lines from left to right
- Braille writing: brailling lines of the letter "g" and "for" sign
- Early math: counting one to five using one-to-one correspondence
- Positional concepts: following directions using spatial concepts
- Independent travel: navigating his classroom with a modified human guide, trailing, and protective techniques
- Cane use: consistently sweeping and keeping the cane on the ground when walking
- Bilateral fine motor coordination: cutting paper with regular or adapted scissors
- Fine motor: isolating each finger and producing an imprint on playdoh
- Expressive language: using three or more word phrases to communicate for a variety of purposes with the use of common vocabulary
- Receptive language: following at least 10 single-step directions containing early language concepts (shapes, prepositional, qualitative, and quantitative concepts)
- Social/emotional and pragmatic language: participating in games by turn-taking and following the rules

His current IEP services include the following:

- One-on-one aide daily for the duration of the school day
- Vision services
    - Consultation between the TVI and classroom teacher for 15 minutes once a week
    - Individual vision services for 30 minutes four times a week through consultation, observation, and direct intervention
- Orientation and mobility services individually for 20 minutes twice a week
- Specialized academic instruction in a group for 210 minutes five times a week in a level 2 self-contained transitional kindergarten and kindergarten classroom
- Adapted physical education individually for 20 minutes twice a month
- Occupational therapy individually for 30 minutes three times a month
- Integrated speech-language services (including consultation, collaboration, coaching, and direct instruction) for 30 sessions lasting 45 minutes each

His Extended School Year (ESY) services included individual and small group instruction in the preschool classroom for 120 minutes five times a week during the summer of 2024.

Validity Statement

Kaleb's vision, primary language, cultural background, sensory, and communication needs were considered before selection and during the interpretation of evaluation procedures and measures. Kaleb is an English speaker, although Hmong is also used in the home, and testing was conducted solely in English. Scores on tests can be influenced by the individual's motivation, attention, interests, and opportunities for learning. Please keep in mind that an individual assessment cannot assess all of the skills that Kaleb might be capable of to help him achieve his goals and enjoy life. All assessment procedures measure a limited sample of an individual's total repertoire, a snapshot of skills and development.

Many factors impact the reliability and validity of testing for Kaleb. Normative samples, on which standard scores are based, typically do not include students with Kaleb's unique background. Although standardized assessment was attempted, his self-directed tendencies, language, and processing differences made it difficult for him to respond to standardized prompts.

The evaluation included a review of records, interviews with Kaleb's parents and educational staff, two days of observation at school, and three home visits for observation and direct assessment to address the referral questions. The majority of the evaluation tools utilized were criterion-referenced and informal assessments. Testing

was conducted using a play-based approach with toys and other objects to promote engagement. Instructions were simplified and repeated as needed. Developmental tasks were tried across multiple days to check Kaleb's knowledge. The examiners also utilized dynamic assessment procedures, which measure students' potential to learn and understand their environment instead of their knowledge base or life experiences. Extended response time and frequent breaks were given to accommodate his sensory and processing needs.

Rapport was quickly established. Kaleb responded inconsistently to bids for interaction from examiners but made frequent social contact on his own. The findings discussed in this report represent helpful insights into Kaleb's current capabilities and functioning levels. His performance on the evaluation tasks may not wholly reflect his skills but may reflect the level of support needed in his educational programming. No single assessment or procedure was used as the sole determining criteria for eligibility or educational planning recommendations. The test results have been integrated with data from other sources, including a review of records, interviews, observations, and work samples to ensure ecological validity.

Reason for Referral

A joint referral for assessment was submitted by Kaleb's parents and educational team, with priorities from both considered in the evaluation design. Parent priorities for evaluation included understanding Kaleb's cognitive development, communication, and social skills and whether autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and developmental delay should be added as qualifying disabilities to his Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). Educational team priorities for assessment included addressing Kaleb's sensitivity to sounds, his level of braille abilities, and how to support his communication needs.

This evaluation focused on answering the following questions:

- How can Kaleb's communication needs best be addressed?
- How can Kaleb's IEP team best foster his Expanded Core Curriculum (e.g., social skills, learning media, and sensory efficiency) skills?
- What is Kaleb's current cognitive functioning, and how can the IEP team best support his learning?

Findings and Recommendations

The evaluation included a review of records, interviews with Kaleb's parents and educational staff, two days of observation at school, and three home visits for observation and direct assessment to address the referral questions.

Question 1: How Can Kaleb's communication needs best be addressed?

Kaleb's communication abilities were evaluated via observation at school and home, interviews with his parents and educational team, parent questionnaires, and the INSITE Developmental Checklist, Third Edition. Currently, Kaleb receives speech and language services at school in a group push-in model and from an outside provider in a one-to-one setting.

Language Development

While at school, Kaleb did a fair job of communicating to get his needs met. His school day was highly structured, and the classroom staff utilized a personalized tactile reward chart to motivate Kaleb. Kaleb demonstrated that he understood the process of completing a task to earn a token. He used spoken language to ask simple questions (e.g., "See mommy after snack?"), to label, make statements about what he was doing, and to answer simple questions (e.g., "What do we do now?" and "Zip it back.") He was not observed to use language to ask for help, for a break, or to make a direct request. During the school observation, Kaleb had no behavioral issues due to communication difficulties.

Kaleb's communication style, needs, and sensory-seeking behaviors were strikingly different at home than at school. Kaleb's parents reported frequent communication breakdowns, which led to emotional meltdowns and tantrums. For example, Kaleb asks for a grape every day after school. When they are out of grapes, he continues to ask for one and becomes upset, suggesting he does not understand what his parents are saying or the concept of "gone." Examiners also observed an interaction where Kaleb tossed a toy and said, "All done." When the toy was removed, he became agitated and wanted it back. When he was given the toy back, he again tossed it and said, "All done," which suggests that he does not actually mean that he is "all done" but has paired that phrase with the action of tossing or dropping the toy. Kaleb did not demonstrate a consistent use of "yes/no," which causes frustration at home. Per the parent report, "It feels like a constant guessing game."

At home, Kaleb also engaged in more vocal stim behaviors, such as singing repetitive songs and repeating the same request many times. He appeared more at ease socially and frequently approached the examiners to show them his toys. While Kaleb's behavior at home was overall less compliant and more energetic than at school, he communicated in ways not seen at school, including bids for social connection and making requests.

Kaleb's language is significantly comprised of echolalia, or repeated speech. He sometimes repeats sentences and phrases of six or more words in length. Kaleb has started integrating repeated phrases with his own generated language to create more unique and meaningful utterances. This suggests that Kaleb is a gestalt language learner. Gestalt language learners acquire language in large chunks and slowly break them down into meaningful parts. Typically, we consider language acquisition to happen by learning single words and stringing them together. Gestalt language processing is common among children with ASD and with visual impairments.

It is important to note that Kaleb's ability to copy long sentences may make him appear more advanced in his language development than he is. While Kaleb may use a word, that does not ensure he understands its meaning. For example, his parents reported that he uses words like "hot" and "don't touch" in reference to the stove; however, he does not actually refrain from touching the stove and needs to be monitored closely for safety.

Language Assessments

The INSITE Developmental Checklist Third Edition was administered to Kaleb over two days at his home. Kaleb demonstrated scattered language skills, with most of his skills landing in the 30 to 40-month age range. He had some emerging scores in the 44-month range, such as using four- to five-word utterances and counting to 10. Kaleb had not mastered important developmental language skills, including:

- Consistent use of pronouns
- Asking questions to gain information
- Use and understanding of feelings words
- Following two to three commands given at one time
- Understanding "who," "what," and "where" questions
- Use of descriptive words that are opposite (such as hot and cold, big and little). Note: this skill is emerging. See more on basic concepts under Question Three.

Overall, Kaleb showed higher skills in expressive language, which is unsurprising due to the amount of echolalia in his speech. Kaleb's strengths also included identifying size, labeling items (including shapes), and rote counting.

Kaleb's parents were given the Children's Communication Checklist Second Edition (CCC2) to complete. This tool helps rate aspects of communication, screens for general language, and identifies pragmatic language impairment. Based on his parents' scores, Kaleb's General Communication Composite had a standard score of 79; the average range for this tool was 85-115, indicating that communication was an area of need for

Kaleb. It is important to note that this tool is not normed on students with visual impairments. However, items that involve sight were discussed with his parents or not counted against his score. More information on Kaleb's scores can be found in Appendix A: Test Descriptions and Results.

Alternative and Assistive Communication (AAC)

Kaleb was evaluated for a speech-generating AAC device by his private SLP on 05/15/24. Shortly after, Kaleb was given a Toby Dynavox device (TD I-110) with a keyguard to trial at home. At the time of the observation, Kaleb was still in the exploration phase and was not yet using the device to communicate. During the observation, Kaleb could isolate his index finger to press buttons and play the messages. Per parent report, Kaleb will sometimes repeat the phrases that the device plays. While Kaleb is a verbal communicator, an AAC device may benefit his expressive language growth. Research has shown that AAC improves and does not hinder spoken language (Miller et al., 2006). A speech-generating device's first-person modeling and immediate feedback will likely support Kaleb's speech development.

Communication Recommendations

- Continue to respond to Kaleb's speech as though he means what he says, even if his words do not match what he wants, to reinforce the meaning of his words.
    - Teach clear and consistent outcomes. For example, when he says "all done," put away the object(s). Use simple language to explain.
        - There will be meltdowns, but an emotional reaction can reinforce learning.
        - Refrain from offering choices when Kaleb is already in a heightened emotional state.
        - Teach Kaleb clear phrases to use with clear outcomes and keep them consistent.
            - I want the _____.
            - All done with the ____.
        - Model the phrases for him, rather than asking, until he has mastered the phrases in the correct contexts.

- Begin introducing a tactile schedule at home to support Kaleb's learning. He learns from routines and repetition, so a more consistent schedule will likely help him understand what is coming and feel prepared and able to communicate his needs. See examples of a tactile schedule in Appendix D.
    - The schedule does not need to be complex or adhere to strict times. Listing the activities in the order they occur is a good way to start a simple

schedule. For example, arrive home, snack, free time, swing time, dinner, bath/bathroom, and bedtime.
    - Keep the schedule as consistent as possible, with some items such as "free time" and "bedtime" remaining constant.
    - Include after-school activities such as ABA, OT, and SLP sessions.
    - Eventually, Kaleb can participate in making the schedule and making choices.

- Utilize the tactile schedule to teach Kaleb sequence and time concepts such as: first/then, before/after, first/second/last, etc.
    - To help Kaleb understand when an activity ends, have him place symbols of finished tasks in an "all done" bucket. Always use the same bucket/container, and help Kaleb put it into it while telling him, "____ is all done."
    - Encourage Kaleb's independence by supporting his ability to transition between activities rather than guiding him physically.
        - "A major goal in using tactile and sensory cues is for students to make the connection between the presentation of the cue and what is to happen next. After consistent use of tactile and sensory cues, teachers will detect connections being made as they observe that the student performs behaviors that indicate he is anticipating what will follow the cue." (Welch, 2016, Chapter 7, p. 237)

- Support Kaleb's ability to communicate clearly by working on basic core vocabulary skills. Core words comprise most of our vocabularies and are typically made up of prepositions, verbs, commands such as "stop/go," etc. Kaleb does not currently have a reliable yes/no response, which causes frustration for him and his communication partners. Adding additional sensory information may help Kaleb strengthen this skill.
    - Consider utilizing touch cues for yes/no. This could be a tactile sign or a touch to indicate that Kaleb should shake or nod his head.
    - Make learning these concepts fun and active. Use highly rewarding options for "yes" practice and silly or clearly unwanted options for "no" practice. For example:
        - Do you want the grape? Yes! Want the grape!
        - Do you want the vacuum? No! Don't want the vacuum.
    - Whenever possible, make the practice times engaging and physical. For example:

        - Practice “stop/go” with a fun rolling toy or wagon or in the swing.
        - Practice “more” with bubbles in the bathtub.
        - Practice “open/close” with a greeting card that makes noise, or a container with something fun inside.

