

Editor:

Tanni L. Anthony, Ph.D.  
State Consultant on  
Blindness/Low Vision

Colorado Department of Education  
201 East Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203

(303) 866-6681 (voice)

(303) 866-6811 (fax)

E-mail: anthony\_t@cde.state.co.us

# WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE!

A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers  
of Colorado Children Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired

January—February 2008



## WHATEVER ... IT TAKES

By Tanni Anthony

I recently attended the Courage to Risk Conference, which is an annual event in Colorado and an exciting opportunity to learn more about educational instruction. The first general session included Peter Alsop, an educator and a songwriter. He had a lot to share, including a song written by one of his colleagues. It rang a note in my soul. It is about the familiar term "whatever" ... or, more properly stated, especially if you have heard it from a truly apathetic individual.... WHAAT EVVVVERRRRR. Say that it again, with the edge of an adolescent or even an irritated adult. Shrug your shoulders, roll your eyes ... WHAAT EVVVVERRRRR. You got it.

But the song continued to urge people out of their apathy to a response that can motivate, turn around the conversation, and, by gosh, maybe even make a difference. "Whatever ... it takes." I so wish I would have learned this reply when my then teenage niece or nephew stormed off from a household discussion with the rolled eyes and prolonged first version of the word. Usually and, unfortunately, my response was reactionary and, undoubtedly, something brilliant, like "You are SUCH a TEENager!" These kind of verbal or silent exchanges in our mind put us in a nonproductive exchange.

I think this second phrase has the power to turn into a powerful mantra, "Whatever it Takes!" ... to have a good working partnership between parents and professionals, to protect the literacy needs of all learners, to ensure we have prepared our children for employment after public school ... you get the idea. Whatever it takes will require good teamwork and smart thinking. Who can roll their eyes at that notion?!

### Table of Contents

Page	Page	Page
1 Whatever It Takes	13 Transition	26 CAER
2 CSAP for Blind/VI	14 See the Future Fund	27 Check it Out
5 Bits from Bonnie	15 O & M	28 Statewide Enrollment
6 Low Vision Clinics & Tools for Life	16 CSDB's Strategic Plan	29 Adult Role Model
7 Screen Magnification Software	17 Inclusion Education Conference	30 NFB Junior Science Academy
8 CSDB Course & Braille Mentoring	19 DOTS of Interest	31 Vision Coalition Meeting
10 CSDB Update & Essay Contest	20 Expert Opinion	42 Colorado Connections
11 BOEC & SKI for Light	22 Jobs	
12 Resources and Materials	23 Calendar of Events	

# 2007-08 CSAP for Students Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired: General Recommendations

By Tanni Anthony

The CSAP Test Administration is just around the corner! Please review these general recommendations well before administering a CSAP test to a student who is blind/visually impaired:

## Assessment Administration Dates

Grade 3 Reading and Lectura: 02/18/08 through 02/29/08

Grades 3-10: 03/10/08 through 04/11/08



## Test Formats

- The CSAP test is produced from the test publisher in five possible formats for students who are blind/visually impaired: (a) regular print; (b) standard large print of 18 point; (c) extra large print (per an approved nonstandard accommodation request); (d) uncontracted braille; and (e) contracted braille.
- If the test is in braille format, it is imperative that a person who can read braille is administering the test.

## Data Grid or Biogrid of the Test

- Please fill out the “braille format” bubble in the data grid. This is very important as some of the tests MAY have omitted items due to visual-bias challenges. The only way for the test publisher to know that a particular grade / content test in braille may need to be pulled for special scoring (due to fewer test items) is this bubble.

## Transcriber Notes on Braille Tests

- There will be a label on the front of the test indicating that the print version of the braille transcriber notes are located in the back of each test. The label should be in a bright color to attract your attention. If for some reason, it is not obvious – please go through the braille test ahead of time to determine the location of the transcriber notes.
- TVIs should work with their students to scan for braille transcriber notes. This may need to be an actual IEP goal to ensure that the student has these skills.
- There will be transcriber notes specific to picture descriptions. Captions will be noted as such to make the distinction between a picture description and an actual picture caption.

## Preview of the Test

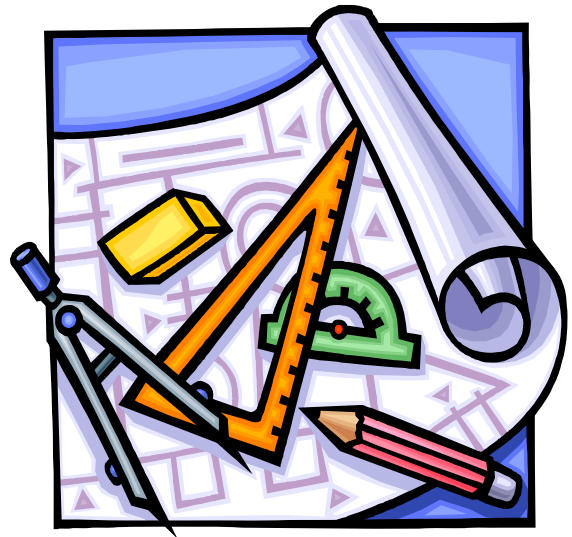
- It is the responsibility of the TVI to read through the braille CSAP test protocol ahead of time in order to determine if there are any needed “other materials” for the test. For example, some of the math tests

will require materials such as graph paper and material to plot points for making a line graph. Other needs may include 3-D geometric shapes. Check to see if it may be helpful to bring a tactile diagram kit, wiki sticks, and thumb tacks for some of the math tests in the older grades.

- The label on the front page of the test should be in a bright color. The label will direct the test evaluator to look in the back of the test booklet for the envelope with the needed materials for that particular test.
- Please remember that the Braille version of the test is also considered secure material and must be protected on a daily basis. No versions of the CSAP may be stored in classrooms.

### **Protractors, Rulers, and Tangrams**

- If a test requires the use of a protractor, the test will also include the plastic APH protractor. It would be best practice, however, to be proactive and ensure that the student uses the protractor used in everyday instruction to the test. (CDE is no longer dispersing protractors).
- The rulers used last year seemed to be fine. They are paper rulers with braille added. If you want to bring the ruler that the student has used for everyday instructional purposes, that would be the better option. Please note: ALL measurement tools are preserved at their true measurements. A large print ruler, for example, is not going to have larger increments of spacing than a regular ruler.
- Tangrams will be provided for the math tests needing these materials. However, be proactive to ensure these materials have been sent with the test.



### **Accommodations**

- The *CDE Accommodations Manual* can be found at [http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csap/manuals/2007/CO\\_%20ACCOMM\\_MANUAL\\_10172007.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csap/manuals/2007/CO_%20ACCOMM_MANUAL_10172007.pdf)

Please review the manual for acceptable accommodations. These accommodations should be on the student's IEP for testing purposes. Be aware of the time-related accommodations of extra time and giving your student's appropriate breaks to accommodate for visual fatigue etc. Also it will be important to be aware of the rules of scribing. There are times when using a scribe is the most efficient way to collect the student's information. A scribe cannot be used when the test is actually measuring writing skills unless the student dictates needed punctuation etc. on tasks requiring writing, students can use a separate piece of paper for their answer.

### **The Test Directions Etc.**

- If a student does not understand the test directions, the TVI can use different words to convey the intent of the test items. If the directions do not apply to the child, such as "use your number 2 graphic pencil, you can substitute the language needed to fit the type of writing instrument for the student.

- It is permissible to give students verbal information to help orient them to a tactile graphic, as long as information will not guide the answer.
- Look at what the test question is measuring. Sometimes it is not tied to the actual content of items – but another construct. For example, the question may not truly be about baseball, but some aspect of math. We have had people think this is a visual bias issue (though our kids should know about baseball – but I hope you understand the example. Go Rockies!)



### **Transcription of Results in Regular CSAP Booklet**

- Students who use a large print and/or Braille test format may record answers directly on the adapted format copy of the test, may use a scribe, or other techniques for response as designated in the student's IEP. On completion of testing, the student's test responses must be transferred into a regular print test booklet. When the student has used braille as a response format, the transfer of this information into the regular print assessment booklet should be completed by the TVI or a district brailist. The content of both a large print and a braille test must be transcribed into the regular print CSAP booklet (the data grid should indicate it was a braille test).

### **Returning Completed Tests**

- All transcribed test booklets, along with the original braille and standard and nonstandard large print test materials should be returned to the CTB/McGraw Hill Scoring Center with the other CSAP test materials. Be sure to turn in all CSAP tests.

### **Completing an Item Analysis Form and Future Bias Review Opportunities**

- Tanni will be sending out an electronic form to gather information about the CSAP tests; if there are particular test items in a grade/content/particular format test that were problematic for your students. We also want to know if the test had no concerns. This item-specific information is reviewed with the Unit of Student Assessment and the test publisher.
- The CSAP questions have been reviewed over the past 5-6 years for visual-item bias. We have been diligent in removing or altering questions that are too visually-based for accommodation and, on rare occasions, would be so time consuming to complete. For example, visual bias is NOT that a student has not had an experience with type of a tree or a school gym.
- Be familiar with grade-level expectations. The more we protect the standards of when students should know, for example, Venn Diagrams, diacritical marks, use graphic organizers, use footnotes, etc., the better we can protect that our learners have these instructional experiences commensurate with their peers.
- The Unit of Student Assessment is very interested in having TVIs participate in their content alignment and bias reviews where content experts and teacher specialists examine every new item before it becomes a part of the next test. This year's review will take place May 12-16 for the different content areas – please be in touch with Tanni if you are interested in participating.



# Bits From Bonnie

By Bonnie Snyder

[BonnieLS21@Gmail.Com](mailto:BonnieLS21@Gmail.Com)

## The Icon that Says “I Can”

Awhile back, I was fortunate to have an Icon from Levelstar in my possession and I played with it for quite some time. The flavor of Icon that is available through APH is known as the Braille Plus, and the addition of external braille entry keys was a stroke of genius!

The Icon/Braille Plus is basically a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) that has its own word processing software, scheduling software, calculator, email, and web browser. It has 18 button keys on the front which can be used for input (the Icon – without the braille keyboard expects input that way, although you can hook up a computer keyboard to it if you wish, using the cable that comes with the Icon and a USB keyboard.) The Icon cable also allows you to transfer files between a PC and the Icon, using the specialized software that comes on a CD with the device.

The Icon/Braille Plus also has wireless capability, and of all the functions of the device, this was, by far the easiest to learn how to do. The Icon/Braille Plus also has speech. It uses the Eloquence speech, which is used by JAWS. The quality of the speech is FAR superior to that of the Bookport. But, like the Bookport, you can load up files to read auditorily (text and Word). Although it does not specifically read PDF files, I understand that there is a free program you can download to its operating system (which is Linux, by the way) that is capable of reading PDFs.

Last, but certainly not least, Levelstar will be adding a GPS capability to the Icon/Braille Plus by the end of the year, and the people at Levelstar have told me that it will be an add-on to the present device, so you don't have to go out and purchase a whole new critter just to have that capability.

All in all, I can't say enough positive things about the Icon/Braille Plus. I really think it is at the top of the line of assistive technology for people who are blind. And, just think, Levelstar is a Colorado native company, based in Louisville!

P. S. I just stumbled across this website. I think you will find some absolutely marvelous shareware and freeware that you can use with your students! The site is:

<<http://www.oatsoft.org/Software/listing/Repository>>.

## Low Vision Evaluation Clinics



Remaining Low Vision Evaluation Clinics for the 2007-2008 academic year:

Region:	Dates:	Location:	Regional Site Coordinators:
Northern	February 22-23, 2008	Fort Collins	Carol Love & Sally Eldridge

Please contact your regional site coordinator(s) or a member of the clinic team with any questions you may have specific to the upcoming clinics. The clinic team includes:

**Donice Fennimore**

*Clinic Coordinator*

Email: [dfennimore@cldb.org](mailto:dfennimore@cldb.org)  
 Office: (719) 578-2198  
 FAX: (719) 578-2207

**Thomas W. Theune, O.D.**

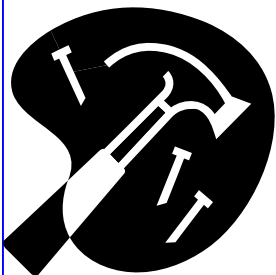
*Low Vision Specialist*

Low Vision Services of  
 Southern Colorado, P.C.  
 Office: (719) 471-3200  
 FAX: (719) 471-3210

**Jim Olson**

*Certified Low Vision Therapist*

CSDB Outreach Department  
 Email: [jolson@cldb.org](mailto:jolson@cldb.org)  
 Office: (719) 578-2283  
 FAX: (719) 578-2247



## The SEE THE FUTURE Fund's "Tools for Life" Update

**The Need:**

Visually impaired or blind students may be highly motivated and highly educated, but without the proper "tools" they are not able to perform to their highest level. Visually impaired and blind children need special "tools" or devices to interact and compete in a world with their sighted peers. These tools allow students

greater access to information in their homes, schools, and communities.

**The Mission:**

To provide financial assistance to the families of visually impaired and blind students (Pre-K – Transition) who are residents of Colorado. This assistance is to help purchase necessary adaptive equipment (tools), which students may own and utilize in their home, school, and community. These tools will help support literacy and the pursuit of higher education allowing students to reach and exceed their hopes and dreams.

