

# FEDERAL QUOTA PROGRAM GUIDELINES

## ELIGIBILITY

Students must meet the federal definition of legal blindness as outlined by the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind: “...*central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with best correction; a peripheral field so contracted that the widest diameter of such field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees; or visual performance reduced by a brain injury or dysfunction when visual function meets the definition of blindness as determined by an eye-care specialist or neurologist.*”

- **Meets the Definition of Blindness (MDB)** - a central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with best correction (using the Snellen chart) or a visual field of 20 degrees or less;
- **Functions at the Definition of Blindness (FDB)** - when visual function meets the definition of blindness as determined by an eye-care specialist (ophthalmologist or optometrist) or other medical doctor such as a neurologist. Students in this category manifest visual characteristics often found in conditions referred to as neurological, cortical, or cerebral visual impairment (e.g., brain injury or dysfunction).

### AND

- Be enrolled in a formally organized public or private nonprofit educational program of less than college level including
  - students who are deafblind
  - students with multiple disabilities who are legally blind
  - students enrolled in regular education or special education programs
  - students in public, private and parochial schools

School-age students must be enrolled with the registering school or agency on Monday, Jan. 3, 2022.

**There is no chronological age limit for eligibility.** The federal law limits registration to persons working at less than college level but places no restrictions on the ages of eligible students.

- **Adults over 21 years of age** who meet the definition of blindness and are enrolled in instructional programs at less than college level for 20 hours per week of documented intervention.
- **Eligible infants/birth to age three.** An infant can be registered if they meet the following three requirements:
  - Are enrolled in a formally organized (i.e., Help Me Grow Early Intervention, Early Head Start, or attending a licensed early care and educational program), regularly scheduled educational or training program and have a written education plan. An individualized family service plan (IFSP) or any other written plan may be used.
  - Meet the definition of blindness. An infant can be registered with a note from their pediatrician, or any eye care specialist, stating the infant meets the definition of blindness since an actual acuity is impossible to obtain at this age. When the child turns three, a new, official eye report from their eye care specialist (optometrist/ophthalmologist) must be obtained with acuities to determine if they meet the definition of blindness, or from their neurologist if they function at the definition of blindness due to a brain injury.
  - Signed parent permission form. Parent permission forms are required for all students in the birth to three age group.
- **Preschool Children and Homebound Students** who have a written education plan are enrolled in a formally organized program.



- **Eligibility of Students Who Are Home-Schooled** who have a written education plan and meet Ohio's eligibility requirements.

**Please note the following student groups may not be eligible**

- **Students of Armed Services Personnel**
  - The Department of Defense Education Agency (DOD-EA) is responsible for meeting the educational needs of military base school students who would otherwise be eligible for federal quota funds.
  - The DOD-EA is allowed to use the National Instructional Materials Access Center (NIMAC).
- **Students residing on reservations who receive funding from the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE)**
  - The Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) is responsible for meeting the educational needs of students in reservation schools who would otherwise be registered for federal quota funds.
  - The BIE has not coordinated with the NIMAC. For more information, contact [nimac@aph.org](mailto:nimac@aph.org).

**PARENT PERMISSION**

Each infant, preschool, or school-aged student is required to have a permission form signed by the parent (one time only) to be registered in the Federal Quota program. If a student is an adult (18 or older) and his or her own guardian, you do not have to get parent permission. In these cases, if the student is subject to FERPA and IDEA, the student will need to provide permission for release of personally identifiable information (PII).

[Parent Permission forms](#) are available in: Albanian, Chinese, English, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Somali, Spanish and Ukrainian.

**STUDENT GRADE PLACEMENT REPORTING CODES**

Please carefully review the chart of student placement categories, being certain the placement reported accurately reflects each student's placement. Report the grade placement for each student using the appropriate code shown. Only these codes will be accepted.

Note: Students who exceed school-age as determined by respective state law must be registered as an adult student (Reporting Code "AD").

Grade Placement Categories and Reporting Codes for Adult Students (This includes all eligible participants over school-age)

- **AD - Adult Students:** Adults above school-age, as determined by state law, in educational programs of less than college level. Note: The Federal Government requires that all students above the state's age/grade limitation for high school (In Ohio, over 21 years of age per IDEA federal guidelines.) must be registered as adults.
- **IP – Infants:** Children of preschool age served by infant programs.
- **PS – Infants:** Children of preschool age served by infant programs.
- **KG – Kindergarten Students:** Children enrolled in kindergarten classes.
- **01...12 – Students of School-age:** Determined by state law, in regular academic grades 1 through 12; please indicate grade placement by indicating grade as of first Monday of January.
- **AN – Academic Nongraded:** Students of school-age, as determined by state law, who are working to acquire skills necessary for placement in a regular grade.
- **FC – Functional Curriculum Students:** Students in grades 01-12 working toward a graduation certificate or non-traditional diploma.

- TR – Transition Students: Students of school age, as determined by state law, in secondary instructional programs designed to supplement the traditional academic curriculum. Could include students in post-graduate programs at less than college level.
- OR – Other Registrants: Students of school-age, as determined by state law, who do not fall into any of the above placements (e.g., students enrolled in classes for nonacademic students).