- Create tactile symbols that are unique and meaningful to Kaleb.
    - Have the SLPs and TVI collaborate to make them, with help from the family, for input on meaningful icons.
    - APH has a useful kit for creating tactile icons called the Tactile Connections Kit. This is available on quota funds. While the school does have the STACS kit, it is recommended that Kaleb’s icon be personalized rather than the generic STACS icons. The Tactile Connections Kit symbols are also smaller and easier to transport.
        - Have a set of icons available at school and at home.
        - Include braille on the icons to increase Kaleb’s exposure.
        - When creating icons, avoid miniatures. For example, a miniature car does not represent Kaleb's experience of what a “car” is. Consider how Kaleb interacts with a car. A piece of a seatbelt or the fabric from his car seat may be more relatable than a toy car.
        - Get creative when creating icons for abstract concepts such as “want” or “stop.” Consider how to make the icons tactually different.
        - Consult the many free resources that share information about tactile objects. Below are some recommended resources:
            - Perkins School for the Blind
            - AACCommunity
            - Paths to Literacy
            - Texas Deafblind Project

- Teach Kaleb vocabulary in an experience-driven way whenever possible to reduce empty language. Seek to have Kaleb touch, smell, and listen to learn about his environment. Collaborate with the O&M specialist, SLP, and family to ensure consistency.

- Teach Kaleb how to compare and contrast to increase his understanding of nouns and concepts. Blind students often struggle to identify salient features required to describe, compare, and contrast. Incorporate real items into lessons whenever possible. For example, you may teach him to compare and contrast a spoon and a spatula. Give Kaleb the utensils to explore while you talk about

them. Include descriptive features such as relative size, shape, parts of a whole, what it's made out of, feeling, function, semantic category (e.g., people, plants, animals, etc.), location, etc. Teach words including "both" and "differences."

- Increase SLP time to include pull-out or small group sessions (1 peer).
    - Teach basic concepts that are crucial for learning such as:
        - above/below, inside/outside, high/low, etc.
        - Following directions with simple prepositions.
        - Categorical knowledge. This is an area VI students frequently struggle with due to a lack of incidental learning and requires explicit instruction.
    - Work on basic social skills in a play-based format to teach an understanding of pronouns and turn-taking.
    - Reinforce pretend play skills in sessions and utilize real objects in play to practice vocabulary. See recommendations under Learning (Cognition, Processing, and Pre-Academics) for more information on pretend play.

- Teach Kaleb social language games that incorporate turn-taking and encourage social interaction. For example:
    - 20 questions
    - Simon Says
    - What's in the bag? (Take turns touching something you cannot see, describing it, and trying to name the item.)

- Narrate the day by choosing times of the day to dictate what you are doing at home. Because of his vision impairment, Kaleb misses out on crucial moments of incidental learning. Narrating your routines gives Kaleb more vocabulary and lets him know what is happening around him. This will also support Kaleb's pretend play development, as he will have words and actions to imitate that he otherwise would not learn as he cannot see what you are doing. The following can be good times to narrate:
    - Cooking meals. Use verbs like "mixing," "scooping," and "frying."
    - Bath time. Use verbs like "pouring," "washing," and "scrubbing."
    - Cleaning the house. Use verbs like "wiping," "spraying," and "sweeping."
    - Let Kaleb feel what you are doing (e.g., getting the shampoo bottle, touching a mixing bowl, holding a wooden spoon, and holding the broom).

- Continue to have Kaleb trial the AAC device and work with his private SLP to expand his communication. If the device is to become a primary mode of communication, it will need to go with Kaleb to school and the community.

Question 2: How can Kaleb's IEP team best foster his Expanded Core Curriculum (e.g., social skills, learning media, and sensory efficiency) skills?

The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) is a specialized set of vision-related skills for blind and low vision students. While these students are expected to follow the same core curriculum (e.g., English language arts, math, and science) as their sighted peers, there are certain areas in which they need specific instruction because of their vision loss. The nine skill areas that have been identified as those that require direct teaching to achieve mastery are assistive technology, compensatory, orientation and mobility, sensory efficiency, independent living, social interaction, career education, recreation and leisure, and self-determination. In May 2019, A Bill of Rights for All Children with Visual Impairment and their Families was drafted by the Council of Schools and Services for the Blind (COSB) and the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) to inform parents, educators, and legislatures on the fundamental rights of students who are visually impaired and is intended as a companion document to the 1990 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The Bill of Rights states that "[t]he Expanded Core Curriculum is equal in importance to the standard academic curriculum and will not be overlooked in the educational plan" (COSB & AER, 2019, para. 7). As such, incorporating the ECC into Kaleb's school day will be an integral part of his education.

As a blind, autistic student, Kaleb needs to be taught much more than the common core curriculum. Due to the lack of incidental learning (i.e., learning through visual observation), the world needs to be brought to within his arms' reach. The educational team has concerns regarding the amount of time required for ECC services during the short three-and-a-half-hour transitional kindergarten school day. Fortunately, there is much overlap between ECC skills and naturally occurring moments throughout Kaleb's day as concept development is embedded within the California Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (California Department of Education, 2024). Capitalizing on these learning opportunities will be essential to build Kaleb's foundational concept development. Many of Kaleb's ECC skills are emerging, which is to be expected as he is just starting school. It is critical that the ECC skills be addressed in Kaleb's school and home learning to foster his autonomy and independence. While all areas of the ECC are important, key areas are outlined below.

Assistive Technology

Assistive technology (AT) refers to the knowledge and skills essential to using technology to access all aspects of daily living, whether at school, home, or the community. Functional use of AT has not yet been introduced to Kaleb beyond his AAC device (See Alternative and Assistive Communication for more information about AAC use). Based on observation, hands-on trials, and interviews with parents, Kaleb has shown dexterity for and interest in AT. It is vital to expose Kaleb to assistive technology from a young age, commensurate with technology exposure for same-age peers without disabilities (McNear & Farrenkopf, 2014). As Kaleb grows, AT features (e.g., dictation and text-to-speech) will help provide him access to visual information and social/leisure activities that would otherwise not be available.

Compensatory

Compensatory skills allow blind and low vision students to access their education curriculum. Examples of compensatory skills include communication modes, access to print materials (e.g., braille), study skills, organization skills, concept development, and literacy. Currently, Kaleb primarily accesses information in his environment auditorily and uses tactile skills as a secondary learning medium. Tactile skills are an area of strength for Kaleb; he is currently working on tactilely identifying two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, tracking braille lines, identifying braille letters, and using a braillewriter. When reading braille, he typically uses one hand at a time but will use two hands together when prompted. Many appropriate accommodations with tactile representations/manipulatives are being used in class with Kaleb (e.g., class values system and calendar patterns).

The Braille Readiness Grid (McComiskey) is an observational assessment tool used to identify which literacy readiness skills a student has mastered. Not all skills need to be mastered to begin a formal literacy curriculum. However, the flow chart within each domain (i.e., tactile, fine motor, listening/attention and expression, concept development, and book and story skills) can indicate when a student is ready for formal literacy instruction. Kaleb has mastered a few items within each domain (e.g., locates objects by touch, turns book pages one at a time, shows object permanence) and has emerging skills in others (e.g., uses two hands cooperatively, shows finger strength and dexterity, plays symbolically, concept development). See Appendix A: Braille Readiness Grid for the completed flow chart. Kaleb needs to master more of these foundational concepts before focusing on more advanced literacy skills like letters and/or beginning a formal braille literacy curriculum.

Orientation and Mobility

Orientation and Mobility (O&M) focuses on the concepts and skills necessary to understand position in space and get from one place to another safely and efficiently. Kaleb is curious about the environment around him and explores with his cane, hands, and feet. Songs and music help motivate Kaleb and encourage focus during O&M lessons. Parents are concerned for Kaleb's safety as he shows minimal fear of or reaction to bumping into things and refuses to use a long cane outside the school day. Typically, Kaleb uses a modified guide technique (e.g., holding an adult's hand) to navigate at school and in the community. As such, he has few opportunities to interact with the environment and learn about natural consequences (i.e., the results of his actions that occur naturally, without any outside intervention). When playing with a toy wagon at recess during the observation, Kaleb used it in a push/pull manner and problem-solved (i.e., moved the wagon in different directions) when it was stuck. The educational team does a good job at incorporating and reinforcing O&M skills throughout the school day (e.g., reminders to keep his cane tip on the ground and in front while walking with a guide and describing smells and sounds).

Sensory Efficiency

Sensory efficiency skills refer to Kaleb's use of available senses to access literacy and concept development, including hearing, touch, smell, and taste. During the assessment, Kaleb showed many sensory needs and preferences (e.g., fidgeting, swinging his legs, rocking, and pressing his ears). He was good at meeting his own sensory needs in appropriate ways that did not disturb others. The educational team incorporated sensory skills well while Kaleb walked around campus (e.g., describing and discussing crunching leaves and a skunk smell). During home visits, Kaleb showed his ability to participate in testing/instruction while self-regulating his sensory needs (e.g., fidgeting with items, moving, standing, and swaying in the work area while responding). Allowing Kaleb to implement these strategies throughout the school day will help him to focus more on learning.

Since Kaleb is autistic, in addition to being blind, it is necessary to think of his needs and accommodations as a hierarchy. The hierarchy of needs will likely be different in different environments. For example, the need to reduce the noise of the cafeteria or during circle time outweighs the need for full hearing access when seated in these situations, so wearing sound-muffling devices (i.e., headphones) would be appropriate. However, Kaleb needs full auditory access when walking, so wearing headphones while walking would not be appropriate.

At home, Kaleb presents quite differently from school, and the expectations in each environment are in contrast. At school, Kaleb sits quietly in his chair; at home, he moves, spins, jumps, mouths objects, and makes noise. Note that sitting quietly at a desk does not equate to learning. Given Kaleb's sensory needs for movement and tactile input, he has a different learning style than his peers. While in class, he is likely primarily focusing on producing calm hands and a quiet body, leaving little available focus for lesson content. Since Kaleb works hard throughout the school day to demonstrate student-ready behavior, he is tired in the afternoon and needs time for his body to unwind. Understanding Kaleb as a whole learner across environments will help his IEP team know how to work best with him.

Independent Living Skills

Independent living skills include the tasks and functions people perform in daily life to increase their independence and contribute to the family structure. Much of Kaleb's independent living skills require maximum support; his skills are delayed compared to same-age peers. At school, he is working on zipping/unzipping his jacket with support and feeling comfortable in the kindergarten restroom. At home, his parents fully support him for mealtime, dressing, hygiene, health, and safety needs. Continued exposure and increasing opportunities for independence after direct instruction will be essential for growth in this domain.

Social Interaction

Social interaction skills involve reading and responding to social situations without visual cues, including body language, conversation patterns, cooperative skills, interactions with others, social etiquette, development of relationships and friendships, knowledge of self, and social behavior monitoring. Blind and low vision students need careful, conscious, and explicit instruction in this area, as sighted children learn nearly all social skills by observing their environment and people. Social interaction is a concern for Kaleb's parents and educational team, as he does not seek out engagement with peers or siblings. During the evaluation, Kaleb warmed up to the assessors quickly and brought items to show them. Kaleb does not demonstrate pretend play skills, which same-age peers are beginning to use to connect and learn social rules. Teaching Kaleb pretend play skills will support his friendship development. Identifying familiar people by their voice, showing interest in new people, and creating emotional bonds with family members are areas of relative strength. See specific examples of activities to try under ECC Recommendations.

ECC Recommendations

- Infuse the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) throughout Kaleb's day, at school and home, focusing on basic concept development. These skills need to be specifically taught as they are not gained through incidental learning. *ECC Essentials: Teaching the Expanded Core Curriculum to Students with Visual Impairments* (Allman & Lewis, 2014) has many lesson plans and activities for incorporating ECC skills in the classroom. The use of consistent strategies and language will be essential for understanding.

- Track ECC skills Kaleb should acquire using the Utah School for the Blind ECC High School Readiness Checklist - Preschool & kindergarten. The checklist suggests skills to master across various environments (home, school, and community), is free, and can be obtained by completing the Google Form linked above. As an IEP team, adapt skills to meet Kaleb's abilities and needed support. This checklist will give the team a good idea of meaningful skills to work on with Kaleb.

- Develop the concept of "stop/go" through a play-based approach. In emergency or safety situations, Kaleb must be able to respond to a verbal and/or physical "stop" cue.