**The Update:**

Over \$23,000 was raised in 2006 which was awarded in December of 2007! Thirteen families were given "Tools for Life" scholarships to assist their purchase of desk-top & portable electronic reading machines. The students ranged from pre-school to 10<sup>th</sup> grade and over 70% of the families receiving "Tools for Life" assistance had incomes below \$25,000.

**Next Application Deadline: April 15, 2008**

To apply for a "Tools for Life" scholarship and to obtain more information, please go to: [www.seethefuture.org](http://www.seethefuture.org) and click on "Tools for Life" scholarships. You may also call Tom Theune, OD – Chairperson of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund at 719-471-3200.





# Screen Magnification Software

By Jim Olson

Students with low vision have many options available for accessing computer information in a more comfortable, efficient, manner. These include accessibility options built in to operating systems as well as hardware and software options such as large monitors, adjustable monitor arms, and screen magnification software which enlarges visible text and graphics on the computer screen. Some of this software is free but expect to pay for the feature-rich commercially available software. The newest cutting edge technology includes adding portability by installing the software on portable USB thumb drives. For more information and full reviews of the three leading screen magnification software programs, visit <[www.afb.org](http://www.afb.org)>.

Software Title	Manufacturer	Price
<b>BigShot</b>	www.AiSquared.com	\$ 99
<b>iZoom standard 2.0</b>	www.issist.com	\$ 199
<b>iZoom2Go</b>	www.issist.com	\$ 299
<b>iZoom Web 2.0</b>	www.issist.com	---
<b>Lunar</b> (no speech)	www.YourDolphin.com	\$ 395
<b>LunarPlus</b> (with speech)	www.YourDolphin.com	\$ 595
<b>LunarPlus Pen Edition</b>	www.YourDolphin.com	\$ 690
<b>MAGic Professional</b> (no speech)	www.freedomscientific.com	\$ 395
<b>MAGic Professional</b> (with speech)	www.freedomscientific.com	\$ 595
<b>MAGic Standard</b> (no Speech)	www.freedomscientific.com	\$ 345
<b>MAGic Standard</b> (with Speech)	www.freedomscientific.com	\$ 545
<b>WebEyes</b>	www.ionwebeyes.com	\$25/\$35
<b>ZoomText 9.1 magnifier</b>	www.AiSquared.com	\$ 395
<b>ZoomText 9.1Magnifier USB Drive</b>	www.AiSquared.com	\$ 495
<b>ZoomText 9.1 magnifier/reader</b>	www.AiSquared.com	\$ 595
<b>ZoomText 9.1 magnifier/reader USB</b>	www.AiSquared.com	\$ 695
<b>ZoomText Large-Print Keyboard</b>	www.AiSquared.com	\$ 99

## [www.AiSquared.com](http://www.AiSquared.com)

**BigShot** (Magnifier) Lower cost. Only magnifies between 100 to 200 percent.

**ZoomText 9.1**(Magnifier version) (Magnifier/Reader version). New improvements include dual monitor support, focus enhancements, support for Windows Vista, Microsoft Office 2007, Firefox 2.0, Adobe Acrobat 8 and Adobe Reader 8. Online ZoomText tutorials.

**ZoomText USB Drive** ZoomText on a USB flash drive. Faster deployment in school and work environments. Users need administrative privileges for the computers they are using. Single user and Multi-User pricing options.

**ZoomText Large Print Keyboard** Large print (36 point) keyboard available in two high-contrast color schemes (black letters on yellow keys or white letters on black keys) that work with ZoomText 9.0 and above. 16 dedicated buttons allow instant access to ZoomText without memorizing hotkeys. \$99 if purchased separately. \$79 if purchased with ZoomText. \$85 if purchased with a ZoomText Upgrade.

[www.YourDolphin.com](http://www.YourDolphin.com)

**Supernova:** combined screen reader and screen magnifier with full Braille support. **Hal:** screen reader with Braille support. **Lunar:** screen magnifier (no speech). **Lunar Plus** (with speech). **Smart Hal:** screen reading for Smartphones. **Pocket Hal:** screen reading for Pocket PCs and PDA devices.

[www.freedomscientific.com](http://www.freedomscientific.com)

**MAGic** (Magnifier) (Magnifier/Screen Reader) Up to 16X magnification. Hotkeys help avoid conflicts with Windows® and popular software applications. Free online demo. Standard edition for Windows XP Home; Professional Edition for Windows XP Professional, Home, and Media Center Editions (check website for specific compatibility information) and 2000.

[www.ionwebeyes.com](http://www.ionwebeyes.com)

**WebEyes:** Internet Explorer toolbar that enlarges and re-formats text of websites. Instantly adjusts the text size and font (from 4 point to 144 point) of the website. Works on web based e-mail like Hotmail and Yahoo. The “Read Like A Book” format (with or without graphics) lets you turn the page to read instead of scrolling. System Requirements: Internet Explorer 5.5 or higher. Works on Windows XP/ME/2000/98 & NT. 15 day free online demo.

[www.issist.com](http://www.issist.com)

**iZoom Standard 2.0:** (Magnifier/Reader) Magnifies from 2 to 32 times. Has color/cursor enhancements, font smoothing and image smoothing. 8 zoom modes. Requires Windows 2000/XP/Vista. Education discounts. 30 day free trial online.

**iZoom2Go:** (Magnifier/Reader) Marketed as “the world’s first truly portable access solution available on a USB drive.” Just plug it in and it starts up. Works on any Windows 2000/XP/Vista machine

**iZoom Web 2.0:** (Magnifier) Runs directly from a website without the need to download software on the computer. Go to <[www.issist.ca](http://www.issist.ca)> to start it up if you are running Works with Windows 2000/XP/Vista operating systems. Web browser must be Internet Explorer 6.0 or greater.

If I can be of any assistance to you throughout 2007-2008 academic year, please feel free to contact me:

Jim Olson, Certified Low Vision Therapist  
Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, Outreach Department  
33 N. Institute Street  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903  
Office: (719) 578-2283  
FAX: (719) 578-2147  
Email: [jolson@csdb.org](mailto:jolson@csdb.org)





# CSDB School for the Blind Presents

## Remaining Short Term Courses 2008

**Date:**

February 10-15, 2008

**Focus:**

Recreation & Leisure & Daily Living Skills

April 10-12, 2008

Introduction to Bus Travel & Social Skills



The Short Term Course offerings are developed to serve students throughout the State of Colorado. They are designed to help students benefit from a short period of intensive instruction in an area of the expanded core curriculum for visually impaired students. We want your help in designing your student's instruction. We have set aside specific weeks (see above) for the training, but we can lengthen, shorten or change the dates based on specific needs for your student.

For more information, please contact Donna Keale at <[dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org)>.

### Braille Mentoring Project

By Ann Hicks

The Braille Mentoring Project is funded through a grant from the Colorado Department of Education to the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind and administered by Ann Hicks. This grant pays Library of Congress Certified (L.O.C.) Braillists an hourly rate to mentor those who are enrolled in the Library of Congress Braille Certification Course.

Currently there are three L.O.C. Braillists, June Englehorn, Carol Potashnick and Sharon Benn, who have been mentoring people who are working toward L.O.C. certification. June has mentored nine ladies since this program began, Carol is mentoring one lady and Sharon has mentored one lady. Most of those ladies have completed the program and are now L.O.C. certified. Some of them are working for local school districts and others are being paid to produce Braille for the Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC).

The person that Carol is currently mentoring is a para-educator who works with a student with visual impairment and is planning on becoming a L.O.C. certified braillist.

We have funding enough for additional people to begin to work toward this certification. If you or someone you know is interested in either mentoring others or in becoming a certified braillist, you need to get in touch with Ann Hicks at (719) 578-2195 or <[ahicks@csdb.org](mailto:ahicks@csdb.org)>. Please call or email Ann if you would like any further information.

# CSDB: School for the Blind Update

By Louis Tutt

The School for the Blind currently has 50 students enrolled in the K-12 program and 3 in the Preschool program. We are also serving 48 Transition students, both deaf and blind. We welcome back Ms. Amy Gutowski, who has returned to us from maternity leave. Her daughter, Libby, was born in early December. This is Amy's second child, but first girl.

We said goodbye to two interns during December: Kim Toffel, who had been working with Jim Olson and Audrey Selph, who was supervised by Julie Novak.

CSDB's pilot On-The-Job Training program is going strong, with seniors working both on and off campus to gain valuable job skills. On February 2, CSDB will host the National Braille Challenge regional competition. Mr. Randy Witte, who is organizing the competition, expects a large number of participants, particularly in the novice category. Anyone who has demonstrated Braille competency and wishes to help proctor the competition should call Randy at 719-578-2204.

The "Exploring Leadership" meetings, hosted by Superintendent Hilty, have attracted a large number of staff participants and will continue throughout the school year. These meetings give staff the opportunity to explore what leadership means and how different leadership styles interact. There are four staff from the School for the Blind who are involved in this program.

## AN ESSAY CONTEST FOR ALL!!

The American Printing House for the Blind is celebrating 150 years of services this next year. In recognition of APH employees, past and present, they are inviting blind and visually impaired children, adults, and the professional who work with them to tell us how APH products have impacted the creation of an independent lifestyle.

The contest is open to:

- Students with a visual impairment enrolled in grades 3 through 12 for the 2007-2008 school year.
- Adult consumers of APH products.
- TVIs, rehabilitation counselors, and other professionals in the field of blindness.

Contestants must compose an original essay based on their own thoughts and in their own words with limited guidance from others. The topic for student is "How APH has Helped Me to be Independent" and for professionals, "How APH has Helped Me Promote the Independence of My Clients or Students."

Prizes will include the latest APH technology and gift certificates for APH products. A "meet the author and autograph session" will be held the night of the banquet of the 2008 Annual APH meeting.

All entries must be received by **April 11th, 2008**. For more information about this contest, and to download the rules, please go to the website: <[www.APH.org/essay.html](http://www.APH.org/essay.html)> or call 1-800-223-1839.

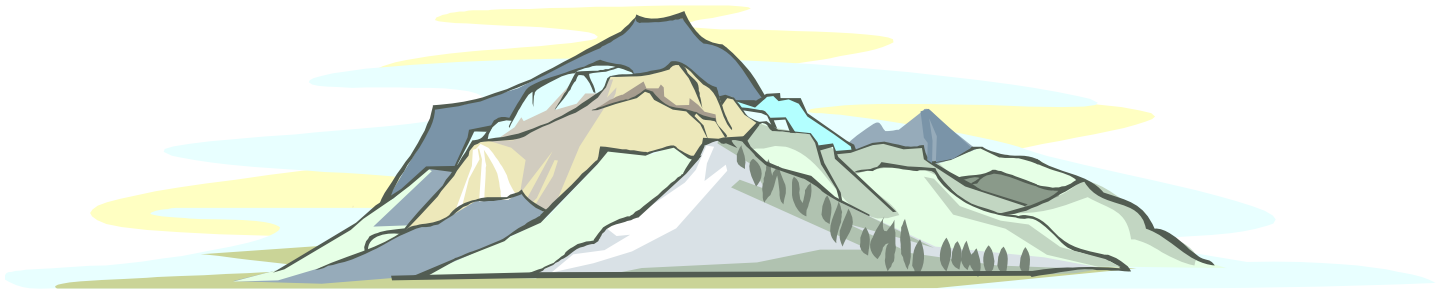
# BOECC

## What is the BOEC?



For more than 30 years, the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center (BOEC) has provided life changing outdoor learning experiences to people of all abilities, with a focus on those with special needs. The BOEC provides a sense of freedom to those who are routinely excluded from activity due to a disability or special need. Whether skiing in the Adaptive Ski and Ride Program at Breckenridge or Keystone Ski Resorts, paddling the Wests' great rivers, or mastering the Ropes Course, the BOEC inspires people of all abilities to discover new places, learn new skills and rekindle their spirit in the heart of the Colorado Rocky Mountains.

Programs for the blind and visually impaired. The Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center offers activities including skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, white water rafting, ropes course, adaptive cycling, teambuilding and more! Thanks to a generous grant from the Alcon Foundation, we are currently expanding our programming for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The BOEC is offering a winter ski and snowboard camp for the visually impaired ages 13-17, and a summer camp for visually impaired adults in 2008. Join our experienced staff for fun and adventure in the Rocky Mountains!



### SKI for Light

by Diane Fizkee



We are having our third annual Ski for Light Kid's Day event at the Frisco Nordic Center on Sunday, **February 24th**. There is an application process and a \$15 fee which includes lunch, rental equipment, trail pass, and instruction for cross-country skiing. We had quite a few students from the Colorado Springs area last year, and would love to have even more this year. I am coordinating the event with Becky Myers from Ski for Light.

If you are interested in having a student attend, please email Becky at [becky@rebeccamyers.com](mailto:becky@rebeccamyers.com) to get an application. What a wonderful opportunity for VI kids to meet each other and learn a lifelong recreational skill.

# Resources and Materials

📖 **“Golden Moments: Reflections of a Retriever”** is a braille and large print book. It is the story of how Camille Petrecca conquered her fear of dogs and other obstacles. Goldy, Petrecca’s first Seeing Eye dog, tells the story in realistic and humorous terms. Each edition cost \$20, including shipping and handling. To order make checks payable to the Campanian Society and mail it to PO Box 243, Rhinecliff, NY 12574. Allow four weeks for processing.

