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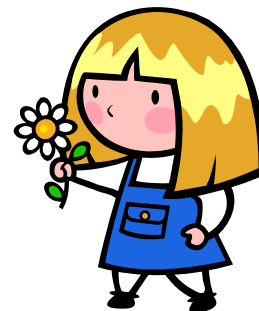
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## The Charlie Schulz Philosophy



The following is the philosophy of Charles Schulz, the creator of the 'Peanuts' comic strip. You don't have to actually answer the questions. Just ponder on them. Read the text straight through, and you'll get the point.

1. Name the five wealthiest people in the world.
2. Name the last five Heisman trophy winners.
3. Name the last five winners of the Miss America pageant.
4. Name ten people who have won the Nobel or Pulitzer Prize.
5. Name the last half dozen Academy Award winners for best actor and actress.
6. Name the last decade's worth of World Series winners.

How did you do? The point is, none of us remember all or even many of the headliners of yesterday. These are no second-rate achievers. They are the best in their fields. But the applause dies.. Awards tarnish.. Achievements are forgotten. Accolades and certificates are buried with their owners.

Here's another quiz. See how you do on this one:

1. List a few teachers who aided your journey through school.
2. Name three friends who have helped you through a difficult time.
3. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile.
4. Think of a few people who have made you feel appreciated and special.
5. Think of five people you enjoy spending time with.

Easier? The lesson: The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money...or the most awards. They simply are the ones who care the most.

**Thanks for being that special person - the one that cares the most.**

**"Be Yourself. Everyone Else Is Taken!"**

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**WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE!**

**A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers  
of Colorado Children Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired  
January—February 2012**

# 2011-12 TCAP Tests and Students Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired: General Recommendations

By Tanni Anthony

The 2011-12 TCAP Test Administration period is starting! Please review these general recommendations **well before** administering a TCAP test to a student who is blind/visually impaired.

## Before the Test: Be in the Know and Be Prepared

<u>TCAP Administration Dates</u>	<u>Early Testing</u>	<u>Testing Window</u>
Grade 3 Reading	2/13/12 – 2/24/12	2/27/12 – 3/9/12
Grade 3 Writing	3/5/12 - 4/6/12	3/12/12 – 4/13/12
Grades 4-10 Reading & Writing	3/5/12 - 4/6/12	3/12/12 – 4/13/12
Grades 3-10 Mathematics	3/5/12 - 4/6/12	3/12/12 – 4/13/12
Grades 5, 8, 10 Science	3/5/12 - 4/6/12	3/12/12 – 4/13/12

**Grade Appropriate Standards:** Be familiar with grade-level expectations and content standards for your students. It is our responsibility to work with the general educators to ensure that our students have instructional experiences commensurate with their peers (e.g., graphing, Venn Diagrams, etc.).

**Accommodations:** -Please review the *Colorado Accommodations' Manual* for allowable accommodations both in general and specifically for learners who are blind/visually impaired well ahead of the test. Accommodations must be on the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) for instruction and testing purposes.

The *Colorado Accommodations Manual* can be found at: [http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csapa/2011/2011\\_CO\\_Accom\\_Manual.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/documents/csapa/2011/2011_CO_Accom_Manual.pdf)

**Test Protocol Formats:** The TCAP test is published in six 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) high contrast/black and white regular print (per an approved nonstandard accommodation request); (e) uncontracted braille; and (f) contracted braille. If the test is in braille format, **it is mandated** that the person who is administering the test can read and write braille. The test should be administered by a TVI with a current CDE Certificate of Braille Competency.

**Preview of Braille-Format TCAP Protocols:** For this testing administration, the District Assessment Coordinators will be given instructions that TVIs may have advance access to the braille-format TCAP tests for purposes of being fully prepared to administer these tests. The intent is not to review the actual questions, but to complete the following checks:

- To ensure that the entire test has been received and is the correct grade / content area(s) for your student(s). Be aware that some of the braille-format tests will have more than one volume. Check the front cover to the number of volumes for each content area test.
- To be fully prepared by reading the Transcriber and Teacher Notes involved with each test
- To determine any material needs for each test; what may be included in the test and what may need to be brought by the TVI to the test.

**Transcriber and/or Teacher Notes in the Braille Tests:** All braille-format TCAP tests will include transcriber notes and/or teacher notes. Please go through the braille test(s) ahead of time to become familiar with this informa-

tion. [This information](#) is included in the back of the bound test booklet in an envelope woven into the binding.

Further TVIs should work with their students to scan for braille transcriber notes using other materials well before the test administration period so they are able to scan the transcriber and teacher notes on the actual days of testing. This skill may need to be an actual IEP goal to ensure that the student has this ability (if it is not already, please consider this as a future IEP goal).

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.

Teacher notes have been added in some instances to clarify what is appropriate for a student response when drawing is required and/or if there are special materials that are permissible to bring to the assessment setting for a particular item.

**What Materials to Bring to the Test:** It is the responsibility of the TVI to review each braille-format test in advance to determine what materials are provided within the test and what materials should be brought to 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, wikki sticks, and thumb tacks for some of the math tests in the older grades. Be sure to have graph paper on hand for tests requiring graphing.

If the test requires a protractor, an American Printing House for the Blind (APH) plastic protractor will be included in the envelope at the back of the TCAP braille-format test booklet. It is best practice, however, to be proactive and ensure that the student uses the protractor used in everyday instruction prior to the test. (CDE is no longer dispersing protractors).

A paper braille ruler will be provided in the braille-format math tests. You may want to bring the ruler that the student has used for everyday instructional purposes so that the student is using a familiar tool during the assessment. 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. Please be proactive to ensure that these materials have been sent with the test.

### **The Day of the Test: Come Prepared and Know What To Do**

**Transcription of Results in the Regular TCAP Booklet:** Students who use a special-format test may record answers directly on the adapted format copy of the test, may use a scribe or use other techniques for response as designated in the student's IEP. **Upon 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 TCAP booklet.

**Data Grid or Biogrid of the Test:** Please fill out the "braille version" bubble on the student data grid or "large-print version" bubble depending on the test format used. There is not an accommodation bubble for "high contrast version." Indicating a "braille version" is very important as some of the tests MAY have omitted items due to visual-bias challenges. This bubble is **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). For this year's testing, the following TCAP tests have suppressed items: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Math, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science, and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Math.

**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 student such as “use your number 2 graphic pencil, the TVI can substitute the language needed to fit the type of writing instrument for the student.

**Be Ready with Needed Testing Materials:** TVIs should come prepared with the needed materials for the student to take the TCAP. For example, students who are blind/visually impaired should have grade-appropriate graphing skills. The person administering the braille-format tests should know in advance of the testing date that that student is expected to graph an answer. In this situation, the student will need graph paper separate from the braille-format testing booklet. In these situations, TVIs should be prepared to bring graph paper, graphing pad / cardboard, push pins, etc. This is the same situation that braille students face when asked to graph in everyday instruction.

**Be Ready to Assist Your Student in Orienting to a Tactile Graphic (as needed):** It is permissible to give students verbal information to help orient them to a tactile graphic, as long as information is not given to guide the student to the answer.

**Be Aware of Tactile Graphic Formats in the Test:** Please be aware there may be an instance where there is not sufficient space on a tactile graph to include numbers or complete set of numbers on the X and Y axis lines.

Tactile graphics have been produced on facing pages as possible. When they are not situated on facing pages, it is because it was not possible to do so. Also due to the size specifications of some of the tactile graphics, they may be produced across pages. This may be due to the need to enlarge the graphic and so it may take several pages to fit in each of the needed graphics.

**Be Aware of Appropriate Response Accommodations:** There will be questions where the student is asked to draw his or her response. This type of response continues to be a “red flag” for some personnel completing the annual item analysis. Please be aware of how to work with a student to complete a response that requires drawing. As in everyday instruction when print readers are asked to draw, the TVI can work with the braille learner to accommodate a “drawing response.” A student may use an item to trace and/or use the test evaluator as a scribe to draw the needed response

It will be important to be aware of the rules for scribing. There are times when using a scribe is the most efficient way to collect the student’s information. For example, during TCAP items that require drawing, it may be best for the student to describe what needs to be drawn to the test administrator or the student can dictate his or her thinking as a math problem is worked on the abacus when the problem asks for the student to show written work of the problem. Some students who use braille may choose to do their own drawing. For other students, it is permissible for them to verbally indicate what needs to be drawn or physically use manipulatives to demonstrate knowledge of the answer specific to the math tests.

A scribe cannot be used when the test is actually measuring writing skills unless the student dictates needed punctuation etc. It is recommended that rules on scribing be read prior to test administration. It is important to remember that with the change to marking all accommodations used on the student data grid, if a scribe is used, this will also be bubbled along with the appropriate accommodated test version.

-For tasks requiring writing, students can use a separate piece of paper(s) for their answer. Pages containing student answers are secure test materials and must be returned to your School Assessment Coordinator with the other testing materials for return to the test vendor.

**Do Not Assume Visual Bias:** - The TCAP questions have been reviewed over the past 9-10 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 too time consuming to complete. As such, the expectation is that the braille reading student will be able to complete the TCAP test. For example, visual bias is NOT due to a student not having an experience with a particular type of a tree or a school gym. Be aware of the construct being measured as it may not be tied to what is thought to be visually-biased phenomena. For example, if the student is required to measure the parameter of a tree house, the question is not about a tree house, but what to do with the provided dimensions.

**Suppressed Test Items:** There are a handful of suppressed items in the braille version of the TCAP tests. This should not be a surprise to the TVI administering the test(s) – the expectation is that each test is previewed ahead of time. A suppression of a test question DOES NOT mean that we do not have high expectations of our braille readers or that they should not know a certain construct. Please be sure to explain this to your student. In the rare instance that a question has been suppressed, it has been done so through a strict peer-review process.

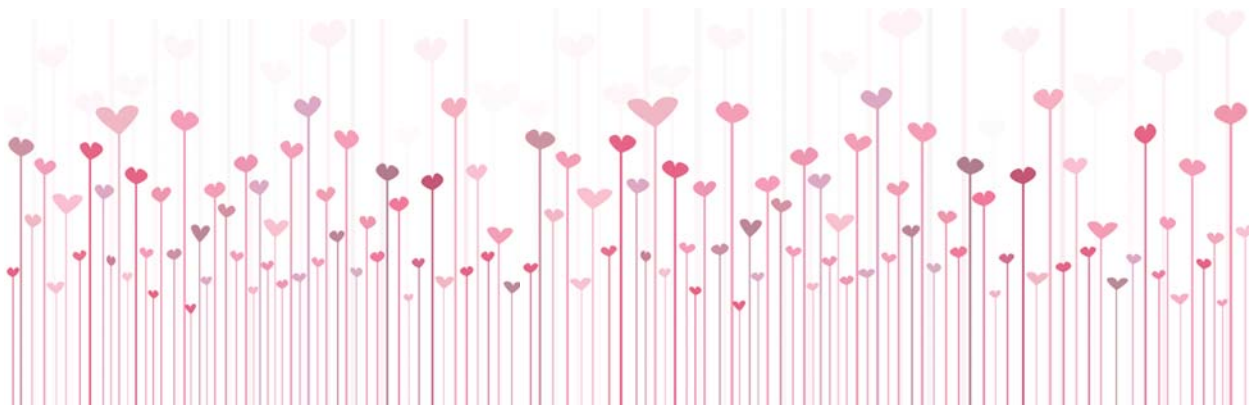
Reasons for an item to be legitimately suppressed include: (a) there is not a good way to illustrate the graphic tactually and there are no corresponding easy-to-get objects to accommodate the missing graphic; (b) there are no commercially-produced manipulatives, such as a geometric shape, that correspond to a question where the tactile graphic is highly confusing; and (c) the amount of time needed to tactilely review the needed graphics that correspond to the test question are inordinate (we test this onsite at the National Braille Press and have instances where it took the braille reader 30 minutes just to acquire the needed tactile information to answer one test question).

For this year's testing, the following TCAP tests have suppressed items: 5<sup>th</sup> grade Science, 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Math, 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science, and 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Math.

**Storage and Returning Completed Tests:** Please remember that any adapted version of the test (braille, large print, or high contrast) and corresponding student answers are always considered to be a part of the secure materials and must be secured on a daily basis with your School Assessment Coordinator. No versions of the TCAP or student answers may be stored in classrooms.

All transcribed test booklets, along with the original braille, and standard and nonstandard large print, or high contrast test materials must be returned to your administrative unit District Assessment Coordinator.

**Contributing to the Annual Graphic / Braille Analysis Process:** I will send out an electronic form to gather information about the 2011-12 large print and braille-format TCAP tests. If there are particular test items that had a problematic graphic or braille errors, this information will be critical to further test development. We also want to know if the test had no concerns. This item specific information is reviewed annually with the CDE Office of Student Assessment, the test publisher, and the braille vendor.