Assistive Technology

- Consider using a Joy Player (available through federal quota funds) for music. Instruction in the device will reinforce concept development (e.g., directions, positions, and shapes). When using the device, be cognizant of the purpose of the activity. If it is for leisure or a reward, allow Kaleb to interact with the device as he pleases. A benefit of using this device as a reward is that it encourages active participation.

- Begin introducing Kaleb to the use of an iPad. Start with cause-and-effect apps while teaching basic finger isolation and movements so that he builds familiarity with the device. Teaching can then progress to fun apps that teach iPad swipe gestures (e.g., finger movements) in preparation for using VoiceOver (i.e., a text-to-speech accessibility feature). As Kaleb develops his iPad skills, he may use Siri as a virtual assistant with voice control. Staff may also model using Siri to help Kaleb understand its function.
    - Cause and effect app suggestions include Ratatap Drums, Music Sparkles, and Bebot-Robot Synth. Additionally, pausing music on YouTube

Kids and having Kaleb tap the screen with one finger to restart the music is an engaging way for him to interact with the iPad.
    - Use Guided Access, an accessibility feature that limits the iPad to a single app and lets an adult control which features are available to prevent Kaleb from accidentally closing out of the desired app or clicking on advertisements.
    - Perkins School for the Blind posted a blog about Apps That Teach VoiceOver Gestures. While not all apps listed in this post are appropriate for Kaleb, apps such as Ballyland Magic Plus may be in the future.

- Introduce Kaleb to using a Braille Buzz, an instructional tool for young braille learners that encourages practice with braille characters and phonics. This tool may be used as a warm-up and/or reward during braille lessons and for fun at home. The article TVI and Kindergartener's Review of the Braille Buzz (Perkins) describes how to use the device and sample activities.

Compensatory Skills

- Continue to monitor Kaleb's literacy readiness skills with the Braille Readiness Grid and Indicators of Reading Readiness form found in Chapter 3 of *Keys to Educational Success: Teaching Students with Visual Impairments and Multiple Disabilities* (Bruce et al., 2016).

- Discontinue focus on the alphabet. Instead, work towards developing Kaleb's tactile pre-literacy skills. Foundations for Tactile Literacy: A Reference Tool for the Tactile Journey, Emergent to Advanced Skills (APH, 2024) is helpful for understanding and tracking tactile skills. The Tactile Skills Matrix (APH) links APH products that help support learning specific tactile skills. Sample ideas can be found on the Paths to Literacy blog post Tactile Activities for Pre-Braille Learners (Paths to Literacy).

- Create story bags and boxes for Kaleb, a collection of actual items that correspond to parts of a story. Consider making multiple bags/boxes so that each student in class can interact with something while the teacher talks about that part of the book. For example, *The Foot Book* by Dr. Seuss may have a corresponding bag that includes slippers, towels, cotton balls, toy clown, big shoes, and small shoes. Be sure to use real objects, not miniatures or plastic representations, when possible. Refer to the following resources for additional ideas:
    - Story Boxes (Paths to Literacy)

    - Making Story Boxes (Paths to Literacy)
    - Story Boxes: A Hands-on Literacy Experience (Wonder Baby)
    - Easy to Create Story Boxes (Paths to Literacy)

- Create experience books with real objects that are meaningful to Kaleb. Experience books provide a multimodality approach to narrative that also develops pre-braille skills and fosters important connections between oral language and the written code of braille. The content of an experience book is based on Kaleb's direct experience (e.g., a cooking activity, a walk, or a shopping trip). Create the book with Kaleb. Steps for participation may include:
    - Recount (with prompts as necessary) a recent experience (immediately preceding is best).
    - Write and braille a letter, word, or sentence (depending on his capability) that captures each event in the experience (e.g., *I stirred the batter* and *I put it in a pan).*
    - Attach tactile reminders of the experience to each book page, such as the box top from a cake mix or a cupcake liner.
    - Fasten the pages together into a booklet.
    - Read and share the story with classmates and friends.
    - Create two of every tactile experience book so that one copy stays at school and the other goes home with Kaleb, allowing him to continue to read the experience books over time, reinforcing his pre-braille and narrative skills.
    - To promote iPad skills, use an app such as Google Slides, Pictello, or My Story – Book Maker for Kids to create a digital/talking version of the book. These apps involve generating a short narrative with a photo or picture accompaniment. Kaleb or an adult could provide a sentence of recorded narration about his experience on each page. Although the pictures would not be visually accessible to Kaleb, he could share the stories with friends or family.
    - There are many ideas and guides on how to make experience books, such as:
        - You Can Do It! Tips for Families Who Are Just Getting Started (Paths to Literacy)
        - Bath Time Discussion Box and Book (Paths to Literacy)
        - Experience Books (Paths to Literacy)
        - Tactile Book Project (Lighthouse Guild)
        - Accessible Books and Literacy: Supporting and Encouraging a

Love for Literacy (Kenrick)

- Use a non-slip pad and/or tray on Kaleb's desk when presenting tactile items to explore for organization and to facilitate localizing items.

- Build a library of braille books both at school and at home to increase Kaleb's exposure to literacy. Several twin vision (i.e., print and braille) books were given to Kaleb's parents; they also registered for the National Braille Press Children's Braille Book Club. Additional braille book options to explore include:
    - The Braille Special Collection - Dots for Tots ages 2-5
    - Seedlings Braille Books for Children
    - On the Way to Literacy series (APH) has tactile storybooks designed to assist young children in developing key literacy skills. The Moving Ahead series (APH) is the next step for students with some tactile representation experience.
    - Braille Books Program (ActionFund) provides a free braille book to registered participants each month.
    - The National Library Service Braille-on-Demand pilot program, launched in 2022, allows all registered patrons to receive five hard-copy braille books per month with no return date. Patrons may request books directly or contact their network library for assistance filing their requests. Any braille book available on Braille and Audio Media Download (BARD) can be produced in hard copy by this program. Books will be mailed directly to the requesting patrons.

- Begin labeling items throughout the classroom and home using braille labels. Create the label with Kaleb and have him help place the label on the item. For example, if there is a shelf of braille books at home or in the classroom, use the hand-under-hand technique with Kaleb to braille the label, feel the braille, help place the label on the shelf, read the label, and then show Kaleb the braille books. Avoid placing labels throughout Kaleb's environment without his help, as he needs to understand the meaning behind the labels and learn where they are placed. A 6dot Braille Label Maker, a portable embossing labeler with a braille keyboard that can also be connected to a QWERTY keyboard for non-braille writers, could help create labels.

- Ensure that Kaleb's table/desk and chair set-up allow his feet to be flat on the floor (or footstool) with his arms bent 90 degrees at the elbow for tablework across environments, particularly for pre-literacy work. This set-up will support

good ergonomics, lessen the strain on Kaleb's body, and build good reading habits.

Orientation & Mobility

- Consider introducing an adaptive mobility device (AMD) (instead of a long cane) at school and in the community to encourage Kaleb's exploration of the environment, independent purposeful movement, and understanding of tactile feedback. A device such as the Pediatric Belt Cane, a lightweight, wearable rectangular assistive safety device that connects with magnets to a custom-made belt, would help support the detection of and protection from obstacles and dropoffs as the device is fixed in front of Kaleb. Safe Toddles, the maker of the Pediatric Belt Cane, offers tips and trainings for families and educators on how to introduce and use the device effectively to promote independent travel. As this would be a new device, new expectations could be set with Kaleb from the start regarding when to use it, including outside of the school day.
- Place a texture that Kaleb likes on the top of the grip of his cane and/or AMD, designating where he should hold onto it.
- Lower Kaleb's cane hook in the classroom and place a knot in the cane cord so that it is an appropriate height for Kaleb to stow his cane independently.
- Have Kaleb hold the guide's wrist instead of hand when being guided at school and by non-family members. While he may be more wiggly, establishing and reinforcing proper guide procedures helps set him up for success.
- Increase opportunities for Kaleb to move independently with close adult supervision at school (e.g., from his cane hook to his cubby and while walking the track) and home to promote autonomy; this will help afford him the dignity of risk, the idea that the right to take reasonable risks is essential for dignity and self-esteem and that caregivers should not restrict it. While Kaleb may acquire minor bruises or scrapes, he is learning to care for himself.
- Design structured O&M lessons with a consistent, predictable routine (e.g., walk a predictable loop to work on cane skills ending at the playground to support playground exploration). Reinforce concept development throughout the lesson (e.g., left/right and fast/slow) and consider introducing simple tactile maps over time.

- Increase collaboration with Kaleb's parents to support and reinforce O&M skills outside of school. To maximize instructional minutes during Kaleb's short school day and to capitalize on functional O&M needs, consider providing O&M instruction outside of the school day and/or in the home environment.

- Select a few activities from the O&M Activity Calendars to complete at home with Kaleb each week. Note that some activities will need to be modified to be appropriate for his learning and/or environment.

Sensory Efficiency

- While having a proper, ergonomic workspace available is important, allow Kaleb to work in a comfortable, self-regulated position. Providing alternative seating options throughout his home and classroom, such as a wobble stool, inflated seat cushion, or a swivel chair, may be beneficial to meet his need for movement. Alternative seating options should still allow his feet to be grounded and his arms bent at about 90 degrees at his elbows. Exploring Elizabeth Sautter's resources on "Whole Body Listening" will help to explain what neurodivergent learning and "active listening" may look like in different children. For example, the "Listen, Learn, and Grow" book is a rhyming children's book about listening with your whole body and includes activities for educators and caregivers.

- Provide more opportunities for tactile and sensory experiences through art. Coloring promotes a systematic two-handed search pattern and tactile identification of shapes and boundaries. The following are examples of tactile art materials:
    - Tactile stickers such as Feel N' Peel stickers (APH), foam shape stickers, googly eyes, jewels, etc.
    - Puff paint or WikiStix
    - Tactile sheets (Carousel of Textures 1 and Carousel of Textures 2) for collages and art projects rather than traditional coloring paper
    - Quick-drying clay for creating shapes and figures
    - Scented markers to be used with sponge paper to add to the sensory experience
    - Tactile Doodle to create raised line drawings

- Provide discreet fidgets for Kaleb to use throughout the day to meet his sensory needs. Consult with his OT for specific fidget tool ideas.

- Review "Sensory Exploration Fact Sheet and Activity Ideas" and "Self Regulation Fact Sheet and Activity Ideas" from Perkins School for the Blind (2021) for more sensory ideas.

Independent Living Skills

- Consider utilizing the Michigan Independent Living Skills (ILS) website resources to monitor and support Kaleb's progress in adaptive daily living skills. The website contains checklists, video clips, five-minute activities, calendars of daily ILS tasks for home, and modules to help teachers quickly set up lesson plans and ILS learning stations. Beginning with the Preschool ILS Guide would be most appropriate for Kaleb.

- Scaffold independent living skills tasks by teaching Kaleb one step at a time for practice. Initially, an adult will assist with most of the new tasks but will also provide Kaleb with opportunities to do one specific part of the task. At home, choose one skill to focus on mastering at a time.
    - Backward chaining is a technique in which the last step of the routine is taught first. For example, when teaching Kaleb to put on socks, start by putting his toes in the sock and pulling up until it is almost entirely on his foot and over his heel. Have him pull the sock the rest of the way up by himself. When he consistently performs that step, do less of the task for him, increasing the amount he does on his own over time. Reduce and eliminate prompting as he masters each skill. By instructing Kaleb through backward chaining, he will end each task with familiar steps and success.
    - Provide ample hand-under-hand modeling, direct guidance, prompting, and positive reinforcement as he learns new skills. As he progresses, have him attempt more parts of the tasks.

Social Interaction

- Inform Kaleb of who is around him to increase his opportunities for social interaction. Let him know who is available to talk to, share with, play with, etc. Do not assume that Kaleb knows who is nearby, even if they typically sit beside him. Remind him throughout the day who is around to increase his awareness and encourage interactions.

- Provide Kaleb with information about nonverbal communication that happens around him. For example, if a student gives a "thumbs-up," tell Kaleb what the student did and what it means. For more information on verbalizing visual

information, read the Verbalizing Information for Learners Who are Visually Impaired post by Lisha Yochimowitz on the Paths to Literacy website (n.d.).

