## Strategy Name:

## Higher Education and Personnel Preparation: Educational Vision Professionals

## Our Intent:

### What is to be accomplished?

Describe the intent that is to be accomplished by this strategy

Our intent with this strategy is to create separate CVI specific, semester long, content in university programs for educational vision professionals. This strategy will help define the essential elements of this CVI specific instruction in order for vision professional students to understand the causes and manifestations of CVI, understand CVI specific assessment methods, understand current promising practices for the different manifestations of CVI and understand the need for collaboration systems around CVI with medical professionals, parents and school team members.

### Why? What does this influence?

Describe why accomplishment of this strategy is important to achieving the organizational mission/vision or what major influence this strategy is expected to have on the organization.

Why? What does it influence?

The number of children impacted with CVI has outpaced the number of children with ocular impairment. Those numbers continue to grow. University training programs have not changed curriculums sufficiently to prepare graduates for the students with CVI (COLAB Influence Tree Statement #5).

A self reporting survey of TVI competency with students with CVI was conducted on February 2019. The survey was disseminated through social media and through direct email from the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER). In that survey 419 TVIs responded to questions about general knowledge, personal knowledge backgrounds, skills with identification, skills with assessment and to their ability to apply assessment information to their students with CVI. Respondents overwhelmingly reported that they felt they had had little to no training about CVI in their TVI training programs. They felt there was a deficit in formal training about CVI at the university level. Results of this survey will be published in an upcoming issue of Seminars in Pediatric Neurology.

Personnel preparation programs for vision professionals need to change and expand curriculums to meet this growing need and the changing demographics to insure competence in the understanding of CVI, the assessment of CVI, the interventions and collaboration strategies for students with CVI at all severity levels (COLAB Influence Tree Statement #84). Because this visual impairment is caused by damage to the brain rather than to the eye, different assessment methods (COLAB Influence Tree Statement #87) and interventions are required.

With the growing demand for service to students with CVI, there remains too few well trained TVIs to serve students with this brain based visual impairment. There are few educational visual professionals who understand the brain and the impact of brain damage on visual recognition. Few understand visual neuroplasticity, the capacity for visual change in student with CVI or understand the visual behaviors common in students with CVI for identification and for assessment (COLAB Influence Tree Statement #76). The low numbers of educated vision professionals impacts the mentoring opportunities in the field. Increasing the number of competent educational vision professionals will increase the local access to assessment and “best practice” mentors (COLAB Influence Tree Statement #19). Influencing this area will increase referrals and provide appropriate educational vision services to students with CVI.

More knowledgeable educational visual professionals will create appropriate materials and technology specifically aimed at the needs of students with CVI. Well educated vision professionals will give parents of children with CVI the appropriate information and strategies. Well educated vision professionals will give educational teams that serve children with CVI the appropriate assessment results and interventions strategies. Expanded competence of professionals working with children with CVI will drive scientific study. Collaboration brings professionals out of silos and will provide greater CVI information sharing between medical and educational professionals, between vision professionals and discipline teams, between TVIs and O&M specialists, between TVIs and between TVIs and parents. More competent educational visual professionals create more tools for assessment and intervention for students with CVI.

## Implied Tasks:

### What tasks are assumed to be completed as part of this effort?

Knowing that the implementation teams will define “how” this intent will be met, are there any specific tasks that they must accomplish?

Development:

* Creation of a document outlining a CVI competency outline
* Creation of document listing the essential element of anatomy and function of the brain’s visual system, essential elements CVI assessment curriculum, and current promising practices and collaboration strategies for students with CVI.

Logistics:

* Identify how each university systems in different states change to include CVI specific content.

Dissemination:

* Curriculum presentation at international and national conferences
* Curriculum components shared in print and electronic media through blindness associations.

## Defining the boundaries:

### How much freedom do we have?

How far can the implementation team go to determine how best to meet the strategic intent? What authority do they have to make decisions using their best judgment?

The work of teams will be guided by the approved implementation plan (milestones projected over a one-year timeframe) and operate within the allocated resources

Adapted from Bungay, S. (2011), The Art of Action: How leaders close the gap between plans, actions and results. London:Nicholas Brealey