📖 **There is a new on-line parent support group for anophthalmia called MAPS (Microphthalmia Anophthalmia Parent Support)** - the web address is [maparentsupport.com](http://maparentsupport.com). In addition there is a "closed" yahoo parent group also for anophthalmia. If the parent e-mails the contact from the MAPS web page, they can receive an invitation to join the yahoo chat group. The yahoo group is not a live chat, but parents post and other parents respond when they can. There are parents in the group who also have kids with bilateral anophthalmia.

📖 **Long Strong Crayons** are a pack of nine brightly colored long, thick crayons that are reported to be break resistant and long lasting. These crayons are designed to fit a big kid’s palm grasp or whole hand grasp better than conventional crayons. They produce a good line with light pressure, yet will not break if a child bangs them. The cost is under \$3.00. For more information call 800-308-2208.

📖 **The Victor Reader Stream** is a versatile DAISY-MP3 and NISO player that lets users read and navigate through complex books, such as reference manuals and textbooks, as well as novels and magazines. Entire textbooks can be stored on a compact flash card. The built in text-to-speech features allows users to read books in text format such as Bookshare. RFB&D and audible books will

be supported in the near future. Learn more about the new Victor Reader Stream by calling Humanware at 800-722-3393 or visiting [www.humanware.com](http://www.humanware.com).

📖 **New Set of Maps**  
The Princeton Brailleists recently released a new set of maps, “Maps of Canada and the United States.”



This is a single volume, 75 pages long, which includes 28 maps. There are four thematic maps (major cities, land forms, elevation and climate) of Canada and the U.S., six maps of Canada (including enlarged maps of the maritime provinces and the Great Lakes region), and 18 maps on the U.S. and its territories, maps of Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Guam. The cost is \$20. Shipping is by free matter, if eligible. For more information on other maps and atlases, visit <http://mysite.verizon.net/resvqbx/princetonbrailleists/> or call (215) 357-7715 or (609) 924-5207.

📖 **New AFB Web site** On December 3, 2007, the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) launched its web-based Talking Book Archives at [www.afb.org/talkingbook](http://www.afb.org/talkingbook), in celebration of the birth of the audiobook. The searchable archives offer a fully accessible electronic guide to the Talking Book archival collection that includes scanned images of items. The web site also features an AFB Talking Book Exhibit, which presents images of letters, advertisements, and photographs, as well as audio clips that explain how the idea of the Talking Book became a reality. For more information, contact: Caitlin McFeely, Communications, American Foundation for the Blind, 11 Penn Plaza, Suite 300, New York, NY 10001; phone 212-502-7674; e-mail: [cmcfeely@afb.net](mailto:cmcfeely@afb.net).



## TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

### SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OUR GRADUATES!!

- ☆ **AER William & Dorothy Ferrell Scholarship Program & Douglas C. MacFarland Stipend Program** AER's Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that they are now accepting applications for the William & Dorothy Ferrell Scholarship, which helps to support two legally-blind individuals who are enrolled in a college or university program. In addition, they are also accepting applications for the Douglas C. MacFarland Stipend. Up to five members may be selected for these stipends, which assist in defraying the cost of attending the AER International Conference. For an application or additional information, please visit AER's website at <[www.aerbvi.org](http://www.aerbvi.org)>. Please note that the submission deadline is **February 15, 2008**.
  
- ☆ **RFB&D friends** RFB&D is hosting their fourth annual scholarship event on **May 8, 2008**. Details will follow about the event itself. Scholarships range between \$500 - \$1000. Submit your essay on how RFB&D has had an impact on your life. Download and include the application form. Deadline is **March 1, 2008**. For more information and the application form, go to: <[www.rfb.org/denver\\_unit.htm](http://www.rfb.org/denver_unit.htm)>.
  
- ☆ **Guildscholars off to College** In early 2007, the Jewish Guild for the Blind awarded 16 scholarships to high school seniors. For information on the Guild's scholarship program, contact Gordon Rovins at (212) 760-7801 or e-mail <[guildscholar@jgb.org](mailto:guildscholar@jgb.org)>.
  
- ☆ **Friends-In-Art Scholarship Announcement** High school seniors and college students are invited to apply for the Friends-In-Art scholarship for the 2008-2009 school year. This \$1,500 scholarship is offered annually for achievement, talent, and excellence in the arts. The scholarship is for students who are planning to major, or are currently majoring, in the field(s) of music, art, drama, or creative writing, and are blind or visually impaired and live in North America. Obtain an application form by writing to Harvey Miller, 196 E. French Broad St., Brevard, N.C. 28712-3410. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope when requesting the application. You also may request an electronic application by sending an e-mail to <[hhmiller@citcom.net](mailto:hhmiller@citcom.net)>. Applications and supporting information must be in the hands of the scholarship committee **by the end of May 2008**.



## **The SEE THE FUTURE Fund 2008 Application**

**The SEE THE FUTURE Fund is pleased to award scholarships to qualified visually impaired and blind students who are Colorado residents. This scholarship fund is made possible through generous donations by ophthalmologists, optometrists, opticians, staff, corporations, educators, foundations and many others with an interest in the lives of the visually impaired and blind. All scholarships are awarded based on academic achievement, school and community service, and individual need.**

### **AMOUNT:**

Scholarships totaling up to \$42,000 may be awarded. Probable distribution will be one (1) \$12,000 four year scholarship, one (1) \$10,000 four year scholarship, one (1) \$8,000 four year scholarship and three (3) \$4,000 two year scholarships. [The Selection Committee](#) will determine the final number of scholarships awarded and the amount of each scholarship.

### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE:**

Any Colorado resident \* who submits a completed application prior to the March 1, 2008 deadline, and meets the following criteria:

**\* For STF purposes, a Colorado resident is one who has lived in Colorado as a dependant at least one year prior to March 1, 2008 (March 2, 2007 – March 1, 2008); or has held a valid Colorado ID for at least one full year prior to March 1, 2007 (March 2, 2007 – March 1, 2008).**

### **Educational Criteria:**

Applicant must be enrolled as a full time student (12 credit hours or more) in one of the following:

1. an entering freshman in an academic post-secondary program
2. an undergraduate (sophomore, junior or senior) in an academic, post-secondary program
3. a graduate student in an academic program
4. a vocational/technical school student or student who is pursuing an associate's degree from a community college

### **Applicants must also meet the following Vision Loss Criteria:**

20/70 or less, central vision, best corrected, in better eye,  
and/or 20 degree peripheral field or less in better eye  
or 20/40 or less, best corrected, in better eye, and associated field loss with a prognosis of further vision loss secondary to underlying disease process.

### **Application deadline:**

All applications must be postmarked on or before March 1, 2008. The selections will be made by April 15, 2008.

### **Selection process:**

The SEE THE FUTURE Fund screening committee will review all applications. The entire selection committee will review top candidates. Individual interviews may be arranged and will be determined based on an individual basis.

### **Presentation of Scholarship Awards:**

The scholarships will be awarded at The SEE THE FUTURE Fund Celebration Reception in late May, 2008, in Colorado Springs. Award winners are strongly encouraged to attend.

### **Scholarship Distribution:**

The scholarship award will be divided over the duration of the student's post-secondary career (two or four years) and all scholarship moneys will be sent directly to the post-secondary institution on a semester basis. The student must be enrolled full time (12 credit hours) and in good standing to receive future money. The award may be used toward tuition, fees, room & board and books. If a recipient does not use a portion of their award within one year from selection, their award will be forfeited.

## **Induction Programs Specific to O&M**

O&M Specialists who hold a special service provider license must meet the induction program requirements in place in the school district or BO-CES where they work. Each approved induction program has specific requirements that must be met before they can qualify for a professional license. There is not an approved induction program currently available through CDE for special service providers. They must complete one through their employer. O&M Specialists who are not able to complete an approved induction program can renew their Initial Special Service Provider license.

### **New NCSER Report: Facts From NLTS2:**

#### **Orientation and Mobility Skills of**

#### **Secondary School Students With Visual Impairments**



This report was released by the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER) on January 23, 2008. Orientation refers to one's ability to determine his/her location and relationship with other objects in the environment. Mobility refers to one's ability to move about in the environment. Orientation and mobility training may be provided to students with visual impairments as part of their individual programs of special education and related services. This report presents information on the percentages of students with visual impairments who receive orientation and mobility services, including percentages for different segments of the population (blind vs. partially sighted, regular vs. special school placement, and demographic groups). It also discusses the levels of orientation and mobility skills in this population, and factors associ-

ated with their skill levels. Data are from The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2), funded by the National Center for Special Education Research at the Institute of Education Sciences, U. S. Department of Education. NLTS2 was initiated in 2001 and has a nationally-representative sample of more than 11,000 students with disabilities.

For further information please contact David Malouf at 202-219-1309 or <david.malouf@ed.gov>. To read, download, and print the report, go to: <<http://ies.ed.gov/ncser/pubs/index.asp#20083007>>.

## CSDB's Strategic Plan

By Laura Douglas Ph. D.

In 2004 CSDB's Board of Trustees mandated that a strategic plan be developed to guide the work of staff both on and off campus. During the 2004-2005 school year, the work of collecting input from parents, educational providers, special education directors and other stakeholders about the needs of school districts across the state in serving students with vision and hearing losses began. The data was compiled and a strategic plan was approved by the CSDB Board of Trustees in June 2006. One priority area that emerged from the data was expanding outreach services throughout the state.

Beginning in 2006-2007, CSDB staff and others throughout the state began implementing the outreach portion of the strategic plan with the goal of "Every eligible child in Colorado, birth to 21, who has been identified with a sensory disability, will have increased quality learning experiences and successful integration into their chosen academic setting, post-secondary settings, and the community through collaboration between CSDB's Statewide and Regional Resources Services Network, school districts, and families." As the result of the emphasis on developing and expanding outreach services, a Director of Outreach was hired in July, 2007 and an outreach department developed. The "on-campus" representatives of the outreach department focusing on vision services needs include Jim Olson, Donna Keale, and Ann Hicks. Each of whom have years of experience in vision services and are dedicated to assisting in the development and enhancement of services for students, educational providers, and parents across the state.

The specific target areas within the outreach portion of the Strategic Plan include: providing technology, individual assessments, and meaningful social opportunities for students as well as communicating more with staff and parents in public school districts to create and expand services where gaps in services may exist. Based on input from staff across the state, expanding professional development opportunities for staff and parents will be presented to the Board of Trustees in February, 2008 as an additional target area. The Strategic Plan is a living document and is revised or updated as needs arise and as changes are warranted.

An opportunity to expand funding for these supports is being developed in a proposal that will go to the Colorado Legislative Joint Budget Committee during the legislative session of January, 2009. In this proposal, CSDB will be requesting state funding to enable CSDB through its Strategic Planning process to expand and enhance services to public school students and parents. Staff from the Outreach Department at CSDB will be attending various meetings across the state to ask for information regarding school district/BOCES needs to be considered in the development of the funding proposal. If you have ideas that you would like to be considered for expanded services in the state, please email your thoughts to Laura Douglas, Director of Outreach, at <[ldouglas@csdb.org](mailto:ldouglas@csdb.org)>.

The funding proposal will go to the CSDB Board of Trustees in June, 2008, then to the Colorado Legislative Joint Budget Committee in the fall, 2008. Any funding increases that are approved through this process will be available during the 2009-2010 school year.





## CIMC approved Braille-Writer Repair Specialists

As of 12/07



These are the people who currently have agreements with the CiMC. Contact them to see if they can take your braillewriter, then send the approval form to the CIMC. The CIMC cannot pay the bill of the vendor without this paperwork. If there are any questions about the braille repair procedures, please be in touch with Ann Hicks at <[ahicks@csdb.org](mailto:ahicks@csdb.org)> or (719) 578-2195.

### **Bob Barnes**

PO Box 207  
400 County Road  
Wetmore, CO 81253  
(719) 784-9301  
[b.k.barnes@excite.com](mailto:b.k.barnes@excite.com)

### **Mark Carpenter**

CIMC  
1015 High Street  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

### **Paula Quintana**

217 East Strong Avenue  
Trinidad, CO 81082  
(719) 846-9688

## 2008 Conference of Inclusion Education

Designing Classrooms for Success

**February 14 – 16, 2008      Hyatt Regency Denver**

### **Are you interested in increasing student achievement?**

Do you want to learn:

- Concrete strategies that support students in inclusive classrooms?
- How to build collaborative relationships between families and schools?
- Ideas for engaging students at all levels of the curriculum?

Then join PEAK Parent Center for the 2008 Conference on Inclusive Education and experience the cast of world class presenters and strategy-packed, hands-on sessions outlining planning and teaching using principles of Universal Design.

### **Featured Keynote Presenters:**

**Jonathan Mooney** Nationally-recognized writer, author, and activist with Dyslexia and ADHD

**Anne Donnellan** Professor, University of San Diego, CA

**Lee Jones** Nationally-recognized motivational speaker on setting and achieving goals, and Self-Advocate with Down syndrome, Kansas City, MO

**Michael Remus** Director of Student Support Services, Deer Valley Unified School District, Phoenix, AZ

Go to the PEAK website to learn more information <<http://peakparent.org/conferences.asp>>.

## Jo Taylor Leadership Institute

The 2008 Josephine L. Taylor Leadership Institute will take place in San Francisco, CA, from April 4 to 5 at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Hotel. There will also be a pre-conference seminar that focuses on Cortical or Cerebral Vision Impairment and Traumatic Brain Injury on Thursday, April 3rd. For more information, contact the American Foundation for the Blind at: <http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=28&TopicID=92>.



