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KEEPING IN TOUCH!

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

May 2013

It's Independence Day!

By Tanni L. Anthony



As we approach the summer months, we begin to look forward to July 4th – our Independence Day. It is a time to celebrate our country's freedom complete with fireworks, picnics, and gratitude for our independence as a nation. To be independent is to be self-sufficient and self-reliant. It means to have freedom to make choices, to fulfill our potential, and to make our own mark on this world.

Our goal is to raise and support our children to become fully self-sufficient and self-reliant. This creed is so powerful that the field of educating children who are blind/visually impaired long ago developed a companion curriculum to the core general education curriculum. Educators define "core curriculum" as the knowledge and skills expected to be learned by a student by high school graduation. Generally the core curriculum consists of knowledge and skills related to academic subjects (math, science, English Language Arts, etc.). The Expanded Core Curriculum for Children and Youth with Visual Impairment (ECC) is the body of knowledge and skills that are needed by all students who have blind/visually impaired due to their unique disability-specific needs. The underpinning focus of the ECC is to build knowledge and skills to increase personal independence and success. What we all need to implement the ECC is time—and what better time than summer time!

There are many activities (see the Calendar of Events) that children and youth can become involved in over the summer months to increase their skills of independence. Summer is also a great time for families really focus on building independence on the home front. Parents are key to encouraging / expecting a child's self responsibility of getting dressed in the morning, helping with or completing household chores, making snacks or a meal for the family, getting around the neighborhood and community, etc. No matter the age, blindness/visual impairment should never be an excuse for a child not to be working on age-appropriate independence.

As summer approaches, think about how to maximize personal independence skills of our shared children.

Everyday should and can be Independence Day!

I thank you for another great school year! My best to each and everyone!



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Bits From Bonnie

By Bonnie Snyder

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<http://TVIVIP.org>

***Editor's Note:** I asked Bonnie to write her last article for the KIT Newsletter, as she winds down her commitment as a part-time employee with the CDE as our technology consultant. We thank, thank, thank Bonnie for all she has done to assist students, parents, and TVIs in our shared exploration of new technology. The following is a broad chronology of her contributions to all of us here in Colorado and other parts of the world!*

While still at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, I began to serve as an outreach technology consultant. Back then, the focus was on PC DOS with speech programs, Apple with their speech card and BEX, graduating to Windows 95 with Outspoken for Windows, the beginnings of OCR, the Braille 'n Speak, Braille Lite and the Type 'n Speak as well as several iterations of the Duxbury Braille Translation software, Mega-Dots, and early embossers.

Now we have a plethora of braille notetakers, the advent of the DAISY reading format, and portable DAISY devices, Windows XP, 7, and 8 with JAWS, Window-Eyes and NVDA along with major and ongoing updates for Duxbury. And then there is VoiceOver for the Mac platform and another plethora of touch pads, such as the iPad, as well as the iPhone and iPod Touch, all of which have VoiceOver, quite a few speech accessible apps and independence for users who are blind or visually impaired, in setting up the speech to individual preferences. The Android platform for phones and touch tablets also have accessible software.

Additionally, I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Sudhanshu Semwal at UCCS in putting together three Symposiums on Technology for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Several of Dr. Semwal's students (Masters and PhD candidates) have written software for the blind and visually impaired and they plan to continue doing this work.

It has been a wonderful ride and the challenge of keeping up with all the changes has been fun for me! I have so enjoyed working with the TVIs around the state and with their students.

But there comes a time when, in my case, health issues have interfered with the joys of doing this job and so I am going to fade into the bit bucket of retirement and turn the tech support over to a new generation of people who love what technology can offer individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

I would like to sincerely thank Tanni Anthony for giving me the opportunity to serve. And thank you to all the TVIs with whom I have worked over these many years.





New AFB App Helps People with Vision Loss Easily Take Notes on iPhone®, iPad®, and iPod touch®

For the millions of Americans with vision loss looking for a simple, convenient way to take notes at work, at school, or at home, the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) has launched the AccessNote™, a specialized notetaker for the iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch. The app was designed to complement the iPhone's other popular features, like web browsing and email, so that users who are blind have all the tools they need in one, handy device. AFB's AccessNote app is available for \$19.99.

In addition to being a low-cost alternative to traditional notetakers, AccessNote allows users to combine efficient note-taking with many other features and functions of the iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch. This allows people who are blind or visually impaired to use the same popular devices that their sighted peers are using in classroom or business settings.

This is the first note-taking app developed and designed specifically for users who are blind. AFB evaluated many of the other available note-taking apps, but found none to be very efficient or user-friendly to people who are blind or visually impaired. Features that set the AccessNote apart include:

Seamless Navigation. Customized keyboard commands make note-taking more intuitive and productive than ever before, including quick access to important features like Search All Notes and Search Within a Note, as well as several navigation options.

Automatic Saving. With an automatic save on every few keystrokes, notes will never be lost.

Cursor Tracking. When navigating among multiple sets of notes, users can always pick up right where they left off.

Unparalleled Simplicity. With a clutter-free interface, users can create, read, find, and sync, making it easier to spend more time with actual content and less time with tools.

DropBox Integration. All notes, always on hand. DropBox keeps AccessNote in sync with the user's desktop (and other devices) so their notes are always available and backed up.

Compatibility with Bluetooth Keyboards. AccessNote is optimized for efficiency with the Apple Wireless Keyboard and for today's wireless braille displays. AccessNote was developed in conjunction with FloCo Apps and is available on the App Store(SM).



And the Unforgettable APH Star Contest

Winners Are...(Drum Roll, Please!)

The American Printing House for the Blind judges were very impressed with the 11 amazing student video entries for the Winter 2013 installment of the Unforgettable APH Star Contest! The three winners are all from the North Dakota School for the Blind.

To see the winning videos and all the contest videos, go to: www.aph.org/contest





Software Created by a Blind Student for Blind Students

AccessiSoft is a software development enterprise focusing on software that improves accessibility to mathematics for computer users who are blind/visually-impaired. It specializes in products created by a student who is blind for students who are blind! AccessiSoft was formed in 2007 by Nicole B Torcolini, a blind high school student from Silverdale, Washington, to make available her first accessibility product, the Nemetex Nemeth Back-Translator. The **Nemetex Nemeth Back-Translator™** converts a Computer Braille file containing a mix of Nemeth Braille Math and plain text in contracted braille directly into LaTeX so it can be read or printed for a sighted user.

For more information, please go to: <http://www.accessisoft.com/>

The National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program

Submitted by Eugene McMahon, Executive Director, COSB

The 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility act of 2010 has established a Program to make communication equipment available to eligible persons with deaf-blindness. Persons that meet low-income requirement and who have combined hearing and vision loss can access telephone, advanced communications and information services for free.

This program provides a wide range of hardware, software, and applications to suit the varying communications technology needs of people who have hearing and vision loss. Examples include products that are available to the general public and may be accessible to people with hearing and vision loss or products that are adaptable through the use of specialized equipment, such as screen enlargement software, screen readers or Braille displays.

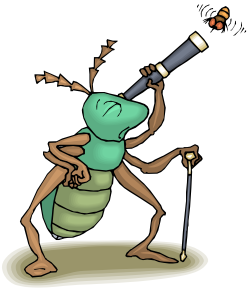
The FCC has set aside funding to support one program in each state, plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U. S. Virgin Islands. These participating programs will distribute this communications equipment to qualified individuals and provide equipment installation, training and support to help recipients make the most of this technology.

To learn more:

Visit <http://www.icanconnect.org/> or call 1-800-825-4595

<http://transition.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/NDBEDP.pdf>



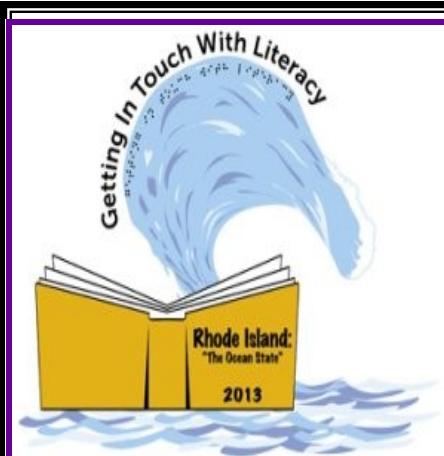


LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



2013 / 2014 CDE LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC DATES

REGION	DATES	PAPERWORK DEADLINE	SITE COORDINATOR
Western Region	September 20-21, 2013	Wednesday, September 4, 2013	Sarah Sonnier and Angela Sims
Southern Region (CSDB)	September 27, 2013	Wednesday, September 11, 2013	Donice Fennimore
Northern Region	November 8-9, 2013	Wednesday, October 23, 2013	Elaine Karns
Metro Region	February 27, 28, March 1, 2014	Wednesday, February 12, 2014	Amber Rundle Kahn
Southern Region (Alamosa)	November 22, 2013	Wednesday, November 6, 2013	Kathy Gallina
Southern Region (CSDB)	April 11, 2014	Wednesday, March 26, 2014	Donice Fennimore

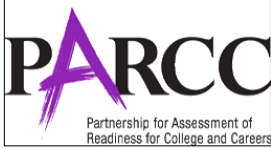


Catch the Wave at GITWL 2013

The Getting In Touch With Literacy Conference will be celebrating its 20th anniversary at the 2013 Getting In Touch With Literacy conference on December 4—7, 2013 in Providence, Rhode Island. This event, the premier literacy conference for individuals who are blind and visually impaired, will feature presentations, exhibits, poster sessions, pre-conference workshops and more, all designed to promote literacy skills for children and adults.