- Instruct Kaleb on what body language conveys. Lunch bunch and SLP sessions are good opportunities to explain body language and its meaning (i.e., head on desk conveys not being ready to talk, facing a conversation partner indicates readiness to speak, and sitting up straight shows a conversation partner respect and interest in the conversation).
- Review the resource *Better Together: Building Relationships with People who have Visual Impairment and Autism Spectrum Disorder (or Atypical Social Development)* (Hagood, 2008). This manual provides suggestions for teachers and parents on building relationships and teaching social skills to children with visual impairments and autism.
- Teach Kaleb simple back-and-forth games that will encourage turn-taking. For example:
    - Back-and-forth ball play with a bell ball or beeper ball
    - Songs that require taking turns
    - Taking turns stacking blocks or building something
    - Partnered clapping games
    - Pop-up Pirate, Pop the Pig, Beware the Bear, or other similar games that require turns and have an entertaining conclusion.

Question 3: What is Kaleb's current cognitive functioning, and how can the IEP team best support his learning?

Overall Development and Functioning

Intellectual or cognitive ability includes many skill areas, such as verbal comprehension, fluid reasoning, problem-solving, abstract thinking, memory, learning, cognitive efficiency, and planning. Currently, Kaleb is functioning as a child younger than his chronological age (i.e., all areas delayed by at least one year) in various domains, including his language development, cognition, social skills, self-help, and self-regulation skills. Although he showed some emerging skills in the one-year-old range, most of the skills he demonstrated consistently and independently are within the two- to three-year-old range, with some scattered skills within the four-year-old range.

Kaleb demonstrates rote skills (i.e., memorizing skills through repetition rather than understanding). While rote learning can help with quick recall of basic facts, it is not an effective way to master complex subjects. He has challenges with generalizing skills

and consistently showing what he knows across time, settings, and people. The significant level of scaffolding and explicit, direct instruction needed to facilitate learning is much more than needed for a typically developing child who is four years old. Kaleb has the potential to learn, but his pace of learning is slower than that of his same-age peers, and he needs more time and repeated practice opportunities. While Kaleb is a transitional kindergarten student, his functioning is generally similar to that of a younger preschool student, who needs support with basic concepts, social interaction, and student readiness skills.

Adaptive functioning includes conceptual, social, and practical skills. Examples of adaptive functioning include taking care of personal hygiene and belongings, participating in meal preparation, cleaning, communicating, and interacting with others. Kaleb requires adult support for most of his daily care, health, and safety. He has the potential to participate in activities of daily living and learn rote sequences of motor skills that will be meaningful to him, promote a better quality of life, and increase his independence (e.g., participate in parts of his self-care and dressing routine and further develop his mealtime skills).

As mentioned earlier, Kaleb's challenges are not solely due to his visual impairment. The data from this evaluation are also consistent with his prior diagnoses of:

- Autism spectrum disorder with language impairment and cognitive impairment, level 3 "requiring very substantial support" for social communication and level 2 "requiring substantial support" for restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior (F84.0),
- Language disorder (F80.2),
- And global developmental delay (F88).

Autism and global developmental delay significantly impact his functioning and ability to access the academic curriculum and the home and school community without significant support. Individuals with autism, visual impairment, and other disabilities can learn to actively participate in many daily activities with substantial support and direct instruction. Per the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, Text Revision* (DSM-5-TR; American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2022), "[a]ppropriate assessment of intellectual functioning in autism spectrum disorder is essential, with reassessment across the developmental period, because IQ scores in autism spectrum disorder may be unstable, particularly in early childhood" (p. 45). Future re-evaluation is needed as Kaleb's learning and developmental trajectory may change with intervention.

Learning (Cognition, Processing, and Pre-Academics)

Learning can be broadly defined as an individual's ability to meaningfully obtain and retain knowledge, which is significantly impacted by a person's natural pace of learning and underlying cognition and processing. Research has continued to demonstrate the positive benefits of neuroplasticity, which is the brain's ability to generate new neural pathways as people acquire new skills. There is always a potential for growth, progress, and development in learning skills through targeted intervention and correct practice.

Kaleb's learning profile was evaluated via observation at school and home, interviews with his parents and educational team, and informal, dynamic assessment. Due to Kaleb's emerging foundational cognitive skills (e.g., emerging understanding of the basic concepts like same versus different) and limited tolerance for adult-directed activities, a developmental assessment using the INSITE Developmental Checklist, Third Edition (INSITE-3) and Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills, Second Edition (Brigance CIBS II) was conducted to gather more meaningful information on his current levels of functioning instead of standardized assessment. Developmental data describes a student's strengths and weaknesses in neurodevelopmental areas that are important in learning and help anchor a student's performance relative to a developmental continuum of tasks. The Boehm-3 Preschool Tactile Edition was also attempted; however, testing with the Boehm-3 stopped after a few practice items. The test demands exceeded Kaleb's ability to follow directions, sustain focus, and understand tactile graphics. Please see Appendix A for descriptions of the tests and score tables.

Overall, Kaleb displayed engagement and potential for learning by:

- Demonstrating understanding of cause and effect
- Using trial-and-error problem-solving
- Tolerating touching a variety of textures and objects when prompted
- Interacting with adults when activities were structured in a play-based manner with preferred items or with motivators
- Expressing his wants and needs through verbalization and actions
- Accepting adult support from various familiar and novel adults
- Showing an understanding of some space and time concepts (e.g., daily routine)
- Initiating efforts to interact with familiar and novel adults
- Having definite preferences, which can be motivators for engagement
- Exhibiting emerging early number concepts
- Showing a relative strength in rote memorization (i.e., being able to recall information learned verbatim)

- Responding best when given processing time and directions one step at a time

The following developing areas were identified. Adult support and direct instruction are needed to:

- Increase his understanding of basic space, position, direction, size, shape, time, and quantity concepts
- Improve his functional communication
- Learn concepts of personal and community safety
- Develop his flexibility and expand his on-demand engagement and performance

The following paragraphs in the Learning section provide more information about these bullet points.

Verbal Comprehension and Knowledge

Verbal comprehension and knowledge refers to the ability to use knowledge, facts, and experience that an individual has accumulated over time. It involves knowledge of culture and language-based knowledge developed during general life experiences and formal schooling. This domain includes the use of speech to communicate thoughts and a general understanding of spoken language.

Kaleb's understanding of basic concepts essential for learning and following instructions is emerging. He showed knowledge of some spatial, directional, positional, and temporal (time) concepts (e.g., up, down, fast, slow, in, out, over, under, on, top, front, back). Kaleb also exhibited knowledge of body parts, such as mouth, eyes, nose, hair, ears, hands, tummy, back, feet, toes, chin, neck, knees, and shoulders. Other concepts are developing (e.g., bottom, side, corner, left, right, big, and little). Understanding these concepts is essential for spatial reasoning, measurement, and basic quantitative thinking. Most children develop an understanding of these concepts around three to four-and-a-half years old, per the California Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (Foundational Language Development Foundation 1.3; California Department of Education, 2024). Kaleb has not yet mastered these basic concepts and needs to build foundational language skills to support his communication and preliteracy development. His current ability to understand and follow directions is impeding his learning. With repeated teaching and demonstrations, he still had challenges understanding tasks that are usually easy for other children his age, such as following one-step familiar directions and physically matching two identical items. Additional details are in Language Development.

Fluid Reasoning

Fluid reasoning refers to thinking flexibly using logic to solve new problems. This type of thinking includes drawing inferences and recognizing patterns and relationships. This problem-solving goes beyond previously learned habits or scripts. Early components of reasoning include object permanence, causality, means to an end problem-solving, classification, number concepts, and seriation.

Object permanence involves the memory of objects, people, events, and places. Understanding object permanence involves knowing that objects continue to exist even when not visible. This concept lays the foundation for memory and the concept of cause and effect. Kaleb demonstrated an understanding of object permanence. For instance, he searched for a toy that was dropped. He also displayed memories of time and places of past events. Kaleb has the foundation to build memory and emerging reasoning.

Causality refers to a child's comprehension of cause and effect. Knowledge of cause and effect involves recognizing that certain actions or events lead to specific outcomes. Kaleb showed an understanding of cause and effect (e.g., pressing a button activates a music toy and using behavior to escape difficult or nonpreferred tasks). Examples of tasks that Kaleb can complete independently because he has met this causality milestone include understanding first/then concepts for establishing work contingencies and responding to cause-and-effect demands.

Means to an end problem-solving in early development refers to the skills needed to plan and execute a sequence of actions, using a specific "means" (e.g., a tool or strategy) to achieve a desired goal. Using means-end problem-solving demonstrates an understanding of cause and effect and identification of the necessary steps to reach a desired outcome. Kaleb exhibited means-ends problem-solving (e.g., using a trial-and-error method to nest four cups and solve a four-piece inset puzzle). Verbal or physical prompting is needed to further develop his problem-solving strategies, such as reminding him to use both hands to explore the workspace before moving objects around.

Classification involves understanding similarities and differences between objects or ideas, essential for categorization, problem-solving, and developing critical thinking skills. Matching is a skill that is needed before developing sorting and categorizing. Classification can be demonstrated by sorting objects or ideas into groups based on shared characteristics. Understanding classification forms the basis for organizing information, understanding relationships, and generalizing concepts. Kaleb showed early problem-solving skills but needed direct teaching and adult support to match

identical items or match by shape or size. He needs explicit teaching to master the concepts of same and different. Learning to match and sort is important to develop various independent living skills, such as sorting silverware and laundry, and a prerequisite skill for braille literacy. Though Kaleb has not yet developed classification skills, most children his age learn to use words related to categories and sort items by one attribute in at least two groups when they are around three to four-and-a-half years old, per the California Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (Foundational Language Development Foundation 1.2 and Mathematics Foundation 2.5; California Department of Education, 2024). Kaleb needs support to develop this early preschool skill.

Memory

Memory consists of multiple interactive systems: immediate short-term memory, working memory, and long-term retrieval. Memory is crucial for learning, problem-solving, and developing academic skills. Critical thinking involves the memory of information and doing something with that information instead of simply restating the facts. Higher-order thinking involves connecting information with previously learned knowledge, categorizing facts, and applying them to new situations.

Short-term memory involves holding on to information and then using it within a few seconds. Rote memory involves learning and repeating information memorized verbatim, which does not require critical thinking, understanding, or analysis of the memorized content. Currently, much of Kaleb's learning is rotely memorized. While he successfully repeated verbal information verbatim during observations, his on-demand performance was inconsistent. For instance, he repeated rhyming words but did not spontaneously produce rhymes without being given examples. Adult support and direct teaching are critical for Kaleb's understanding of the material. Further details on his echolalic speech are in Language Development.

A component of short-term memory is working memory. Working memory is a memory system that holds things in mind when performing complex tasks. When using working memory, an individual needs to attend to the presented information, process the information in memory, and then formulate a response. Kaleb showed the ability to hold at least one piece of information in mind by sometimes following one-step directions. His self-directed nature contributes to his inconsistency with following instructions. For example, he focused on the texture of the wobble cushion in class instead of the task at hand. As Kaleb develops and improves in his participation in adult-directed activities, his performance on working memory tasks may improve.

Long-term memory includes the ability to store and retrieve information over time. As mentioned in Fluid Reasoning, Kaleb exhibited memory for objects, people, events, and places. His limited attention impacts his performance on typical long-term memory tasks for his age, such as attending to and recalling parts of a short story. Though he needs much more support than other children his age, Kaleb is showing the potential to retrieve information from his long-term memory once he learns it. His interest and motivation need to be engaged to support his memory and learning.

Executive Functioning

Executive functioning includes the ability to regulate emotions and behavior as well as higher-level thinking skills, such as planning, organizing, and monitoring. Autism is associated with challenges with executive functioning; Kaleb's emotional and behavioral regulation and sensory needs are beyond that of a student who solely has visual impairments.

At school, Kaleb has shown a lot of growth in his behavioral regulation. At the beginning of the school year, staff reported that he screamed and cried during music or the pledge of allegiance. These behaviors have greatly decreased, but he continues to have sensory sensitivity related to sounds (e.g., noises in the cafeteria). Having clear expectations, structure, and routines supported Kaleb's progress and adjustment to being in his present educational setting.