National Federation of the Blind of Colorado

*Voice of Colorado's Blind*

### **2008 Scholarship Awards Program**

Building Opportunities for the Blind  
In Education and Beyond

Scholarship Awards may range in value from between \$800 to as much as \$6,000.

If you are a blind student

**PLEASE APPLY IMMEDIATELY!**

If you are a teacher, counselor, family member of friend of a legally blind student,  
please encourage them to apply now!

**DEADLINE: May 16, 2008**

For more information please contact: Kevan Worley, Chairman Scholarship Committee  
NFB of Colorado  
1223 Lake Plaza Drive, Suite D  
Colorado Springs, CO 80906  
(719) 527-0488

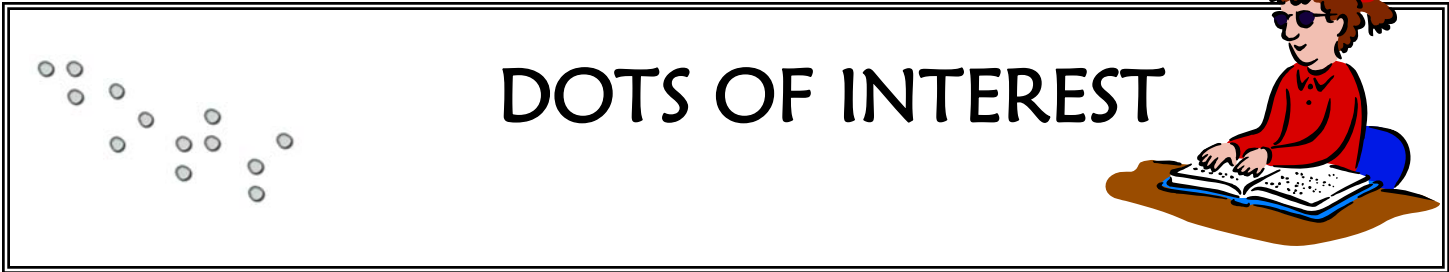
### **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

**Parents:** If you are moving out of state or your child is graduating, please be in touch so we can remove your name from our newsletter mailing list. Also, please be in touch with your address changes if you move to a new Colorado location.

**TVIs and O&MSs:** If you have any changes in program contact information over the school year, please help us out and send Tanni these changes.

**Thanks to everyone for helping to keep our mailing list up to date!**

**Just send your changes to [anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:anthony_t@cde.state.co.us) or to  
Tanni Anthony, CDE, 201 East Colfax, Denver, CO 80203.**



# DOTS OF INTEREST

**Dancing Dots!** Where Music Meets Technology for the Blind Assistive technology, Music hardware and software, Supported with consultation and training, Developing and adapting technology to benefit blind musicians and those who educate them since 1992. Scan printed scores, listen to results or convert to braille music notation. Braille music courses/educational resources.

**GOODFEEL® and GOODFEEL® LITE:** Scan, edit & automatically transcribe printed music to braille. Include Lime Aloud features CAKE TALKING for SONAR® SIBELIUS SPEAKING with JAWS. PO Box 927: Dept., Valley Forge, PA 19482; Telephone: (610) 783-6692 Fax: (610) 783-6732; [www.dancingdots.com](http://www.dancingdots.com) or [info@dancingdots.com](mailto:info@dancingdots.com)

## PRESS RELEASE November 2007

CONTACT: Judith Dixon, Chairperson  
Braille Authority of North America  
PHONE: 1-202-707-0722  
E-MAIL: [jdix@loc.gov](mailto:jdix@loc.gov)



### BANA Codes Update 2007

In a continuing effort to be as responsive as possible to braille readers and braille transcribers, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) has created a new publication entitled *BANA Braille Codes Update 2007*. It is a compilation of braille code changes approved by BANA over the past few years.

This publication contains updates to the following three codes:

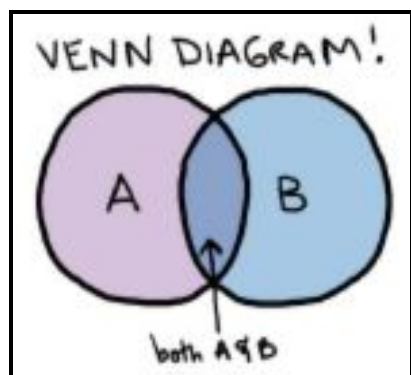
- *English Braille American Edition 1994, Revised 2002*
- *Braille Formats: Principles of Print to Braille Transcription, 1997*
- *Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation, 1972 Revision*

BANA is currently undertaking a comprehensive revision of *English Braille American Edition* and of *Braille Formats: Principles of Print to Braille Transcription*. This update is a preliminary release of specific changes prior to the complete revision and publication of new editions of each of the codes. The Nemeth portion of this update is a compilation of all changes and errata to the 1972 edition of the Nemeth Code. It is intended that subsequent BANA Braille Codes Updates will be published as necessary and will contain code changes adopted following the release of this Update.

The Update is being distributed in several electronic formats through the BANA web site <[www.brailleauthority.org](http://www.brailleauthority.org)>. Users can easily create print and/or braille versions from the provided files. Hard copy print or braille versions will be available free of charge upon request to the BANA Chair using the contact information above.

## Expert Opinion:

### Teaching Venn Diagrams, Tally Marks, and Graphic Organizers



The listserv is providing a valuable forum for TVIs to dialogue about instructional strategies specific to students who are blind/visually impaired. Recently, there was a posting asking about how Venn Diagrams tally marks, and graphic organizers are taught.

The following responses were from Dian Megarry, Jan Megarry, Janet Anderson, Randy Witte, Nancy Cozart, Phyllis Jordan Peniston, and Sarah Sonnier. Thanks to those who contributed! Here were their responses. Lets keep up this important dialogue.

- Dian and I assist the students cutting out large circles (2 or 3 depending on the Venn Diagram) and gluing them so they overlap. We then use glue to outline the area of the overlap. Label each circle so they know which characteristics belong to which item as well as the overlap. The students then Braille the information being compared, cut them out, and glue into the appropriate areas. (Dian likes to use Braille-on instead of Braille paper because it is easier and quicker to use.) The glue lines help the students see what items are the same inside the lines and different outside the lines (*Jan Megarry and Dian Megarry*)
- I taught Venn Diagrams right along with the other students, starting in the 1st grade. I made tactile circles using a tracing wheel and then used the Braille writer to write in the appropriate area of the diagram or I made words on label-on so that the student could stick them in the correct place on the diagram. Each circle is labeled. We also use the tactile image enhancer for Venn Diagrams. (*Janet Anderson*)
- People have sent back some real quick and easy ways to teach Venn Diagram--using a tracing wheel, glue, etc. to quickly create the drawing. Another idea for kids that have spatial problems and are having trouble seeing how the circles overlap is just to quickly make two circles out of pipe cleaners so that the kids can see them first as separate and then to overlap them so they can see how the shared shape is formed in the middle. Hula hoops do the same thing (but not nearly as practical to pull out in a math class). This concept is very easy to teach and kids get it quickly! (*Sarah Sonnier*)





## **Tally Marks**

- Tally Marks – From the Library of Congress “An Introduction to Braille Mathematics”.
  1. Tally marks (dots 4,5,6) must be grouped in braille just as they are grouped in print.
  2. When a group of tally marks is crossed through, the cross-tally must be treated as an additional tally mark which should be added to its group.
  3. One space must be left before and after a group of tally marks even when the group is preceded or followed by a sign of operation.
  4. No space should be left between a group of tallies and a braille indicator, a sign of grouping, or a punctuation mark applying to it (*Phyllis Jordan Penniston*)
- Tally marks are one of the easier items to do in Braille. When practicing with kids, help them to understand they can count tally marks as a group of 5. The space with tallies after will indicate it was a set of 5. Ensure they are actually counting the marks in the final grouping of 5 (or less) so they get exact information. (*Nancy Cozart*)

## **Graphic Organizers**

- A list is a graphic organizer. Lists should be scored as highly as another type that may be more visually appealing. Students need to develop their skills of how to organize their lists to be more detailed and efficient in planning their writing. (*Nancy Cozart*)
- We have found that the best way to do graphic organizers is as a list—somewhat like an outline. I often draw out the graphic organizers in raised format so the Braille students get an idea of what the visual format is like. There is no guarantee that a CSAP or college class will eliminate this from their curriculum and Braille students will better understand the descriptions given by the teacher to the rest of the class. It's my belief that it is our responsibility to give Braille students a FULL picture and not a tainted one. My discussions with some of our Braille students indicates that it is better for them to be able to relate to what their peers are looking at and do their graphic organizers in a list/outline form. (*Jan Megarry and Dian Megarry*)
- I think a student can use a "list" for a graphic organizer, but it should have some degree of detail, and I would suggest some type of overall organizational structure to the list (i.e. chronological order, spatial order) that the student can use to develop their writing. I would add that our students DO need to know how to tactually access various graphic organizers, because they will encounter them, particularly in math and science areas. It is a good idea to teach common standard formats for G O's such as pie charts (they always make me hungry), bar graphs (they always make me thirsty), number lines (makes me want to go to Vegas), X/Y axis graphs, webs, etc. (*Randy Witte*)



# IMPORTANT!

## We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for the next school year. It is never too early to advertise an expected opening. Please keep in touch with Tanni about your job openings.

### Jobs for School Years 2007-2008 and 2008-2009

#### Metro Region:

- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Specialist** (.5 FTE) Contact Ann Marie Jansen in Adams 12 (northern metro area) at <[annmarie.jansen@adams12.org](mailto:annmarie.jansen@adams12.org)>.

#### Southern Region

- ✓ There will be a number of vacant positions for TVIs and O&M Specialists in the 2008-2009 school year at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (School for the Blind) located in Colorado Springs. Contact Chelle Lutz at CSDB at (719) 578-2114 or <[clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org)>.

##### **Teachers of the Visually Impaired (anticipated vacancies)**

- ✓ All core content areas (English, Social Studies, Math, and Science)
  - ✓ Braille Instruction / Itinerant Services
  - ✓ Elementary Special Needs
- ✓ **Teacher of Orientation and Mobility (O&M), 2 vacancies** at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (School for the Blind) located in Colorado Springs. Contact Chelle Lutz at CSDB at (719) 578-2114 or <[clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org)>.
  - ✓ **Teacher of the Visually Impaired Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA): Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC)** at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (School for the Blind) located in Colorado Springs. Contact Chelle Lutz at CSDB at (719) 578-2114 or <[clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org)>.
  - ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Specialist** (.5 to 1 FTE). Contact Kim Lovelace at <[lovelkm@dll.org@d11.org](mailto:lovelkm@dll.org@d11.org)> in El Paso 11 District in Colorado Springs for more information.



# Calendar of Events

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

- February 6—March 7      **CSAPA Grade 3 Reading, Writing, and Mathematics Administration**
- February 6—March 28      **CSAPA Grade 3-10 Administration**
- February 8-10      **Snowshoe Weekend**  
Contact: Elaine Karns - [elk@psdschools.org](mailto:elk@psdschools.org)
- February 12      **CAER Meeting**  
Contact: Julie Wetzstein - [jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us)
- February 14      **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - [spfaffenhauser@csdb.org](mailto:spfaffenhauser@csdb.org)
- February 14-16      **VIISA Preschool Course (first session) - Anchor Center**  
Contact: Tanni Anthony—(303) 866-6681
- February 18 -29      **CSAP Grade 3 Reading and Lectura/Administration**
- February 20      **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**  
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or [Isbell@cmsd12.org](mailto:Isbell@cmsd12.org)
- February 21      **Metro TVI Meeting - Anchor Center- 2:00-4:00**  
Contact: Nancy Cozart - [ncozart@lps.k12.co.us](mailto:ncozart@lps.k12.co.us)
- February 22-23      **Northern LVE Clinic—Ensignt Center**  
Contact: Carol Love— [love\\_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us](mailto:love_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us)  
 or Sally Eldridge— [eldridge\\_sara@stvrain.k12.co.us](mailto:eldridge_sara@stvrain.k12.co.us)
- February 28—March 2      **49th Annual California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Impaired Conference—Los Angeles CA**  
Contact: 323-666-2211 website [www.ctevh.org/conference.htm](http://www.ctevh.org/conference.htm)
- March 1      **Deadline: See the Future Fund Scholarship Applications**  
Contact: Dr. Tom Theune - [twtheune@prodigy.net](mailto:twtheune@prodigy.net)