### **PRIMARY INSTRUCTIONAL LANGUAGE OF LEARNER**

- English (EN)
- Spanish (SP)
- Other (OT) – Languages other than English and Spanish

### **DEFINITION OF REQUIRED INFORMATION AND REPORTING CODES**

- Be sure to use the student's legal name for registration and requesting materials.
- Name of pupil: Report each student's full name in this order: last name then first name (e.g., Doe John). Do not report the middle initial. Do not submit a name with only the initial of the student's first name. Do not use punctuation marks.
- Date of birth: Give the student's date of birth in numbers in this sequence: month, day, year (e.g., 01/02/2012)

### **READING MEDIUM CODES**

- PRIMARY READING MEDIUM (PRM) - The primary reading medium is to be reported for each student using the following reporting codes. Only these codes will be accepted. Note: Infants and preschoolers identified as visual, braille, or auditory readers should be reported using the appropriate medium code.
  - V - Visual: Students primarily using print in their studies.
  - B - Braille: Students primarily using braille in their studies.
  - A - Auditory: Students use a reader or auditory materials to some extent.
  - SN - Symbolic/ Non-readers: students not working on or toward a readiness level; students who do not demonstrate traditional print or Braille reading potential (symbolic readers); students do not fall into any of the above categories.
  - PRE - Pre-reader: Students working on or toward a readiness level; infants, preschoolers, or older students with reading potential.
- SECONDARY READING MEDIUM (SRM) - In addition to listing a primary reading medium, please check students secondary reading medium so that a more accurate profile of student literacy can be tracked. Note: If a student's primary reading medium was coded as non-reader, the secondary reading medium must be coded as N/A.
  - V – Visual: Students use print to some extent.
  - B - Braille: Students use braille to some extent.
  - A - Auditory: Students use a reader or auditory materials to some extent.
  - N/A - Not Applicable: Nonreaders, prereaders, or students with no additional reading media.
- OTHER READING MEDIUM (ORM)
  - V - Visual: Students use print to some extent.
  - B – Braille: Students use braille to some extent.
  - A - Auditory: Students use a reader or auditory materials to some extent.
  - N/A - Not Applicable: Nonreaders, prereaders, or students with no additional reading media.

### **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

To protect student identity, the AT&AEM Center encrypts all electronic correspondence with districts and provides a method for districts to return encrypted reporting materials.



Log onto the 2022 FEDERAL QUOTA REGISTRATION OF BLIND STUDENTS portal at <https://ohioaem.ataem.org> and report **every student who is legally blind and in attendance in your school district or agency as of Monday, January 3, 2022**. Only the **school district of attendance** reports each student who is legally blind. Please note there may be students who could be eligible and **not** be listed in your account. Additional students to review:

- students who have moved into the district within the last year
- students who have a change in their visual acuity

**Superintendent's report using one of the two codes defined above, MDB - Meets the Definition of Blindness or FDB - Functions at the Definition of Blindness.**

**Superintendents must:**

- Verify the eligibility of each student listed;
- Obtain parental permission for each student being enrolled, if not currently on file;
- Check the accuracy of the information provided;
- Update incorrect information;
- Add new students;
- Submit for approval by the AT&AEM Center;
- Once approved, electronically sign the approved final student census submission, and click submit by **Feb. 18, 2022**. Once submitted, the superintendent will receive a confirmation message saying, "signature submitted successfully."
- Print and retain a copy of the registration form for district record; and
- The **superintendent's electronic signature** on the submitted registration form **verifies the existence** of these records.

Electronically sign and submit the registration form to the AT&AEM Center even if there are no enrolled students who are legally blind.

**Only the codes listed in the eligibility guidelines can be accepted**

**Each district must have the following documents on file for each registered student:**

- **Written education plan.** Such as an IEP, a 504 plan or any other written action plan that verifies the student is in a formally organized education program.
- **Current eye report by an ophthalmologist or an optometrist.\*** A report from a medical doctor such as a neurologist is acceptable for students classified as "Functions at the Definition of Blindness." **FDB** is a category indicating blindness due to a brain injury or dysfunction. The report must be **current within three years (2019 or later)** of the last report date. Exemptions from the current eye report regulation include students who are totally blind or whose eyes have been enucleated or who have proven non-changing eye conditions. The current eye report requirement has been waived for the 2022 Federal Quota Registration of blind students due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.
  - *Students with an eye report:* Eye reports from an ophthalmologist or optometrist do not need to be dated 2019 or later. Any date is accepted for the 2022 Federal Quota Census.
  - *Students without an eye report:* The education team needs to consider all available data, including functional vision assessments, current performance and medical documentation, to determine if the student could be classified as 'Functions at the Definition of Blindness' (FDB) or 'Meets the Definition of Blindness' (MDB) for the 2022 Federal Quota Census.
- **Signed Parent Permission.** [Parent permission forms](#) can be found on the AT&AEM website.

**SUBMISSION**

Superintendent's electronic signature for the **2022 FEDERAL QUOTA REGISTRATION OF BLIND STUDENTS FORM** must be received no later than Friday, **Feb. 18, 2022**.