***A note to readers: The Microsoft word version differs from the pdf version because it does not contain line numbers or material that was crossed out and deleted from the final version of the law. We have included a word version to provide greater access to the information. When you see material in all capital letters, it represents what was new when this particular bill was passed.***

Maryland Literacy Rights and Education Act

Education Article

Section 8-408

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

 (2) "Child who is blind or visually impaired" means a child who:

(i) Has a visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with correcting lenses or

 has a limited field of vision so that the widest diameter of the visual field

 subtends an angle no greater than 20 degrees;

 (ii) Has a medically indicated expectation of visual deterioration; or

 (iii)Has a medically diagnosed limitation in visual functioning that restricts the

 child's ability to read and write standard print at levels expected of other

 children of comparable ability and grade level.

 (3) "Braille" means the system of reading and writing through touch

 commonly known as Standard English [Grade 2] CONTRACTED Braille.

 (4) "Individualized education program" and "IEP team" have the same

 meaning as provided by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

 Amendments of 1997, P.L. 105-17, Section 614(d).

(b) (1) In developing the individualized education program for a child who is

 blind or visually impaired, provisions shall be made for instruction in braille and

 the use of braille unless the IEP team determines, after an evaluation of the child's

 reading and writing skills, needs, and appropriate reading and writing media,

 including an evaluation of the child's future needs for instruction in braille or the

 use of braille, that such instruction or use is not appropriate for the child.

 (2) A child may not be denied the opportunity for instruction in braille

 reading and writing solely because the child has some remaining vision.

 (3) This section does not require the exclusive use of braille if other

 reading and writing media are appropriate to the child's educational needs. The use

 of other reading and writing media does not preclude the use of braille or the

 instruction of braille.

(c) For the purpose of achieving successful implementation of this section, the

 State Board and the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board shall adopt

 certification standards for teachers of blind and visually impaired students.