The conference has a tradition of outstanding presentations by practitioners in the field. More information about this important conference can be found on the Getting In Touch With Literacy website, at www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org

ASSESSMENT NEWS



PARCC Releases Assessment Blueprints and Test Specifications Documents

The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) has released assessment blueprints and test specifications for both the English language arts/literacy and mathematics assessments set to debut in 2014-15. These blueprints and test specifications will help educators better prepare students for the new online assessments that are aligned to the more rigorous Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and designed to measure college and career readiness. *"These tools will help educators assist staff in both teaching the CCSS and in designing common classroom-based assessments that will help students become college- and career-ready and to succeed on the PARCC assessments,"* said Cindy Journell-Hoch, an Elementary Teacher Specialist for School Administration and Leadership for Frederick County Public Schools in Maryland.

The English language arts/literacy blueprints provide useful information to better understand the design of the assessments themselves, including ELA/literacy rubrics to guide thinking about classroom rubric use, ELA/literacy passage selection guidelines and worksheets to guide text selection for instruction. *"The PARCC evidence statements and tables are a much-needed step towards focus, coherence and rigor as we prepare for the PARCC assessments,"* said Heather Brown, Illinois State Board of Education Area 1C Math Content Specialist. "They are necessary in providing clear expectations as teachers, districts and states transition to the CCSS."

The mathematics evidence tables help readers further understand the integration of mathematical practices and content. They also provide greater detail about how standards can be combined, highlighting one of the most critical advances of the standards - their coherence. Furthermore, the documents in both content areas provide greater insight into the planned reporting categories for the PARCC summative assessments.

"The release of the blueprint and test specification materials comes at a time when teachers are eager to understand how PARCC will assess the CCSS," said Wendi Anderson, Director for PARCC/Innovative Assessment at the Arizona Department of Education. *"These materials allow teachers to see 'under the hood' of the assessment, to understand how the different elements work together to assess student mastery of the CCSS."*

Classroom teachers, state-level content experts, higher education faculty, PARCC staff members and consultants and ETS and Pearson staff conducted several rounds of review over the past year and a half to discuss and make revisions to the documents to ensure they reflected the highest quality alignment to the Common Core State Standards and the vision of the next-generation PARCC assessment system. PARCC intends to continue to update the blueprints and test specifications to reflect the changing, iterative nature of the assessment development process. For more information on the assessment blueprints and test specifications, including narrated overview PowerPoints and an FAQ document, visit:

<http://www.paccrconline.org/assessment-blueprints-test-specs>.

Follow the consortium on Twitter at:

<http://twitter.com/PARCCPlace>.

For more information on PARCC, go to:

www.paccrconline.org.

PARCC Educator Training Resources Now Open to All Educators

Content and materials created to train the Educator Leader Cadre are an open resource for all educators. Those resources are available at :

<http://www.nms.org/Resources/CommonCoreOpenResources>



Alport Syndrome

Information for this article was retrieved from: www.qhr.nlm.nih.gov/condition=alportsyndrome; http://www.rightdiagnosis.com/a/alport_syndrome/intro.htm; and <http://www.disabled-world.com/disability/types/alport-syndrome.php>

What is Alport Syndrome? Alport syndrome is a rare inherited condition that affects the kidney, inner ear (cochlea) and eye. In 1927 British Dr. Cecil A. Alport described three generations of a family with combinations of progressive kidney disease, hearing loss, and vision problems / impairment. The most common symptom among these individuals was the presence of blood in the urine (hematuria) which indicates abnormal kidney function. In the years following, accounts of many more families with the same symptoms were documented, which led to the condition being named Alport syndrome in 1961.

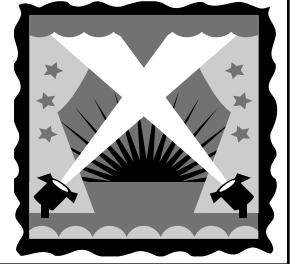
What Causes Alport Syndrome? A genetic mutation or change in the Type IV collagen family of fibrous proteins that make up connective tissue causes Alport syndrome. Type IV collagen is a major part of important tissue structures called basement membranes that are present in all tissues including the kidney, inner ear, and eye.

What are the Symptoms of Alport Syndrome? The results of this inherited mutation are progressive deterioration of the kidneys as scar tissue forms in the normal kidney structures (glomeruli and tubules). As the kidneys filter proteins out of the blood, these molecules damage the filtering system or glomeruli because of the abnormal collagen makeup. This process is known as fibrosis and it eventually leads to kidney failure or end-stage renal disease (ESRD). Because of the loss of kidney function, many people with Alport syndrome also develop high levels of protein in their urine (proteinuria) and high blood pressure.

Another symptom of Alport syndrome is sensorineural hearing loss caused by abnormalities of the inner ear of younger individuals. The hearing loss is not present at birth, but becomes evident by late childhood or early adolescence and, generally, occurs before the onset of kidney failure.

Eye abnormalities are another sign in affected individuals. The individual may have misshapen lenses in the eyes (anterior lenticonus) causing slow progressive loss of vision which requires them to change the prescription of their glasses frequently. Anterior lenticonus may also lead to formation of cataracts. Abnormal coloration of the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye (retina), called dot-and-fleck retinopathy may be present. Recurrent corneal erosion may also occur in individuals with Alport syndrome. Those who experience this problem should take measures to protect their corneas from minor trauma, such as wearing goggles when riding a bicycle.

Spotlight on



What is the Prevalence of Alport Syndrome? Alport Syndrome is estimated to affect around 1 in 5,000 people. Alport syndrome affects boys more often than girls because 80% of the time, the disease is passed on by a mutation of the X chromosome (called X-linked Alport Syndrome). Males only have one X-chromosome while females have two X chromosomes. In girls, the normal X chromosome buffers the effect of the mutated gene. The other 20% of persons with Alport syndrome have the autosomal recessive or autosomal dominant form of the disease where males and females are equally affected.

Males with the X-linked form of Alport syndrome develop kidney failure by the teenage years or early adulthood, but the onset of kidney failure may not happen until 40 to 50 years of age. Most females with X-linked Alport syndrome do not progress to the kidney failure stage. However, as women with Alport syndrome age, the risk of kidney failure does increase. Boys and girls with the autosomal recessive form of Alport syndrome will develop kidney failure by their teens or young adult years. People with autosomal dominant Alport syndrome are usually well into middle age before kidney failure develops.

Approximately 80% of young males with X-linked Alport Syndrome develop hearing loss at some point in their lives, often by their teenage years. In young females with X-linked Alport syndrome, hearing loss is less frequent and happens later in life. Boys and girls with autosomal recessive Alport syndrome typically develop hearing loss in childhood. Individuals with autosomal dominant Alport syndrome develop hearing loss at a later age.

What are the Functional Vision and Hearing Implications? The eye abnormalities seldom lead to permanent vision loss and may be corrected by prescriptive lenses or surgery to remove cataracts. Hearing is not affected in all cases of Alport syndrome, and hearing aids often prove to be very effective. Children and youth with Alport syndrome should be closely followed by an eye care specialist and audiologists for their vision and hearing status and need for changing glasses, cataract surgery and/or amplification devices. These individuals should also be evaluated and monitored to determine their educational needs and whether they will qualify for special education service due to a need for specialized instruction.

Resource Information:

Alport Syndrome Foundation website. This site is designed for patients and families affected by Alport Syndrome, a genetic kidney disease. It is their goal to provide a central location for information about this disease, to create an opportunity to meet and talk to other families who are dealing with Alport syndrome, and to support research aimed at curing the disease. www.alportsyndrome.org



Resources and Materials



Introduction to TactileView

TactileView creates pictures for people with visual impairments, including blindness. These pictures are transformed into tactile graphics. People who are blind can read them by touch and interpret the tactile material. Simple tools are available for the design and production of tactile pictures, diagrams and maps.