# TCAP / CoALT UPDATE

## TCAP Parent's Brochure

Revised and updated from the CSAP parent's brochure, this printable color pdf may be reproduced by districts and schools to distribute to parents. The brochure contains important information for parents such as where to find information about test score interpretation, information about accommodations and tips on how to help prepare their student's for success on the 2012 TCAP. The 2012 TCAP Parent Brochure may be found here:

[www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/parents\\_guide.html](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/parents_guide.html)

## CoAlt Test Materials

Materials should have been received by districts no later than January 20, 2012. A reminder was sent to District Assessment Coordinators on January 17 that test examiners and teachers certified in the area of visual impairment (TVIs) need access to student materials and test examiner's protocols prior to the assessment window to allow for adaptations for individual students. Student materials are available on CTB Navigator in an electronic format which may be helpful in adaptations for student access such as: enlarging, Braille, and/or adaptive materials. For test security it is important that electronic versions of student materials are removed from school and district computers as quickly a possible once used for adapting materials. These electronic materials should not be distributed via email, unless it is a password protected file. TVIs who need to make adaptations to the test for accessibility should be in touch with their District Assessment Coordinators to obtain access to the full testing materials.

## TCAP FAQ

Frequently asked questions about the TCAP have been answered in this FAQ document. In it, you will find answers to general questions, questions about TCAP administration including official guidance and clarification on state assessment procedures and expanded information about the TCAP Assessment Frameworks. The TCAP FAQ may be found here:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/publications.html>

## Spanish language version of the TCAP Parent Brochure

[www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/parents\\_guide.html](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/parents_guide.html)

## Procedures Manual

[www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/publications.html](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/publications.html)



# Bits From Bonnie

By Bonnie Snyder

[BonnieLS21@gmail.com](mailto:BonnieLS21@gmail.com)

<http://TVIVIP.org>

## Tips and Tricks for Enhancing the PC Visual Display

If you are in need of assistance in seeing the screen on a PC, there are several options available to help you do this. If you are using Windows 7, for instance, there is a built-in screen magnifying program that is head and shoulders above the one in Windows XP. You can run it at any time (provided your video can use the Win 7 Aero display) by pressing Windows key – plus on the keyboard. Pressing Windows key – plus additional times will increase the magnification with each press and Windows key – minus will decrease the magnification with each press. Once you are in the magnification program, you can set up the program with the options you want. To do this, go down to the taskbar and click on the magnify icon. A window will open toward the top of the screen and an icon that looks like a “gear” will allow you to choose your options, including having the magnification load automatically at startup. You can change options on the fly by using Windows key – L for Lens mode, Windows key – D for Dock mode, Windows key – F for Full screen mode.

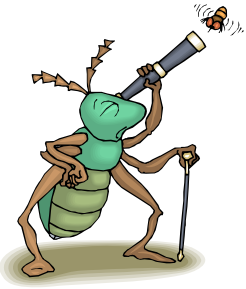
An interesting freeware program you might want to try is aRuler for Windows. It works under Win XP and Win 7. Initially it loads a ruler that you can use to help focus on the line of text you wish to read. It is configurable in length, and ruler’s visual display can be changed to the user’s preference. It also includes a screen magnification option from 1X to 4X.

One of the things that can cause visual fatigue when reading on a computer screen is the brightness of the display. There is a freeware program called TintedWindow which works in both Win XP and Win 7 that can mitigate this problem. Once loaded (it is a JAVA executable so it doesn’t install), TintedWindow comes up in a small window. Do a right click on that window and you can set up the color of the tint you wish. The window also allows for full screen or just a lens.

I recommend you do a Google search to find the two freeware programs referred to here.

I have a number of other freeware programs to help with video access, and I will write about them in my next few articles.





# LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



## The CDE Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Schedule Clinic Schedule for School Year 2011-2012

REGION	DATES	PAPERWORK DEADLINE	SITE COORDINATOR
<b>Northern</b> (Location to be determined)	Fri Feb 10, 2012 Sat Feb 11, 2012	January 20, 2012	Rita Albright Vicki Pearson
<b>Southern</b> (CSDB low vision room)	Fri Mar 2, 2012	February 17, 2012	Donice Fennimore

### EYE REPORTS REQUIRED BY APH FOR FEDERAL QUOTA CENSUS

#### EYE REPORTS AND THE APH QUOTA FUND

By Jim Olson

The Federal Quota program, administered by the American Printing House for the Blind (APH), requires that a current eye report is kept on file in the school district reporting a student as eligible for the Federal Quota program. If a student meets the Federal Quota eligibility requirements of legal blindness for the January 02, 2012 Federal Quota count day, the eye report on file must be within three years of the current count date, or more recent than January 02, 2009. If these criteria are met, then the teacher certified in the area of visual impairment (TVI) is eligible to access the repository of APH materials housed in the Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC) for use by that student.

If the student does not meet the eligibility requirements on count day (the first Monday in January of each calendar year) then the district cannot count that student. In this situation, the CIMC does not report that student and the district would not be able to access the repository of APH educational materials. APH quota funds are disseminated to quota eligible students for the benefit of quota eligible students. If an ineligible student requires accommodations or modifications which may include APH educational materials, it would then be the responsibility of the school district to purchase those items from APH directly (their website is [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)). They accept credit cards and purchase orders.

The CIMC will ask TVIs to verify whether the district houses a current (within three years) eye report in the district files before a student who is legally blind will be able to generate and access APH Quota Fund materials. If there are any questions about this federal policy, please be in touch with Jim Olson at [jolson@csdb.org](mailto:jolson@csdb.org) or call him at (719) 578-2195.



# Spotlight on



## Usher Syndrome

The primary content of this article was retrieved from: <http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/pages/usher.aspx>

**What is Usher syndrome?** Usher syndrome is responsible for the majority of deaf-blindness. Approximately 1 in 17,000 or 0.01% or 16,000 people in United States have been diagnosed with Usher syndrome. It is the most common condition that affects both hearing and vision.

A **syndrome** is a disease or disorder that has more than one feature or symptom. The major symptoms of Usher syndrome are hearing loss and an eye disorder called retinitis pigmentosa (RP). Retinitis pigmentosa causes night-blindness and a loss of peripheral vision (side vision) through the progressive degeneration of the retina. In other cases, there is early degeneration of the cone cells in the macula, leading to a loss of central acuity. In some cases, the foveal vision is spared, leading to "doughnut vision"; central and peripheral vision are intact, but there is an annulus around the central region in which vision is impaired. The retina is a light-sensitive tissue in the back of the eye and is crucial for vision. As RP progresses, the field of vision narrows—a condition known as "tunnel vision"—until only central vision (the ability to see straight ahead) remains. Many people with Usher syndrome also have severe balance problems.



*Photograph of the retina of a patient with Usher syndrome (left) compared to a normal retina (right). The optic nerve (arrow) looks very pale, the vessels (stars) are very thin and there is characteristic pigment, called bone spicules (double arrows).*

Usher syndrome is named after the British ophthalmologist Charles Usher, who examined the pathology and transmission of this illness in 1914 on the basis of 69 cases. However, it was first described in 1858 by Albrecht von Gräfe, a pioneer of modern ophthalmology. He reported the case of a deaf patient with retinitis pigmentosa, who had two brothers with the same symptoms. Three years later, one of his students, Richard Liebreich, examined the population of Berlin for disease pattern of deafness with retinitis pigmentosa. Lie-

# Spotlight on

breich noted that Usher syndrome is recessive, since the cases of blind-deafness combinations occurred particularly in the siblings of blood-related marriages or in families with patients in different generations. His observations supplied the first proofs for the coupled transmission of blindness and deafness, since no isolated cases of either could be found in the family tree.

**What are the Characteristics of the Three Types of Usher Syndrome?** There are three clinical types of Usher syndrome: type 1, type 2, and type 3. In the United States, types 1 and 2 are the most common types. Together they account for approximately 90 to 95 percent of all cases of children who have Usher syndrome.

**Type 1:** Children with type 1 Usher syndrome are profoundly deaf at birth and have severe balance problems. Many of these children obtain little or no benefit from hearing aids. Intervention should be introduced early, during the first few years of life, so that the child can take advantage of the unique window of time during which the brain is most receptive to learning language, whether spoken or signed. If a child is diagnosed with type 1 Usher syndrome early on, before he or she loses the ability to see, that child is more likely to benefit from the full spectrum of intervention strategies that can help him or her participate more fully in life's activities.

Because of the balance problems associated with type 1 Usher syndrome, children with this disorder may be slow to sit without support and typically may not walk independently before they are 18 months old. These children usually begin to develop vision problems in early childhood, almost always by the time they reach age 10. Vision problems most often begin with difficulty seeing at night (parents have reported that very young children may not see well dim environments – not reaching for a bottle in a dimly lit nursery, etc.), but tend to progress rapidly until the person is completely blind.

The estimated prevalence worldwide of Usher syndrome type I is 3 to 6 per 100,000 people in the general population. Type I has been found to be more common in people of Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry (central and eastern European) and in the French-Acadian populations (Louisiana).

**Type 2:** Children with type 2 Usher syndrome are born with moderate to severe hearing loss and normal balance. Although the severity of hearing loss varies, most of these children can benefit from hearing aids and can communicate orally. The vision problems in type 2 Usher syndrome tend to progress more slowly than those in type 1, with the onset of RP often not apparent until the teens.

**Type 3:** Children with type 3 Usher syndrome have normal hearing at birth. Although most children with the disorder have normal to near-normal balance, some may develop balance problems later on. Hearing and sight worsen over time, but the rate at which they decline can vary from person to person, even within the same family. A person with type 3 Usher syndrome may develop hearing loss by the teens, and he or she will usually require hearing aids by mid- to late adulthood. Night blindness usually begins sometime during puberty. Blind spots appear by the late teens to early adulthood, and, by mid-adulthood, the person is usually legally blind.

**Who is Affected by Usher syndrome?** Approximately 3 to 6 percent of all children who are deaf and another 3 to 6 percent of children who are hard-of-hearing have Usher syndrome. In developed countries such as the United States, about four babies in every 100,000 births have Usher syndrome. It is important that ALL chil-

# Spotlight on

Children who have hearing loss have regular vision screenings and appropriate eye care checks / follow-up to ensure that vision is monitored appropriately throughout the individual's life span. Any evidence of poor night vision and/or field loss should be reported to an eye care specialist.

	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3
<b>Hearing</b>	Profound deafness in both ears from birth	Moderate to severe hearing loss from birth	Normal at birth; progressive loss in childhood or early teens
<b>Vision</b>	Decreased night vision before age 10, ongoing loss of vision	Decreased night vision begins in late childhood or teens; ongoing loss of vision	Varies in severity; night vision problems often begin in teens; ongoing loss of vision
<b>Vestibular function (balance)</b>	Balance problems from birth	Normal	Normal to near-normal, chance of later problems

**What Causes Usher syndrome?** Usher syndrome is inherited, which means that it is passed from parents to their children through genes. Genes are located in almost every cell of the body. Genes contain instructions that tell cells what to do. Every person inherits two copies of each gene, one from each parent. Sometimes genes are altered, or mutated. Mutated genes may cause cells to act differently than expected.

Usher syndrome is inherited as an autosomal recessive trait. The term *autosomal* means that the mutated gene is not located on either of the chromosomes that determine a person's sex; in other words, both males and females can have the disorder and can pass it along to a child. The word *recessive* means that, to have Usher syndrome, a person must receive a mutated form of the Usher syndrome gene from each parent. If a child has a mutation in one Usher syndrome gene but the other gene is normal, he or she is predicted to have normal vision and hearing. People with a mutation in a gene that can cause an autosomal recessive disorder are called *carriers*, because they "carry" the gene with a mutation, but show no symptoms of the disorder. If both parents are carriers of a mutated gene for Usher syndrome, they will have a one-in-four chance of having a child with Usher syndrome with each birth.

Usually, parents who have normal hearing and vision do not know if they are carriers of an Usher syndrome gene mutation. Currently, it is not possible to determine whether a person who does not have a family history of Usher syndrome is a carrier. Scientists at the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders are hoping to change this, however, as they learn more about the genes responsible for Usher syndrome.

**How is Usher syndrome diagnosed?** Because Usher syndrome affects hearing, balance, and vision, diagnosis of the disorder usually includes the evaluation of all three senses. Evaluation of the eyes may include a visual

# Spotlight on



field test to measure a person's peripheral vision, an electroretinogram (ERG) to measure the electrical response of the eye's light-sensitive cells, and a retinal examination to observe the retina and other structures in the back of the eye. A hearing (audiologic) evaluation measures how loud sounds at a range of frequencies need to be before a person can hear them. An electronystagmogram (ENG) measures involuntary eye movements that could signify a balance problem.

Early diagnosis of Usher syndrome is very important. The earlier that parents know if their child has Usher syndrome, the sooner that child can begin early intervention (0-3 services) and special educational (3-21 years) programs to manage the loss of hearing and vision. A certified teacher of children who are deaf will be an important team member from the onset of the diagnosis of the hearing loss. As the vision loss becomes apparent, a certified teacher of children with visual impairment will be needed, as well as an orientation and mobility specialist for travel training needs. The child will qualify for services from the state deafblind project.

Families may be interested in connecting with other families of children with Usher syndrome, as well as the child him or herself. Role models are very helpful.

