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Thank you for this opportunity to speak on IEP issues particularly for the blind and visually impaired.

I met with a 4<sup>th</sup> grader and her mother. The child has an eye condition that leaves her with poor sight in her left eye and poorer sight in her right. She has underdeveloped optic nerves and her eyes cross. She is not excelling in school believably because she does not have the right services. I asked the mother who is the vision teacher to which she replied, "she does not have one." I followed with several other questions such as:

Has she had a functional vision test? No.

Has she had a learning media assessment? No

Does she get braille instructions? We were advised that braille is not required.

Does she get large print? She has a computer in class that they use to enlarge the print, but not at home.

Are her books provided in large print or electronically? No, she only gets papers in large print.

What do you do at home for her homework? I end up writing for her and reading to her.

Does she have an orientation and mobility instructor? What is that?

The child is in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. The mother has been doing this for at least 3 years and she is totally unaware of what to ask for in terms of services and in terms of an IEP team make-up. Can you fathom what the child will face by the time she reaches high school?

Education services for the blind and visually impaired are not housed in the Department of Education. They come from the Division for Visually Impaired under Health and Human Services. I am almost certain that you do not have anyone on this task force who can speak with authority on the program requirements and services for our children. It is my recommendation that you insist upon an additional legislative study for children who are visually impaired.