The TactileView concept consists of design software for the creation of tactile graphics and an international web catalog. The design software allows production (printing) on a braille embosser or on swell paper (microcapsule paper). The tactile image is created by placing the swell paper in a special heater. Once the images have been pre-processed, they can be prepared for production in a tactile format. Only the essential contours of the design remain and information in braille is added.

For more information, go to: <http://www.tactileview.com/>

NICHCY Fact Sheet

The National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities updated their fact sheet on children with visual impairments. The revised fact sheet has several new sections, including types of visual impairments in children, signs and symptoms, insights about how children with visual impairments learn, tips for educators, and tips for parents.

nichcy.org/disability/specific/visualimpairment

Websites of Interest

The **American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)** has developed a new **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASDs) Toolkit** (<http://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorders-toolkit/Pages/default.aspx>) to raise awareness, promote surveillance and screening, and ensure that all children who possibly have a FASD receive appropriate and timely interventions. To learn more about FASDs, see the toolkit's **frequently asked questions** (<http://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/fetal-alcohol-spectrum-disorders-toolkit/Pages/Frequently-Asked-Questions.aspx>)

From the Advancement Project

A Real Fix: The Gun-Free Way to School Safety:
http://b3cdn.net/advancement/78db1dd92e7fc2f6e8_21m6bck09.pdf

From the National Women's Law Center

Fact Sheet on President Obama's Early Childhood Initiative:
<http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/presidentsproposalfactsheet.pdf>



Resources and Materials

View the New Exceptional Children's Education Act Disability Categories

House Bill 11-1277 amended the ECEA to align Colorado's eligibility categories with corresponding federal terms and requirements and/or terminology used in the field. The legislation was passed in May 2011. The State Board of Education adopted the definition changes into ECEA rules on September 12, 2012. The new disability category and eligibility language went into effect on October 30, 2012. The disability category and eligibility language specific to "Child with Developmental Delay" involved separate legislation and went into effect on March 2, 2013. At this time, each Colorado administrative unit can begin the process of adopting the revised definitions. The new eligibility categories, definitions and criteria must be adopted in full by July 1, 2016.

A series of training documents have been designed to support Colorado administrative units in their work to adopt the new eligibility categories, definitions, and criteria. These documents, which include specific information to the disability categories of visual impairment, including blindness and deaf-blindness have been posted to the following webpage:

http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/Training_ECEAEligibility.asp

ECEA Rules

The recently updated Exceptional Children's' Education Act (ECEA) Rules became effective March 2, 2013. The rules now include the Developmental Delay disability category, in addition to the updated disability categories, including visual impairment, including blindness and deaf-blindness, and changes from 'eligible facility' to 'approved facility school'.

These Rules and Regulations can be found at:

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



For over a decade, Lesson Planet has provided a way for teachers to discover and share innovative lesson-planning resources. The Lesson Planet solution helps teachers find lesson resources, correlate them to standards, and organize curriculum. Their tools provide a time-efficient way to encourage teaching with fresh ideas. For more information, go to:

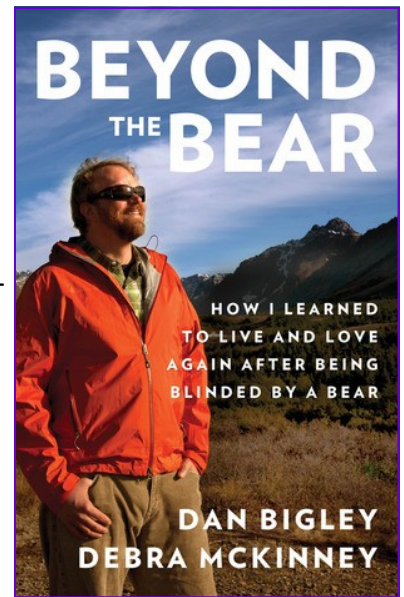
<http://www.lessonplanet.com/>

Resources and Materials

New Book for Your Summer Reading

In 2003, Alaskan Dan Bigley was returning from fishing when he was mauled by a bear, an attack which left him totally blind. He recently wrote a book detailing his recovery and adjustment to blindness. *Beyond the Bear: How I Learned to Live and Love Again After Being Blinded by a Bear* is a story of the power of love and one man's determination to live a full life.

Read the APH book review: <http://www.fredshead.info/2013/04/blinded-by-bear-dan-bigleys-story.html>.



Updated Website

Michigan Department of Education-Low Incidence Outreach (MDE-LIO) has recently updated their website (<http://mde-lio.cenmi.org/Home.aspx>). The Michigan Severity Rating Scales have been updated this year. There are Information Guidelines and forms for the: Vision Services Severity Rating Scales; Vision Services Severity Rating Scale for Students with additional Needs; Orientation and Mobility Severity Rating Scale; and the Orientation and Mobility Severity Rating Scale for Students with Additional Needs.

The MDE-LIO Technology Curriculum for Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired has also been updated and will be available on the website soon. These can be found on the pull-down menu located under Services.

Book on Echolocation

Beginner's Guide to Echolocation is designed to bring better social awareness to the concept of echolocation and make it a more approachable subject for many who may still be hesitant to try. You can find more information about at: <http://www.HumanEcholocation.com/book-details/>

See the book on Amazon here:

<http://www.amazon.com/Beginners-Guide-Echolocation-Visually-Impaired/dp/1478371080>



VI Fit Research Project

**By Dr. Eelke Folmer, Associate Professor, Human-Computer Interaction
Department of Computer Science and Engineering University of Nevada**

Lack of physical activity is a serious health concern for individuals who are visually impaired as they have fewer opportunities and incentives to engage in physical activities that provide the amounts and kinds of stimulation sufficient to maintain adequate fitness and to support a healthy standard of living. Especially children with visual impairments tend to exhibit lower performance in motor skills, lower levels of physical activity and fitness, and higher levels of obesity. Exergames are video games that use physical activity as input and which have the potential to change sedentary lifestyles and associated health problems such as obesity. Unfortunately exergames are not accessible to users with visual impairments as they rely upon the player being able to see visual stimuli.

The VI Fit research project seeks to explore how exergames can be developed that can be played without visual feedback, with the goal to increase the participation of users with visual impairments in physical activity and to improve their health. Currently three different games are available:

VI Tennis simulates the sport of Tennis. This game provides audio and vibrotactile cues that indicate when to serve and when to return the ball. This game is played using upper body gestures. You can play this game against the computer or against a friend using two Wii remotes.

VI Bowling implements the game play of Wii Sports Bowling. VI Bowling has a novel motor learning feature that allows players to find the direction in which to throw their ball using vibrotactile feedback. Audio and speech effects are used to indicate the result of each throw.

Pet-n-Punch is a novel exergame inspired by whack-a-mole. Help a farmer protect his/her fields of carrots by bopping varmints on their head. . .but make sure not to hit any kitties! This game can be played with either one or two Wii remotes.

All VI Fit games can be downloaded for free and played using the Nintendo. Wii remote controller (\$15) Games can be played against the computer or a blind or sighted friend. We believe our games could supplement existing adapted physical education programs and provide children with visual impairments a healthy workout and a great experience of playing games that are popular among sighted children.

For more information contact Dr. Folmer:

<http://eelke.com>

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

SONG PARODY



I Will Never Ever Live Without My Cane

Check out this wonderful **You Tube** video on a young girl singing about her cane. In the spirit of the Taylor Swift song, it is great! It can be found at:

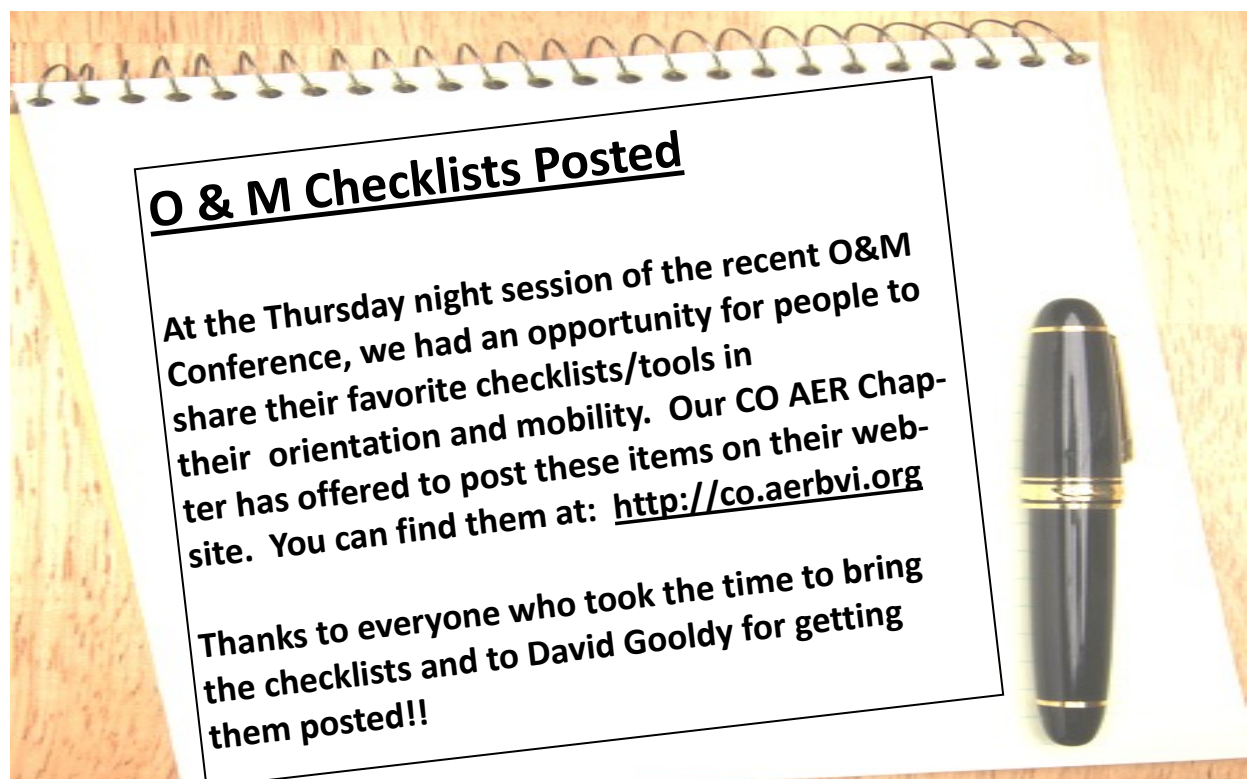
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N08vvHTseWQ&feature=youtube_gdata_player



Link to Article

Here's a link to the article on O&M for visually impaired wheelchair users by James Scott Crawford that was mentioned at the recent O and M conference. The checklist at the end is reported to be very useful!

http://www.affiliatedblind.org/Images/Interior/documents/wheelchair_om.pdf





just for PARENTS



CHAPTER MEETING FOR MOM AND DAD...ART FUN FOR KIDS

Parents and kids: Come try out the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) of Denver chapter meeting on Saturday, May 18, from 10:00 a.m. to noon. While the parents join the monthly NFB of Denver meeting, the kids, ages 3-15, will work with tactile art specialist, Ann Cunningham and blind mentors to create a tactile art piece for Mother's Day. The chapter meeting will include a discussion of tactile art with a display of pieces created by students at the Colorado Center for the Blind. At the end of the chapter meeting the children will have the opportunity to show off their own artwork. Spaces in the art program are limited, so please contact Brent Batron (bbatron@cocenter.org or 303-778-1130).

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, 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 or to Tanni Anthony, CDE ESSU, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1175, Denver, CO 80202. Or leave a voice message at (303) 866-6681.

2013 International Family Conference July 19—21, 2013

Aspects of Raising a Child with Visual Impairments:

- Interactive sessions and panel discussions
- Networking with other families and professionals
- FREE daycare program for children
- Activities designed especially for teens

Connecting Families

There are several organizations that can connect families to advocates in Colorado. PEAK Parent Center is Colorado's Parent Training and Information Center. PEAK has parent advisors on staff and can provide families with the names of advocacy organizations. For more information, visit:

- PEAK's website at www.peakparent.org.
- The Legal Center for People with Disabilities and Older People (www.thelegalcenter.org) and
- The Arc of Colorado (www.thearcofco.org) are other resources for families looking for advocates.

If your family is looking for support groups and/or trying to connect with other families, Parent to Parent of Colorado is a useful resource - www.p2p-co.org

The Parent Information and Resources page on the CDE Exceptional Student Services Unit's website has information about conferences and training opportunities. Every year CDE offers three Parents Encouraging Parents Conferences for families and educators throughout Colorado.

For more information, please visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/PEP.asp>

Family Conference, continued

The conference will be held at:

Boston Marriott Newton
2345 Commonwealth Avenue
Newton, Massachusetts 02466

To Register Go To:
www.guildhealth.org/family

To Make Hotel Reservations:
www.marriott.com/bosnt

Enter **NPVNPVA** in the group code box
OR call 1-800-228-9290.

Special hotel rate of \$129 per night until June 24.

DOTS OF INTEREST



CCB – Blind Youth Programs Upcoming Braille Event

June 18 - Braille Carnival

Join us and have fun with Braille. We will have lots of different types of games, adventures, and races all using Braille. We will also have Louis Braille himself here for this fun-filled day as we celebrate the man who made literacy possible for the blind.

Space is limited so please RSVP for this by contacting Brent Batron at:

Phone: 303-778-1130 x 222 or

Email: bbatron@cocenter.org



Blog About Diabetes and Braille

The blog "Blood Drops, Braille Dots" shares thoughts about living with Type 1 diabetes and using braille. One recent entry was called "6 Things I Wish Everyone Knew About Braille." It's an excellent summary to share with students, parents, administrators, and people who just want to know more about braille. Read the blog post at:

blooddropsbrailledots.blogspot.com/2013_01_01_archive.html

GEARING UP FOR SUMMER--HERE'S WHAT'S COMING:

BELL: A SUMMER BRAILLE CAMP FOR KIDS

The BELL Program is a day camp for children ages 4-12 with a concentration in Braille. Both beginners and more accomplished Braille readers will gain confidence in reading and writing while engaged in games, crafts and exciting outdoor activities.

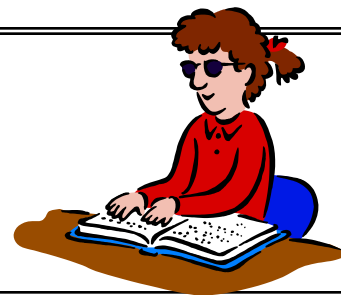
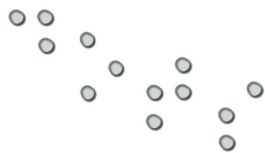
There will be two programs offered. One will be held in Colorado Springs on the campus of the School for the Deaf and Blind, from June 17-27. The Denver Metro program will be held at the Rocky Mountain MS Center in Westminster from July 15-26.

For more information contact Diane McGeorge, at 303-321-4268 or e-mail rmcgeorge@comcast.net or Michelle Chacon at mchacon@adams50.org or phone 303-456-9000. BELL is a project of the National Federation of the Blind.

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to assist with the BELL programs. If you could spare one or more days to help with activities or drive on outings, it would be greatly appreciated (and fun for you!) A training session for the Colorado Springs program will be held on Monday, June 3. Volunteers for the Westminster program will meet on Tuesday, June 25th. Background check paperwork will be completed at the training sessions. Contact Michelle Chacon mchacon@adams50.org or phone 303-456-9000 for details on time and location.

DOTS OF INTEREST



An International Tactile Book Competition

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH), will judge U.S. entries in an annual tactile book competition. The biennial tactile book competition is conducted by Typhlo & Tactus (T&T), an organization comprised of western and eastern European nations that exists to improve the quality and quantity of tactile books available to young children with visual impairments in member countries. As part of T&T's efforts, the organization has conducted a biennial tactile book competition each year, beginning in 2000. At first, the competition was open only to European T&T members, but in 2011 it was opened to a worldwide audience.

APH will be the contact organization for U.S. entries. A panel of U.S. judges will review each entry and select the top five books to send overseas for final adjudication by an international panel of children and adults with visual impairments, as well as professionals in the field. A single winning entry will be chosen, along with ten shortlisted books. Selected books may be featured on the T&T website and may appear in posters and promotional materials used by T&T. U.S. entrants should send their completed tactile book, designed for a child with visual impairment from birth to 12 years of age, to the APH by **July 15, 2013**. A "Guide to Designing Tactile Illustrations for Children's Books" can be found at: www.aph.org/edresearch/illustration.htm

For entry forms and guidelines, visit:

www.aph.org/edresearch/tactile-book-contest or www.tactus.org

National Braille Press Blog

National Braille Press (NBP) has started a blog. Check out their stories about braille and leave comments about what you read at:

nationalbraillepress.wordpress.com/



BANA Documents on the Unified English Braille Code

A new document, "Overview of Changes from Current Literary Braille to UEB" is now available on the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) website in several formats. The HTML version of this document can be found at:

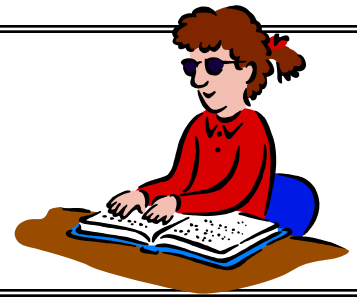
http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb/overview_changes_ebae_ueb.html.