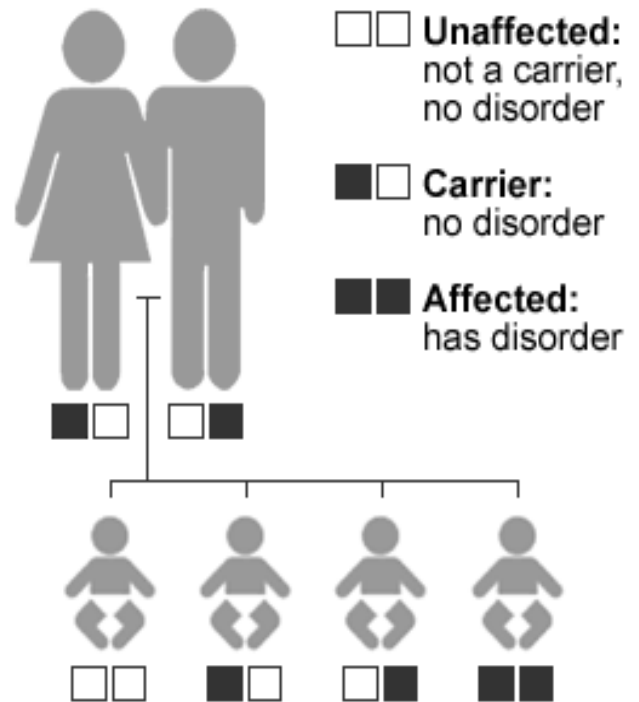
**Is genetic testing for Usher syndrome available?** So far, 11 genetic loci (a segment of chromosome on which a certain gene is located) have been found to cause Usher syndrome, and nine genes have been pinpointed that cause the disorder. They are:

Type 1 Usher syndrome: *MYO7A*, *USH1C*, *CDH23*, *PCDH15*, *SANS*

Type 2 Usher syndrome: *USH2A*, *VLGR1*, *WHRN*

Type 3 Usher syndrome: *USH3A*

With so many possible genes involved in Usher syndrome, genetic tests for the disorder are not conducted on a widespread basis. Diagnosis of Usher syndrome is usually performed through hearing, balance, and vision tests. Genetic testing for a few of the identified genes is clinically available. To learn about laboratories that conduct clinical testing, visit the web site [www.GeneTests.org](http://www.GeneTests.org) and search the laboratory directory by typing in the term "Usher syndrome." Genetic testing for additional Usher syndrome genes may be available through clinical research studies. To learn about clinical trials that include genetic testing for Usher syndrome, visit the Web site [www.clinicaltrials.gov](http://www.clinicaltrials.gov) and type in the search term "Usher syndrome" or "Usher genetic testing."



# Spotlight on

**How is Usher Syndrome Treated?** Currently, there is no cure for Usher syndrome. The best treatment involves early identification so that educational programs can begin as soon as possible. The exact nature of these programs will depend on the severity of the hearing and vision loss as well as the age and abilities of the person. Typically, treatment will include hearing aids, assistive listening devices, cochlear implants, or other communication methods such as American Sign Language; orientation and mobility training; and communication services and independent-living training that may include Braille instruction, low-vision services, or auditory training.

## Where can I get more information?

NIDCD maintains a directory of organizations that can answer questions and provide printed or electronic information on Usher syndrome. Please see the list of organizations at [www.nidcd.nih.gov/directory](http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/directory).

### NIDCD Information Clearinghouse

1 Communication Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20892-3456

Toll-free Voice: (800) 241-1044, Toll-free TTY: (800) 241-1055, Fax:(301) 770-8977

E-mail: [nidcdinfo@nidcd.nih.gov](mailto:nidcdinfo@nidcd.nih.gov)

## Chances of Inheriting a Recessive Disorder

Genetic disorders can be caused by a change (s) in a gene. Every individual has two copies of the same gene. Genetic disorders are inherited in different ways. Usher syndrome is a **recessive** disorder.

**Recessive** means a person must inherit a change in the same gene from each parent in order to have the disorder

A person with one changed gene does not have the disorder, but can pass either the changed or the unchanged gene on to his or her child

An individual with Usher syndrome usually has inherited a change in the same gene from each parent

An individual who has one changed Usher syndrome gene is called a **carrier**. When two carriers of the same Usher syndrome gene have a child together, with each birth there is a: 1-in-4 chance of having a child with Usher syndrome 2-in-4 chance of having a child who is a carrier 1-in-4 chance of having a child who neither has Usher syndrome nor is a carrier

# Resources and Materials



## Stickler Syndrome: Educational Film Series

Stickler Syndrome is an under-diagnosed disease with profound medical consequences particularly with respect to vision and mobility. A genetic malfunction in the collagen found in bones, eyes, ears and the face, can lead to blindness, hearing loss, degenerative joint disease, chronic pain and facial effects. It is our goal to improve access to information on Stickler Syndrome to assist in the reduction of complications and improvement of quality of life.

### FILM 1: Stickler Syndrome - Learning the Facts

Provides the facts about Stickler Syndrome. It aims to increase awareness of what can happen, the possible treatment options and provides support to those with and affected by Stickler Syndrome.

### FILM 2: Finding Hope - Living with Stickler Syndrome

Managing the physical manifestations of a chronic disorder is the initial concern, but addressing the emotional and spiritual impact is equally as important to the well being of the individual and family. This film explores how 3 families living with Stickler Syndrome get the best out of life.

Watch both films at this website: [www.sticklervideo.org/](http://www.sticklervideo.org/)

**Go! Temp** - We've made it easy to use technology to teach science concepts with Go! Temp. Just plug Go! Temp into your Windows® or Macintosh® computer, start the free Logger Lite software, and click "Collect" to see the temperature graph plotted in real time!



**The Vernier LabQuest** is a powerful new interface designed for versatility. Use it with a computer interface and in the field. LabQuest was created with today's classroom in mind. Engage your students with hands-on science in your classroom or in the field. We built the Vernier LabQuest with rugged reliability in mind. Durability Key Benefits include a temperature range of 0-70°C, splash proof exterior, rugged enclosure with rubber molding for shock absorption, and a rechargeable, high-capacity internal battery. Upgradable.



**For a complete product listing go to:**

[www.independencescience.com/Independence%20Science%20Product%20Catalog%202011-2012revision.pdf](http://www.independencescience.com/Independence%20Science%20Product%20Catalog%202011-2012revision.pdf)

**To place an order:** Email [MMichaels@IndependenceScience.com](mailto:MMichaels@IndependenceScience.com), call 814-441-2589, or fax 765-807-8665.

# Resources and Materials



COLORADO  
DEPARTMENT  
OF  
EDUCATION

## CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Senate Bill 11-040 also known as "The Jake Snakenberg Youth Concussion Act" went into effect Jan. 1, 2012. In response to this legislation, CDE developed Concussion Management Guidelines. The Concussion Management Guidelines were written to educate school districts on the legislation and to provide guidance to superintendants as they work to implement concussion management guidelines within their school district. To find and download the guidelines, go to: [www.cde.state.co.us/HealthAndWellness/BrainInjury.htm](http://www.cde.state.co.us/HealthAndWellness/BrainInjury.htm)

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# ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

## SAVE THE DATE FOR SOMA 2012!!!

The South Eastern Orientation and Mobility Association (SOMA) conference will be held September 30-October 2, 2012 in Richmond, Virginia at the Crown Plaza Downtown and everyone is invited to attend! If you are interested in presenting, attending, being on the planning committee, or assisting during the conference, please email [kwalker@alliedinstructional.com](mailto:kwalker@alliedinstructional.com) to be sure you are on the email list for future announcements. Call for Papers will be coming out soon. Please forward this announcement to anyone who might be interested!!!

A new O&M listserv has been created. If you are interested in joining, please go to:

[OrientationAndMobility-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:OrientationAndMobility-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

then reply to the confirmation e-mail asking who you are to ensure only interested parties are really involved in this national listserv.



# TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!



### 30 College Scholarships for Blind Students

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) Scholarship Committee is a national program to recognize achievement by blind student. The program gives annually a total of \$122,000 in scholarships to 30 legally blind college students. The awards range from \$3,000 to \$12,000. Their contest for 2012 begins the first week of November 2011. Membership in the NFB is NOT a requirement and many non-members win every year. The 2011 contest (rules and requirements are posted) are posted at [www.nfb.org/scholarships](http://www.nfb.org/scholarships).



### Leader Dog Summer Experience— Live Independently Friday, June 22- Friday, June 29, 2012

Free, one-week camp experience for 16 and 17 year olds that is all about fun, learning new things, challenging yourself and making new friends. But most importantly... it's one week of strengthening your independence in new ways. All services are provided at no cost to participants including air travel. (Certain travel expenses not covered.) 1:3 instructor to student ratio to ensure a personalized experience for all participants. For more information:

[www.leaderdog.org/programs/youth/](http://www.leaderdog.org/programs/youth/)



### Disabilities At Work Newsletter Winter 2011/2012

The Disabilities At Work newsletter is provided six times per year to Human Resource professionals and others as a source of information regarding the issues surrounding employment of qualified people with disabilities. The newsletter is provided in conjunction with the Disabilities At Work Radio program which is heard each Wednesday at noon eastern time on VoiceAmerica's Business Network.

This newsletter is made possible by a generous grant from the Kessler Foundation: [kesslerfoundation.org](http://kesslerfoundation.org)

DAW Radio is made available to individuals with hearing loss by: Karasch & Associates [www.karasch.com](http://www.karasch.com) (800-621-5689) and by ASL Interpreter Referral Service: [www.aslirs.com](http://www.aslirs.com) (800-275-7551)

Post jobs or look for qualified individuals with disabilities at [www.AccessibleEmployment.org](http://www.AccessibleEmployment.org)

To see the full newsletter, go to: [www.disabilitiesatwork.org/daw-newsletter.html](http://www.disabilitiesatwork.org/daw-newsletter.html)



## An Oceanographer Role Model Inspires Blind Students to Pursue Careers in Science

For a student in high school, college or any stage of their education, a role model is vastly important to achieving their goals. They provide a path to follow and show that it is possible for a student to accomplish their dreams. Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields are underrepresented by people who are blind or have low vision. But one oceanographer is showing students that they can be successful scientists.

Legally blind herself, Dr. Amy Bower has offered herself up as a role model, judging science fairs and hosting touch-based tours of active research vessels and laboratories. In April 2010, she was named an “Unsung Heroine of Massachusetts” for extraordinary contributions to science by the Massachusetts Coalition for Women.

But today, you will find Dr. Bower on the research vessel Knorr on the Labrador Sea searching for underwater storms. This excerpt below was originally posted in Popular Science on February 14, 2011 by Donovan Hohn:



*“...Amy Bower loads onto her extra-large monitor what appear to be abstract paintings, giant red and orange blobs in a field of yellow, as her computer reads text aloud in a robotic voice. Nose almost touching the screen, she searches for clues in the colorful abstractions, which are in fact oversized topographical maps of the Labrador Sea.*”

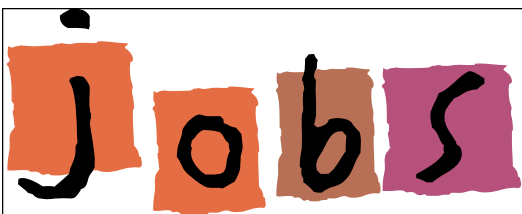
*A senior scientist at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts, Bower is the chief scientist on the first leg of voyage 192, as it’s officially called—a search for the hidden weather that roils beneath the sea. She also happens to suffer from not one but two congenital diseases: macular degeneration and retinitis pigmentosa. She is legally blind. But in her 22 years as an oceanographer, she’s confronted winter storms on the North Atlantic and Somali pirates in the Gulf of Aden. With the help of her computer and other instruments, Bower can see the ocean far more clearly than most of us.”*

Bower uses technology to assist in studies as an oceanographer, some of which are screen reader software on her computer and a CCTV or video magnifier which blows up images large enough for her to examine. She will also use braille to label files and tactile bumps to help her find things when at sea or at home.

With the help of these adaptive tools, Bower is exploring the depths of the ocean and conducting research that will likely have a global impact on the environment. Her goal is to show other students who are visually impaired that careers in the science fields are accessible to them too. This mission is congruent with that of Independence Science and as more low and high tech science access technology is developed, an influx of confident scientists with blindness or low vision will emerge.

Looking for more information on Dr. Amy Bower? Visit her website OceanInsight at [www.who.edu/website/ocean-insight](http://www.who.edu/website/ocean-insight) a collaboration between WHOI and Perkins School for the Blind

Source: *Independent Science*, December 29, 2011: <http://independencescience.com/blog/oceanographer-amy-bower-blind/>



## IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for this school year. Please keep in touch with Tanni about your job openings. If you know of an anticipated opening in your part of the state, please begin working to recruit someone into our field by ensuring he or she has an opportunity to learn about being a TVI and/or an Orientation and Mobility Specialist. This may be a paraeducator, a brailist, and/or a colleague already in the teaching profession. Please work with Dr. Paula Conroy to learn more about the UNC distance education / graduate program to prepare TVIs and O&M Specialists in Colorado!

TVI = teacher certified in the area of visual impairment.  
COMS = certified orientation and mobility specialist

### Metro Region Jobs

- ✓ **Early Childhood TVI** (1FTE): Anchor Center for Blind Children. Submit cover letter and resume to Alice Applebaum at [aapplebaum@anchorcenter.org](mailto:aapplebaum@anchorcenter.org)
- ✓ **Vocation Rehabilitation Counselor / O&M Specialist** (1 FTE): Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. For more information, please contact Lindsey Pacheco at (303) 866.3319 or [Lindsey.Pacheco@state.co.us](mailto:Lindsey.Pacheco@state.co.us)
- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (1 FTE): Aurora Public Schools. Apply online at [www.aps.k12.co.us](http://www.aps.k12.co.us). For more information contact Jo Cunningham at 720-271-9668 or Brenda Shepard @ 303 995 7913
- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (1 FTE): Jefferson County Public Schools. For more information, contact Kaire Yenter in Human Resources at (303) 982-6515.