## *More Calendar of Events*

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

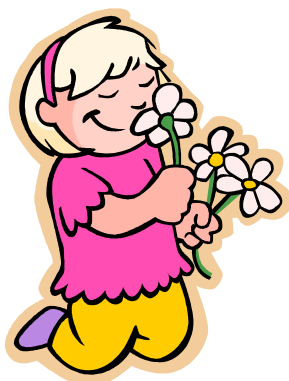
- March 10—April 11**      **CSAP Grades 3-10 Administration**
- March 11**                      **CAER Meeting**  
Contact: Julie Wetzstein - [jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us)
- March 13**                      **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - [spfaffenhauser@csdb.org](mailto:spfaffenhauser@csdb.org)
- April 1—May 9**              **11th Grade Alternate Administration Window**
- April 2-5**                      **CEC Annual Convention & Expo—Boston, MA**  
Contact: CEC—[conteduc@cec.sped.org](mailto:conteduc@cec.sped.org)
- April 4-5**                      **Jo Taylor Leadership Meeting - San Francisco, CA**  
Contact Caitlin McFeely (212) 502-7674 [www.afb.org/JLTLI.asp](http://www.afb.org/JLTLI.asp)
- April 8**                         **CAER Meeting**  
Contact: Julie Wetzstein - [jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us)
- April 10**                      **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - or  
[spfaffenhauser@csdb.org](mailto:spfaffenhauser@csdb.org)
- April 11**                      **Metro TVI Meeting - Anchor Center- 2:00-4:00**  
Contact: Nancy Cozart - [ncozart@lps.k12.co.us](mailto:ncozart@lps.k12.co.us)
- April 16**                      **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**  
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or [Isbell@cmsd12.org](mailto:Isbell@cmsd12.org)
- April 16-19**                  **National Braille Association Professional Development  
Conferences for 2008**  
Visit <http://www.nationalbraille.org/conferences/NBASpringPDC2008.htm>
- April 24-26**                  **Annual O&M Conference—Anchor Center**  
Contact: Tanni Anthony—(303) 866-6681
- May 8-10**                      **VIISA Preschool Course (2nd Session) - Anchor Center**  
Contact: Tanni Anthony—(303) 866-6681



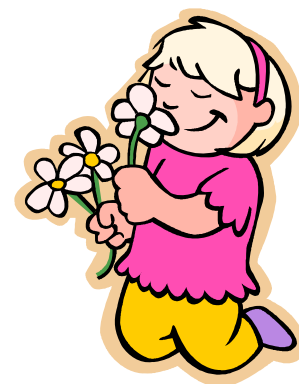
## More Calendar of Events

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

- May 14**                      **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**  
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or [Isbell@cmsd12.org](mailto:Isbell@cmsd12.org)
- June 5-7**                      **Family Learning Retreat - CSDB in Colorado Springs**  
Contact: Karla McKechnie—[kmckechnie@csdb.org](mailto:kmckechnie@csdb.org)
- June 12**                      **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**  
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or [Isbell@cmsd12.org](mailto:Isbell@cmsd12.org)
- June 12**                      **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**  
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - [spfaffenhauser@csdb.org](mailto:spfaffenhauser@csdb.org)
- June 12-14**                      **Collaborative AT Conference of the Rockies - Denver**  
Contact: [www.assistivetechologypartners.org/conference.html](http://www.assistivetechologypartners.org/conference.html)
- July 7-10**                      **9th International Conference on Low Vision—Montreal, Canada**  
Contact: [www.opto.umontreal.ca/vision2008](http://www.opto.umontreal.ca/vision2008)
- July 22-27**                      **AER International Conference—Chicago, IL**  
Visit [www.aerbvi.org](http://www.aerbvi.org) for more information
- Oct 29-Nov 1**                      **National Braille Association Professional Development Conferences for 2008**  
Visit <http://www.nationalbraille.org/conferences/NBAFallPDC2008.html>



Help us keep the Calendar of Events as up to date as possible! Please send Tanni the dates, title, location, and contact information of any regional TVI meetings, conferences, important meetings, etc. so they can be posted in future editions of the *What's Happening Out There* newsletter. Thanks for ensuring we are keeping everyone informed with all that is happening!





## The Colorado Chapter of the Association of the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired

### Career Recruitment Brochures Available from AER!

AER is pleased to announce that brochures highlighting careers in the field of providing services to the blind and visually impaired are now available. These informative brochures are ideal for career fairs, college placement counseling, general career recruitment, and more! Available in bulk orders of 100, the brochures are an easy and inexpensive way to inform prospective vision professionals about the benefits and options of a career in the field.

The recruitment brochures explain the opportunities and benefits, education requirements, type of work involved, and examples of duties of the following careers:

- \*Low Vision Therapist
- \*Rehabilitation Counselor
- \*Rehabilitation Teacher
- \*Orientation & Mobility Specialist
- \*Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments

Visit the AER Web site at <<http://www.aerbvi.org/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=1>> to view a sample of the covers of each brochure. To view a complete sample or for more information contact Sara Sellers at <[sara@aerbvi.org](mailto:sara@aerbvi.org)> or 1-877-492-2708, ext. 202

The AER Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that the amount awarded for the 2008 [William & Dorothy Ferrell Scholarship](#) has been increased this year to \$1,000 per recipient. Applications are currently being accepted for the scholarship, which helps to support two legally blind individuals enrolled in a university program studying to become a professional in the field. If you have a student or client who is enrolled in a university program or if you are a student planning a career in the field, please submit your application for the Ferrell Scholarship prior to **February 15, 2008**.

In addition, current AER members have an opportunity to apply for the [Douglas C. MacFarland Stipend](#), an award presented to up to five AER members to assist in defraying the cost of attending the AER International Conference. The 2008 International Conference to be held July 22-27, 2008, in Chicago, Illinois, is shaping up to be one of the best conferences ever. You won't want to miss it! [Applications for the MacFarland Stipend](#) must be received by February 15, 2008.

For additional information on the Ferrell Scholarship, the MacFarland Stipend, and the AER International Conference, please visit the AER Web site at [www.aerbvi.org](http://www.aerbvi.org) or email [scholarships@aerbvi.org](mailto:scholarships@aerbvi.org).

### Donate Items for 2008 Silent Auction!

AER invites members to donate items for the semi-annual Silent Auction which will be conducted during the AER International conference, July 22-27, 2008, in Chicago, Ill. Proceeds go to AER's operating fund to support member benefits.

Items such as books, gift baskets, artwork, vision-related products, AER membership, trips, election memorabilia, and more are welcome. Chapters and Divisions are challenged to provide at least one item for the auction.

More information and a donation form are available on the AER Web site at <[www.aerbvi.org](http://www.aerbvi.org)>.

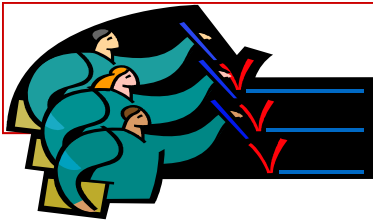
### Moving?

Take AER with you!  
Update your information via email:  
[membership@aerbvi.org](mailto:membership@aerbvi.org)

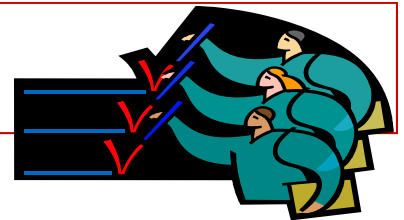


### The Douglas C. MacFarland Stipend Applications Now Available!

Apply today for the Douglas C. MacFarland Stipend, designated to promote professional development of AER members! The Stipend provides funds to attend the 2008 AER International Conference in Chicago next July. First-time conference attendees are given preference for the stipend, which includes a free conference registration in addition to \$250 toward other expenses. Applications are available now on AER's web site, <[www.aerbvi.org/conferences](http://www.aerbvi.org/conferences)>. Application deadline: **February 15, 2008**.



# CHECK IT OUT!



**Media Survey National Public Radio** is looking for visually impaired participants to survey about their experience with media devices. If interested, please provide name, contact information, preferred contact method (phone, e-mail) and type of disability (blindness, dyslexia, etc.) to participant coordinator Daniel Schwab at [dschwab@npr.org](mailto:dschwab@npr.org) or (202) 513-2466.

**The West Virginia University Department of Special Education is seeking an adjunct instructor** at the Master's Degree level with teacher certification in low vision/blindness to develop and teach a course in Nemeth code in an online environment. Experience in online instruction is preferred, but not required. Course will be taught during the Fall semester, 2008. Enrollment will not likely exceed 10 students. The department will provide compensation for developing the course during Spring, 2008, as well as, compensation for delivering it in Fall, 2008. Please send a letter of application and a current vita to Mary Ellen Zeppuhar, Ed.D., Coordinator VI Certification Program, CED, 959 Hartman Run Rd., Morgantown, WV 26505.

**Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program 2008 Legislative Report is Available Now** The Colorado Preschool and Kindergarten Program (CPKP) today published a 12-page report to the state legislature, providing an overview of the statewide effort to boost school readiness for four and five-year-olds. The report provides details on the population of students being served, the risk factors used to establish eligibility for the program and information about the kinds of agencies that serve as providers. The report also provides detail about how the CPKP legislation ensures collaboration between school districts and local public and private child care providers. When addressing the full-day kindergarten component of the program, the report states, "data indicates it is not the length of the day alone that contributes to children's success in kindergarten, but the quality of the program is also key to children's achievement levels." The entire report is available on the CDE Web site at the following link: <[http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprevention/pi\\_color\\_preschool.htm](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprevention/pi_color_preschool.htm)>. Hard copies of the report can be obtained by contacting Lori Goodwin Bowers, 303-866-6783.

**National Center on Severe & Sensory Disabilities (NCSSD)**. NCSSD recognizes that over 1 million children in the United States have severe and/or sensory disabilities. The distinction of NCSSD is that we embrace the practice of facilitating and promoting collaboration between the severe and sensory disability fields, hence our motto: "Together WE can do more!"

*Why the Name Change?* The term low-incidence disabilities is found within federal law and refers to children with: (a) visual impairments, (b) hearing impairments, (c) concomitant visual and hearing impairments or deaf-blindness, (d) significant cognitive impairments, or (e) any impairment for which few personnel have highly specialized skills and knowledge to provide children with the impairment early intervention or a free appropriate public education (Title I (D)(662)(c)(3)). The term *low incidence* emphasizes the small number of children who are blind or visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, or deaf-blind, or who have severe or multiple disabilities. Critical to NCSSD is the emphasis on the needs of children with severe and/or sensory disabilities and the strategies to address those needs; to reflect this value, we removed the term *low incidence* from our name.

*Visit our Newly Designed Web-Site February 1st!* A second goal of NCSSD is to maintain a website that is accessible and user-friendly, modeling our beliefs and values of utilizing current technological innovations. Please visit the NCSSD new website at <[www.unco.edu/ncssd](http://www.unco.edu/ncssd)>.

## **News Release - December 20, 2007**

### **Statewide Enrollment Tops 800,000**

The Colorado Department of Education announced today the statewide pupil count for 2007 increased by 8,613 over the previous year, bringing the total to 802,639 students. The 1.08 percent increase brings the state enrollment above 800,000 students for the first time. Most of the growth between 2006 and 2007 occurred in pre-kindergarten through sixth grade, where totals surged by 8,039. Grades seven through twelve grew by just 574 students.

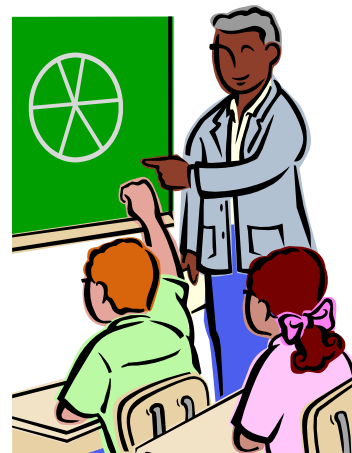
The districts with the largest student enrollment increases over the past year were Douglas County School District (up 2,613 since 2006), Adams 12 Five Star Schools (up 1,480), Brighton School District 27J (up 1,039), Cherry Creek Schools (up 947), St. Vrain Valley School District (up 571), Falcon School District 49 (up 527), Boulder Valley School District (up 525), Denver Public Schools (up 492), and Fountain-Fort Carson School District 8 (up 432).

The Charter School Institute also saw an increase of over 1,000 students between 2006 and 2007. Enrollment in charter schools authorized by the institute—an independent agency within the Colorado Department of Education—increased from 2,735 to 4,421.

Among the 802,639 students, 61.5 percent (493,378) are white; 27.9 percent (224,250) are Hispanic; 6 percent are black (47,936); 3.5 percent are Asian (27,664) and 1.2 percent are American Indian (9,411).

Ten districts have had enrollment increases of 1,000 students or more since 2003. They are:

- Douglas County School District—up 10,974 to 52,983.
- Brighton School District 27J—up 4,324 to 12,608.
- Falcon School District 49—up 4,123 to 12,783.
- Adams 12 Five Star Schools—up 3,952 to 38,821.
- Cherry Creek Schools—up 3,949 to 50,631.
- Vilas Re-5 School District—up 3,404 to 3,789.
- St. Vrain Valley School District—up 2,986 to 24,582.
- Academy School District 20—up 2,340 to 21,423.
- Mesa County Valley School District 51—up 1,103 to 21,308.
- Aurora Public Schools—up 1,043 to 33,573.



Vilas Re-5 School District enrolls just 76 students as a traditional school district serving its local community but the district also runs an on-line school and charters Hope Online Learning Academy, which serves students across the state through learning centers.

The 10 largest school districts in the 2007-2008 school year are Jefferson County Schools (86,182 students), Denver Public Schools (73,053), Douglas County Schools (52,983), Cherry Creek Schools (50,631), Adams 12 Five Star Schools (38,821), Aurora Public Schools (33,573), Colorado Springs School District 11 (29,518), Boulder Valley Schools (28,696), Poudre School District (25,610) and St. Vrain Valley Schools (24,582).

Statewide enrollment has grown every year since 1989, when the total stood at 562,755.