Additional documents about UEB, including sample materials written in the new code, will be added over the next few months. More detailed information about UEB and the motion that BANA passed can be found on the BANA website at:

www.brailleauthority.org

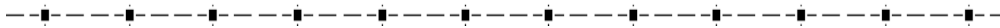


DOTS OF INTEREST



Proceedings of International Braille Conference

The proceedings of the conference, "World Congress Braille21: Innovations in Braille in the 21st Century" held in September, 2011, are now available online. Sixty papers are available related to six topics: Education and Literacy; Vocational Training, Employment, and Lifelong Learning; Research and Development; Improving Access to Information; Braille as a Part of Universal Design; and The Role of Braille in Enabling Independent Living. More than 400 delegates from 50 countries attended the conference. The proceedings can be found at: www.braille21.net/en/proceedings



Braille Scrabble

The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) is now selling the popular board game Scrabble for braille readers all around the world at the same price and quality as the large print version. Each of the letter tiles has a braille label, as well as clear print labeling. The playing board has tactile dots on the premium letter squares and tactile dashes on the premium word squares. The clever tile-lock design means that the letter tiles sit snugly on the board, even when rotating to the next player using the built-in stand. The price is £29.00. To order contact exports@rnib.org.uk or call + (44) 1733 375400. The RNIB Product Code is GB95.



NLS: That All May Read Braille Summit: June 19-21, 2013

NLS invites you to participate in the NLS Braille Summit at Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown, Massachusetts, June 19–21, 2013, to help determine the best ways for libraries to promote and support braille literacy. The conference will bring together librarians, braille literacy professionals, braille readers, and other stakeholders.

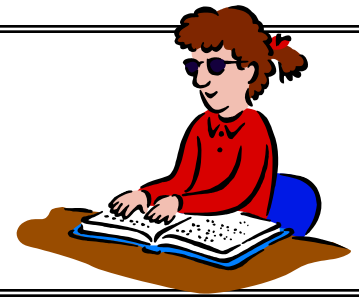
The conference will allow participants to gather lessons learned from across America and around the world; assess the present state of braille literacy, technology, and access; and make recommendations that will shape braille programs and priorities for the future of the NLS network of cooperating libraries.

The conference will cover five major themes: Braille Readers, Library Selection and Collection Development, Braille Production, Braille Technology, and Promoting Braille Literacy and Awareness. Participants will have the opportunity to listen to expert speakers in each subject area and then engage in facilitated discussions with their peers, during which they will identify strategic issues and recommend solutions for implementation. For more details and to register, go to:

<https://nlsbard.loc.gov/cgi-bin/public/nlsbardprod/braillesummit2013conference.cgi>



DOTS OF INTEREST



Building on Patterns (BOP) Kindergarten and the Common Core State Standards

Recently posted on the Research page of the APH website is a reference document with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and information on where they are addressed in the BOP Kindergarten curriculum. BOP lesson numbers are listed next to the standard when a particular lesson addresses that standard. Information about the BOP First Grade and Second Grade curricula will be added over the next few months.

The document is available in HTML and Excel (.xlsx) formats. Follow this link to Research Resources: www.aph.org/edresearch/#research-resources or visit the APH homepage and click the Research Resources link, then select either the HTML or Excel link following the heading ***BOP Kindergarten and the Common Core State Standards***.



More New Braille Plus 18 Videos Added!

The American Printing House for the Blind has added links to more new videos created by student Chase Crispin and his teacher LeAnna MacDonald. Visit our products video page (<http://www.aph.org/products/videos.html>) (to view these videos, which cover hooking up the Braille Plus 18 to a TV and updating its software.

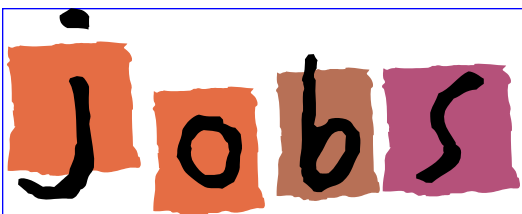
Braille Rally Benefit for Individuals Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

On Saturday, June 8, 2013 American Council of the Blind of Colorado (ACBCO) will host a fun and exciting car rally with the Lotus and Miata car clubs in Denver. Sighted drivers will be guided by individuals who are blind or visually impaired reading either braille or large print directions. Winners will be determined by mileage as opposed to speed.

This fundraising event will not only raise important revenue to continue our assistance to the B/VI community; but also will help evidence the abilities of these individuals and dispel some of the many myths about vision loss.

There are several ways to participate, as a navigator (if you are visually impaired) a sighted driver, and as a sponsor. For more details or to register, go to: www.acbco.org





IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for this school year or the one starting in fall 2013. 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

- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (2 FTE): Aurora Public Schools. Apply online at www.aps.k12.co.us>. For more information contact Jo Cunningham at jmcunningham@aps.k12.co.us or 720-271-9668.
- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (2 FTE): Jefferson County Public Schools. For more information, contact Karie Yenter in Human Resources at (303) 982-6515.
- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (2 FTE): Adams 12 Five Star Schools. For more information, contact Brian Prinzt at pri016116@adams12.org>.

Southern Region Jobs

- ✓ **CSDB** is actively recruiting and accepting applications for positions for the 2013-14 school year. There are a variety of open positions (TVI, COMS, early childhood, school psychologist). For exact details within the School for the Blind, and/or the Outreach Program should contact Chelle Lutz at clutz@csdb.org or (719) 578-2114.

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

TVIs and COMSs—If you are getting ready to retire, please do not let your CDE teaching and support services licenses expire, as you are in a great position to keep contributing in the future with part-time or sub work. Please keep in touch with Tanni, if you are interested in this type of work after your retirement!



Calendar of Events

2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013

June 2	2013 Assistive Technology Expo —The Conference Center at Adams 12 <u>Visit:</u> www.assistivetechologypartners.org
June 3—7	SWAAAC (AT) Conference —The Conference Center at Adams 12 <u>Contact:</u> http://swaaac.com/
June 7—August 2	Earn and Learn, High School Program —Colorado Center, Littleton <u>Contact:</u> Brent Batron— bbatron@cocenter.org or (303) 778-1130
June 7—August 2	Summer for Success, College-Prep Program —Colorado Center, Littleton <u>Contact:</u> Brent Batron— bbatron@cocenter.org or (303) 778-1130
June 10—14	Summer Institute on Deafblindness and SSN —Denver <u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681
June 10—21	Confidence Camp for Kids, Elementary Program —Colorado Center, Littleton <u>Contact:</u> Brent Batron— bbatron@cocenter.org or (303) 778-1130
June 13	CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Veronica Crim - vcrim@csdb.org
June 14—16	Family Learning Retreat —CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Diane Covington at dcovington@csdb.org
June 16—20	Yes, You Can (Independent Living Skills for Middle School) —CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org
June 17—27	BELL Program Summer Camp —CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Michelle Chacon— mchacon@adams50.org
June 19—21	Western Region Early Intervention Conference —Jackson Hole, WY <u>Contact:</u> website will be up soon
June 23—28	Colorado Sports Education Camp —CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org



More Calendar of Events

2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013 2013

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|-----------------------------|--|
| July 10—12 | Audio Description Institute—Hyatt Regency Hotel, Columbus OH
<u>Contact:</u> Joel Snyder at jsnyder@acb.org |
| July 15—26 | BELL Program Summer Camp—Rocky Mountain MS Center, Westminster
<u>Contact:</u> Michelle Chacon— mchacon@adams50.org |
| July 15—August 2 | Initiation to Independence, Middle School Program— CCB Littleton
<u>Contact:</u> bbatron@cocenter.org or (303) 778-1130 |
| July 25—28 | CHARGE Syndrome Conference—Scottsdale, AZ
<u>Contact:</u> http://www.chargesyndrome.org/ |
| July 29—August 9 | HKNC Young Adult Summer Program
<u>Contact:</u> Ellie Carlson at Ellie.Carlson@hknc.org or at 303-934-9037 |
| September 10 | Southern Region TVI Meeting—CSDB (12—2:30 p.m.)
<u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org |
| October | National Braille Association Fall 2013 Conference—Colorado Springs, CO
<u>Visit:</u> www.nationalbraille.org |
| October 7—8
October 9—11 | 31st Annual Closing the Gap Preconference Workshops—Minneapolis, MN
31st Annual Closing the Gap Conference—Minneapolis, MN
<u>Visit:</u> http://www.closingthegap.com/conference/ |
| October 8 | Southern Region TVI Meeting—CSDB (12—2:30 p.m.)
<u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org |
| November 12 | Southern Region TVI Meeting—CSDB (12—2:30 p.m.)
<u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org |
| December 4—7 | 2013 Getting In Touch With Literacy Conference—Providence, Rhode Island
<u>Visit:</u> www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org |
| December 10 | Southern Region TVI Meeting—CSDB (12—2:30 p.m.)
<u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org |
| December 11—14 | AER International All-Orientation & Mobility Conference— New Orleans, LA
<u>Visit:</u> www.aerbvi.org |