### Southern Region Jobs

- ✓ **TVI - Mathematics** (1 FTE / Mathematics): Contact Chelle Lutz, CSDB at [clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org) for more information.
- ✓ **Program Coordinator**, School for the Blind, (1 FTE): Contact Chelle Lutz, CSDB at [clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org) for more information.

### Western

- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (1 FTE): San Juan BOCES. For more information, please contact LeiLani Scott at [lscott@cortez.k12.co.us](mailto:lscott@cortez.k12.co.us) or 970-560-2532

### Statewide

- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (hourly contract work): Colorado Virtual Academy position. Flexible to your schedule. Contact Stacy Altman at 720-379-3985 or [saltman@covcs.org](mailto:saltman@covcs.org)

## **HQ for TVIs - Heads Up for All New TVIs in Colorado**

Many TVIs are contacting Tanni at CDE to clarify the highly qualified requirements. A CDE specialist in the area of Highly Qualified has shared, "All teachers, regular or special education, general classroom teachers, or specialists working more on an itinerant basis, are required to demonstrate elementary subject matter competencies if services are provided to elementary aged students. The only way for a teacher to demonstrate these competences is by having a passing score on the Elementary PLACE or PRAXIS, or, if applicable, the employing school district may apply for elementary HOUSSE provisions, which is a combination of elementary content coursework/professional development and prior work experience at the elementary level. If your school district is indicating you must complete the PLACE or PRAXIS, then HOUSSE may not be an option they choose to utilize, or you may not qualify for HOUSSE."

It will be very important for new TVIs will need to work closely with their districts on this requirement. Most will need to take the Elementary PLACE or PRAXIS.

## **Standards Implementation Toolkit Resources Discipline Concept Maps**

Discipline Concept Maps (DCM) provide a visual representation of unifying themes and organizing and supporting concepts at each grade level. The DCMs provide a central purpose for that discipline at that grade level and depict how concepts relate to each other for intentional planning. They provide a framework for entering the standards in a way that honors the emphasis on 21st Century learning and interdisciplinary connections across the content areas. Check out the Discipline Concept Maps at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/sitoolkit/DesignTools.htm>

## New Special Education Leader Named for CDE

Education Commissioner Robert Hammond announced in early December that Peg Brown-Clark has been selected as the state's new assistant commissioner of the Colorado Department of Education's Exceptional Student Services Unit. Brown-Clark served in a similar position with the Wyoming Department of Education where she was the division director of special education programs. In that role she also served as Wyoming's state director of special education.

Brown-Clark has more than 30 years of education experience ranging from serving as a teacher, a state special education director and the state's top special education leader. She's been tapped for other state leadership roles including serving on the Wyoming Governor's Council for Developmental Disabilities, the Wyoming Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council and she serves as a member of the Wyoming Planning Taskforce for At-Risk Children.

Active in national special education issues, Brown-Clark currently serves as the president of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education. She's also served that organization as its president-elect and as a board member. She's a regular presenter at a variety of state and national conferences on special education issues. She will begin her duties at the Colorado Department of Education in February 2012.



## Colorado Awarded Race to the Top Phase 3 Funds

### *Districts to get funds to implement state reform plan*

The U.S. Department of Education announced in late December that Colorado is one of seven states that will each receive a share of the \$200 million in Race to the Top Round 3 (RTT3) fund to advance targeted K-12 reforms aimed at improving student achievement. Colorado's share of the grant is \$17.9 million over four years.

Today's announcement of the Race to the Top Phase 3 award marks the culmination of a multi-year effort to secure additional funds to support the state's aggressive education reform agenda. Countless individuals, educators, public/private agencies, business groups, and the state's policy makers helped craft a vision for the state's education system that was articulated in the first and second phases of the Race to the Top applications. Colorado has been actively implementing that reform agenda despite not receiving the Phase I or 2 funding.

The state's grant will focus on four major areas designed to advance the state's education reforms:

1. Leveraging and expanding the state's capacity to support district implementation of the state's reforms;
  2. Implementing the Colorado Academic Standards through the work of Content Collaboratives (teams of educators with content and assessment expertise who will develop tools and assessments to assist educators in implementing the new standards and with accessing multiple measures of student learning for use in educator evaluations);
  3. Supporting district implementation of the state's educator effectiveness law (S.B. 10-191); and
- Increasing access to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education across the state.

### *District Participation*

As with prior rounds of Race to the Top, 50 percent of the award is designated for district use. All districts are eligible to participate in Phase 3. District funds are allocated based on their Title I share distributions. The state has 100 days after the grant is awarded to work with districts to determine participation.

# DOTS OF INTEREST



## **BRaille BOOK SWAP: Share Braille, Build Literacy**

The National Federation of the Blind, as part of its Braille Readers are Leaders Literacy Campaign has developed a website to facilitate the exchange of Braille books. NFB ShareBraille will help connect those who want Braille with those who want to give Braille away.

Frequently, braille materials in good condition are discarded because a new home for the materials cannot be found. NFB ShareBraille now offers a way for a community to close that gap and keep Braille reading materials circulating. Build your braille library and help others do the same—share Braille and build literacy.

NFB ShareBraille is a free service provided by the National Federation of the Blind to promote the use and vitality of Braille. To trade your Braille books or to request books from other NFB ShareBraille users, simply create a free account and start exploring the available titles. Books are exchanged from person-to-person. Any books sent to the National Federation of the Blind will be returned to the sender.

To create an account, you first need to register at <http://sharebraille.org/account/register/> After registering you will be able to log on and list a book you no longer need or find a book being offered by someone else.

## **CIMC Brailer Repair Procedures**

Please follow the established procedures when a CDE/CIMC owned brailer is in need of repair.

1. Your first step has always been to contact Debbie Haberkorn at the CIMC to obtain a repair authorization. This is necessary due to recent changes in the way the State of Colorado contracts with vendors. We MUST make sure we have “open” Purchase Order forms written and authorized, necessary vendor contracts signed, and funds available to be encumbered for the repair estimate. Debbie’s email is [dhaberkorn@csdb.org](mailto:dhaberkorn@csdb.org). Her phone is (719) 578-2197.
2. Fill out a braille repair form (available on our website) and email it as an attachment to [cimcaphorders@csdb.org](mailto:cimcaphorders@csdb.org)
3. Wait for a response from Debbie before mailing or dropping brailers off personally to a repair person.
4. After the brailers have been repaired and returned to you, Debbie needs to know that it has been fixed to your satisfaction before we process the invoice for payment. Most vendors have a “30 day warranty” period on their repairs and we need to know BEFORE the 30 day deadline if the brailer is not operating acceptably.

If you have any questions, please contact Debbie Haberkorn (719) 578-2197 or [dhaberkorn@csdb.org](mailto:dhaberkorn@csdb.org)

## **CIMC Braille Text Orders Due No Later Than May 1, 2012**

Please start working with your curriculum departments for your book orders for next year. All book orders must be received by May 1, 2012. If you have any questions, please be in touch with Jim Olson at (719) 578-2195 or [jolson@csdb.org](mailto:jolson@csdb.org). Thank you!



# Calendar of Events

2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012 2012

- February 2 - March 23**      **Colorado Alternate (CoAlt) - Testing Window**  
 Grades 3-10 Rdg, Grades 3-10 Wrtg, Grades 3-10 Math, Grades 5, 8,& 10 Science
- February 8**      **CAER Meeting**  
 Contact: Mike Plansker at [Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org](mailto:Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org)
- February 9**      **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs**  
 Contact: Carol Vallee at [cvallee@csdb.org](mailto:cvallee@csdb.org)
- February 10**      **Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic - TBD**  
 Contact: Nancy Knight [nknight@lps.k12.co.us](mailto:nknight@lps.k12.co.us)
- February 10-12**      **Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic - TBD**  
 Contact: Rita Albright [rita.albright@bvsd.org](mailto:rita.albright@bvsd.org) / Vicki Pearson at [vpearson1@yahoo.com](mailto:vpearson1@yahoo.com)
- February 13**      **Southern Region TVI Meeting - CSDB, Colorado Springs (1 - 3 pm)**  
 Contact: Jim Olson – [jolson@csdb.org](mailto:jolson@csdb.org)
- February 13 - 24**      **Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) - Early Testing Window**  
 Grade 3 Reading or Lectura
- February 15**      **Colorado Commission for the Blind Meeting - Denver, CO (9:15am - 2:00pm)**  
 Contact: Jean McAllister - [jean.mcallister@state.co.us](mailto:jean.mcallister@state.co.us)
- February 24 - 26**      **Snow Shoe Weekend**  
 Contact: Mike Plansker at [Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org](mailto:Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org)
- February 27 - March 3**      **C-SUN Conference - San Diego, CA**  
 Visit: [www.csun.edu](http://www.csun.edu)
- February 27 - March 9**      **Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP) - Regular Testing Window**  
 Grade 3 Reading or Lectura
- March 2**      **“Education for Life” See the Future Fund Application Deadline**  
 Visit: [www.seethefuture.org](http://www.seethefuture.org)
- March 2**      **Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic - CSDB, Colorado Springs**  
 Contact: Donice Fennimore 719-578-2100 / [dfennimore@csdb.org](mailto:dfennimore@csdb.org)

## More Calendar of Events

2012    2012    2012    2012    2012    2012    2012    2012    2012    2012

- March 6**                      **Colorado Standards Implementation Summit** - Westminster, CO  
Visit: [www.cde.state.co.us/otl/standardsimplementationsummit.htm](http://www.cde.state.co.us/otl/standardsimplementationsummit.htm)
- March 5 - April 6**            **Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP)** - Early Testing Window
- March 7**                      **CAER Meeting** - (by phone)  
Contact: Mike Plansker [Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org](mailto:Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org)
- March 8**                      **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting** - CSDB, Colorado Springs  
Contact: Carol Vallee at [cvallee@csdb.org](mailto:cvallee@csdb.org)
- March 10**                     **CSDB Course: Filling in the Gaps** - CSDB, Colorado Springs  
Contact: Niki Lewis at [nlewis@csdb.org](mailto:nlewis@csdb.org)
- March 12 - April 13**        **Transitional Colorado Assessment Program (TCAP)** - Regular Testing Window
- March 15 - 18**                **CTEBVI Conference** - Los Angeles, CA  
Visit: [www.ctevh.org](http://www.ctevh.org)
- April 2 - 27**                    **11th Grade Alternate Testing Window**
- April 3 - 5**                    **Canadian Vision Teacher's Conference 2012** - Richmond Hill, Ontario  
Contact: Kevin Stewart at [Kevin.stewart@yrdsb.edu.on.ca](mailto:Kevin.stewart@yrdsb.edu.on.ca)
- April 9**                        **Southern Region TVI Meeting** - CSDB, Colorado Springs (1 - 3 pm)  
Contact: Jim Olson – [jolson@csdb.org](mailto:jolson@csdb.org)
- April 11**                        **CAER Meeting** -  
Contact: Mike Plansker at [Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org](mailto:Mike.E.Plansker@Adams12.org)
- April 11 - 14**                 **National Council of Exceptional Children** - Denver, CO  
Visit: [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)
- April 12**                        **CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting** - CSDB, Colorado Springs  
Contact: Carol Vallee at [cvallee@csdb.org](mailto:cvallee@csdb.org)
- April 24**                        **Colorado ACT (CO ACT)** - Initial Test Date, Grade 11
- April 25**                        **Vision Coalition**—to be determined  
Contact: Tanni Anthony at [anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:anthony_t@cde.state.co.us)
- April 30 - May 4**              **Data Entry on the ADE Site for 11th Grade Alternate Test**
- May 1**                            **CIMC Braille Text Orders Due**  
Contact: Jim Olson – [jolson@csdb.org](mailto:jolson@csdb.org) or (719) 578-2195
- May 8**                            **Colorado ACT (CO ACT)** - Make-up Test Date, Grade 11







## **PARENTS ENCOURAGING PARENTS**

Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conferences are family-centered events designed to offer support, information and education to **both parents and professionals** who work with children with disabilities across Colorado. PEP promotes the partnerships between parents and professionals that are essential in supporting and including children with disabilities in schools and communities.

The next 2012 PEP Conference will be held **April 26-28, 2012 (Location to be determined)**

For more information about PEP and to complete the preliminary application, please visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/PEP.asp>. You may also call 303-866-6846 or 1-877-834-0588 toll-free for general information. We look forward to seeing you at PEP!

**BLIND LINK** is a mentoring program for blind kids and their families. The kids are matched 1-on-1 with blind mentors. Family members meet at the same time for roundtable discussions to provide support and information about raising a blind child.