Kaleb is self-directed (e.g., does what he wants to and avoids or refuses tasks and work) but can be directed with prompting. At school, he tended to sit at the designated table and wait to be prompted. He responded well to his personal token reward system at school. His self-directed behavior was observed more at home than at school. For example, he sometimes lay on the floor face-down and did not respond to questions or engagement attempts at home. The difference in behaviors between settings may be due to the high amount of structure and routines at school versus at home. His self-directedness causes challenges with consistently showing what he knows or generalizing knowledge. Mastered concepts should be able to be elicited by any person, using a variety of questions or activities, and in various settings.

Tantruming behaviors occurred at home when directed to non-preferred activities or when preferred items or activities were removed or not available. Kaleb's tantrums included shouting, verbally protesting, moving away from the designated area, and crying. Adult support and direct teaching are needed to develop functional language to appropriately express how he feels when emotionally elevated. Deescalation strategies of planned ignoring (i.e., deliberate ignoring or not reacting to negative or inappropriate

behaviors) and redirecting his attention worked most of the time when wait time and prompting with a calm and neutral voice were provided. Additional details about his tantrums and related communication needs are in Language Development. Many autistic children have challenges with behavioral regulation but can learn to manage with explicit instruction and tactile support (e.g., tactile first/then board).

Attention is a complex process that involves being aware and ready to take in information, choosing what to pay attention to, ignoring distractions, and shifting focus back to the task when distracted. To manage thinking and complete tasks of daily living and schoolwork, a student must attend to and filter sensory information in the environment. Most individuals can attend when a task is highly interesting or emotionally engaging. Attention can be viewed as the foundation of all other higher-order processing. In other words, compromised attention can adversely affect other cognitive processes, such as language and memory. Kaleb's attention span varies depending on the given activity, environment, and his biobehavioral state (i.e., physical and behavioral factors that affect how alert and responsive someone is). His attention to preferred activities can be long (e.g., listening to videos on phones or tablets). In group settings at school, he did not follow whole-group instructions and needed direct prompting to engage in activities (i.e., often hand-over-hand prompting was given). When presented with an adult-directed task in a one-on-one setting, he sometimes attended depending on his interest in the given item or activity. Perseverations interrupted his learning and engagement with the task at hand (e.g., singing a song, echoing a script about an unrelated topic, or focusing on preferred items like a grape or toy). The perseverations were observed more at home than at school. Though Kaleb needed prompting for each step of every activity, most children his age actively engage in activities for brief periods with less adult support, according to the California Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations (Approaches to Learning Foundation 1.3; California Department of Education, 2024). The level of independence and focus needed to engage in the general education setting exceeds Kaleb's current functioning.

Pre-Academics

The classroom academic expectations are above Kaleb's developmental level. He received support from his IA for all tasks. While he can repeat information, Kaleb's understanding of early preschool concepts still needs development. He successfully labeled shapes (e.g., circle, square, and triangle) and reported some personal data (e.g., his first name and age). His understanding of early number concepts is emerging. Kaleb correctly recited numbers up to 100 but did not count objects with one-to-one

correspondence or show an understanding of the concept of one. Some skills reported by his educational team at school were not observed during direct testing, such as reciting the alphabet, understanding sizes, sorting objects, and understanding patterning. Kaleb needs to develop pre-literacy and early mathematics skills before working on more complex academic tasks. For example, foundational literacy and mathematics skills listed in the California Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations include rhyming, blending sounds, recognizing quantities and patterns, and classifying objects (California Department of Education, 2024).

Due to his blindness, Kaleb misses many incidental literacy learning opportunities (e.g., seeing the teacher's book and pictures during class read-alouds and exploring the print and pictures on a cereal box at breakfast). As such, it is vital to consciously incorporate literacy in Kaleb's day by putting materials in his hands (e.g., using manipulatives/realia and giving Kaleb a copy of the book the teacher is reading [with braille to track] with an accompanying book bag). Additional details about his pre-academic skills are under Compensatory in Question 2.

Learning (Cognition, Processing, & Pre-Academics) Recommendations

- Continue to teach Kaleb in a supportive classroom with a high adult-to-student ratio. Based on this evaluation, Kaleb would be best served in a classroom setting with fewer students than the general education setting and an educational program focusing on goals that emphasize the development of his communication, independence, and pre-academic skills. Focus on experiential learning of meaningful, functional skills that build independence and access to the world. Kaleb needs to be engaged in learning that is meaningful. While rote (or memorized) learning is a relative strength for Kaleb, it gives him skills he does not often know how or when to use.

- Teach within the zone of proximal development (ZPD). As described by Lev Vygotsky, the zone of proximal development refers to the space between what a learner can achieve independently and what they can learn or accomplish with the help of an adult or by working with more skilled peers. Meeting Kaleb where he is cognitively, linguistically, academically, socially, and emotionally at this time will increase his willingness to participate and ability to retain new information. Support for Kaleb will be most effective when considering his zone of proximal learning across all domains.
    - Kaleb has the potential to learn if taught at the appropriate level for where he is right now. Attempting to teach beyond his current proximal learning

zone will result in limited progress. Tasks and skills can quickly become more complex than he is ready to understand, making him feel frustrated and less motivated to engage and learn. However, if tasks are kept within his learning zone, Kaleb can feel successful, and progress will be more likely.
    - Educational programming should be approached from the perspective of considering what tasks he currently can complete and determining the next attainable skill.

- Teach using explicit instruction. Kaleb requires direct instruction from credentialed educators and service providers to gain appropriate pre-academic and functional skills. Given his current level of performance, it is important that he receive individualized instruction at his level to access learning. Individualized instruction means teaching at his level, not one-on-one instruction. Opportunities for purposeful learning and access should be prioritized over opportunities for exposure when the goal is Kaleb's progress. Explicit, direct instruction is an active process that includes demonstration, prompting, feedback, repeated trials, and hands-on learning. This teaching model is commonly known as "I do, we do, you do."
    - Demonstration: Show and model any new skill to Kaleb before asking him to do it. He will benefit greatly from hand-under-hand guidance or hearing a correct model of the exact skill(s) he is to learn in a meaningful context at his zone of proximal development.
    - Prompting: When Kaleb is asked to produce a new skill, he should not be expected to execute it independently without assistance. The skill should be completed in tandem with Kaleb until he learns the correct response. This process of learning without errors will allow for success and reduce the chances of him learning skills incorrectly. The level of prompting used should be faded until Kaleb can complete the skill independently. Note that this will only be an effective strategy if the skill being presented is at his appropriate instructional level.
    - Feedback: When Kaleb is able to complete a skill successfully, and only then, he should be given a chance to demonstrate the skill independently. Provide feedback immediately after he has completed the skill or response. Positive feedback will help him solidify that what he did was correct. Corrective feedback, if needed, should focus on trying the skill again, with increased support (prompting or hand-under-hand guidance),

rather than by pointing out that it was incorrect. The goal is to develop positive and successful learning behaviors.
    - Repeated trials: Provide many opportunities for Kaleb to practice identified skills each day. He learns at a slower rate but can make incremental progress if this process is repeated consistently and frequently.
    - Hands-on learning: Use manipulatives to help build and reinforce concept development and foundational understanding.

- Set high but appropriate expectations through an understanding of learning progression. Learning progression refers to the purposeful sequencing of teaching and learning expectations across multiple developmental stages, ages, or grade levels. The term is primarily used in reference to the learning standards that students should know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education. Learning progressions are typically categorized and organized by subject area. They map out a specific sequence of knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn as they progress through their education. Each progression begins with simple skills and extends to more complex skills. Concepts must be established and mastered before introducing more complex topics. Skipping steps often leads to learning gaps. Identifying the appropriate skills for Kaleb's educational programming should align with how individuals acquire new skills. An outline of the learning progression of concepts is listed below in order of a typical developmental sequence. It is important to recognize that these skills often overlap and interact, and the development of each concept is not strictly linear. Students may show different proficiency levels in these skills based on their experiences, cultural influences, and individual differences.
    - Understanding cause and effect is essential for understanding relationships, consequences, and problem-solving. Kaleb has mastered the concept of cause and effect but needs to learn to imitate and match before further developing more advanced skills, such as sorting, categorization, and sequencing.
    - Imitation involves repeating an action, move, or vocalization. For students with visual impairment, hand-under-hand guidance or physical prompting is needed when demonstrating an action or a move before a student can imitate it.
    - Matching involves putting together similar objects. Matching is a preliminary mathematics skill needed for daily living tasks like matching socks.

  - Sorting and categorization involve grouping two or more objects based on a common property or function. These skills require understanding comparative concepts and are preliminary mathematics and language skills useful in daily living tasks (e.g., sorting food or utensils) and in the community (e.g., recognizing safety and emergency professionals).
  - Sequencing involves putting a series of objects in order by size, quantity, or other measurement. Sequencing is important for the development of language (e.g., sentence structure), math (e.g., numeracy and one-to-one correspondence), and daily living skills (e.g., following directions or a schedule).
  - Patterning involves putting a set of items together in a predictable way (e.g., ABAB, AABB, AABAAB patterns). This is a precursor for math (e.g., skip counting and simple addition) and pre-literacy skills (e.g., sounding out simple word patterns).

- Infuse concept development instruction throughout the school day. Collaborate with educational team members (e.g., classroom teacher, SLP, TVI, and O&M specialist) to ensure that concepts are being taught in a consistent manner. Review "Teaching Basic Concepts and Pre-Braille Skills" for activity ideas (Floyd, n.d.). Kaleb currently has an IEP goal to develop his understanding of spatial concepts. Consider expanding the focus to develop additional basic concepts, such as time, quantity, and comparative concepts. The following basic concepts are essential for understanding instructions and overall language development:
  - Spatial relationships or positional concepts: side, between, top, bottom, up, down, in, out, inside, outside, near, in front, back, across, corner, center, forward, backward, high, low, etc.
  - Size: big, little, small, large, short, long, tall, thin, thick, etc.
  - Time concepts: first, then, next, before, after, beginning, end, last, never, fast, slow, etc.
  - Quantity concepts: another, more, full, empty, missing, all, both, whole, part, many, few, equal, most, least, every, none, etc.
  - Categorical concepts: same, different, other, etc.

- Focus on incorporating tactile manipulatives using real objects pertinent to Kaleb (instead of miniatures or tactile representations). For example, during circle time, select vocabulary/rhyming words that can be represented with real objects rather than using foam representations that may be hard to decipher. For example, use an actual lock and block or doll and ball, and allow Kaleb sufficient time to

explore the object, teaching him appropriate descriptors for the item before beginning to rhyme.

- Have clear and consistently stated expectations among all adults supporting Kaleb across settings. Use expectations that are appropriate for his developmental level. Expectations need to be adjusted based on how regulated he is and may need to be readjusted multiple times throughout the day. Slow pacing and patience will be key to implementing consistent expectations. Kaleb may initially reject a new activity or expectation until he understands the purpose and reward when applicable. Front-load expectations across situations and environments.
    - Explicitly state clear expectations and structure at the beginning of all lessons and activities.
    - Present instructions one at a time for tasks with multiple steps.
    - Support Kaleb's problem-solving development by giving him ample time to process and respond to a question or directive before offering prompts, as safety and frustration allow.
    - Be sure that expectations are clear so that Kaleb knows what he is working towards and why.

- Collaborate regularly among all adults supporting Kaleb to ensure everyone is using shared language (i.e., the exact words) for prompting. Consider creating a shared document with a list of key vocabulary to maintain consistency among Kaleb's family and service providers. Include specific language used for instruction and activities. Sharing this document with new or substitute staff can help familiarize them with Kaleb's language needs.

- Teach Kaleb pretend play through various scenarios throughout his day. Children Kaleb's age learn best through play and pretend play skills, which are essential for building friendships and learning concepts such as sharing, turn-taking, etc.
    - Teach vocabulary through pretend play using real-world objects whenever possible rather than plastic toy models. Make sure to use many verbs in your play sessions (e.g., stirring, reading, singing, running, baking, etc.) to encourage learning.
    - Model play for Kaleb. He will require demonstrations of how to engage with toys and perform pretend play actions.