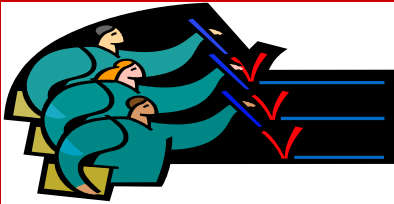
2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014

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| January 6—February 7 | State Testing: ACCESS for ELLS Grades K—12
Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening |
| January 14 | Southern Region TVI Meeting—CSDB (12—2:30 p.m.)
<u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org |

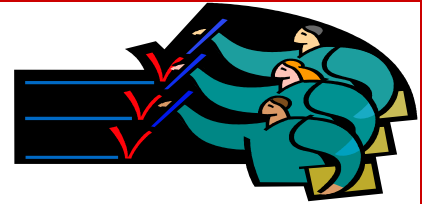
More Calendar of Events

2014	2014	2014	2014	2014	2014	2014	2014	2014	2014	2014
February 5—March 14	State Testing: CoAlt Reading, Writing, and Mathematics—Grades 3—10									
February 10—21	Early Window TCAP State Testing: Reading and Lectura—Grade 3									
February 11	Southern Region TVI Meeting—CSDB (12—2:30 p.m.) <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org									
February 24—March 7	State Testing TCAP Reading and Lectura—Grade 3									
March 3—March 21	Early Window TCAP State Testing (May be extended to March 28 for Grades 3—10 if Spring Break is included in school calendar) Grade 3—Writing and Escritura Grade 4—10 Reading and Writing Grade 4—Lectura and Escritura Grade 3—10 Mathematics									
March 10—April 11	State Testing TCAP (It is strongly suggested districts finish by March 28 to provide separation between TCAP & new science and social studies assessments) Grade 3—Writing and Escritura Grade 4—10 Reading and Writing Grade 4—Lectura and Escritura Grade 3—10 Mathematics									
March 11	Southern Region TVI Meeting—CSDB (12—2:30 p.m.) <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org									
April 8	Southern Region TVI Meeting—CSDB (12—2:30 p.m.) <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org									
April 14—May 2	Colorado Summative Assessment Testing (May be lengthened pending results of technology readiness tool) Grade 12 Science & Social Studies TBD, Fall 2014 Grades 5 and 8—Science AND Grades 4 and 7—Social Studies									
April 14—May 2	CoAlt State Testing (Note: Grade 12 Science & Social Studies TBD, Fall 2014) Grades 5 & 8— Science AND Grades 4 & 7—Social Studies									
April 23	Colorado ACT Initial Testing—Grade 11									
May 7	Colorado ACT Makeup Testing—Grade 11									
May 13	Southern Region TVI Meeting—CSDB (12—2:30 p.m.) <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org									
July 30-Aug 3	AER International Conference – San Antonio, TX <u>Visit:</u> www.aerbvi.org									





CHECK IT OUT!



Assistive Technology Partners

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS



2013 AT Expo: Technology for Living and Learning Sunday, June 2, 2013, 11:00 am—3:00 pm

Reaching your highest potential at home, school, work and play

The 2013 AT Expo will features vendors showcasing the latest innovations in hardware, software, educational materials, Assistive Technology (AT) devices and solutions for home, school, work and play. Colorado organizations that provide services to individuals with disabilities or to those who are experiencing problems associated with aging will also be present. With reasonable accommodations anyone can become job ready, increase learning abilities and be more independent.

Explore devices and services:

- ◆ Hearing
- ◆ Vision
- ◆ Learning Disabilities
- ◆ Environmental Aids for Daily Living
- ◆ Augmentative Alternative Communication
- ◆ Home/Work Modifications
- ◆ Computer Access
- ◆ Wheelchair Seating and Mobility

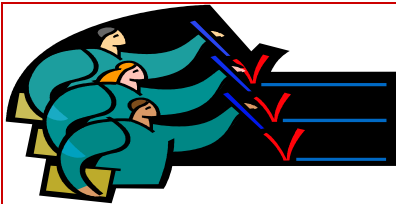
Who should attend?

- ◆ Persons with disabilities
- ◆ Active duty and veteran military
- ◆ Families and caregivers
- ◆ Healthcare professionals
- ◆ Educators and therapists

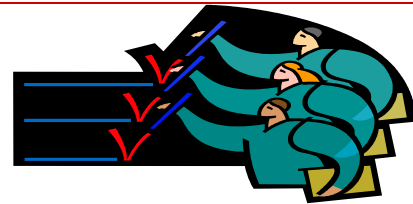
Location:

**The Conference Center at Adams 12
1500 East 128th Avenue
Thornton, Colorado 80241**

For more information about the AT Expo, to view attending exhibitors and for driving directions please visit our website:
www.assistivetechpartners.org



CHECK IT OUT!



Assistive Technology Partners

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS

SWAAAC Summer Symposium 2013: Interdisciplinary Augmentative Alternative Communication June 3 & 4, 2013 The Conference Center at Adams 12, Thornton, Colorado

Individuals with complex communication needs (CCN), require the services of a speech language pathologist (SLP) trained to provide AAC services. But truly effective, comprehensive intervention does not begin and end with a speech language pathologist. Occupational and physical therapists must address access issues, itinerants need to be consulted regarding sensory issues, special and general education teachers must accommodate, differentiate, implement and integrate across environments, and parents are central to the transfer of skills in the home and community. All communication partners need to be educated and trained in the strategies and techniques that support individuals with CCNs. This year's annual SWAAAC Summer Symposium will feature 3 tracks of workshops to promote AAC service provision across disciplines.

Gather your interdisciplinary team and register early for this multifaceted training event. Early Bird registration ends **April 19, 2013**.

Visit the SWAAAC website (<http://www.swaaac.com/>) or Assistive Technology Partners website: <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschool/programs/atp/Events/Pages/UpcomingEvents.aspx> for more information on this year's workshops and to download the full SWAAAC Summer Symposium brochure. From there you can register online or print out the paper registration form. For more information please contact Christina Perkins at 303.315.1278; or christina.perkins@ucdenver.edu.



****Don't miss the 2nd Annual AT Expo on Sunday, June 2nd, 2013.**

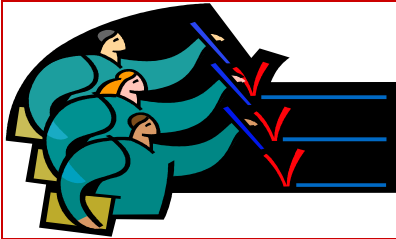
Visit www.assistivetechpartners.org for more information.

CDE's New Facebook Page

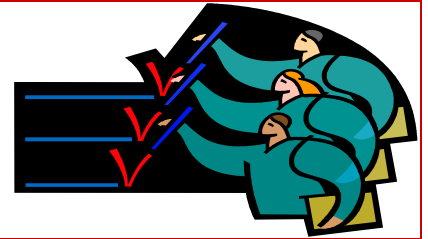
Join the conversation! CDE's new Facebook page is an opportunity to engage with others and share information, news, questions, suggestions and conversation around education! The Facebook page will also include pictures from events and opportunities to share stories about educators who are making a difference in their community.

For more information, please go to: <https://www.facebook.com/codepted>





CHECK IT OUT!



SAVE THE DATES!!

**The American Council of the Blind's Audio Description Project
AUDIO DESCRIPTION INSTITUTE - July 10-12, 2013
In Conjunction with ACB's 2013 Annual Conference and Convention
Hyatt Regency Hotel - Columbus, Ohio**

The signing of the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act has spawned a virtual cottage industry for the development of description for broadcast television. More than 20 million Americans experience significant vision loss, and audio description (AD) makes visual images accessible for those who are blind or have low vision. Using words that are succinct, vivid, and imaginative, media describers convey the visual image from television and film that is not fully accessible to this segment of the population.

BE A PART OF IT!

Who Should Attend

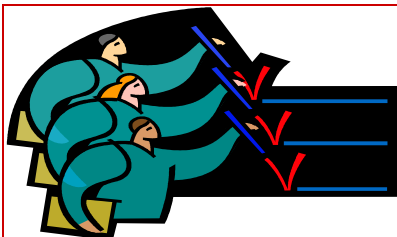
- ✓ **Anyone** interested in working as :
 - freelance description writers for broadcast television
 - describers in a local performing arts program
 - describers for visual art exhibitions
- ✓ **Experienced audio describers** desiring an updated refresher course

Please send an email TODAY to jsnyder@acb.org or call Joel Snyder at 202-467-5083 to reserve your spot OR visit www.acb.org in late May/early June. You will be notified when on-line registration is open.