**BLIND LINK** - 12:30-2:30 p.m., Colorado Center for the Blind  
2233 W. Shepperd Ave., Littleton, CO 80120

## **Spanish Language Version of Amended Procedural Safeguards Notice - Now Available Online!**

The Procedural Safeguards Notice, amended July 1, 2011, is now available in Spanish on the CDE special education law website. Additionally, the following dispute resolution documents are also now available in Spanish:

- ◆ Dispute Resolution Rights (brochure)
- ◆ Mediation Services (brochure)
- ◆ Dispute Resolution Options Table

For more information, please go to:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/spedlaw/info.htm>

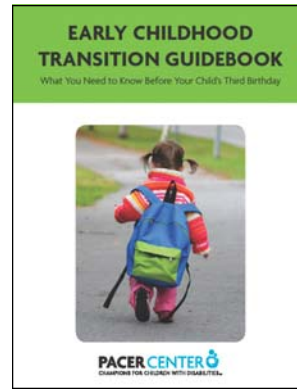
# just for PARENTS

## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

**Parents:** If you are moving out of state or your child has graduated, please be in touch so we can remove your name from our newsletter mailing list. If your child is still enrolled in a Colorado school district and you have a new mailing address, please be in touch with your address changes

**TVIs and COMSs:** If you have any changes in program contact information for the next school year, please help us out and send Tanni these changes.

Thanks to everyone for helping to keep our mailing list up-to-date! Send changes to [anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:anthony_t@cde.state.co.us) or to Tanni Anthony, CDE ESLU, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1175, Denver, CO 80202. Or call and leave her a voice message at (303) 866-6681.



## EC Transition Guidebook

The Pacer Center has published [Early Childhood Transition Guidebook](#) (download for free) in Spanish, English and Somali. This guide helps parents understand services for infants and toddlers and the transition to early childhood services. The link is: <http://www.pacer.org/parent/php/PHP-a40.pdf>



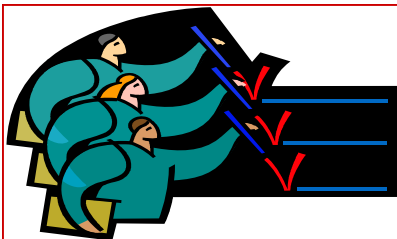
## Free Webinar Series

For Families and Educators  
from the PEAK Parent Center

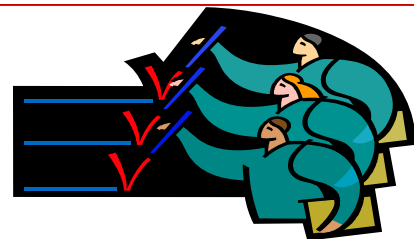
Join PEAK Parent Center as we present a series of webinars for parents and educators. Join us for all or just the ones that interested you the most. Space is limited, so please register online and you will receive a confirmation email with directions for the webinar. Evening IEP Training Series (6:30-7:30pm):

- **Preparing for the IEP on Thursday, February 16, 2012**
- **Content of the IEP Thursday, March 1, 2012**
- **Implementation & Follow up of the IEP Thursday, March 15, 2012**

To sign up online go to: [www.peakparent.org/workshopsTrainings.asp](http://www.peakparent.org/workshopsTrainings.asp) or call PEAK Parent Center 719.531.9400 or 800.284.0251



**CHECK IT OUT!**



## CDE Accommodations Manual / Nonstandard Accommodations

The 2011- 2012 Colorado Accommodations Manual is now available on the CDE Unit of Student Assessment website. All TVIs are strongly encouraged to be familiar with this manual. The manual covers four types of accommodations that are used for instruction and assessment. Not all instructional accommodations are allowable for state assessments.

Please go to <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeassess/publications.html> to download the manual, which details both instructional and assessment accommodations specifically for students with visual disabilities, including deafblindness.

U.S. Office of Special Education Programs **OSEP Project Directors' Conference**

Videos of two of the keynote presentations from the 2011 OSEP Project Directors' Conference are now available online. "The Educational Experiences of a Young Adult Who is Deaf-Blind" and "From Bach to Lady Gaga: Music Lessons for Special Education" can be streamed or downloaded from the OSEP PD Conference website at <https://osep-meeting.org/>

## Math! Math! Math!

APH has received several informal submissions for math products at various meetings. We would like to know which of these you would like to see as a product. Please the survey at <http://www.aph.org/edresearch/MathSurvey.html> and tell us the top five products you feel would be most helpful/needed to teach math skills to students with visual impairments.



## NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC KIDS MAGAZINE PODCAST LINK

The Audio Internet Reading Service of Los Angeles (AIR-LA) offers free podcasts of the *National Geographic Kids* magazine. Each month Danielle Rayne reads from the magazine highlighting different people, animals and places around the world. Interesting facts, games and activities are featured. Subscribe to [National Geographic Kids Magazine Podcast](http://www.airsla.org/ngkids.asp) at <http://www.airsla.org/ngkids.asp>



## Joint General Assembly by the ICEVI and WBU Bangkok Thailand, November 2012

Contributors include the Regional Assembly of the African Union of the Blind, a WBU Diversity Forum, WBU General Assembly and ICEVI General Assembly as well as joint program days, a joint Gala dinner and joint Technology Exhibition.

This event will provide an excellent opportunity for organizations of blind persons, for service providers and educators to come together for mutual sharing and learning. Speakers of international caliber will present at the joint sessions and technology exhibitors will participate.

With the effort and commitment of WBU, ICEVI and TAB, this will be an event not to be missed!

### Evaluating the NEW Geometro Manual and Workbook!

Attention all teachers who have used (or would love to use) Geometro with their elementary students! APH is now working to bring to you a Teacher's Manual, a tactile Student Workbook, and a set of manipulatives as a supplement to the very popular Geometro. Now field evaluators are needed!

The Teacher's Manual provides background and supporting information for using Geometro, while the tactile Student Workbook and manipulatives include activities to help your students better understand geometric concepts. They are specifically looking for teachers of students who are blind or visually impaired, in grades 1-6, who are learning about geometry. Evaluators will be provided with the Teacher's Manual, Student Workbook, and a set of manipulatives. Evaluators must have their own Geometro tiles with the following shapes: triangles, squares, pentagons, hexagons, rectangles, and isosceles triangles.



The evaluation period will begin March 1, 2012 and run approximately 8 weeks. If you would like to be considered for participation, please contact Sandi Baker at [sbaker@aph.org](mailto:sbaker@aph.org)



## Applications Now Available for Braille Institute's 2012 Cinema Without Sight Film Festival!

*Cinema Without Sight* (CWS) is a unique film festival sponsored by the Braille Institute of American for visually impaired students, grades 7-12. It challenges participants to apply their creativity and shepherd a film concept from script to screen. The goals of the program are to foster literacy through the art of script writing, enable students to contribute their own unique perspective to society, and demonstrate their ability to interpret and engage in visual media.

The full video must be no more than five minutes long and may be a fully scripted, acted and edited story, or simply a collection of images and scenes. Entries should be based on this year's theme: Dare to Dream.

A panel of film industry experts from Hollywood will judge films accepted into the contest. The winner of the festival will be flown to Los Angeles and given a full scholarship to attend the New York Film Academy's prestigious one-week film making summer program at Universal Studios in Hollywood, CA.

Participants must submit their original work as a DVD or electronic file to the CWS festival director on or before **May 1, 2012**. Go to [www.cinemawithoutsight.org](http://www.cinemawithoutsight.org) for more information, to view past years' entries, or to download an application!

### Math Resources for Young Children

In Alberta, Canada several of teachers developed a Math Resource Curriculum specifically around Numeracy Literacy for young children.

It is available for download from:

<http://vision.alberta.ca/resources/adaptingprograms/math.aspx>



## Graphics Survey



APH is working cooperatively with the University of British Columbia (UBC) in Vancouver, BC, Canada, on a research project. Phase I involves completion of an online survey regarding the use of graphics-based materials for instructional, as well as high stakes testing, purposes. Input is needed from teachers and students with visual impairments in grades 4-12, who use, or have used, printed or embossed graphics.

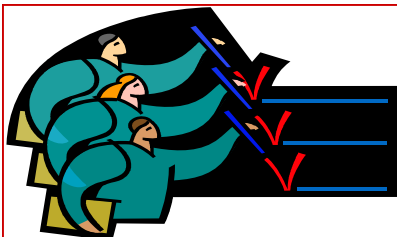
To go to the Teacher Survey, follow this link: <http://app.fluidsurveys.com/surveys/ubcvision/teacher-survey/> By beginning the survey, you are consenting to participate. You may, however, leave the survey at any time. No personal identifying information will be linked to your responses. Please take the survey in one sitting, as there is not an option to save your responses and return to the survey. It should only take about 10-15 minutes to complete the form.

To access the Student Survey, follow <http://app.fluidsurveys.com/surveys/ubcvision/student-survey> This link is the one students need to click on to access and complete the survey. No personal identifying information will be linked to a student's responses. By entering the survey, students are consenting to participate, but they can leave the survey form at any time. The questions in the survey ask for students' opinions and practices when using graphics in the classroom and in a high stakes test environment. There are no personal questions on the survey. Students need to complete the survey form in one sitting, as there is not an option to save responses and return later to the form. The survey is estimated to take about 15 minutes to complete; the time depends on each student's reading speed and familiarity with completing electronic surveys.

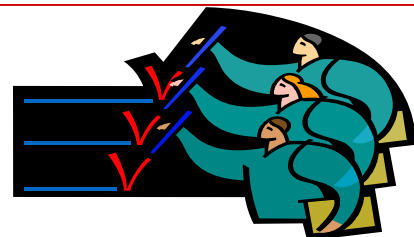
For students planning to participate in the survey, an electronic email message has been prepared and should be sent to each student's parent(s) or guardian(s). Thank you in advance for helping us to obtain "the student voice"! If you have questions or need further information regarding the study, please call Kim Zebehazy at 604/822-4506, or mail Dr. Kim Zebehazy, Assistant Professor, University of British Columbia, 2155 Main Hall, Vancouver, BC V6T 2G3 Canada, or email [kim.zebehazy@ubc.ca](mailto:kim.zebehazy@ubc.ca)



On December 23<sup>rd</sup>, the federal Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) released its 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). You can read and download the report from the following link: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/reports/annual/osep/2008/parts-b-c/index.html>.



# CHECK IT OUT!



## VDRDC

The Smith-Kettlewell Video Description Research and Development Center

“The Smith-Kettlewell Video Description Research and Development Center is kicking off the New Year with an exciting series of Free Educational Webinars about using innovative description technologies in the classroom. This semesterly series will be of particular interest to teachers, administrators, and parents of blind students. This free Webinar, taught by a group of unparalleled experts in the field, will provide a solid foundation for anyone interested in providing better access to video for students with visual disabilities. Register at the following web address: <http://webinars.dcmp.org/>

educator series

knowledge is most powerful when shared

TRAINING & EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES PROGRAM



### The Impact of Deafblindness on the Family

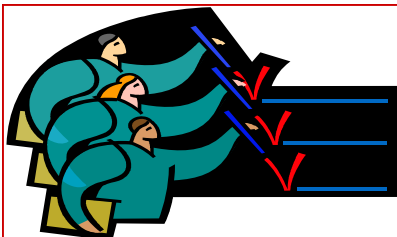
In this webcast, Marlyn Minkin, M.S. addresses the issues that families struggle with related to raising children who are deafblind. Marlyn is a psychologist with extensive national and international experience working with families of children who are deafblind.

This webcast addresses the following topics: 1. Introduction, 2. Common Responses to a Diagnosis of Deafblindness, 3. Parent to Parent Support, 4. Sibling Issues, 5. Personal Experiences and Professional Advice, 6. Self-Care and Accepting Help, 7. Planning for the Future, and 8. Redefining Hope

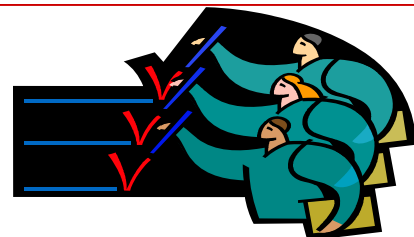
Watch the webcast here:

[http://support.perkins.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Webcasts\\_Impact\\_Of\\_Deafblind](http://support.perkins.org/site/PageServer?pagename=Webcasts_Impact_Of_Deafblind)





## CHECK IT OUT!



A Framed Foreshadowment  
Artist: Cody Shaw  
First Place Winner, Grades 10,  
11, 12 Category  
APH InSights 2007

### APH InSights Art Competition 2012

Visually impaired or blind artists of all ages are invited to submit artwork for our twenty-first annual international art competition, APH InSights 2012. Last year, nearly 400 entries were received. From these, jurors selected 83 pieces for the exhibition, which was shown in Louisville at the Annual Meeting last October. From the 83 works selected for display, 32 award winners were chosen and 13 of them came to Louisville to receive their awards in person at the annual meeting.

Artists may enter original artwork created in any medium, including (but not limited to) painting, drawing, printmaking, fiber, metal, or wood. The deadline for entries from students in kindergarten through high school is **March 26, 2012**. Adult artists have until **April 2, 2012** to send in their entries.

Complete rules and entry forms will be posted on the APH website by the end of February 2012. You may also contact Roberta Williams at 502-899-2357 or [rwilliams@aph.org](mailto:rwilliams@aph.org) to receive a copy of the rules and application forms by email, or a hard copy in print or braille.

### Autism Level 2 Training: Inclusion, Thursday, Feb. 16, 2012

The Inclusion training will include a discussion on the research on inclusive settings for students with autism. The training will explore evidence-based practices and how they can be utilized to increase participation in inclusive school environments. Ideas and strategies for successfully including students with autism into the wider school community will be shared. This is a great training for practitioners responsible for developing concrete, intensive programs for students with autism and other developmental disabilities.

