**AB 947 (Quirk-Silva) Fact Sheet**

**Visually Impaired Students**

## SUMMARY

AB 947 will ensure students who are blind may receive an education that will maximize their potential. The bill adds a group of services known as the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC), to the Education Code. With this, students with visual impairments will obtain the services they need to be given an appropriate public education. This bill will also permit a district to allow the use of an instructor’s personal vehicle or provide an equally effective alternative orientation or mobility service.

## BACKGROUND

The ECC includes skills in areas such as the use of braille or large print media, assistive technology, orientation and mobility, socialization, independent living, and sensory efficiency. Currently, students with vision loss rarely receive evaluation and instruction in the complete array of ECC skills.

School districts often fail to assess these students for the need of one or more of these ECC skill areas. School districts also impose restrictions in schools that have an impact of preventing adequate instruction in ECC skills from being provided.

Orientation and mobility is a one of the most important skill areas of learning for those students who are visually impaired.. Visually impaired students receive dynamic and vibrant information about themselves and the environment in which they move - from basic body image to independent travel in rural areas and busy cities - with skills in the orientation and mobility area.

## SOLUTION

This bill will add the services of the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) to the Education Code to include the instruction of compensatory skills, orientation and mobility, social interaction skills, career education, assistive technology, independent living skills, recreation and leisure, self-determination, sensory efficiency, creating a more effective educational opportunity for visually impaired students.

Additionally, this bill would mandate a certified orientation and mobility specialist to determine if an evaluation is needed for a student who is blind, low vision, or visually impaired.

Finally, this bill would permit a district to allow the use of an instructor’s personal vehicle or require that a district provide an equally effective alternative orientation or mobility services, thus allowing the impact of impediments imposed by the district to be reduced.

## SPONSOR

California Council for the Blind

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