

EDUCATION

OPPORTUNITIES

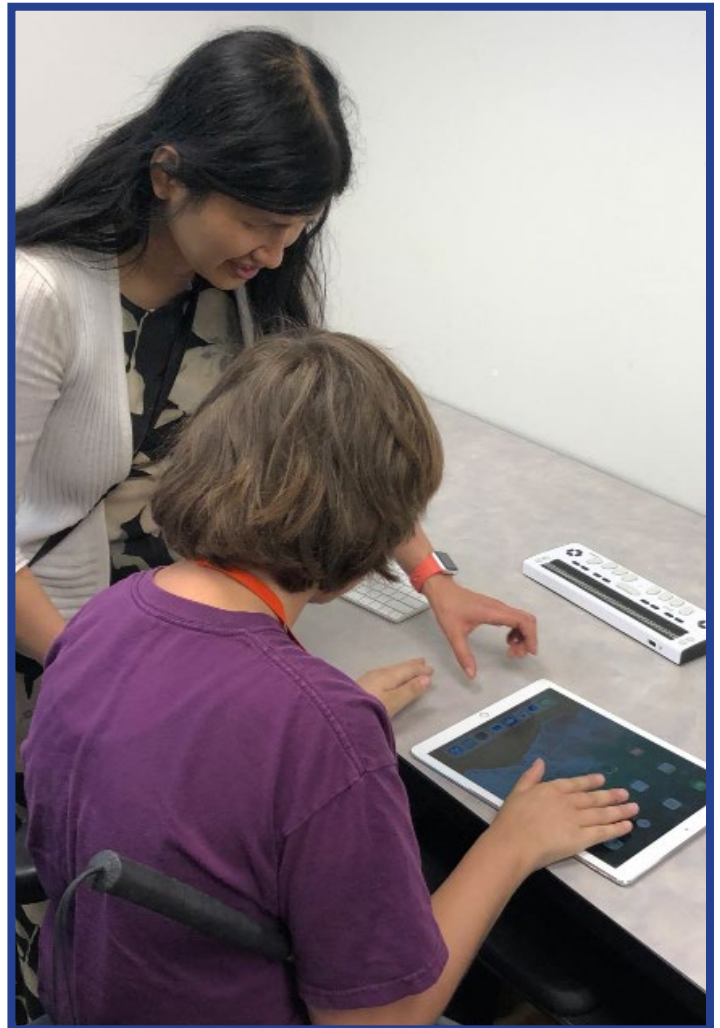
Support increased educational opportunities, including access to specialized educational services, for the 511 Wisconsin students who are blind or visually impaired.

BUDGET ITEMS

- Increase funding for special education by \$500 million to help close the funding gap faced by Wisconsin schools. Prior to the \$100 million increase approved by the Legislature and Governor in the 2019-21 state budget, funding for special education had been flat for over a decade, creating unmet needs for students with disabilities.
- Maintain the current level of funding for the Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (Janesville), which has dedicated programs, outreach, and specially trained professionals serving the needs of students with visual disabilities throughout the state.

LEGISLATIVE ITEMS

- There is currently only one educational institution in the state that provides training for Teachers of the Visually Impaired. This has led to a severe shortage vision professionals in Wisconsin schools. As a result, Wisconsin students with disabilities are not receiving



many of the supports they need to be successful, such as training and education in assistive technology, adaptive techniques and orientation and mobility.

- Promote loan and loan forgiveness programs, facilitated by the Higher Education Aids Board, for teachers of the visually impaired and orientation and mobility specialists.