- Positively reinforce expected behaviors at home and school.
    - Provide frequent positive reinforcement of specific behaviors that Kaleb is asked to or expected to engage in, such as following directions. Be specific when providing praise, such as “good using your cane” instead of “good job.”
    - The rate of reinforcement needs to be related to the level of demand being asked. The recommended ratio is five positive reinforcements to one demand or direction; children need "five to thrive."
    - Positively reinforce any compliance, engagement, or effort towards task demands when he is in an elevated emotional or behavioral state.

- Work at Kaleb's pace. Slow down all activities and allow for processing time instead of immediately prompting him through an activity.

- Reduce the amount of words directed at Kaleb when he is in an elevated or upset state.
    - Positively state what type of behavior he should engage in rather than the behavior that needs to stop.
    - Process behaviors with Kaleb only when he is in a neutral state. Trying to verbally process what is happening is challenging when in an elevated state.

- Add sensory breaks to Kaleb’s routine. The following are some examples of sensory break activities. Consult his OTs for sensory strategies.
    - Engage in prone weight-bearing activities, such as lying on his tummy on a yoga ball while holding his body weight through his arms and hands. Prone weight-bearing activities can be helpful for general strength, postural control, and proprioceptive and vestibular input.
    - Rock in a hammock.
    - Jump on a trampoline.
    - Do yoga poses.
    - Jump and flop onto a beanbag or mattress.
    - Play catch with a large bouncy ball, big pillow, or bean bags.
    - Push a large bouncy ball or yoga ball up a wall.
    - Roll or push a medicine ball.
    - Explore and play with various musical instruments, such as squeezing a horn.

- Consider changing Kaleb's IEP eligibility to autism as his primary eligibility and visual impairment as his secondary eligibility at his next triennial. Although he also meets eligibility for speech language impairment, his learning profile is better encapsulated by autism and visual impairment. Keeping visual impairment listed as his secondary eligibility helps to ensure ease of access to low-incidence funds. Kaleb has been through numerous evaluations, so immediate re-evaluation to consider changing his eligibility categories is not necessary. While changing his IEP eligibility categories is not required to provide appropriate programming, eventually changing his IEP eligibility categories will more accurately reflect his needs.
    - Per the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, Text Revision* (DSM-5-TR; American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2022), "[a]ppropriate assessment of intellectual functioning in autism spectrum disorder is essential, with reassessment across the developmental period, because IQ scores in autism spectrum disorder may be unstable, particularly in early childhood" (APA, 2022, p. 45). Kaleb's learning profile may change as he develops and increases his sustained attention and engagement with adult-directed activities.
    - At his next triennial evaluation, consider assessing to determine his eligibility under additional categories of intellectual disability or specific learning disability after Kaleb has had intensive intervention with individualized instruction.

- Review Kaleb's identified needs and consider if adjustments to his services may be required to address all areas of need.
    - As mentioned in the Communication Recommendations, increase speech and language services to include additional direct service minutes for small group instruction.
    - As noted in Orientation & Mobility, consider shifting some O&M service time to after school or in home. AB-947 outlines the ability of O&M specialists to teach in a student's home and community outside of school hours.
    - Kaleb's last Extended School Year (ESY) services only included individual and small group instruction in the preschool Special Day Class. Consider whether instructional aide support, specialized academic instruction, vision, speech language therapy, occupational therapy, adapted physical education, and orientation and mobility services need to be provided during ESY.

    - Given the stark difference in behaviors and functioning at home and at school, consider adding family consultation time or after-school home visits to support his learning and progress.

- Consider requesting Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services that are provided through his medical provider to work on daily living skills in the home. ABA is a research-based therapy that helps individuals with autism and other developmental disorders to learn new skills and can support caregivers with strategies to work on daily living skills or other goals at home and in the community. Given parent concerns regarding Kaleb's limited attention span, the ABA provider also can support parents in providing consistent expectations, using first/then work contingencies, creating a tactile reward system and schedule, and increase adult-directed activity time at home.

- Consider establishing a release of information between the school district and Kaleb's outside of school service providers, including his medically-provided OT, SLP, and ABA provider. Allowing his educational team and external service providers to communicate and collaborate may increase consistency and implementation of successful strategies across settings.

- Consider learning braille alongside Kaleb, both parents and educational team members, by looking into the variety of programs available.
    - *Just Enough to Know Better (UEB)* (Curran, 2016) is an excellent starting point for parents.
    - Braille Brain UEB Foundation features numerous lessons that provide a thorough scope of the braille code for parents, paraprofessionals, and educational team members to learn braille. This is not meant as a curriculum for blind and low students.

- Explore the World Health Organization's (WHO) Caregiver skills training for families of children with developmental delays or disabilities - Participants' guide: group sessions 1–9. The aim is to enhance caregivers' use of everyday play and home routines as opportunities to build their children's communication, engagement in activities, positive behavior, and daily living skills while improving caregivers' overall well-being. The topics covered include getting and keeping children engaged, helping children to share engagement in play and home routines, understanding communication, teaching new skills in small steps and levels of help, understanding behavior, preventing challenging behavior, and problem-solving and self-care.

- Review freely available online training on evidence-based practices for working with autistic individuals.
    - Kaleb's parents are recommended to review the Autism Distance Education Parent Training from the UC Davis MIND Institute/CEDD. These trainings are interactive, self-paced, online learning modules to provide parents with tools and training to more effectively teach their child with autism and other related neurodevelopmental disorders functional skills using applied behavior analysis (ABA) techniques.
    - Staff members are recommended to review the CAPTAIN Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) website and AFIRM Online Learning Modules developed by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute. The AFIRM Modules are free for anyone to use and are designed to provide the step-by-step process of planning for, using, and monitoring an EBP with learners with autism from birth to 22 years of age. Examples of topics covered by the AFIRM modules include reinforcement, prompting, modeling, time delay, and task analysis.
    - Note: These training resources were not created for visually impaired students. Consider Kaleb's visual functioning (no light perception) when viewing the modules and resources. Although these modules include hand-over-hand prompting, which is commonly utilized with students with autism, hand-under-hand prompting is recommended when working with students with visual impairments. Videos from the Idaho Project for Children and Youth with Deaf-blindness, California Deafblind Services, and Montana Deaf-Blind Project and information from the Washington Sensory Disabilities Services provide information on using the hand-under-hand strategy, which is beneficial to students with visual impairments and other disabilities.

Additional Recommendations

- Consider joining the California Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (CAPVI). CAPVI promotes workshops, provides networking opportunities, and advocates for parents and families of children with visual impairments.

- Consider attending the yearly conference sponsored by California Transcribers and Educators for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CTEBVI). The conference is for family members and educators of students with visual impairments. It consists

of workshops and exhibit halls dedicated to the education and independence of students with visual impairments.

- Read *When You Have a Visually Impaired Child in Your Classroom, A Guide for Paraeducators* (Russotti et al., 2004) books, which are good resources for Kaleb's current education team and should also be provided to his future teams. A copy of the book was left with his parents.
- Join the Resources for Families Supporting Students Who are Visually Impaired listserv to receive updated news and events for students and their families.
- Consider exploring the podcast Feeling This Life (Visual Impairment Preschool Services & Anchor Center for Blind Children), designed to build a community for families and providers about the triumphs, challenges, and strategies that are part of the lives of those who care for young blind and low vision children.
- Check out APH FamilyConnect, a website with helpful information and articles for families of blind and low vision students.
- Participate in local and regional programs for blind and low vision students.
    - Enchanted Hills Camp offers summer camp and retreat opportunities for individuals with visual impairments and their families at their campus in Napa, CA. It provides valuable recreational experiences in a fun, challenging, and accessible way. Both child-only and family camps are offered.
    - Society for the Blind in Sacramento offers youth programs and services designed to enhance and expand upon the blindness skills young people learn through the school system.
- Consider the many outreach and programming opportunities for Kaleb through the California School for the Blind (CSB) as he grows.
    - Short Course Programs are designed to address the unique educational needs of blind and low vision students attending school in their local school districts and are provided at no cost to districts and families.
    - Summer Academy Programs, offered in June, are one week long and offered at no charge. Districts and/or families are typically responsible for the student's transportation.
    - Attend CSB annual outreach events such as White Cane Day to celebrate the independence of blind and low vision individuals.

Kaleb Ceebtsheej Xiong
Date of Birth: 3/13/2020
Chronological Age: 4 years, 9 months (at the time of the evaluation)

It was a pleasure observing and assessing Kaleb and working with his dedicated parents and educational team. Please contact the CSB Assessment Center if you have any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shelby Zimmerman, MA, COMS
Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments,
Orientation and Mobility Specialist

Rebecka Henry, MS, CCC-SLP
Speech Language Pathologist

May Nguyen, MS, LEP, NCSP, ACUE
Licensed Educational Psychologist

Appendix A: Test Descriptions and Results

Kaleb was administered informal and standardized evaluation measures. Standard scores show how Kaleb compares to a group of students the same age across the United States who took the same test. Most tests report results as standard scores, scaled scores, and percentile rank. Standard scores are converted scores showing where a student's performance lies compared to a population to help show how a student is functioning when compared to typical students their age or grade. Percentile ranks are not the same as percentages. Percentile ranks show how many students score the same or lower than a student's performance. Please use the following table of scores for general reference. The tests utilized in this evaluation may use different classifications/labels. A descriptive category is provided as a reference to a normative population for standardized tests. Informal and criterion-referenced tests do not have standard scores.

Classifying Standardized Test Scores

Standard Score	Scaled Score	Percentile	Label
>130	>=17	>98	Exceptionally High
120-129	15-16	91-97	Above Average
110-119	13-14	75-90	High Average
90-109	8-12	25-74	Average
80-89	6-7	9-24	Low Average
70-79	4-5	2-8	Below Average
<70	<=3	<2	Exceptionally Low

Note: Classifications are based on those described in the "American Academy of Clinical Neuropsychology Consensus Conference Statement on Uniform Labeling of Performance Test Scores" (Guilmette et al., 2020).

Boehm Test of Basic Concepts, Third Edition, Preschool Tactile Edition (Boehm-3 Preschool Tactile)

Testing was attempted with the Boehm-3 Test of Basic Concepts, Third Edition, Preschool Tactile Edition to evaluate Kaleb's knowledge of 26 basic concepts relevant to preschool and early childhood curriculum. Basic relational concepts include size,

direction, spatial position, quantity, time, classification, and general concepts. Understanding basic concepts is more than understanding these as vocabulary terms. These fundamental basic concepts are important for language and cognitive development. As students transition from using concepts concretely to employing them more abstractly, these concepts gain greater significance in fostering comprehension, reasoning, and general thinking skills. These concepts are critical for comprehending communication in the classroom and daily life.

The Boehm-3 Preschool Tactile has not been standardized on students with visual impairments but has been adapted to provide access with tactile graphics. The “getting ready” items were attempted, but Kaleb’s fleeting attention and limited exposure and understanding of tactile graphics impacted his ability to engage with the testing stimuli. Testing the limits was attempted with real objects; however, he continued to have challenges following the instructions.