For More Information call Tara Rolfe at 303-866-6969 or email: [rolfe\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:rolfe_t@cde.state.co.us), or go to the Colorado Department of Education website:

[www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Autism.asp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Autism.asp)

### Mobile Buzz: What's 'APPening@APH

APH News about iPad and Other Mobile Devices - Did you know that you can read APH's free Downloadable Manuals on your iPad? Once you download the PDF file from <http://shop.aph.org> or <http://louis.aph.org/> simply select "Open in iBooks" from the menu bar at the top of the screen. You will be able to view your PDF using the iBooks app, and the PDF will be saved in your iBook collection.

A complete list of available Downloadable Manuals is available here: [www.aph.org/manuals/](http://www.aph.org/manuals/)







2233 West Shepperd Avenue, Littleton, Colorado 80120  
 Phone (303) 778-1130 (800) 401-4632 Fax (303) 778-1598  
 Email: ccb@cocenter.org Website: www.cocenter.org

## Youth Services Survey

Please help us to identify areas where blind children are underserved. Information from these surveys will assist us with program development. Please return by **February 15, 2012** to Brent Batron by Email [bbatron@cocenter.org](mailto:bbatron@cocenter.org) or [ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) Fax 303-778-1598 or by mail to Brent Batron, 2233 W Shepperd Ave, Littleton CO 80120 Completed surveys will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 Target Gift Card.

Please mark all that apply to ensure that we are providing the most beneficial programs for blind and visually impaired kids and their families. To receive information on our programs, please include your email and/or phone number. We thank you for your help in designing these programs and we look forward to playing, working and learning with you. Thank you!

I am a blind child     I am a parent of a blind child     I am a professional working with blind children

What activities / areas do you believe you, your child or your student would benefit from participating in:

**Daily Living Skills:**

- |                                   |  |   |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaning            | <input type="checkbox"/> Sewing           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Labeling | <input type="checkbox"/> Budgeting & Banking | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Hygiene |

**Braille Instruction:**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beginning Braille | <input type="checkbox"/> Braille Music    | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer Code |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nemeth Code       | <input type="checkbox"/> Slate and Stylus | <input type="checkbox"/> Book Club     |

**Cane Travel:**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic Street Crossings        | <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate Street Crossings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Complex Street Crossings      | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Transportation         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Downtown                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Inside Travel                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Familiar and Unfamiliar Areas |  |

**Assistive Technology:**

- |  |  |                              |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Note Takers       | <input type="checkbox"/> Smart Phones    | <input type="checkbox"/> GPS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptive Software | <input type="checkbox"/> Word Processing |                              |

**Mentoring Program:**

**STEM class (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math):**

- |                                     |                                    |   |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dissection | <input type="checkbox"/> Chemistry | <input type="checkbox"/> Physics              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biology    | <input type="checkbox"/> Robotics  | <input type="checkbox"/> Latex (Math program) |

**Socialization:**

- |                                       |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dating       | <input type="checkbox"/> Interacting with Other Blind Kids                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Movie Nights | <input type="checkbox"/> Group Outings <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Events |

**Recreation:**

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Goalball      | <input type="checkbox"/> Rock Climbing | <input type="checkbox"/> Beep Baseball        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gymnastics    | <input type="checkbox"/> Skating       | <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback Riding     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking        | <input type="checkbox"/> Camping       | <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rafting       | <input type="checkbox"/> Winter Sports | <input type="checkbox"/> Tandem Biking        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Running Clubs | <input type="checkbox"/> Martial Arts  | <input type="checkbox"/> Five a Side Football |

**Discussion Groups on Various Topics**     **Career Exploration**     **College Prep**

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you participate if:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> There was a minimal cost   | <input type="checkbox"/> Was during school hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Was on the weekend   | <input type="checkbox"/> Was during the summer   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter break   | <input type="checkbox"/> Spring break            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> It was after school at your school   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> It was after school within your district (you had to provide transportation) |  |

Area of town preferred \_\_\_\_\_

- Was at the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton
- Parent participation was required
- Was an ongoing activity and 75% attendance was required
- Would your family participate in a multi-day retreat

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

What do you see as a barrier to participation:

- |   |                                   |                                    |
|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time           | <input type="checkbox"/> Location | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Interest |                                    |

Would you be interested in the 2012 summer program:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confidence Camp for Kids: elementary school age | <input type="checkbox"/> Earn and Learn for high school students |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Initiation to Independence: middle school age   | <input type="checkbox"/> Summer for Success college prep         |

**Areas you believe you (parent/professional) need additional training or support:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Braille instruction                | <input type="checkbox"/> Instruction under sleep shades                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent support group               | <input type="checkbox"/> Integrating blind children into community activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General understanding of blindness | <input type="checkbox"/> Available resources                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IEP Process                        | <input type="checkbox"/> IEP Advocacy   |

If you are a teacher of blind students, how can the Colorado Center for the Blind best help you?: \_\_\_\_\_

Continuing Education Credit helpful

General Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Optional Parents Name: \_\_\_\_\_ TVI Teachers Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Child's Grade or Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



## **“Education for Life” Application Deadline: *March 1, 2012***

Up to \$42,000 may be awarded to six deserving recipients. In addition the SEE THE FUTURE Fund has formed a partnership with the Kane Family Foundation. The merit-based Kane Foundation is offering two “full-ride tuition” scholarships to visually impaired or blind students who meet the SEE THE FUTURE Fund criteria (see below) and are nominated by the SEE THE FUTURE Fund selection committee. Presently, Kane – SEE THE FUTURE recipients must attend CU-Boulder, CU-Denver, or CU-Colorado Springs.

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

### **The SEE THE FUTURE / Kane Scholarship Criteria:**

- ◆ **Acceptance to CU-Boulder, CU-Denver, or CU-Colorado Springs.**
- ◆ **Un-weighted high school GPA: 3.40 or higher (through senior year).**
- ◆ **Achieve an A or a B in at least one AP (Advanced Placement) or IB (International Baccalaureate) course during junior or senior year.** If a school district does not offer AP or IB courses, the student must address this in their application. If an applicant is graduating from the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, that student must achieve an A or B in at least one AP class from a local high school.
- ◆ **Achieve an ACT composite score of 25 (80<sup>th</sup> percentile) or above.**

### **Summer Symposium - June 4 & 5, 2012**

- Conference Center at Adams 12 Five Star Schools
- 1500 East 128th Avenue, Thornton, Colorado
- Full day workshops Monday and Tuesday
- Dinner and presentation Monday evening



For more information:

[www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/programs/atp/Events](http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/programs/atp/Events)

# Vision Coalition Meeting Minutes – January 31, 2012

**Persons in Attendance:** Tanni Anthony, Nancy Cozart, LaVerne Dell, Charlotte Javier, Judy Mumford, Jim Olson, Angela Sims, and Wendy Stoltman.

**Persons Absent:** Kathryn Botsford, Paula Conroy, and Jamie Lugo

## MISSION OF THE VISION COALITION

The purpose of the Vision Coalition is to bring the collective resources of the group together to address state priorities improving services to students who are blind/visually impaired.” (April 1998)

## LEGEND OF ACRONYMS

CDE	=	Colorado Department of Education
CIMC	=	Colorado Instructional Materials Center
COMS	=	certified orientation and mobility specialist
CSDB	=	Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind
DVR	=	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
ESSU	=	Exceptional Student Services Unit
TVI	=	teacher certified in the area of visual impairments

## PROGRAM UPDATES

### Northern Region (Wendy Stoltman)

The NE area is looking forward to our low vision clinic on February 10-11<sup>th</sup> in Fort Collins at the Ensign Center. Rita and Vicki have done an outstanding job coordinating. We have had a few cancellations, and are going to let the metro teachers fill our openings.

Discussion:

Could an updated list of equipment/materials that is available from the outreach CSDB loan bank be generated and put on the CIMC website? *Yes! Jim will post the list by the end of February.*

We would love to become more proficient using Apple Technology, especially the built in accessibility features including VoiceOver. Vicki has been doing research, and spoke with Larry Lewis from Flying Blind about AAI. He charges \$600 plus travel expenses to come to do training. He indicated that a group of 15 people is the optimal group size. Our area would love to have him come. Perhaps he could come for two days and we could have a beginner and advanced group (or something of that nature). Or, would there be a way to have this be fall conference material? *Great idea! It is suggested that since the optimal size is 15 people, that we look at a series of regional meetings instead of having this be a fall conference topic. See the budget section of these notes for further discussion.*

### Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)

We had our metro low vision clinic in November. It is always a wonderful opportunity for students and their families. Thanks to the low vision clinic team and Nancy Knight, the metro area coordinator.

Our next metro TVI meeting will be on February 10<sup>th</sup> at the Colorado Vocational Rehabilitation center in Denver. Laverne Dell will be our guest speaker. We will be discussing transitioning services from school to voc rehab. Nancy Cozart will also review info for TVIs on state testing procedures for TCAP. Our final meeting is set for Friday April 13<sup>th</sup> from 3:00-4:30. Details for that meeting are forthcoming.

## **Southern Region (Judy Mumford)**

Our last meeting we had two fun presenters, Louise Gettman and Mickey Abercrombie. Louise provided some great information about the babies, and specifically transition from Part C to Part B. Mickey gave an introduction to a new APH product called Treks. The group enjoyed playing the game with blindfolds on. Mickey provided many examples of ways to use Treks for O&M as well as classroom use. This is a wonderful tool.

We have our one day LVEC coming March 4th, we already have a waitlist for this! Donice is compiling the paperwork and scheduling.

Jim is putting together an upcoming training on iPad, there is much interest in use of iPad.

### Discussion Questions:

What IS Vision Coalition and what do they do? *The Vision Coalition is a statewide advisory committee that meets three times a year to address the needs of Colorado children and youth, ages birth through 21 years, who are blind/visually impaired, their parents, and service providers. The Vision Coalition is comprised of the following representatives: one TVI and/or COMS from the metro, northern, southern, and western regions, representative trained in blindness from the School for the Blind; TVI from the Anchor Center for Blind Children; Program Coordinator of the CIMC; rep from CSDB Outreach Program and Services; Program Coordinator of the University of Northern Colorado's Visual Impairment Program; representative trained in blindness from the Colorado Vocational Rehabilitation Services; and the CDE State Consultant on Blindness/Visual Impairment. Currently there is a vacant position from the CO Parents of Blind Children.*

*Each meeting involves a program / regional update, key discussion on questions / needs from the field, and attention of an identified product (as time permitting). The notes from the Vision Coalition are placed in the What's Happening Out There newsletter for statewide dissemination.*

Could TVIs in districts be required to take a child who is birth to 3? *Does this depend on their certification? Colorado school districts can begin services the semester that a child turns three years of age, but not earlier. There have been instances where Part C has contracted with school district personnel for the 0-3 services. In this case, the child would need an IEP. School districts are required to do initial evaluations for children birth - three in order to determine a significant developmental delay so that the Community Center Board (CCB) can determine eligibility for Part C (birth to three early intervention services). For children birth - 3 who have an established condition (such as a visual impairment) which automatically qualifies them for Part C services the district is NOT required to do evaluations, because eligibility has already been determined by the CCB. Some districts still do them but they do not have to provide this evaluation. Fewer and fewer districts are doing evaluations who have established conditions due to capacity issues.*

*With regards to services, if the child is on an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and in the Part C system the district is NOT responsible for services. Those services are coordinated through the local CCB. If the child is on an Individual Education Program (IEP), yes, the district is responsible for providing services. Personnel providing vision-impairment services to children on an IFSP must hold an appropriate CDE license and must meet personnel standards outlined in the Part C State Plan.*

*All TVIs going through UNC's program since 1994 have coursework for this age range and endorsement specific to 0-21. Many TVIs, who went to school prior to this date and had K-grade 12 licensure, participated in CDE provided coursework in the late 1990s to change their license to 0-21 endorsement. TVIs who may still have a K-Grade 12 endorsement cannot provide services to infants, toddlers, and/or preschoolers.*

## **Western Region (Angela Sims)**

We would like to give a belated thank you the Low Vision Clinic team for their time and commitment to all our students. Once again they did a great job with the students they saw and made a big impact. One student said it was the first time a doctor had really talked to him about his vision in a way he understood. Thank you to Dr. Theune for making a difference!

Mesa School District would like to welcome Lesli Tigert. She is replacing our brailist who left to pursue a teaching degree. Lesli is quickly picking up braille and we feel very fortunate to have her working with us.

Stephanie Labossiere from the NW BOCES is serving 5 school districts and it is very busy. As the technology continues to evolve and change...she would like to see more training available especially in the area of apple/mac products, since that definitely is the direction we are going.

LeiLani Scott reports things in the San Juan BOCES and her nine districts are going well but busy! She is still providing services to the 9 districts only one day a week (SPED Director the other 4 days) and continues to get more students - YIKES! There are a lot of little ones transitioning in with multiple disabilities. They are still looking for a full-time TVI - so if you know ANYONE, send them their way! She has been using the iPad a great deal with students and getting good and measurable results from its use. She has been working on streamlining a concept or skill through a variety of modalities, taking a lot of prep time, but it nicely ties in other service providers, allowing for a broader and more complete continuum of services.

