



March 4, 2008

Dear Educator:

NH Vision/Hearing Network is undergoing changes from its current model, as announced by the NH DOE in Numbered Memos #17 and #27. The changes, which are necessary due to a reduction in funding to the NHVHN, go into effect on 7/1/2008. It is very important for you, as an educator who is supporting one or more students with vision and/or hearing loss, to understand the changes and how they will affect services for your students who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind. A letter with this information has also been sent to the special education administrator in your district as well as to parents of students with vision and/or hearing loss. The changes are summarized below.

#### #1: CORE FUNDING

The program continues to be funded by the NH Department of Education to provide certain centralized functions that will be of assistance to districts working with these students. The contract with the NH Department of Education will provide the following services to school districts at low or no cost to the district:

- a) **Broker/Central contact for needed services, materials and equipment**
  - i) Educational consultants who are certified teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired or students who are deafblind can assist school districts in planning for the appropriate level of support.
  - ii) Although NHVHN is no longer funded to pay for assistive technology evaluations for students with vision and/or hearing loss, the project staff can assist schools in identifying the most appropriate AT evaluator when an evaluation is needed.
  - iii) Project staff can assist schools in making cost-effective purchase of low vision equipment, FM systems, and large print/braille instructional materials.
  - iv) The director of the Instructional Materials Center (IMC) will assist schools in identifying the best place to purchase needed large print and braille materials.
- b) **Equipment and Materials Loan**
  - i) Short term, emergency loan of available vision and hearing related assistive technology will be available.
  - ii) Schools will be able to borrow available large print/braille books and related materials from the IMC in Concord, and to access, through the IMC, other loan programs across the country.
- c) **Training**
  - i) Low cost workshops for regular and special educators and parents will continue to be available at NHVHN offices in Concord throughout the school year.

#### #2: EDUCATIONAL CONSULTATION SERVICES

The educational consultants that are currently working with NHVHN will continue to be available to provide ongoing consultation. However, the cost for these services will be the responsibility of the school district. The contract with the NH DOE no longer covers the cost of any level of consultation or training within the school district provided by NHVHN educational consultants. A variety of on-site and phone/email consultation supports will be available for an hourly charge. The list of services available and the associated fees is enclosed with this letter.

### #3: APPLYING FOR SERVICES

Districts who would like to request services from the NHVHN will use a Request for Services form (RFS). A blank RFS for the 2008-2009 school year is enclosed with this letter and is also available for download on the project's website [www.nhvhn.org](http://www.nhvhn.org). Once the RFS is received, a consultant will contact the appropriate person at the school to discuss the needs of the student. That initial conversation and determination of needs is offered at no cost. Depending on the needs of the student and the district, a contract for consulting services will be developed and/or the student will be registered for the Instructional Materials Center. Contracts for multiple students within one district may be established by contacting the project director. In these cases, consultation time may be purchased for several students within one school or district.

Change is always difficult, and these changes are certainly no exception. The goal of the NH Vision & Hearing Network is to continue to serve as a resource to students with vision and/or hearing loss and their educators and families. Please contact me at 226-2900 x 109 or [catew@atechservices.org](mailto:catew@atechservices.org) with any questions you may have as you plan for services for the 2008-2009 school year.

Sincerely,

Cate Weir  
Project Director  
NH Vision/Hearing Network

*Enclosures:*

- *Request for Services School Year 2008-2009*
- *List of Services Available and Related Costs*