**Considerations for the Child Who Has Multiple Disabilities...
Will a Visit to the Low Vision Clinic Be Beneficial?**

Students evaluated at the Low Vision Clinic represent a wide range of ages, developmental levels and abilities, as well as levels of visual functioning. Often, the appropriateness of a low vision clinic evaluation for the child who has additional disabilities depends on variables that need to be considered by the parents, the teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI), and perhaps other members of the child’s educational team.

Children with multiple disabilities often respond best in an environment that is familiar and consistent. Additionally, responses may be influenced by such things as the effects of medications or other physical states that are not always predictable. These are some of the reasons it is possible that a child with multiple disabilities will not always test true to their ability level during a clinical evaluation. Parents and other team members should carefully consider possible variables and weigh their expectations for the outcome of a visit to a Low Vision clinic. Parents are encouraged to bring along familiar toys or other items that their child enjoys. This being said, we welcome students of all ability levels to the clinic.

**Outcomes of a Low Vision Clinic visit that may be beneficial include:**

* **To establish a baseline of general visual functioning level**, or perhaps an acuity measurement. For very young children, or nonverbal children who are not able to respond to a traditional test of acuity measurement, it may be possible to use other methods to obtain a general indication of their level of visual functioning, or even a distance acuity equivalent, and to give a prognosis for expected levels of visual functioning they likely will develop.
* **To help parents and teachers obtain information** to better understand their child’s visual condition and visual functioning – “how” he/she sees.
* **To determine if there is a refractive error (need for corrective lenses)** and whether the refractive error is significant enough to prescribe eyeglasses.
* **To provide information and assistance in the process of determining appropriate learning strategies that will possibly enhance the student’s functioning level**, and to assist educational team members with trial and/or acquisition of recommended devices, equipment, or strategies. The Low Vision Clinic Team includes professionals who are available to explore suggestions, and possibly demonstrate some learning techniques and equipment with your child at the time of your clinic visit.
* **To provide re-evaluation to determine if visual functioning is improving, remaining stable or otherwise changing**, and what those changes may indicate in terms of other programming needs.