Kaleb Ceebtsheej Xiong
Date of Birth: 3/13/2020
Chronological Age: 4 years, 9 months (at the time of the evaluation)

Braille Readiness Grid

Braille Readiness Grid

Developed by Anne McComiskey, Director of the BEGIN early childhood program of the Center for the Visually Impaired

TACTILE	Tolerates Being Touched	Enjoys Being Touched	Locates Objects By Touch	Examines Objects by Touch	Matches and Sorts Objects	Touches Braille in Exploration	Grades textures of Sandpaper	Locates Tactile "Mark" on Paper	Uses Pad of Index Finger to Touch	
	Traces 3 Dimensional Outline of Shape	Traces 2 Dimensional Outline of Shape	Traces left to Right Continuous Line with Sticks, Glue,etc.	Traces Left to Right Using: a. Braille Cell w/no space b. Braille Cell w/space c. Dot 2,3,5,6 w/no space d. Dot 2,3,5,6 w/space e. Dot 3,6 w/no space f. Dot 3,6 w/space g. Dot 1 w/no space h. Dot 1 w/space			Uses Two Hands Cooperatively in Tracing (Place Marker & Reader Hand)	Locates Braille marked Items in Home	Participates in formal tactual Sheets & Units	
FINE MOTOR	Holds Object in Each Hand	Uses Pincer Grasp	Opens and Closes Books	Turns Cardboard Pages	Uses Two Hands Cooperatively	Uses Appropriate Grasp with Stylus	Makes Stylus Art with Construction Paper	Turns Pages One at a Time	Copies Patterns with Pegs, Muffin Tins, Geo Boards, etc.	
	Shows Hand Strength and Flexibility	Shows Finger Strength and Dexterity	Places Individual Finger on Braille Keys	Manages Paper into Slate	"Scribbles" with Slate and Stylus	Manages Paper in/out of Brailler with help	Positions Fingers on Braille Keys Appropriately	Manages Paper in/out of Brailler Independently	Operates All Keys of Brailler Appropriately	Plays at Brailling
LISTENING, ATTENTION and EXPRESSION	Alerts to Sound	Listens to Interaction Songs	Sits Socially with Adult 5-10 Minutes	Listens to and Enjoys Rhymes	Participates in Finger Plays and Songs	Follows Two Step Directions	Uses Jargon and Imitation on Phone	Matches Sound Cans	Shows Interest in Short Stories About Self	Shows Interest in Short Stories about Others, with Participation
	Shows Interest in Stories About Others Without Participation		Tells Simple Event (Idea)	Makes up Simple Stories (3 Ideas)	Listens to Simple Story Tape	Relates Two Events from Short story	understands slow automated voice	Attends to Task Completion (5-20 Minutes)		
CONCEPT BUILDING	Identifies Body Parts	Names Body Parts	Identifies Objects and Actions	Names Objects and Actions	Shows Object Permanence Concept	Searches for Dropped Objects	Shows Same and Different Concept Awareness	Demonstrates Number Awareness of Quantities to 3	Shows More/Less, Big/Small, Long/Short, Wide/Narrow Concepts with Objects	Plays Symbolically
	Shows Concepts Of: Above/Below, Left/Right, Back/Front,Up/Down, Top/Bottom Middle/Sides (with Objects)		Understands Positional Concepts with Marks on Page	Shows Rote Knowledge of Alphabet	Shows Letter/ Cell Awareness Using Balls, Marbles, & Braille	Participates in Rich Life Experiences	Says Letters of Name (rote)	Says Names of Brailler Keys	Shows Awareness of Touch Patterns Representing Word; i.e., name	
BOOK AND STORY SKILLS	Uses Books as Toys (Squeak, Pull,etc.)	Identifies Parts of a Book (Cover, Pages, Margin, etc.)	Holds Book and Turns Pages	Explores Tactile Books Using Pad of Fingers	Traces Marks purposefully in Tactile Book From Start to End	Participates in Object "Book" Story	Has Lap time with Appropriate Book Daily (ie. Twin Vision)	Dictates and Reads "Sentence" Book		
	Selects Favorite Book and Stories	Completes Formal Braille Primer series (APH)	Reads "On the Way to Literacy" Series (APH)							

CENTER FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Name: _____

DOB: _____

Vision: _____

DIRECTIONS: Reading and writing braille is achieved by systematic building of skills in many areas of development. This literacy readiness grid enables parents and teachers to identify accomplished skills and target other skills for educational programming.

Using observation and informal assessment identify which skills in each area a child has accomplished. Highlight the accomplished skill box entirely. Emerging skills are partially filled with highlighter. Non-highlighted skill boxes are skills targeted for the child's educational program. This is a flexible tool. Add or delete boxes for individual children.

Remember: FUN IS THE KEY INGREDIENT.

Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills, Second Edition, Braille Adaptation (Brigance CIBS II Braille)

Kaleb was administered select tests from the Readiness section of the Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills, Second Edition, Braille Adaptation (Brigance CIBS II Braille). Testing the limits was conducted by using alternative materials (e.g., toys and real objects) and a play-based approach to engage Kaleb in the tasks.

The Brigance CIBS II includes mathematics and English Language Arts (reading and writing) criterion-referenced assessments and grade-level placement tests for students with special needs in kindergarten through ninth grade. Criterion-referenced assessments compare the individual's performance to specific criteria or objectives. The Brigance CIBS II determines which educational concepts and skills have been learned and mastered and identifies the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance.

Assessments: What the test involves	Score	Performance
Personal Data Response (A-1) Measures the ability to communicate personal information verbally.	2/11	When asked, Kaleb stated his first name and age correctly. The remaining questions were challenging for him, such as saying his last name and siblings' names when asked.
Self-help Skills (A-3) Measures independence in daily living skills.	0/7	Adults facilitate most independent living skills. Some skills are emerging. For example, Kaleb sometimes helps when being dressed, such as holding his arms out to put on a jacket. He requires support and supervision when using the restroom and washing his hands.
Identifies Body Parts (A-7) Measures self-awareness and knowledge of body parts.	24/30	Kaleb correctly identified (i.e., pointed to) 24/30 body parts when named by someone else: mouth, eyes, nose, feet, hair, tongue, head, ears, hands, legs, arms, fingers, tummy, back, teeth, toes, chin, knees, neck, fingernails, chest, ankles, shoulders, and wrists.
Recites Alphabet (A-8) Measures alphabet knowledge.	0/26	Although Kaleb is reported to know the alphabet, he did not recite it when asked to.

Assessments: What the test involves	Score	Performance
Counting (A-16) Measures the ability to count in sequence from memory.	10/10	Kaleb rote counted from 1 to 100 in English.
Counts Objects (A-18) Measures understanding of numbers.	0/6	Kaleb is not yet counting with one-to-one correspondence and needs direct instruction to develop this skill.

INSITE Developmental Checklist: Assessment of Developmental Skills for Young Children with Sensory Impairments and Additional Disabilities, Third Edition

Kaleb was administered select tasks to evaluate skills on the INSITE Developmental Checklist - Third Edition. The INSITE Developmental Checklist is a comprehensive developmental skill assessment for young children with sensory impairments and additional disabilities. This criterion-referenced tool was developed with input from various specialists including physical, occupational, and speech-language therapists, vision and hearing professionals, and early interventionists. The Checklist includes the developmental areas (domains) of auditory, tactile, gross motor, fine motor, self-help/daily care, cognition, social-emotional, communication and language, and vision. Each evaluation team member contributed to the completion of the INSITE - 3 via interviews, observations, and direct assessment.

Domain	Developmental Level Scores in Months
Auditory	29.25
Cognition	28.80
Communication	42.42
Self-Help	26.95
Social-Emotional	11.88
Tactile	44.00
Overall Developmental Level Score	30.55

Kaleb demonstrated scattered skills from the one-year-old range to the four-year-old range. Most of the skills he demonstrated consistently and independently were within the two- to three-year-old range. He showed relative strengths in his willingness to touch various textures, interact with adults, and explore the environment. His tolerance

for adult-directed activities impacted his performance across domains. At school, Kaleb often is a passive learner, receiving adult prompting and support to participate in activities.

Children's Communication Checklist - 2 (CCC-2)

The Children's Communication Checklist-2 (CCC2) was completed on 12/17/2024 by Kaleb's mother and father. This questionnaire looks at several aspects of communication namely speech, fluency, grammar, and social use of language.

Subtest	Scaled Score
Speech	8
Syntax	4
Semantics	3
Coherence	7
Initiation	8
Scripted Language	4
Context	6
Nonverbal Communication	3
Social Relations	5
Interests	5
General Communication Composite	Standard Score: 79, 8th percentile rank

Kaleb's parents identified that Kalab has some severe difficulties, occurring several times a day, with many areas of communication including but not limited to:

- Difficulty with the use of prepositions
- Use of repetitive language, repetitive play, scripted language
- Forgetting words or mixing up words
- Atypical social behaviors including standing too close and talking with strangers
- Utterances sound babyish (e.g., "me got ball")
- Not recognizing the emotions of others

- Difficulty with non-literal language

In addition, several communicative behaviors that are expected to be mastered or emerging by Kaleb's age were marked as occurring less than once a week or never. These behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Speaking clearly to be easily understood
- Recognizing the need to be polite
- Showing concern when other people are upset
- Talking about friends
- Explaining past events
- Talking to others about their interests
- Appreciating humor

Appendix B: Disability Verification Letter

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

TONY THURMOND
STATE SUPERINTENDENT
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

GINA OUELLETTE, SUPERINTENDENT
California School for the Blind • 500 Walnut Avenue, Fremont, CA 94536
(510) 794-3800 • Fax (510) 794-3818

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing regarding Kaleb Ceebtsheej Xiong (DOB: 3/13/2020), a four-year-old student whom the California School for the Blind Assessment Center team assessed in December 2024.

Students with visual impairment present a challenge when evaluating cognitive and academic functioning. No measures afford the calculation of an overall intelligence score (IQ score) for students with visual impairments. Standardized measures of intelligence require the administration of visual-spatial tests and often include processing speed components, which would be discriminatory to individuals with a visual impairment. Impacts from visual impairment would be measured rather than cognitive ability. Solely relying on norm-referenced tools to provide an estimate of Kaleb's overall abilities is not appropriate. Given his challenges with understanding basic concepts that impact his ability to follow directions, criterion-referenced evaluation tools and dynamic test methods were utilized to provide a more comprehensive estimate of his abilities. The Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills, Second Edition, Braille Adaptation (Brigance CIBS II Braille) and INSITE Developmental Checklist: Assessment of Developmental Skills for Young Children with Sensory Impairments and Additional Disabilities, Third Edition (INSITE-3) were utilized to assess Kaleb's pre-academic and cognitive functioning. In addition, data from records review, interviews with parents and educational team members, work samples, and direct observations at school and home were considered.

Due to persistent hyperplastic primary vitreous (PVF) (i.e., a congenital eye disorder that occurs when the vascular structures during eye development fail to disappear after birth, which results in abnormal eye development and vision loss), Kaleb has no light perception (i.e., blindness) in both eyes. He also has keratopathy (i.e., corneal degeneration). While his blindness does impact his learning and daily functioning,

Kaleb's needs are beyond those stemming from his visual impairment. Although there is significant overlap in behaviors seen in blindness and autism (e.g., poor eye contact, repetitive behaviors, sensory issues, and trouble with changes or transitioning), his symptoms go beyond those seen in visual impairment alone. The data from this evaluation are consistent with Kaleb's prior diagnoses of:

- Autism spectrum disorder with language impairment and cognitive impairment, level 3 "requiring very substantial support" for social communication and level 2 "requiring substantial support" for restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior (F84.0),
- Language disorder (F80.2),
- And global developmental delay (F88).

Currently, Kaleb is functioning as a child younger than his chronological age (i.e., delayed by at least one year) in various domains, including his language development, cognition, pre-academic, social, daily living, and self-regulation skills. Most of the skills he demonstrated consistently and independently are within the two- to three-year-old range, with some scattered skills within the four-year-old range (but with a few skills not fully developed within the one-year-old range). For instance, Kaleb demonstrated an understanding of cause and effect and trial-and-error problem-solving. His knowledge of basic concepts (e.g., spatial, positional, temporal, and quantitative) is emerging but needs explicit instruction to further develop his understanding. He is not yet following two-step directions or matching and sorting objects.

Many of his skills are rote (i.e., habitual repetition of something learned). For example, he rotely recites numbers but is not yet demonstrating one-to-one correspondence or understanding the concept of one. He has challenges with generalizing skills and consistently showing what he knows across time, settings, and people due to his self-directed nature and limited attention span. The significant level of scaffolding and explicit, direct instruction needed to facilitate learning is much more than needed for a typically developing child who is four years old.

Kaleb also presents with frequent echolalia and sensory-seeking behaviors (e.g., jumping, spinning, fiddling with objects, mouthing objects, and vocalizing random sounds). When engaging in physical sensory input, he does not show awareness of his surroundings and often bumps into objects, such as walls, large furniture, or other people.

Much of Kaleb's independent living skills require maximum support; his skills are delayed compared to same-age peers. At home, his parents fully support him to care for

his mealtime, dressing, hygiene, health, and safety needs. He has the potential to participate in activities of daily living and learn rote sequences of motor skills that will be meaningful to him, promote a better quality of life, and increase his independence (e.g., participate in parts of his self-care and dressing routine and further develop his mealtime skills).