Complete 2007 pupil count information is posted on line under “Pupil Membership”

at [http://www.cde.state.co.us/index\\_stats.htm](http://www.cde.state.co.us/index_stats.htm).

## Meet the Newest Adult Role Model Team Member!

By Roger Harwell



Todd Fahlstrom, a man of 34 years young, was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa early in his life. He was born and raised in Moorhead, Minnesota and learned of his blindness at around age 14 when his parents thought he could better understand the disease. Todd has the x-linked RP and has several uncles, cousins, and distant relatives that have acquired it as well.

Todd's parents wanted him to succeed in life and gave him opportunities to do so. He swam long distance for Moorhead Senior High school for 4 years and, after dropping 1 minute off his 500 free-style, went to state his senior year. Todd gained his independence by learning how to drive. He attended college at Minnesota State University, Mankato and received his Bachelor's degree in Business Management with a minor in Art. Todd's driving career ended just a few months prior to his 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday. He played trombone in high school and in college played in both the marching and pep band till the end of his second year.

Vocationally, Todd's first career was in food service where he did everything from cooks helper, line server, dishwasher, breakfast cook, salad bar manager, and worked his way up to become student manager for his final 2 years of college. After completion of his Bachelor's degree, he accepted a job in the Twin Cities as an Assistant Manager for Walgreens. After 6½ years at Walgreens, Todd left to pursue a Master's degree in Rehabilitation Counseling at Minnesota State University, Mankato. He accepted a job as a Rehabilitation Counselor for the Blind in Pueblo, Colorado following his graduation.

Todd received his Eagle Scout while still in high school. During Graduate School, he was president of 2 organizations, served on 2 committees, and addressed the needs of the student body by addressing needed accommodations for those with disabilities. He takes on new challenges like riding a unicycle, going four-wheeling and tandem biking, bowling, camping, and traveling. He appreciates every opportunity to be with his wife, family, and friends along with his 3 cats.

Todd often quotes John Wooden, "Don't let the things you can't do, get in the way of the things you can do". He expects to return to snowboarding while living in Colorado and possibly developing a goalball team. He can be reached via email at [blindforgod@usfamily.net](mailto:blindforgod@usfamily.net).

**For more information about the Adult Role Model Team, please contact  
Roger Harwell at [r.harwell@juno.com](mailto:r.harwell@juno.com)**

# 2008 NFB Junior Science Academy

The NFB Jernigan Institute is pleased to announce the latest breaking addition to its Science Academy—the 2008 NFB Junior Science Academy. This program is the first NFB Science Academy for elementary students and their parents, and will be held July 23-27, 2008 in Baltimore, MD at the National Center. The program will accept thirty students in grades third through sixth, or ages eight to twelve, and one parent or guardian to participate.



Modeled after the NFB's previous successful Science Academies for teens, this four-day session will expose blind and low vision children to the excitement of science in real-life applications. The students will learn that science can be fun through hands-on instruction, field trips, and interactive activities as they learn about how different aspects of the environment work together to create the world around them. In addition to sparking their interest in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects, the program aims to teach students how alternative techniques can help make STEM subjects accessible and more engaging. Workshops for parents of blind children will take place in conjunction with the children's activities for those individuals accompanying their child.

The Education department is also looking for individuals over 18 years of age who are interested in serving as a mentor to help facilitate the children's activities.

Interested families or individuals who would like to serve as a mentor can learn more about the program and submit an application online at:

[http://www.blindscience.org/ncbys/Junior\\_Science\\_Academy.asp?SnID=896032691](http://www.blindscience.org/ncbys/Junior_Science_Academy.asp?SnID=896032691)

Applications are due by **March 31, 2008**. For more information, please contact Mary Jo Thorpe, Education Programs Specialist at the Jernigan Institute at (410) 659-9314 ext. 2407 or at [mthorpe@nfb.org](mailto:mthorpe@nfb.org).



Photo from the NFB's website

[http://www.blindscience.org/ncbys/Junior\\_Science\\_Academy.asp?SnID=896032691](http://www.blindscience.org/ncbys/Junior_Science_Academy.asp?SnID=896032691)

## Vision Coalition Meeting

January 8, 2007

**Persons Present:** Tanni Anthony (CDE), Paula Conroy (UNC), Nancy Cozart (metro region), Laura Douglas (CSDB Outreach), Ann Hicks (CIMC), Samantha Hoffman (CAER), Karla McKechnie (CSDB School for the Blind), Vicki Pearson (northern region), and Cathy Smyth (Anchor Center)

**Persons Absent:** Barbara Adams (Western region), Donna Keale (CSDB Outreach), Julia Zanon (CDVR), Lou Tutt (CSDB School for the Blind), Kay Ferrell (National Center on Severe and Sensory Disabilities), Stephanie Isbell / Judy Mumford (Southern region)

### Acronym Glossary:

Anchor	Anchor Center for Blind Children
CAER	CO Chapter - Association of the Ed & Rehab of the Blind Visually Impaired
CDE	Colorado Department of Education
CDVR	Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
CIMC	Colorado Instructional Materials Center
CSDB	Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind
NCSSD	National Center on Severe and Sensory Disabilities
TVI	Teacher certified in the area of visual impairment
UNC	University of Northern Colorado
VC	Vision Coalition

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are excited to have this meeting at the brand new Anchor Center for Blind Children building. Thank you to Cathy Smyth for making the hosting arrangements.

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### Western Region – Barbara Adams

Things are quiet on the Western Slope lately. Key bits of news include: Tracy Mosbarger is available to do more Colorado contract work. Kevin O'Brien has been busy with several new students. LeiLani Scott notes all is well and she has become the time management queen, but with servicing her districts plus the birth to 3 students, most of whom have severe and profound needs, she wants more info on how to work with profound needs. She is taking some classes and is wondering if there are any specialists available to help. Robin Bremner applied for a grant with Tools for Life in November for a student to receive a CCTV for home use and received it!

Barbara Adams is working on getting a date for the USABA to come to Glenwood Springs for an Abilities Day Training for the Western Slope, looking into Goal Ball, and maybe judo or tandem bikes. We've been trying to squeeze it in between Spring Breaks, the Western Slope Annual Meeting, and the O&M conference.

**Discussion:** *There is a Significant Support Needs Task Force that has been meeting for several years to develop training modules specific for these learners. They have developed a full day training on Communication. They provided a full-day training in Haxton this fall and were very well received. Be watching for more information about future trainings with this module.*

*Tanni asked the TVIs to discuss the need for more professional development on working with students who have additional disabilities. She queried people's interest in focusing the 2008 Summer Institute on Deafblindness on the topic of the Communication Matrix and its practical application with students. There are several Colorado teacher experts who could contribute to the second day of the workshop.*

### **Metro Region – Nancy Cozart**

We have had two meetings so far this year as a metro group. The first was held in Littleton to address topics for the year and review notes from Vision Coalition such as going over responses from the low vision clinic & how technology support from Bonnie would be used. We submitted two names for the Technology Task Force, Sue Newhart Larson and Cheryl Leidich. Their initial meeting was during our State VI Conference. Debbie, Tammy and Ann came from CIMC to review procedures and answer questions about how to access the instructional materials center.

The second meeting (and now all future meetings) was held in November at the new Anchor Center. At the start of this meeting we updated plans for the LV Clinic as well as tech support hours with Bonnie. Then, the focus was on a very lively discussion with Jennifer Berg from Children's Eye Physicians. She works as a tech with a specific direction to support families who have someone with a visual impairment get questions answered and linked to supports. Some of things shared are that CEP' patient records are being changed so chart notes might look different. Dr. King has begun serving preschoolers through Anchor Center on the last Wednesday of each month. The hope is to develop it into a community service. It was shared that doctors from CEP periodically have "Lunch and Learns" with local pediatricians. In reference to vision therapy, CEP simply states there is no medical proof that it works. A lot of information was exchanged on the roles of TVIs so Jennifer could pass along our expertise, duties and such with the doctors. We brainstormed on how to work cooperatively to provide support to families most effectively. A couple ideas that received a lot of attention is to have an eye doctor night with TVIs again to get updates on medical conditions and ways to work together for the benefit of kids. We also were talking about family nights that could gather people with specific eye conditions to meet and exchange information and socialize.

Upcoming meetings will cover a summary from attendees at the Literacy Conference in Florida, use of the teller cards and learning media assessments. **Our meetings will be from 2:00-5:00 on February 21<sup>st</sup> and April 11<sup>th</sup>.** This will assist us in covering information more thoroughly without adding more meeting dates to the calendar.

***Discussion:** Cathy shared that Dr. King has already provided a full day of eye examinations for Anchor students. This service may ultimately be available to other high need learners.*

### **Northern Region – Vicki Pearson**

The Northern Group continues to meet in Longmont with Carol acting as the coordinator for the group. At the last meeting in November, technology was the focus. Bonnie Snyder is coming to the next meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup> to train on technology and several of the district have individually contacted Bonnie for training and/or support.

Our Low Vision Clinic is totally booked. The dates are February 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Ensign Skills Center in Ft. Collins. Sally Eldridge and Carol Love are the clinic coordinators. The Ensign Skills Center has written some grants to assist with the funding of some of the prescribed low vision devices. They have also assisted with other types of home equipment for students such as lap top computers and software programs. They are branching out more and more; they are interested in assisting TVIs and/or families of children who are blind/visually impaired.



Jay Stitely was recently up in Greeley representing See Eye guide dogs. He was also at Golden High School.

**Discussion:** Tanni talked about a question from an administrator who recently wanted more information about who should teach braille and what curriculum materials are used to ensure a systematic Braille curriculum questions have come up. Paula brought up the question of “Are you teaching braille within a reading context or are you teaching the braille code?” The TVI must be able to select what curriculum content is appropriate for braille instruction. The general education curriculums are different and, as such, braille instruction may look different with different students. Good braille instruction mirrors good reading instruction. Tanni has requested information from Dr. Cay Holbrook and Anna Swenson on this topic. Tanni, Nancy, Karla, and Ann will work on a draft document explaining braille instruction.

### **Southern Region – Stephanie Isbel**

We held the Southern Region Low Vision Clinic October 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, and 27<sup>th</sup>. Slots were full for all three days. Thank you to Melissa Shular, Donice Fennimore, Jim Olsen and Dr. Theune for another successful clinic.

Our last meeting was held at CIMC in November. Before the meeting Lucia Hasty proctored a Braille module session. We had five TVI’s and Braillists take the opportunity to complete Braille modules. We did a make and take power-point activity led by Jim Olsen. TVI’s left the meeting with power-point presentations individualized with pictures taken from the October Low Vision Clinic. Thank you Jim for putting together a wonderful activity and helping us take the low vision reports and make them into something valuable for student and teachers.

We have meetings dates and schedule are as follows:

- January 16<sup>th</sup> - Holiday Party and program updates
- February 20<sup>th</sup> - CSAPA
- April 16<sup>th</sup> - Technology – Graphing with the Braille Note
- May 14<sup>th</sup> - End of the Year wrap up



We will be setting up at least one more proctoring session before the January or February meeting. We are also looking at adding more technology topics to the spring meetings.

### **Anchor Center for Blind Children (Cathy Smyth)**

We are thrilled to have the Vision Coalition join us here in our new building! Feel free to contact us about using the Community Room for your needs in the future, brochures are available. Welcome!

Congratulations to Paula Stallman, who has graduated from UNC this December! She will join us full time as a Teacher of Students that are Visually Impaired this month, and we are thrilled and grateful to have her here! Anchor now has five TVIs. There are 26 preschoolers attending Anchor Center

Anchor Center is embarking on an exciting “Re-design” process this month, which will re-evaluate our current processes and look to the future. Our numbers are increasing exponentially in all areas of the program and we want to be sure to use all of our staff and resources in the best way possible. New activities like research in the field and looking at our role in the State/ Federal requirements are challenging us as well, and it is exciting that our staff is so motivated to take on extra projects.

A meeting to discuss the federal initiative, Results Matter, was held here at Anchor Center on November 13<sup>th</sup>. CSDB early intervention staff Louise Gettman and Jennie Germano joined us and it is

exciting that we are able to work on these projects together. This was a productive meeting, and we set some goals that will make this mandatory Federal Testing more valuable for our VI students. All the VI teachers present agreed to review the 3 tests and rate the items for feasibility for VI and Blind babies so we are all working to the same end. Colleen Head from Results Matter will meet with us again (February 13) when we have decided on what test items are the most concerning and help us present these items and our suggestions to the test authors. In addition, CDE will be offering the VIISA course specific to preschoolers with visual impairments in then new year. Small steps, but at least we are moving forward.

At Anchor Center, one of our goals is to be a resource to the community, and that includes programs that are receiving preschoolers/schoolagers that may have been with us since infancy. We encourage receiving programs to come and visit the student in our program before transition if they are interested and we are working on adapting our Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment reports to reflect some additional history of our students that the receiving program might benefit from. We realize that our program may do some things differently than a public school program but everything we do is based on parent-child needs and encouraging the child to be as independent as possible. Some times history with a family is a valuable teacher. If you have a question or a concern regarding a child's behavior or skills, please feel free to call any one of us to discuss the issue. We look forward to hearing from you and working with you.

Our most exciting news is that Gerber Grants has accepted our research proposal to do some very basic research on the effect of Blindness and Visual Impairment on the development of eating. This is a three year project in which we will look at 30 children (15 blind and 15 VI) through parent interviews and videotapes. Our goal is to present at conferences and develop a feeding curriculum. We are very excited!