Kevin O'Brien has been extremely busy with the unanticipated arrival of several new students in the past two weeks which is an unprecedented increase to the Delta/Montrose caseload in such a short amount of time. Juggling the logistics of meeting these students' needs is always challenging and exciting! In the "bragging category", Kevin is really excited for Beth Myers and Meghan Crosby who are both in training at UNC for V.I. and O&M. Beth and Meghan are outstanding teacher candidates and he's just thrilled they're on track to become top-notch TVI's. On a technology note, it has been exciting (and fun!) to get several students set up with iPad and accessibility apps. However, this sense of excitement is often tempered by the reality that many textbooks are simply not available for digital (print) download and that has been really frustrating. The potential is obviously there but it seems we still have a long way to go.

#### Discussion Items:

What are districts using as alternatives to computerized testing? *This continues to be an area of concern for many districts for a number of reasons. There are issues specific to compatibility with screen-reader programs, the student's ability to use a screen-reader program, etc. There continues to be challenges that require discussions with assessment personnel in districts who may not understand these complications with braille learners.*

*If you are using a computerized test, have you found enlargement software is affecting the information displayed on the screen? This would be a great question for feedback on the listserv.*

If districts are using iPads, how much are they being used and what types of applications are **successfully** being used specific to blind users and multiply impaired users? *There is a lot of new usage of the iPads. There are questions about who funds the iPads. In some districts, there is a request for parents to pay for them, but this has complications with downloading software. There have been problems with ordering lengthily textbooks onto the iPads. The pdf versions can be downloaded, but are less navigable. It seems to work with smaller textbooks. This problem has been reported to Bookshare.*

*One district is using iPADS with their students who have significant support needs and for students in resource rooms. The program for VI is being encouraged to check out the iPads as an option for their students. This district buys Itune cards for the district-purchased iPads*

*Dragon Dictionary was highly recommended by one person— need to have wifi for it to work.*

*One challenge is that some districts do not allow apple products. So they cannot be linked to printers or cannot be used to log-in.*

*Anchor Center for Blind Children has had training on apps for preschoolers. The trainer really recommended the use of YouTube as there are good videos that detail how the iPad is being used with young children who are blind/visually impaired. It is helpful to find examples from people who understand the needs of children who are blind/visually impaired.*

*Anchor will start to collect information about what has been successful. The cause-effect programs have been very successful with infants and toddlers. Paint and draw programs have been helpful with preschoolers.*

*Tanni and Nancy will send out some iPad information that the CO AT Partners has been using.*

*What are thoughts about personal notetakers versus computers? If you are using personal notetakers when do you transition a student to a computer? Again, a great question for the listserv to gather a statewide perspective.*

*Is anyone/anywhere using Voice Over for the Mac as a screen reader. How does it compare to Jaws? Bonnie Snyder is a great resource for this question. It may be less complicated than Jaws, but has different rules. The user will need to learn the new rules.*

It was recommended that these questions be posted on the listserv for further discussion across the state.

### **CAER (Kathryn Botsford and Nancy Cozart)**

CAER has had an active fall with some fundraising events, in-kind equipment donations and give-aways, mini-grant selections as well as updating the mini-grant process and website. First, with significant help from Barb Galgano, we sponsored the T-shirt contest for White Cane Day at the start of the year. It proved to be a hit and something we would like to offer again in the future. Next, CAER offered what we hope to be the first of several mini-workshops. It was on the BrailleNote. It was successful for students and their families as an instructional time and served as a good fundraising opportunity as well. Look for other topics of interest ahead!

A variety of low vision devices, canes and various parts of equipment have been given to the CAER equipment bank. It is provided to individuals as specific needs are identified and matched. Check the CAER website for more information.

The CAER mini-grants were reviewed in November. There are two recipients: 1) TVIs in Cherry Creek to assist with financial cost of a monthly "lunch bunch" that addresses shopping and food preparations. 2) a student in Grand Junction who is putting his money toward the purchase of an I-Pad to use in conjunction with his school programming. CONGRATULATIONS!

Our next meeting is on February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 5:30. Let us know what is on your mind.

### **Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (LaVerne Dell)**

As DVR has filled the vacancies for the Supervisor IIs, we are moving towards filling the Supervisor I vacancies that were created from those promotional opportunities. Our Grand Junction office has filled its teacher vacancy; we welcome Loraine Hutchinson to that position. Kristy Penk has been transferred to a teaching position at the Metro Office. We currently have one more teacher vacancy. We also have a few Rehabilitation Counselors for the Blind caseloads that are vacant, at this time. DVR continues to work towards filling the open positions.

The Colorado Commission for Individuals who are Blind/Visually Impaired is scheduled to sunset on June 30, 2012.

### **Anchor Center and CSDB Early Intervention (Charlotte Javier)**

We are very excited to welcome back Paula Landry from her maternity leave! JC Greeley has had hip surgery recently and is at home rehabilitating. She loves all notes, emails, visits and calls. We hope for her speedy return mid-February. Colorado Gives Day was a huge success and we thank everyone who was a part of this day! Anchor's community room now has black out shades to help with our Colorado sunshine. The transdisciplinary play-based assessment (TPBA) team has changed the format of TPBA's on students this year. Two students are given a TPBA a month. This allows the team to give more time to parents during the TPBA time. The student's current development and next step goals are discussed and handwritten up for parents to leave with that day. Parents, doctors, school districts and teachers that

the parents ask copies to go to will receive the background report, learning styles and the current development/next step typed copy within a few weeks of the TPBA. Cathy Smyth gave CSDB a tour recently of our center to several of their staff. Cathy has also been to the preschool several times to administer the Bohem Test to students. The preschool staff has been busy updating The Oregon Project Skills Inventory on all students. The new morning and afternoon class hours was a success in preschool to accommodate the large numbers. There will be 13 preschool graduates this spring! Anchor will also soon be celebrating its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! Look for details to come join in the celebrations.

### **Colorado Instructional Material Center (Jim Olson)**

Statewide VI Registration Count & Federal Quota Count Process for 2011-2012: This count is essential for our statewide processes. It is also a RARE opportunity for Colorado to truly know our numbers of students who are blind/visually impaired. The December 1 Count that the CDE completes each year does not capture our true numbers since that collection is specific to primary disability codes AND does not capture all of our infants/toddlers. These data also inform us of our numbers of braille readers.

*October 2011:* Administrative Units in Colorado were mailed printed color-coded spreadsheets of their current enrollment data as reported by school districts to the CIMC.

*November 2011:* Deadline for returning updated VI Registration spreadsheets to the CIMC.

*December 2011:* CIMC mailed corrected VI Registration spreadsheets to districts to compare to their actual enrollment on the Federal Quota count day, the first day in January of each calendar year.

*January 2, 2012:* Federal Quota count day! Districts are asked to compare their Current enrollment against the spreadsheets mailed in December, make updates, and mail to CIMC by January 31 so CIMC staff can enter the information into the federal count database by the established deadline.

For more information regarding the Federal Quota program, please visit [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)

Book orders for 2012-2013: Plan Ahead! .....May 1 of every year is the deadline for book orders for the following school year. **Please place your orders for the 2012-13 school year no later than May 1, 2012.**

Districts may contact the CIMC for a printout of their current book order status at any time. The spreadsheet data is shaded grey if the book order has been delivered complete to an AU. Orders received after May first are not guaranteed to be delivered the following school year although the CIMC will make every attempt to complete the book order.

#### Returning books to the CIMC:

- A "Return Shipping Label" must be used.
- Districts with large quantities of braille shipments were given color-coded labels specific to their district. All other labels are printed on white paper.
- Return shipping labels should be filled out accurately and completely.
- Labels should be adhered to the side of the box so that it is visible when the boxes are stacked 6 high vertically.
- Boxes need to be packed and taped securely so they do not break open during shipment.

More detailed instructions are available on the CIMC webpage of the CSDB website ([www.csdb.org](http://www.csdb.org)).

Phone numbers: The CIMC currently uses the following numbers: (719) 578-2195 for Jim Olson and (719) 578-2197 for Debbie Haberkorn; (719) 578-2207 FAX (if you send a FAX, please contact us to verify we received your FAX)

Request for updated contact information sent to district contact personnel: Please check with your district's contact person to verify and update your contact information. Send it to Jim at [jolson@csdb.org](mailto:jolson@csdb.org)



Forms: Please use current versions of all forms. All forms are available on our website. Current forms all have footers that state “May 2011” or newer. The “VI Registration” form is in the process of being revised.

How To Get To The CIMC Website: Go to: [www.csdb.org](http://www.csdb.org). Click on “Programs & Services,” “Outreach,” “CIMC.” Click on the link for “CIMC Documents and Order Forms”

“CIMC Documents and Order Forms” links to the following forms:

- Order Form: APH Educational Materials
- Order Form: Braille and Large Print Books
- Order Form: Professional Lending Library Materials (NEW)
- Order Form: Braille
- Braille writer Repair Form
- VI Registration Form (to sign up new students)
- VI Exit Form (to notify us of a student withdrawal/graduation)
- Leisure Reading books in braille by age
- Recommended APH products for Science instruction

Other Information:

- Send new "VI Registration" forms to: [cimcaphorders@csdb.org](mailto:cimcaphorders@csdb.org)
- Send "Exit" forms to: [cimcaphorders@csdb.org](mailto:cimcaphorders@csdb.org)
- Send order forms for APH educational materials to: [cimcaphorders@csdb.org](mailto:cimcaphorders@csdb.org)
- Send order forms for braille and large print books to: [cimcbookorders@csdb.org](mailto:cimcbookorders@csdb.org)
- Contact Debbie Haberkorn ([dhaberkorn@csdb.org](mailto:dhaberkorn@csdb.org)) with your Low Vision Eval Clinic orders for prescribed devices.
- Contact Jim Olson ([jolson@csdb.org](mailto:jolson@csdb.org)) with your Low Vision Evaluation Clinic inquiries.

### **CSDB – BVI Outreach (Jim Olson)**

Family Literacy Packs are back. They are kid-sized backpacks full of fun literacy activities to help families with children who are blind/visually impaired support literacy development. Each pack is designed around a them and includes: (a) four to five children’s books related to a topic at differing levels; (b) learning activities and games for families to complete together; and (c) a video of the stories. Current themes include: ABCs; animals, birthdays, bugs, diversity, family, feelings, food, friends, health, money, ocean, pets, plants, seasons, sports, travel, weather, and west. To borrow, please send an email to [familylitpacks@csdb.org](mailto:familylitpacks@csdb.org)

Community Braille Class began Tuesday, January 17, 2012 and will run through March 6, 2012.

February 3, 2012: National Braille Challenge (hosted by CSDB). There are 29 confirmed competitors in the 5 categories and 36 total students participating from eight school districts.

Rookie (non-competitive)	7 registrants	Apprentice (grades 1-2)	9 registrants
Freshmen (grades 3-4)	7 registrants	Sophomore (grades 5-6)	6 registrants
Jr. Varsity (grades 7-9)	3 registrants	Varsity (grades 10-12)	4 registrants

February 10 & 11, 2012: Northern Colorado Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic (co-sponsored by CDE/CSDB). A two-day Northern Colorado regional clinic will be held at the Enight Skills Center in Fort Collins. Vicki Pearson and Rita Albright are the regional clinic coordinators.

February 15, 2012. 6-8pm. The CSDB Employability Center is hosting Look Mom and Dad, No Hands activity for transition students and their families promoting self-advocacy skills, (participants may attend in person, over telephone, or via the internet using “MegaMeeting”).

February 22, 2012: Optimist Oratorical Contest Adams Building, CSDB.

February 24, 2012: Snowshoe Weekend (co-sponsored with CAER) - Location: YMCA Snow Mountain Ranch, Grandby, CO. This activity is at full capacity with 24 registered students participating.

March 2, 2012: Southern Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic. (Co-sponsored by CDE/CSDB) This final, third clinic day for the Southern region is at full capacity with 6 appointments scheduled. The School for the Blind will host the clinic location. Donice Fennimore is the regional clinic coordinator.

June 22-23, 2012: Family Learning Retreat for families of D/HH, B/VI, and deafblind. Planning committee will be developed to determine workshop topics, presenters, etc.

March 10, 2012: Filling in the Gaps - A short course for students who are blind/VI in grades 2-4 accompanied by their parent/guardian. This event will involve an experiential learning field trip to Home Depot. Contact Niki Lewis, [nlewis@csdb.org](mailto:nlewis@csdb.org). The flyer is available on the CSDB website, [www.csdb.org](http://www.csdb.org).

March 2012 = Health Fair. CSDB.

April 20, 2012: Career Day. Hosted on the CSDB campus.

June 2012: Sports Camp for the Blind/VI is scheduled for the last week in June. Contact: Donna Keale, [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org)

The Technology Loan Bank For The B/VI has added 3 new pieces of technology: An APH Braille Plus Mobile Manager (an easy-to-use notetaker for users who are blind or visually impaired), an APH Refreshabraille 18 (a refreshable braille display), and an Intel Reader (technology with a built in camera that allows the user to just point, shoot, and listen to quickly access printed text). More information, including paperwork, is available at [www.csdb.org](http://www.csdb.org), click on "Programs and Services," "Outreach," "Services for Blind/VI," and "Technology Loan Bank Request Form."

Families Together is an ongoing monthly program where parents and students (ages birth through 3) gather together for educational and socialization opportunities. Hosted by Louise Gettman and Jerri Nelson (CSDB Early Education program) and Niki Lewis (CSDB preschool).

### **CSDB – School for the Blind (Jamie Lugo)**

Two students from CSDB's Student Leadership Strand participated in the CO Association of School Boards on panels analyzing leadership case studies. Feedback was shared with Mrs. Hilty, Dr. Ververs and the Superintendent's Council.