In addition to Kaleb's Individual Education Program services (i.e., one-to-one aide, specialized academic instruction, vision, orientation and mobility, adapted physical education, occupational therapy, and speech-language therapy), he receives medically provided services (i.e., occupational therapy, speech-language therapy, and Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services). He also is followed by his pediatrician and ophthalmologist.

Kaleb's community supports include Alta Regional Center, California Children's Services (CCS), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medi-Cal, and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS). I highly recommend that Kaleb continue to be found eligible for these support services. Kaleb has disabilities that have been present before his 18th birthday and that are expected to continue indefinitely and present a substantial disability. He requires adult support and supervision throughout the day for his daily care, health, and safety. I fully support this family's request for services to enable them to continue caring and raising Kaleb in their home.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions regarding this summary.

Sincerely yours,

May Nguyen, MS, LEP, NCSP, ACUE
Licensed Educational Psychologist
California School for the Blind, Assessment Center School Psychologist
mnguyen@csb-cde.ca.gov
(510) 320 - 2961

Appendix C: Special Education Eligibility Criteria to Consider

Kaleb currently meets criteria for autism, visual impairment, and speech language impairment. Per the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, Text Revision* (DSM-5-TR; American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2022), "[a]ppropriate assessment of intellectual functioning in autism spectrum disorder is essential, with reassessment across the developmental period, because IQ scores in autism spectrum disorder may be unstable, particularly in early childhood" (APA, 2022, p. 45). Kaleb's learning profile may change as he develops and increases his sustained attention and engagement with adult-directed activities. At his next triennial evaluation, consider assessing to determine his eligibility under additional categories of intellectual disability (and therefore multiple disabilities) or specific learning disability after Kaleb has had intensive intervention with individualized instruction. Below are the criteria for all the special education eligibility categories his IEP team is recommended to review and consider at his next triennial evaluation.

California Code of Regulations 5 CCR § 3030. Eligibility Criteria.

(1) **Autism** means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, and adversely affecting a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

- (A) Autism does not apply if a child's educational performance is adversely affected primarily because the child has an emotional disturbance, as defined in subdivision (b)(4) of this section.
- (B) A child who manifests the characteristics of autism after age three could be identified as having autism if the criteria in subdivision (b)(1) of this section are satisfied.

(6) **Intellectual disability** means significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

(7) **Multiple disabilities** means concomitant impairments, such as intellectual disability-blindness or intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment, the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in

special education programs solely for one of the impairments. “Multiple disabilities” does not include deaf-blindness.

(10) **Specific learning disability** means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may have manifested itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The basic psychological processes include attention, visual processing, auditory processing, sensory-motor skills, cognitive abilities including association, conceptualization, and expression.

- (A) Specific learning disabilities do not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of intellectual disability, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.
- (B) In determining whether a pupil has a specific learning disability, the public agency may consider whether a pupil has a severe discrepancy between intellectual ability and achievement in
    - oral expression,
    - listening comprehension,
    - written expression,
    - basic reading skill,
    - reading comprehension,
    - mathematical calculation, or
    - mathematical reasoning.
- The decision as to whether or not a severe discrepancy exists shall take into account all relevant material which is available on the pupil. No single score or product of scores, test or procedure shall be used as the sole criterion for the decisions of the IEP team as to the pupil's eligibility for special education. In determining the existence of a severe discrepancy, the IEP team shall use the following procedures:
    - 1. When standardized tests are considered to be valid for a specific pupil, a severe discrepancy is demonstrated by: first, converting into common standard scores, using a mean of 100 and standard deviation of 15, the achievement test score and the intellectual ability test score to be compared; second, computing the difference between these common standard scores; and third, comparing this computed difference to the standard criterion which is the product of 1.5 multiplied by the standard

deviation of the distribution of computed differences of students taking these achievement and ability tests. A computed difference which equals or exceeds this standard criterion, adjusted by one standard error of measurement, the adjustment not to exceed 4 common standard score points, indicates a severe discrepancy when such discrepancy is corroborated by other assessment data which may include other tests, scales, instruments, observations and work samples, as appropriate.

- 2. When standardized tests are considered to be invalid for a specific pupil, the discrepancy shall be measured by alternative means as specified on the assessment plan.
- 3. If the standardized tests do not reveal a severe discrepancy as defined in subdivisions 1. or 2. above, the IEP team may find that a severe discrepancy does exist, provided that the team documents in a written report that the severe discrepancy between ability and achievement exists as a result of a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes. The report shall include a statement of the area, the degree, and the basis and method used in determining the discrepancy. The report shall contain information considered by the team which shall include, but not be limited to:
  - (i) Data obtained from standardized assessment instruments;
  - (ii) Information provided by the parent;
  - (iii) Information provided by the pupil's present teacher;
  - (iv) Evidence of the pupil's performance in the regular and/or special education classroom obtained from observations, work samples, and group test scores;
  - (v) Consideration of the pupil's age, particularly for young children; and
  - (vi) Any additional relevant information.
- 4. A severe discrepancy shall not be primarily the result of limited school experience or poor school attendance.

- (C) Whether or not a pupil exhibits a severe discrepancy as described in subdivision (b)(10)(B) above, a pupil may be determined to have a specific learning disability if:
  - 1. The pupil does not achieve adequately for the pupil's age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the following areas, when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the pupil's age or State-approved grade-level standards:
    - (i) Oral expression.

        - (ii) Listening comprehension.
        - (iii) Written expression.
        - (iv) Basic reading skill.
        - (v) Reading fluency skills.
        - (vi) Reading comprehension.
        - (vii) Mathematics calculation.
        - (viii) Mathematics problem solving, and
    - 2.(i) The pupil does not make sufficient progress to meet age or State-approved grade level standards in one or more of the areas identified in subdivision (b)(10)(C)(1) of this section when using a process based on the pupil's response to scientific, research based intervention; or
        - (ii) The pupil exhibits a pattern of strengths and weaknesses in performance, achievement, or both, relative to age, State-approved grade-level standards, or intellectual development, that is determined by the group to be relevant to the identification of a specific learning disability, using appropriate assessments, consistent with 34 C.F.R. sections 300.304 and 300.305; and
    - 3. The findings under subdivisions (b)(10)(C)(1) and (2) of this section are not primarily the result of:
        - (i) A visual, hearing, or motor disability;
        - (ii) Intellectual disability;
        - (iii) Emotional disturbance;
        - (iv) Cultural factors;
        - (v) Environmental or economic disadvantage; or
        - (vi) Limited English proficiency.
    - 4. To ensure that underachievement in a pupil suspected of having a specific learning disability is not due to lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math, the group making the decision must consider:
        - (i) Data that demonstrate that prior to, or as a part of, the referral process, the pupil was provided appropriate instruction in regular education settings, delivered by qualified personnel; and
        - (ii) Data-based documentation of repeated assessments of achievement at reasonable intervals, reflecting formal assessment of student progress during instruction, which was provided to the pupil's parents.
    - 5. In determining whether a pupil has a specific learning disability, the public agency must ensure that the pupil is observed in the pupil's learning environment in accordance with 34 C.F.R. section 300.310. In the case of

a child of less than school age or out of school, a qualified professional must observe the child in an environment appropriate for a child of that age. The eligibility determination must be documented in accordance with 34 C.F.R. section 300.311.

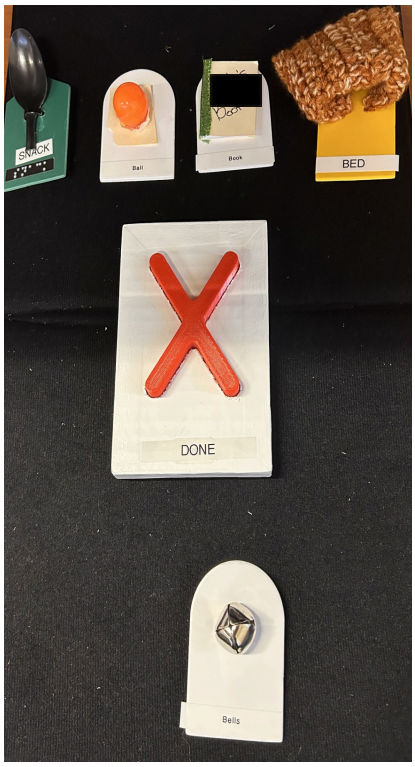
(11) A pupil has a **language or speech disorder** as defined in Education Code section 56333, and it is determined that the pupil's disorder meets one or more of the following criteria:

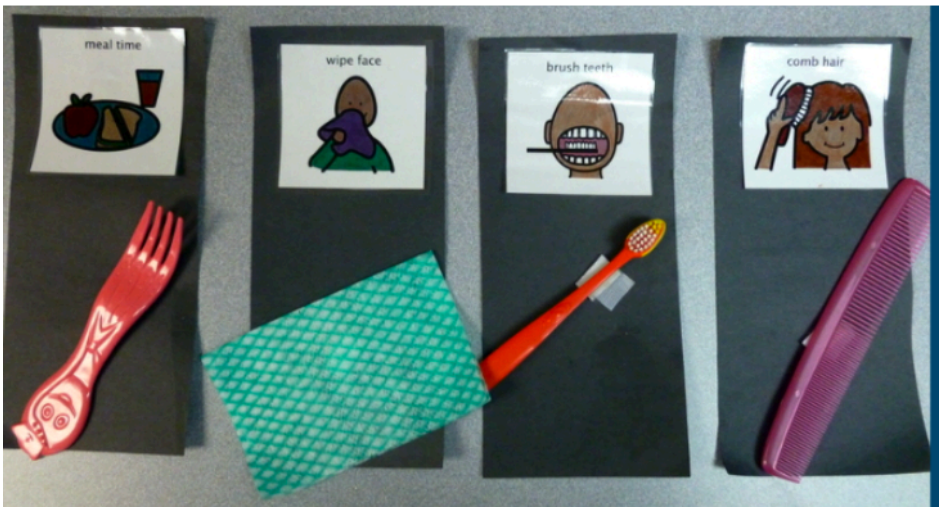
- (A) Articulation disorder.
    - 1. The pupil displays reduced intelligibility or an inability to use the speech mechanism which significantly interferes with communication and attracts adverse attention. Significant interference in communication occurs when the pupil's production of single or multiple speech sounds on a developmental scale of articulation competency is below that expected for his or her chronological age or developmental level, and which adversely affects educational performance.
    - 2. A pupil does not meet the criteria for an articulation disorder if the sole assessed disability is an abnormal swallowing pattern.
- (B) Abnormal Voice. A pupil has an abnormal voice which is characterized by persistent, defective voice quality, pitch, or loudness.
- (C) Fluency Disorders. A pupil has a fluency disorder when the flow of verbal expression including rate and rhythm adversely affects communication between the pupil and listener.
- (D) Language Disorder. The pupil has an expressive or receptive language disorder when he or she meets one of the following criteria:
    - 1. The pupil scores at least 1.5 standard deviations below the mean, or below the 7th percentile, for his or her chronological age or developmental level on two or more standardized tests in one or more of the following areas of language development: morphology, syntax, semantics, or pragmatics. When standardized tests are considered to be invalid for the specific pupil, the expected language performance level shall be determined by alternative means as specified on the assessment plan, or
    - 2. The pupil scores at least 1.5 standard deviations below the mean or the score is below the 7th percentile for his or her chronological age or developmental level on one or more standardized tests in one of the areas listed in subdivision (A) and displays inappropriate or inadequate usage of expressive or receptive language as measured by a representative spontaneous or elicited language sample of a minimum of 50 utterances.

> The language sample must be recorded or transcribed and analyzed, and the results included in the assessment report. If the pupil is unable to produce this sample, the language, speech, and hearing specialist shall document why a fifty utterance sample was not obtainable and the contexts in which attempts were made to elicit the sample. When standardized tests are considered to be invalid for the specific pupil, the expected language performance level shall be determined by alternative means as specified in the assessment plan.

(13) **Visual impairment** including blindness means an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

Appendix D: Tactile Symbols





*note: replace images with text & braille

Appendix E: References

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