***Discussion:** Cathy shared that many of the children who have augmentative communication evaluations that attend Anchor Center have a report indicated a need for picsyms or other visual symbols. There is a need to provide more information about the visual demands of many of these systems. We talked about the importance of including other providers in the proposed 2008 Summer Institute so that they can have a chance to work with TVIs who can provide more information about the "sensory packaging needs" of communication systems for learners with visual impairment or deafblindness who have other disabilities.*

### **Colorado School for the Blind - Karla McKechnie**

*Staff and Student Activities:* Julie Novak presented "Song Signing as a Medium for Musical Expression and Language Learning in Children Who Are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing" at the American Music Therapy Association National Conference in Louisville, KY in November. While in Louisville, Julie also toured the American Printing House for the Blind.

The School for the Blind Winter program was on December 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:00pm and 6:30pm. Karla McKechnie attended the CASE Conference "Soaring to Leadership: Aspiring to the Principalship" November 29<sup>th</sup>-December 1<sup>st</sup>. The CSDB Bulldog Band played at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Common Sight Common Vision Breakfast held on Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup> at Cheyenne Mountain Conference Center. The School for the Blind held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spelling Bee Friday November 30<sup>th</sup>. Along with the rest of CSDB the School for the Blind held several assemblies to support our celebration in *PRIDE* Week. Jim Olson attended the annual APH meeting in October as a 2007 APH Scholar. Jim Olson presented a poster the 2007 Getting In Touch With Literacy Three School for the Blind staff members attended the first "Exploring Leadership" meeting hosted by Superintendent Hilty along with Dr. Laura Douglas and Lou Tutt. The 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Young Ameritowne fieldtrip was on Thursday, November 8, 2007. Two School for the Blind students, along with Ms. Novak, and School for the Blind

intern Audrey Self, attended the 2007 Black Forest League Honor Choir on October 29<sup>th</sup>. It was a great success! Mr. Witte hosted a class of teacher cadets from Palmer High School who spent the day at the School for the Blind on October 24<sup>th</sup>. They all seemed very interested in the field of visual impairment and blindness. Commissioner Dwight Jones had the opportunity to eat lunch with 3 students from the School for the Blind (along with students from the School for the Deaf) during his visit to CSDB's campus on October 18<sup>th</sup>. Foresight Ski Trip- Vail; 8 students, 2 staff 12/16-12/19. Two CSDB students (1 from the School for the Deaf and 1 from the School for the Blind) attended the CASB student strand at the Broadmoor hotel November 30<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>. January 11<sup>th</sup> is the School for the Blind 1<sup>st</sup> semester awards assembly. The CSDB Board of Trustees currently has a vacancy that has not been filled. This position is Governor appointed.

### **Colorado Chapter of AER – Samantha Hoffman**

We are so excited to let everyone know that the website is up and running again. We owe a ton of thanks to Janet Anderson who has taken the lead in getting the site up. She has also been keeping it up-to-date with new information and activities. Thanks Janet! We encourage everyone to go to the site to retrieve information on topics such as conferences, awards, mini-grants, and ACVREP reimbursement procedures. The site can be accessed directly by going to <<http://co.aerbvi.org/>> or by going to the national AER website and clicking on Chapters.

In November, the CAER board reviewed and awarded mini-grants to support members. The mini-grants awarded are as follows:

- Two students were awarded \$100 to help cover parking, transportation and food for the **National Braille Challenge** that they attended in May, 2007.
- Funding for the annual **Holiday Craft Day** was awarded to support the Cherry Creek School District VI staff in providing Expanded Core Curriculum activities in this fun Saturday through the use of crafts, games, social time and recreational activities.
- Three TVIs in Jefferson County Schools were awarded a mini-grant to supplement a portion of the registration fee for the **Getting in Touch with Literacy** conference that was held in Florida this year.

More mini-grants will be reviewed and awarded in April. Please see the website for information on how to apply. As a board we feel that supporting members through this type of benefit is very important. In order to continue to provide this support, we will be exploring more fundraising opportunities. We want to thank everyone for participating in 50/50 drawing that was held at the fall conference. All the money raised will go directly to support the mini-grants.

CAER will once again Co-sponsor the OMSOC Conference to be held on April 24-26, 2008. We also plan on holding our Annual Meeting and Banquet in conjunction with the conference. Dates and locations for this event will come out soon. The most exciting part of the banquet is our opportunity to honor our colleagues with awards. It is not too early to begin thinking about submitting an award recommendation. Here are the awards and the criteria to be considered:

- Gary Schmidt Award- This award honors an AER member who works directly with students/clients. Nomination criteria include; ethical standards, sense of humor, degree of excellence in job performance, and professionalism. The CAER Board and Janice Schmidt review the nominations.
- Connections Award- This award recognizes cooperative efforts that cross organizational lines, perhaps even groups working collaboratively to benefit our field. The CAER Board considers the nominations.

- Lifetime Achievement Award- This award is presented to professionals who have given of themselves to students/clients throughout their career and are preparing for retirement.

This criteria and information is also available on the website. Nominations can be made by submitting brief narrative describing this person's achievements, as well as letters of support. Elaine Karns is currently the chairperson in charge of awards. Her contact information can be found on the website. If you have any question about awards, feel free to contact any board member.

Finally, CAER continues to meet at 5:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. Meetings are opened to members and we would greatly appreciate input and suggestions on any topics. For meeting locations, please contact any board member.

***Discussion:*** *It was recommended that the CO AER Chapter submit regular chapter updated to the national AER Report. This chapter is doing such great things for its membership and deserves national-level recognition.*

### **Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (Julia Zanon)**

The Rehabilitation Counselors for the Blind (RCB) met in September at Beyond Sight to learn about blindness technology including electronic notetakers. The new product called the Braille Sense looks like a very handy notetaker and worth checking out. We also met with the staff at the Colorado Center for the Blind to find out about the new Randolph Sheppard Training program to train individuals to work as Business Enterprise Program Operators. This is a good opportunity for blind individuals who want to own and operate their own food service or vending business. The RCB's met again in December and this time, we learned about the services provided by the American Council of the Blind of Colorado. Barbara Boyer was very helpful in describing ACBCO's service including the free Braille/print children's books they have available to anyone who requests this material. We also learned a lot from Lindsey Pacheco, supervisor of the Personal Adjustment to Blindness training program at the Metro Denver office at 2211 W. Evans. This is a comprehensive independence to blindness/low vision training program available to vocational rehabilitation clients throughout the state.

We continue to discuss employment for people who are blind/vision impaired and the many challenges regarding access and discrimination that people who are blind encounter. As jobs get more complex with regard to technology, the challenge is to keep up with the technology access needs that will allow blind individuals to be competitive. Our spring 2008 meeting will include a technology fair at the 2211 W. Evans location as well as training and information about home based businesses and self employment. Jackie Geib is our Denver RCB working on improving relationships with the public schools and she has experienced some frustration with school staff who tell her that DVR services are not needed. She has plans to provide us with a list of the TVI's in the Denver area in hopes of building better relationships with school professionals. We have received some referrals from the public school system as well as the CSDB this year and it would be great to get a better idea of how many blind/low vision students are in the system that might be potential referrals.

### **University of Northern Colorado – Paula Conroy**

We ended the fall semester with 7 graduates from the MA and licensure-only programs. We have 40 active students in the programs for the spring semester. Our current grant supported program is full and there is a wait list, so we are proposing another personnel preparation grant that would begin in the fall of 2008.

Students are moving to electronic portfolios for assessment of overall performance throughout their programs. This system will help with program evaluation at a university level as well. It is another way to ensure the program continues to meet standards set by CDE, CCHE, and NCATE.

AER will begin to review university programs for AER approval beginning in the 2008 academic year (Fall). They stopped their approval process a few years ago. Members feel that this approval is valuable and have voted to reinstate the approval process. UNC will be a part of this process and seek to renew AER approval.

Paula has been involved in submitting a new federal grant for student stipend support.

### **Colorado Instructional Materials Center – Ann Hicks**

It is so good to be back in Colorado after my extended trip from October 21<sup>st</sup> through December 13<sup>th</sup>. I am back at work at the CIMC and appreciate all that the CIMC staff and Jim Olson did to make the CIMC run so smoothly in the past 3 months.

**Getting in Touch With Literacy Conference:** While I was away I did participate in the conference by presenting a session on Family Literacy Packs. There were 36 participants in that session and all were very interested in these Family Packs. There was excellent representation from Colorado at this conference.

**District Fee Assessments:** Every district has now paid its 2007-2008 CIMC Fee Assessment and all except one has sent in the letter stating that their fee was paid out of federal funds.

### ***Update on Books (this includes books that were ordered as recently as December 2008)***

Total Books	1081	Large Print	2
Shipped Complete	971	Loan	0
Shipped Partial	56	Inks	0
Purchase Order	32	% Complete	90%
Sourcing	11	% Partial	5%
APH	10		

**Prison Braille Program:** When Ann attended the annual meeting of the American Printing House for the Blind, I went a day early in order to attend the day-long workshop on Prison Braille Programs. We spent a half-day discussing current programs and suggestions on how to start and develop such a program and the other half-day visiting the Prison Braille Program in Kentucky. I think that this is a possibility for us to consider here in Colorado to help us have better access to braillists within Colorado. It will be a long-term solution to a big problem for us. Ann is hoping that this can be a discussion item for us or that a couple of people may want to volunteer to discuss this at a different time.

**Braille Repair:** Ann shared a handout specific to persons who can help with braille repair. When a braille writer is sent for repair, please let the CIMC know. Further, when the braille writer has been returned, please notify the CIMC via email or phone as to whether the problem is fixed. Once the CIMC learns that the braille writer has been fully repaired, they will pay the bill for the repair.

**Barriers and Proposed Solutions:** Ann handed out a document entitled Barriers / Solutions document for VC membership feedback. Categories of barriers included: communication, ink print copies of textbooks, online order form template, TVIs sourcing their own books, bar codes and Perkin Braille Writer model number, and repair of Perkins braille writers. Another issue that was generated was the lack of returned phone calls. It was strongly suggested that all staff maintain a phone log. If there is not a prompt response, TVIs are encouraged to report the concern to Ann. It was suggested

that Ann sent out a mass email to everyone to let people know when the monthly list is coming in an individual email. The question about the need to send the ink print was discussed. The current practice has been to let the TVI know by April whether the ink print is needed. Summer time is problematic to locate the ink print when school personnel are on break. The book is sourced immediately to determine if it has been brailled. If it is not available, the next step is to do further search to determine if an ink print is needed.

**Job Vacancy:** CSDB has a preliminary job announcement out for the CIMC Director position. There is an open date on the announcement right now. As more applications come in, CSDB will determine the interview date. The hope is to have a good applicant pool by April. Ann's last day will be June 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **CSDB Outreach (Donna Keale and Laura Douglas)**

The newly established Outreach Department at CSDB includes Ann Hicks, coordinator of the CIMC; Donna Keale, TVI/O&M specialist; and Jim Olson, low vision specialist. The focus of the CSDB Board of Trustees and the Administrative team is to collect data from TVIs, parents, special education directors across the state to identify gaps in services and support for students with vision losses, TVI's and parents. With this information, the Outreach Department will work with CDE's Tanni Anthony and TVIs across the state to develop services and supports.

At this time, Donna is providing direct contractual services to five students across the state whose district's or schools have not been able to hire TVI's or O&M instructors. The districts/schools have contracted with CSDB to provide IEP services until a TVI or O&M provider can be hired locally. Donna is also working with Roger Harwell to develop and expand role model activities throughout the state. It is also within her role to develop and provide short term courses for students with vision loss to address skills within the expanded core curriculum. During January, Donna is providing a short term course in independent living and in orientation and mobility. Persons interested in having students participate can contact Donna at 719-578-2251. There is also a role model event scheduled on January 30<sup>th</sup> at CSDB for any students, teachers and parents who would like to attend.

Jim and Ann presented at the *Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference* in Tampa. Jim has also been asked to serve on the national CEC vision interest group/committee for the next two years. There have been two successful low vision clinics this year, one in Grand Junction and one in Colorado Springs. The next clinics will be in the metro area in late January and in Fort Collins on February 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The Outreach Staff are working with a broad group of stakeholders to address target areas in the CSDB Strategic Plan for Statewide and Regional Resources. With input from providers, special education directors, and parents, the strategic plan was developed and being implemented to develop resources in various areas, including technology support.

The goal of the Statewide and Regional Resource Network plan is "Every eligible child in Colorado, birth to 21, who has been identified with a sensory disability, will have increased quality learning experiences and successful integration into their chosen academic setting, post-secondary settings, and in the community through collaboration with CSDB's Statewide and Regional Resources Network, school districts, and families." Collaboration with CDE is also a priority goal to identify gaps and needs across the state.

### **CDE (Tanni Anthony)**

**CSAP, CSAPA, and CELA Braille and Large Print Formats:** In early December, Tanni, Nancy Cozart, and Sarah Sonnier traveled to Boston to meet with the staff of the National Braille Press and a representative from CTB McGraw Hill to review the 2007-2008 braille format CSAP tests. It was a

busy two days, with a lot of great discussion and recommendations in the following areas : (a) recommendations to alter some questions to increase accessibility; (b) recommendation to suppress a couple of questions due to the difficulty of equalizing accessibility; and (c) recommendations to alter tactile graphics to improve accessibility. There was also discussion about the materials supporting the tests such as braille rulers, braille protractors, and tangrams. Nancy Cozart will meet with Tanni and Marisol Enrique in late January to review the braille and large print CELA tests.