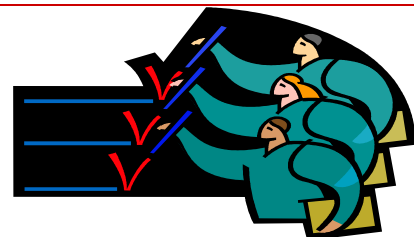
Tuition: \$450.00 (\$430 plus \$20 ACB Convention administrative fee). Credit card payments are accepted by secure on-line registration.

Lodging: You can make reservations by calling the Hyatt Regency at 1-888-421-1442; be sure to mention that you are with the American Council of the Blind Convention in order to receive the conference rate. If you'd like to make your reservation online, go to: <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/acb2013>. Rates are \$89 and do not include applicable taxes.

****NOTE:** Participation is strictly limited. The Institute will issue ACB-sponsored certificates to all successful participants confirming completion of this professional description training program.



CHECK IT OUT!



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND-AUDIO DESCRIPTION PROJECT
and the
DESCRIBED AND CAPTIONED MEDIA PROGRAM
Announce the
FIFTH ANNUAL YOUNG DESCRIBED FILM CRITIC Contest
A "Listening Is Learning" Initiative

If you're a young person who can't see or can't see well, audio description provides access to all the visual images of the movies that your sighted peers enjoy. Some films in movie theaters and certain DVDs have description available; many of those DVDs and the older VHS tapes with description can be borrowed at public libraries or state libraries for the blind. The **YOUNG DESCRIBED FILM CRITIC Contest** wants you to experience these films and the description soundtracks and tell us about them for a chance to win prizes and recognition for your school! And—a chance to hold the awesome title: **Young Described Film Critic of the Year!**



Enter On-Line at:

www.listeningislearning.org/get-involved_events-and-contests.html

There are three age categories: **Sophomore** (ages 7 to 10), **Junior** (ages 11 to 14), and **Senior** (ages 15 to 18). You can enter as many times as you like! All you need to do is to write, type or record your own film review of any described movie. Keep it short: 250 words maximum. Send your regular, large print, or Braille written entry via email or postal mail (submissions from outside the United States are fine) to:

ACB-Young Described Film Critic
2200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 650,
Arlington, VA 22201 USA
email: jsnyder@acb.org
phone: 202 467-5083

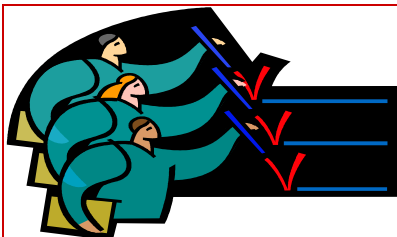


Please provide the following information with your entry:

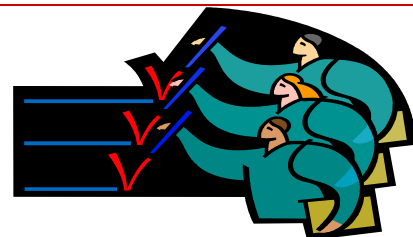
Name _____ Address _____
 Phone _____ Email _____
 Age category _____ Name of School and Class _____
 School address and phone number _____

The top nominees in each age category will be invited to an Awards Ceremony at the American Council of the Blind 2013 convention in Columbus, OH during the week of July 10.

TIP: For "Top Tips for Writing the Ultimate Film Review," visit the listening is learning website above.



CHECK IT OUT!



31st Annual CONFERENCE

Closing The Gap

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday
OCTOBER 9-11, 2013

Preconference Workshops
Monday and Tuesday, October 7-8, 2013

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

Preconference Workshops • Over 200 Presentation Hours • State-of-the-Art Commercial Exhibits

Assistive Technology in Special Education and Rehabilitation

Hailed as the most practical and best educational AT conference in North America, Closing The Gap is excited to share with you the 19 just-announced preconference workshops for October 7-8, 2013!

This year's workshop offerings include an official two-day PODD workshop by Linda Burkhart, an accessible assessments workshop by Dave Edyburn, a writing workshop by David Koppenhaver, and workshops on advanced Proloquo2Go and Proloquo4Text, Rett Syndrome, autism, birth to three, access and iPad integration, to name a few.

In addition, the conference itself (October 9-11) will boast over 200 presentation hours (to be announced in July), labs (including an iPad lab!) and an expansive exhibit hall.

There are many registration options and discounts available:

- \$30 RETURN discount (by June 30th)
- EARLY, GROUP, PARENT and STUDENT rates
- BUNDLED WORKSHOP pricing (a \$75 savings!)

CEUs and academic credit are available as well.

We encourage you to learn more about the conference by visiting our Web site now:

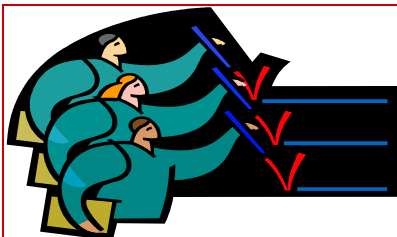
- View the preconference workshop descriptions and titles: <http://www.closingthegap.com/conference/workshops/>
- View the 2013 Closing The Gap Conference FAQ: <http://www.closingthegap.com/conference/faqs.lasso>
- Download the conference brochure: http://www.closingthegap.com/media/pdfs/conference_brochure.pdf
- REGISTER: <http://www.closingthegap.com/store/registration/>

SHARE your knowledge and your skills . . .

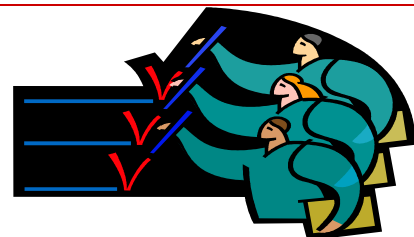
We would further like to invite you to consider submitting a one- or multiple-hour presentation proposal for the conference, Wednesday - Friday, October 9-11.

Click http://www.closingthegap.com/conference/call_for_participation.lasso for more information. Submission deadline is Thursday, May 2, 2013, 2:00 pm Central Daylight Time.

The learning opportunities are great, the networking nothing less than exceptional!



CHECK IT OUT!



to learn to read, yes, but to read what ???
 ...Učít se číst, ano, ale co ???
 ...Leren lezen, ja, maar wat lees je dan ???
 ...Jos opin lukemaan, onko mitään luottavaksi ???
 ...Nauczyć się czytać? Tak. Tylko co czytać ???
 ...apprendre à lire oui, mais à lire quoi ???
 ...imparare a leggere sì, ma che cosa ???

United Kingdom
 Czech Republic
 Netherlands
 Belgium
 Finland
 Poland
 France
 Italy



TYPHLO
 &
 TACTUS

2013

THE INTERNATIONAL TACTILE-ILLUSTRATED BOOK PRIZE

In partnership with CEVI

Typhlo & Tactus Tactile Book Contest 2013-Entries Due July 15

Once again APH is the U.S. national contact for the international biennial competition created to encourage improvement of the quality and quantity of tactile books for young children with visual impairments. Don't miss the chance to submit your tactile book, designed for children with visual impairments from birth to 12 years of age. Visit www.aph.org/edresearch/tactile-book-contest/ for rules and deadlines.

Colorado's District Sample Curriculum Project Teacher-created curriculum samples

This fall, over 500 Colorado educators, representing 61 school districts, participated in curriculum design workshops that resulted in the creation of 670 curriculum samples based on the 10 content areas of the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS). Utilizing a Colorado-designed and refined template, the samples provide organizing structures for addressing the grade-level expectations (GLEs), evidence outcomes (EOs) and 21st Century Skills that build students' mastery of the standards at each grade level. As voluntary resources for districts, the samples:

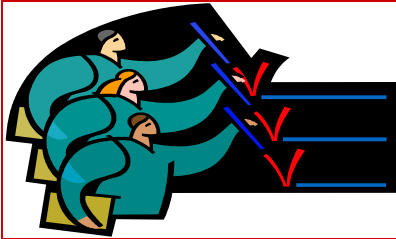
- Represent the translation of the CAS into unit overviews for all (10) content areas, grades k-12
- Illuminate possibilities for sequencing grade-level and content-specific standards across courses/years
- Offer one possible foundation for exploring standards-based unit and lesson-plan development

The samples, the blank template upon which they are based, and a template with definitions can currently be accessed on this website. Together, these resources were created by and for Colorado educators to support school districts as they intentionally plan for the successful implementation of the CAS in the 2013-14 school year. Indeed, initial feedback indicates that districts can envision utilizing the samples and blank template as starting points for the creation of their own curricula, as examples to build upon and augment, as crosswalk documents for curricular comparisons, and other purposeful and individualized uses.