The school for the blind had their annual science fair on November 30th. Several judges from the community participated including former Science teacher Ben Wentworth and Blind Role Model Roger Harwell. 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners will compete in the Black Forest League Regional Contest in January.

Julie Novak, music teacher, hosted the always amazing winter program on December 8th. Two full-house musical performances featured students of all ages. This performance was enjoyed especially by elementary students who were not able to stay in their seats and refrain from dancing.

Elementary Vail Foresight Ski Trip took place on December 11-14th. Five elementary students attended and were chaperoned by Jamie Lugo. An elementary students' mother wrote a long letter of appreciation, praising the Foresight Ski Program and CSDB for this valuable educational and physical learning activity.

One of our very talented students at the school for the blind played for a packed house during a solo music event at the Ravens Nest Coffee House. She was applauded and encouraged by family, Adams staff and classmates.

### **University of Northern Colorado – VI Program (Paula Conroy)**

We are excited to congratulate Elaine Brown, Donice Fennimore and Elsa D'Angelo on their graduation this past December. All three of these women are currently working as TVIs in Colorado. Donice and Elsa will finish up their O&M

practicum this spring for their ACVREP certification.

The UNC VI program continues to hold steady with healthy enrollment numbers. We would like to thank our practicum supervisors in the state for the time they put into mentoring our beginning teachers. This interaction can make the difference in the success and retention of TVIs in individual districts and can help a district secure a TVI for a vacancy.

Kay and Silvia continue to work hard on the video-description grant and Paula is finishing up the final OSEP grant requirements as the funding cycle ends in June. We are excited for the upcoming CEC conference in April that will be in Denver this year. We hope to see everyone there!

### **Colorado Department of Education (Tanni Anthony)**

**CDE News:** The name of the special education unit within CDE has been changed to the Exceptional Student Services Unit or ESSU. Peg Brown Clark has been hired as the new Assistant Commissioner of the Office of Special Services. She will be on board February 6 and comes to us as the State Director of Special Education of the Wyoming Department of Education. Ms. Brown Clark has an impressive national reputation and is the President of the National Association of the State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE).

**Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project:** The project is in its fourth year of a five-year grant cycle. The project's mission is free technical assistance to parents and services provides of children and youth, ages birth through 21 and who are deafblind or who have both a vision and a hearing loss. The project has a lending library and a website with electronic resources that are available to families and educational personnel.

*Census:* Each winter, the project conducts an annual census of students, birth through 21 years, with combined vision and hearing loss. A total of 133 children and youth have been currently identified across the state. These learners, their families, and their service providers are eligible for free technical assistance through the grant project. THANK YOU to all the TVIs who participated in collecting the needed information for the census. You are most appreciated!

*VIBRATIONS Newsletter:* The next newsletter is in process and will focus on the topic of literacy. .

*Project Webpage:* Everyone is encouraged to check out the recently updated project webpage (located at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/Deafblind>) and specifically the Topic Index page. This page holds over a hundred documents and/or links to training information pertinent to deafblindness. Another way to get to the webpage is to go to CDE's webpage, which is [www.cde.state.co.us](http://www.cde.state.co.us) and type in deafblindness in the search box, which will take you to a direct link to the project page. The website has a steady diet of new documents – so please check periodically to see what is NEW!

*Summer Institute:* The June 11-15, 2012 Summer Institute on Deafblindness and Significant Support Needs will once again feature two internationally-recognized experts in the field of literacy and learners with significant disabilities. It will be offered as a five-day, two semester hour graduate course. The flyer and registration information will be ready for dissemination by mid-February. The emphasis will be on school districts teams attending.

**Annual O&M Conference:** The conference is a joint event with CDE and CAER. The details of this school year's training have yet to be finalized.

**Low Vision Evaluation Clinics:** Three out of the five regional low vision evaluation clinics have been offered throughout this school year. Thank you so much to our onsite coordinators who have either hosted a clinic or will be hosting a clinic: Sarah Sonnier and Angela Sims – Western LVE Clinic; Donice Fennimore – Southern LVE Clinics; Nancy Knight – Metro LVE Clinic; and Rita Albright and Vicki Pearson – Northern LVE Clinic. And, of course, thanks to our great LVE Clinic Team: Debbie Haberkorn, Jim Olson, and Dr. Tom Theune. TVIs, if you have received a follow-up evaluation for

the clinic that you brought a student(s) to, please take a moment to complete and return it to Tanni at CDE. These data will be used to review the clinic's effectiveness and status for funding continuation.

Recruitment and Retention: We currently have a 1 FTE opening in Aurora School District, a 1 FTE at the Anchor Center for Blind Children, a 1 FTE in Jefferson Country, a 1 FTE for a TVI / mathematics teacher at the School for the Blind, and a 1. FTE Program Coordinator at the School for the Blind, and a 1. FTE in Brighton School District. The .6 FTE position in Cherry Creek was recently filled by Jeannie Lei! If you anticipate an opening in your administrative unit for the 2012-13 school year, please be in touch with Tanni so we can be highly proactive with national-level recruitment.

Mentors for New TVIs / COMSs: If you are new to the field of teaching students who are blind/visually impaired and would like a mentor to work with you during this next school year, please be in touch with Tanni. Mentors can also be arranged for veteran TVIs/COMSs who have been out of the teaching field for a while and would like some update support. There is no cost to having a mentor.

Listserves: The CDE ESSU maintains two separate listservs specific to personnel working in BVI programs in Colorado school districts. One is specific to Colorado TVIs and COMSs. The second one is specific to Colorado braillists. If anyone has questions about the listservs, please be in touch with Tanni.

Description-Enhanced Assessments for Students with Visual and Print Disabilities: A grant award was made to the Utah State Office of Education in the fall of 2010 for the purpose of examining the use of description as an accommodation for students with visual and print disabilities. Partners include the Colorado Department of Education, the Kansas Department of Education, WGBH National Center on Accessible media, the National, Center on Severe and Sensory Disabilities, and a panel of advisors. A big thanks to all the Colorado TVIs, students, and parents who participated in the study!!

Eligibility Definition - Visual Impairment, Including Blindness: One of Tanni's tasks this school year has been to facilitate important work around House Bill 11-1277. This bill renamed many of the disability categories for school age students to align with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). CDE is beginning work now to review criteria for these disability categories. A stakeholder group has approved draft definition and criteria language specific to: Autism Spectrum Disorders; Hearing Impairment, Including Deafness; Serious Emotional Disability; Intellectual Disability; Multiple Disabilities; Deaf-Blind, Orthopedic Impairment; Other Health Impairment; Specific Learning Disability (definition only); Speech or Language Impairment; Traumatic Brain Injury; Visual Impairment, Including Blindness; Preschooler with a Disability; and Infants and Toddler with a Disability. The second stakeholders' meeting was held in Denver on January 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012. More information will be shared specific to the public comment period beginning in early March.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

### Budget for 2012-13

#### CDE ESSU Proposed Funded Projects

- State Conference: the identified focus for the Fall 2012 Conference would be on tactile graphics
  - Low Vision Evaluation Clinics
  - Orientation and Mobility Training
  - Braille Format TCAPs
  - Braille Competency Testing and Mentor Support
  - Vision Coalition
  - Technology Support (established regional trainings technology symposium support of speaker or follow-up use of identified specialists; iPad specific to blindness/visual impaired)
- TVI Mentoring

Technology remains an area of high priority for TVIs. It was also suggested that CSDB make some "quick tech informa-

tion” videos that someone like Bonnie Snyder could do that would highlight key information that is pertinent to a variety of people.

CSDB – Blindness

CIMC

Low Vision Evaluation Clinics (CSDB staff)

**Work Activity: Standards and IEP Goals**

The VC members broke out into small groups to address standards and IEP goals. This will continue to be a work in progress!

Task	Person Responsible	Date Due
Send Tanni program report updates. Ask TVIs in the field who may want to be on the VC for the next school year.	All VC members	April 20, 2012

**Date for next Meetings:** April 25, 2012 – Anchor Center for Blind Children (tentative location)  
Focus on mental health module



**AER International Conference Call for Abstracts**

The Call for Abstracts submission program is now available online! AER is proud to launch a new online program for 2012 making it easier than ever to submit abstracts for consideration. Submit your abstracts for 60-minute, 90-minute and/or poster presentations between now and March 31, 2012, at <https://cmt.research.microsoft.com/AER2012/Default.aspx>.

AER is honored to have Tom Sullivan, author, actor, singer, writer and producer, deliver the keynote address during the opening ceremony on July 18, 2012. For more than 30 years, Tom Sullivan has been one of the most sought-after inspirational presenters on the speaking circuit. His interests and insights, his pride and patriotism, his wisdom and passion for excellence have motivated audiences worldwide. Help us welcome Mr. Sullivan as he performs and talks about his challenges, accomplishments, and strength of human spirit.

To learn more about this exciting news and to submit your abstract for presentation, visit the conference website at <http://aerbvi.org/2012international/index.htm> or contact the AER office at 877-492-2708 or via email at [aer@aerbvi.org](mailto:aer@aerbvi.org).



# colorado connections

🔊 The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) commissioned "A Meta-Analysis of Educational Applications of Low Vision Research." The report, finalized in fiscal year 2011, was authored by **Dr. Kay Alicyn Ferrell, Dr. Cherylann Dozier, and Dr. Martin Monson**. It represents a comprehensive search of scientifically based research in the area of low vision. APH is appreciative of the collaborative efforts and contributions of all those who worked under the umbrella of the National Center on Severe and Sensory Disabilities to complete this work. Please visit the following link to access the full report: <http://www.unco.edu/ccssd/research/LowVisionMeta-Analysis.shtml>



- 🔊 A Tardy Hats Off to **Dr. Silvia Correa-Torres** and former UNC doc student **Dr. Julie Durando** for their article in the September edition of the *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness* on "Perceived Training Needs of Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments Who Work with Students from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds."
- 🔊 Congratulations to **Jasmine Campbell** of DPS , **Jeannie Lei** of Cherry Creek, and **Wendy Unwin-Watson** of Pikes Peak BOCES for earning a CDE Certificate of Braille Competency and to **Michelle Chacon** for earning a CDE Renewal Certificate of Braille Competency!
- 🔊 Hats off to **Karen Jamison, Amy Gunning, and Taryn Galow** for completing braille renewal hours. Thanks to proctors **Julie Wetzstein, Lucia Hasty, and Brenda Shepard**.
- 🔊 The CIMC would like to applaud **Kathy Gallina** and **Donna Keale** for submitting braille book orders for their students in South Central BOCES and East Central BOCES. They are the first orders for next school year.
- 🔊 Good on Ya! **Kaitlin Lombardi, Elsa D'Angelo, and Cheryl Leidich** provided an overview for teachers who are studying all different educational fields at CU- Boulder (Some sped teachers, elementary teachers, secondary teachers) on strategies for students who are blind/visually impaired.



# colorado connections

Many Colorado TVIs may have not heard of the death of **Ashley Kendelle Fritz**. Ashley passed away in late December 2011. She was born in Miami, Arizona, raised in Westminster, Colorado and graduated from Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Hotel Management from Johnson & Whales University and her Masters degree in Business from The University of Phoenix. She held the position as Sales Manager at Holiday Inn. Throughout Ashley's life her disability did not stop her from achieving her goals and her love for life. She enjoyed dancing, listening to her music, and communicating through new technology. She earned the honor of being the school Valedictorian of her High School Senior Class. Ashley achieved the status of being an honor student while obtaining her BS and MS degrees. The family requests all donations be sent to THE SEE THE FUTURE FUND (see article below).



## **Ashley K. Fritz Memorial "Humanitarian" Scholarship**

An additional \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to one of the 2012 SEE THE FUTURE recipients who the STF Selection Committee feels demonstrates exceptional humanitarian and leadership abilities, in the spirit of Ms. Ashley Fritz.

Ashley was a 2004 winner of a SEE THE FUTURE scholarship. She was valedictorian of her class at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Hotel Management from Johnson & Whales University and her Masters degree in Business from The University of Phoenix. Ashley achieved the status of being an honor student while obtaining her BS and MS degrees.

Ashley passed away in 2011; however, her determination in making a difference to people in need was evident throughout her life and will always be remembered.

Ashley writes: "As a leader of the El Pomar Youth in Community Service Program at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, I was responsible for getting everyone equally involved in helping non-profit organizations. I was responsible for constructing a variety of food drives, fundraisers and toy drives for those who are less fortunate. Now I fully understand the philosophy behind philanthropy."

After receiving her SEE THE FUTURE Scholarship, Ashley was asked by Dr. Theune if she was "less fortunate" because of her visual impairment. She replied: "Absolutely not - I have plenty of food to eat, a roof over my head, warm clothes to wear and a loving family. The people in this world who are less fortunate do not have these basic necessities of life."

**It is with this spirit that the SEE THE FUTURE Fund presents the Ashley K. Fritz Memorial "Humanitarian" Scholarship.**

**State of Colorado Department of Education**

**Colorado State Board of Education**

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3rd Congressional District

Deborah Scheffel  
6th Congressional District

Angelika Schroeder  
2nd Congressional District

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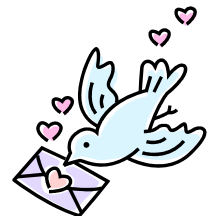
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