**ECEA Rules Specific to Braille Competency:** The changes to the ECEA Rules were approved and finalized on December 31, 2007. There are changes to ECEA section 2220-R-4.00 Child Identification And Planning Process 4.02(4)(l) include: (a) renaming Literacy Modality Plan to Learning Media Plan; (b) adding learning to the phrase learning and literacy mode; (c) inserting language that braille competency is expected of all CO teachers licensed and endorsed in the area of visual impairment; and d) adding a statement specific to guidelines developed by the Colorado Department of Education. Tanni will be working with the CDE Braille Competency Committee to redefine our procedures with braille competency testing.

**Recruitment and Retention:** Vacant positions are currently being advertised in the *What's Happening Out There* newsletter. There are positions at CSDB School for the Blind, Adams 12, and El Paso 11. There are anticipated vacancies in other districts for the next school year, but these have not been confirmed.

**Low Vision Clinics:** We have had two very successful low vision evaluation clinics thus far this school year. Clinic evaluations are coming in from the western region clinic and have just been sent out for the southern region clinic. The two remaining clinics for the school year are for the metro and the northern region. Our low vision team is working hard to keep our inventory up to date!

**Technology Consultation for Next Year:** Bonnie has been busy with consultations via phone, email, and in person. The contact person for each of the regional TVI meetings is encouraged to work with Bonnie on possible regional presentations.

**O&M Conference:** Our O&M Conference will be held on April 24-26, 2008.. Dr. Kevin Stewart from Canada will be one of our featured speakers.

**NIMAS and NIMAC:** All Colorado administrative units have turned in a public assurance document specific to their work with NIMAC. Each public agency has the option of participating in NIMAC. Whether a public agency does or does not participate in NIMAC, the public agency will be responsible for ensuring that each child who requires instructional materials in an alternate format will receive it in a timely manner. The Colorado Department of Education recommended that Colorado's public agencies choose to participate in NIMAC, because this national effort to centralize the distribution of instructional materials in alternate formats will help guarantee timely provision of such materials to students.

For public agencies that choose to participate in NIMAC, **contracts with publishers executed on and after December 3, 2006** for textbooks and other printed core materials *must* include a provision that requires the publisher to produce NIMAS files and send them to the NIMAC (this will not add any cost to the contract). Curriculum publishers have been involved in discussions relating to NIMAS and are well aware of its requirements.

**State Listserv:** The listserv is up and running. There are weekly posting and it appears to be a helpful communication resource for CO TVIs! Thanks to everyone who are using this great resource.

**Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project:** This is the last year of the grant's five-year cycle. Gina and Tanni will be working with others to complete the activities of the project and to prepare, funding allowed, a new grant proposal. Parents and teachers of children ages birth through 21 years who have a combined vision and hearing loss are eligible for free technical assistance from the project. The project's website has many resource documents, including some in Spanish. The project also has a free lending library that is chockfull of VI-specific books, videos, and DVD. For more information about the project, please go to <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Deafblind.asp>.

### Technology Task Force

Vicki Pearson provided some background on the technology task force. The intention is to provide TVIs with more training and hands-on expertise to the variety of technology tools needed by students who are blind/visually. Vicki and Rita Albright administered a survey last school year that indicted a high need for further technology training and support. A task force was convened by the beginning of the 2007-08 school year.

On December 18<sup>th</sup>, Bonnie Snyder, Jenevieve Scott-Carpenter, Sue Newhart-Larson, Julie King, Kristen Lavergne, Sally Eldridge, Chloann Woolley, Rita Albright, and Vicki Pearson participated in an MSN message conference. It was determined from an informal survey of the state TVIs at the major technology concerns are teacher training on notetakers, bookport, scientific notebook, and screen readers. There was a discussion on the importance of HOW and WHERE teacher training should take place with further discussion on what other states are currently doing to meet these needs. Utah, Nevada, New Hampshire, Iowa, and Oregon were chosen as states for further exploration. The person responsible is as follows:

Jenevieve-Oregon	Kristen-Nevada and New Hampshire
Julie-Utah	Chloann-Iowa
Sue-notetaker training	Sally-notetaker training with vendor.

**Discussion:** *We discussed whether it would be helpful to have technology lab at CSDB for outreach support. People could go to the school for an on-site demonstration and tutorial or CSDB could send someone out for individual or regional training. The cost of a lab is very high due to the ever changing status of new equipment. It was further suggested that vendors be involved with possible equipment donation. Laura has an idea of mobile technology lab that could travel across the state for demonstration and training purposes. Paula talked about other programs that use modules for training purposes. Vicki shared that refreshable braille is a topic that seems to have universal appeal. It might be helpful to focus on the high need topics first. It would also be fun to capture students teaching others about the equipment. There was further discussion about regionalized labs – for example, space at Anchor Center or space with the Ensign Center.*

### BUDGET for 2008-09

The following budget items were approved for CDE Set Aside funds for school year 2007-08.

- CSAP, CSAPA, and CELA Test Review
- *What's Happening Out There* newsletter
- VIISA Preschool course for the front range
- Paraeducator Module Development
- Vision Coalition
- Mentor Program
- O&M Annual Conference
- State Conference on Visual Impairment
- Braille Transcriber Mentoring
- Technology Consultation



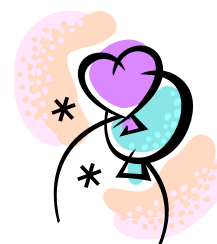
- CIMC
- Family Learning Seminar (VI strand)
- Braille Competency (proctors / proofreader)
- Adult Role Model
- Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

A contract for \$320,779 was completed with CSDB for the following activities: CIMC, Adult Role Model Team, Braille Transcriber Mentor program, and the Family Learning Seminar. The August-September edition of WHOT detailed key contact people for these projects and many others sponsored by CSDB and others in Colorado.

**Discussion:** Nancy polled the metro area for their priorities for the next school year, which included the state conference, low vision evaluation, and the What's Happening Out There newsletter. We talked about working on beefing up the mentoring project. Paula has written a mentor aspect into the new federal grant proposal that will address the UNC students in training. We talked about building an outreach position that has specific skills in the high-end training needs. People are interested in a vendor night with the state conference.

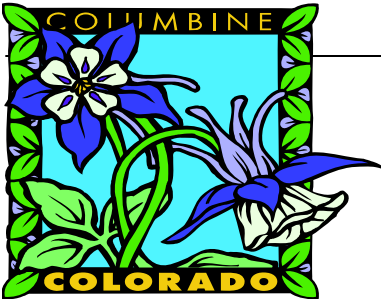
Laura talked about requesting CSDB for some technology projects before the formal Joint Budget Committee (JBC) request for the larger projects. For example, some summer training on certain technology projects. Tanni and Laura will be meeting over the next few months to discuss budget items for both CDE set-aside funds and the JBC proposal.

**Next Meeting Dates:** April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008 – Anchor Center



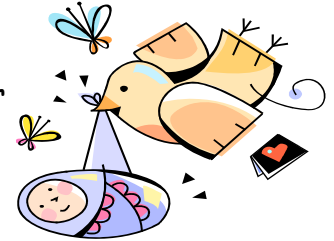
**Assignments for the next 2008 meeting**

WHO	WHAT	WHEN
All	Electronically submit program updates to Tanni	April 8, 2008
Nancy, Karla, and Ann, Tanni	Draft a document specific to braille instruction	April 15, 2008
TVI reps	Talk to regional membership about professional development needs specific to learners with additional disabilities	ASAP – with input into Tanni ASAP
Tanni	Get an update on the Colorado Commission for the Blind.	April 15, 2008
Paula	Talk to Diane Wormsley about the national braille test status.	April 15, 2008



# COLORADO CONNECTIONS

☞ **Debbie Mendoza** has welcomed the newest member of their family. Debbie and her husband Juan had their baby girl Monday, November 11, 2007. Isabella Rose weighed 6 lbs 7 oz. Mom and baby are doing fine. Or as we are affectionately calling her, in Adams 12, "Baby Bella"

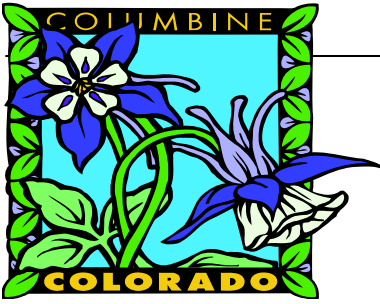


☞ Thanks to **Rae Cunningham** and **Jan Megarry** for their fine hosting of the CSAP Accommodations webinar on November 27th. Tanni participated in the webinar at the CSDB participation site. It was a wonderful opportunity to talk about how CSDB is participating in both CSAP and CSAPA and plans to use the new CDE eligibility documents with their students.

☞ A meeting was held on the CSDB campus on November 27th with **Tanni Anthony, Laura Douglas, Donna Keale, Jim Olson, and Lou Tutt** to discuss the CSDB Outreach Services specific to students who are blind/visually impaired, their teachers, and their parents

☞ Colorado was extremely well represented at the Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference, which was held in St. Pete's Beach, FL on November 29-December 1, 2007. Colorado, has the second highest registrations of any attending state - next only to the host state Florida! In attendance were: **Barbara Adams, Tanni Anthony, Sarah Bickford, Elaine Brown, Gwenn Carroll, Paula Conroy, Julie Durando, Charles Farnsworth, Ann Hicks, Sheryl Herlevich, Samantha Hoffman, JC Greeley, Shelley Moats, Martin Monson, Jim Olson, Sue Newhart, Michelle Seela, Edie Smith, and Paula Stallman**. Conference presentations were given by: **Tanni Anthony** and **Samantha Hoffman** (literacy modules for learners with significant support needs / sensory disabilities), **Paula Conroy** (peer assisted learning strategies), **Julie Durando** (braille and students with additional disabilities), **Charles Farnsworth** (poster session - brailenote with a rural student), **Ann Hicks** (family literacy packs) **Martin Monson** (phonological awareness and braille), **Jim Olson** (poster session - low vision portfolios).

☞ A very special thank you to **Samantha Hoffman** (from Tanni) for her marvelous photos of students who are involved in meaningful literacy activities. She brought true life to the presentation on literacy modules. If you are working with a student(s) who is blind/visually impaired or deafblind and who have additional disabilities and want to contribute photos and/or videos for these modules, please be in touch with Tanni



# COLORADO CONNECTIONS

- ❧ Congratulations to **Amy and Monte Gutowski** on the birth of their little one. Son Jackson has a baby sister who was born on November 29th. Baby Libby Suzanne weighed 6 lbs. 9 oz..
- ❧ Congratulation to our new CO AER members, **Danielle McGrath & Kelly Alicia Phillips!**
- ❧ Thank you so much to the following TVIs who worked so hard to get their Census Forms into CDE on time to register learners who have combined vision and hearing loss. You are SO appreciated: **Linda Campbell, Samantha Hoffman, Rita Albright, Kathy Gallina, Janet Anderson, Phyllis Penniston, Shelley Moats, Cheryl Leidich, Ann Marie Jansen, Janice Mountford, Barb Galgano, LeiLani Scott, Barbara Adams, Chuck Farnsworth, Samantha Hoffman, and Diane Fitzkee.**
- ❧ Congratulations to **Ann Johnson**, brailist in Cheyenne Mountain School District, for earning her Library of Congress braille certification. This is great testimony of her dedication to braille!
- ❧ Thanks to our pairs of mentors and mentees for this school year! They include: **Charlotta Morgan and Paula Stallman; Cathy Smyth and Sarah Bickford; Trina Boyd and Michelle Chacon; Judy Mumford and Edie Smith; and Samantha Hoffman and Melinda Carter.**
- ❧ CO TVIs were well represented at the recent training with Dr. June Downing. In attendance were: **Janet Anderson, Tanni Anthony, Linda Campbell, Ann Marie Jansen, Pat Lewis, Kristen LaVergne, Danielle McGrath, Judy Mumford, Wendy Stoltman, Judy Weiport, and Anita Wherry.**
- ❧ "Way to go!" to **Donice Fennimore** for her exciting presentation on Low Vision to her *Business Communication* university class. She has been looking at large print issues in our state. Her presentation addressed why low vision devices are essential. Donice will graduate on May 23 with a BA in Psychology.
- ❧ Thanks to Nancy Cozart for her guidance on braille and large print CELA tests on January 23rd. Also to **Janet Anderson and Lorraine Hutcheson** for sending in their item-review comments on braille CELA tests.
- ❧ We are so proud that **CSDB** was a sponsor of the recent *Getting in Touch with Literacy* Conference in Florida!



**State of Colorado Department of Education**

**Colorado State Board of Education**

Pamela Jo Suckla, Chairman  
3rd Congressional District

Evie Hudak  
2nd Congressional District

Elaine Gantz Berman  
1st Congressional District

Bob Schaffer  
4th Congressional District

Randy DeHoff  
6th Congressional District

Peggy Littleton  
5th Congressional District

Karen Middleton  
7th Congressional District

**Dwight D. Jones**  
**Commissioner of Education**



**COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**Exceptional Student Leadership Unit**  
**201 E Colfax Avenue, Room 300**  
**Denver, CO 80203-1799**

**25-23B-3401**



**MAIL TO:**