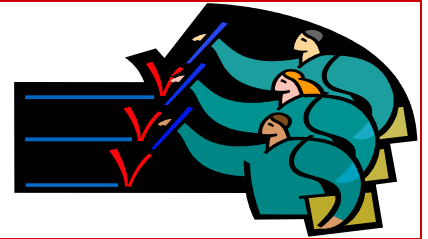
Check it out at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/StandardsAndInstruction/SampleCurriculumProject.asp>





CHECK IT OUT!



Colorado Center for the Blind Summer Programs for Kids!

Check out the following summer programs sponsored by the Colorado Center of the Blind. The programs offer an opportunity for our students to get together for social, mobility, literacy, daily living, and recreational skill-building opportunities.

Confidence Camp for Kids, Elementary School Program, June 10- June 21: This is a day program for children age 5-10. The kids will work on building skills in Braille and cane travel. They will prepare lunch each day and practice household chores. There will be fun activities such as swimming, hiking, picnicking, and going to an amusement park. For more details about the Confidence Camps for Kids, please check out the video at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rpzdBduVp4&feature=youtu.be>

Initiation to Independence, Middle School Program, July 15 – August 2: Students 12-14 years old will experience apartment living (with a counselor), shopping, cooking, recreational activities as well as building skills in braille, cane travel and more.

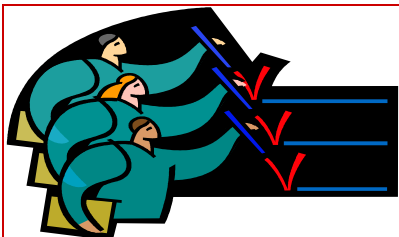
Earn and Learn, High School Program, June 7 – August 2: Students will have a half day paid work experience and half day program in building skills to become an employable adult. A trip to the NFB National Convention is included.

Summer for Success College-Prep Program, June 7–August 2: Students will learn how to navigate a college campus and survive in the college classroom. A trip to the NFB National Convention is included.

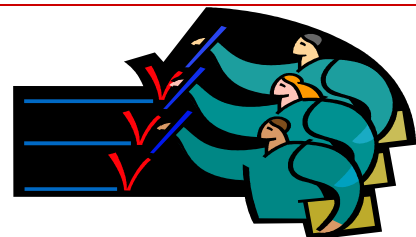
For more information please contact Brent Batron at bbatron@cocenter.org or (303) 778-1130.

Play Goalball with the Colorado Center for the Blind

The Colorado Center for the Blind offers goalball fun in their gym on Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m. This is open to students who are blind/visually impaired from a variety of ages. Goalball is a fun and exhilarating game that takes toughness and skill. To join them for goalball, call Brent Batron, Youth Services Coordinator, at 303-778-1130 ext. 222 and sign up!



CHECK IT OUT!



Summer 2013 will be Unforgettable!

This summer, capture a 5-minute APH product video while you are having fun with your friends at summer camp or as a summer school project. It can make you an instant APH Star.

Every entry in our Unforgettable APH Star contest is eligible to win up to \$150.00 cash and will be entered into a random drawing for three \$25.00 Amazon.com gift certificates. Entries must be received by September 17, 2013.

We already know you use APH products, so capture your best moments in a quick video and have an unforgettable summer!

For complete guidelines and submission form, go to: www.aph.org/contest.



Reminder to Print Your Educator License Online

As of January 1, 2013, CDE's Educator Licensing Office no longer prints and mails paper copies of educator licenses, endorsements, credentials or authorizations. These documents are available online and can be printed by the licensee.

This new process allows licenses to become available much quicker; cutting three weeks of print time. Teachers/educators receive instant verification and licenses will be easier to keep track of for people.

For more information, visit: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/Printing_faqs.htm

CDE Education Effectiveness Team E-Newsletter

The CDE Educator Effectiveness team supports districts and BOCES with guidelines, trainings and resources for implementing the educator effectiveness law (Senate Bill 10-191). The team's ultimate goal is to support educators as they continually improve their impact on student learning. Make sure to sign up for the educator effectiveness e-newsletter to receive updates when new resources are released: <http://bit.ly/UAzTj0>

Yes, I CAN

Exploring the challenges of being independent

DATE: JUNE 16-20, 2013

Hiking

Bowling

Swimming

Bus Travel

Team building

Preparing simple meals

... and more!



Daily Living Skills
Orientation and
Mobility
Recreation and
Leisure
Social Skills
Technology

Students, currently in 6th-8th grade who are blind or visually impaired, get active with CSDB's Yes, I CAN!



Location:

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind
33 North Institute Street/Colorado Springs, CO

www.csdb.org

Cost: \$50.00 (Minimum 5 students; Maximum 15 students)

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: JUNE 3, 2013

RSVP to Donna Keale: 719-330-7387; dkeale@csdb.org



Family Learning Retreat 2013

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind
33 North Institute Street
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903
719-578-2100; www.csdb.org
June 14-16, 2013

The Family Learning Retreat (FLR) will be returning to the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind June 14-16, 2013. The FLR is a three-day retreat focused on families with a child who is deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired or deafblind. This is an opportunity for families to meet other families while networking, learning and having fun together.

Parents /adults will attend training during the day, while children participate in supervised recreational activities within the youth program. Check-in and dinner begins Friday June 14, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. followed by an opening session. The retreat ends by noon on Sunday, June 16. Lodging will be available Friday and Saturday nights in the CSDB dormitories. Meals provided include Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch, and Sunday breakfast.

The cost of the Family Learning Retreat is only \$15.00 per adult and \$10.00 per child under the age of 18. Spanish and sign language interpreters will be provided upon request.

Parents will be responsible for providing any assisted feeding or medical procedure their child requires. A nurse will not be available during the Family Learning Retreat.

Come and relax. Make new friends. Experience a valuable learning opportunity.

Questions or to register, contact Diane Covington at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind at **(719) 578-2225**. For Spanish speaking participants, contact Gloria Romero **(719)578-2288**.





**Colorado School
 for the Deaf and
 the Blind**

33 North Institute Street
 Colorado Springs, CO 80903

**Check/purchase
 order must
 accompany
 registration**

Make checks payable to:
 CSDB

Mail to:
 Attention: Diane Covington
 33 North Institute Street
 Colorado Springs, CO 80903
 Email: dcovington@csdb.org

Family Learning Retreat

When: June 14-16, 2013

Where: Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

**Registration Deadline
 June 1, 2013**

Colorado families with a child who is deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired or deafblind attend to network, learn and have fun together. Parents/adults will attend training during the day, while children participate in supervised recreational activities within the youth program.

Mom's Name _____
First Name Last Name

Dad's Name _____
First Name Last Name

Mailing Address _____ City _____ Zip Code _____

Phone(h) _____ Email _____

1st Child's Name Age Deaf, Blind, Deafblind, Other, None

2nd Child's Name Age Deaf, Blind, Deafblind, Other, None

3rd Child's Name Age Deaf, Blind, Deafblind, Other, None

Additional Adult _____ Relationship _____

Additional Adult _____ Relationship _____

Previously Attended? (Circle) Yes No

Accommodations: _____ Sign Language Interpreter

Specify _____

_____ Other (such as Braille or Spanish Language)

Specify _____

FEES

_____ Adult Registration - \$15.00/Adult

Total Adult \$

_____ Child Registration - \$10.00/Child

Total Child \$

_____ Totals

For additional information or if you need to cancel PRIOR to the close of business June 1, 2013, please contact Diane Covington at dcovington@csdb.org. No reimbursements for cancellations made after June 1, 2013. Please request ADA accommodations at time of registration.



Retiro de Aprendizaje Familiar 2013

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

33 North Institute Street

Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903

719-578-2100; www.csdb.org

14-16 de junio, 2013

El Retiro de Aprendizaje de Familia regresará a la Escuela de Colorado para los Sordos y los Ciegos el 14-16 de junio de 2013. El retiro es un evento sobre tres días que se centra en familias que tienen hijos con pérdida auditiva total/parcial, discapacidad visual o que es sordociego. Esto es una oportunidad para que familias conozcan a otras familias mientras que establecen amistades, aprenden y diviertan juntos.

Los padres/adultos asistieran entrenamientos durante el día, mientras que los niños participan en actividades divertidas dentro de un programa de la juventud. La registración y la cena es el viernes, 14 de junio a las 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM y después habrá una sesión de bienvenida. El retiro se concluye a mediodía en domingo. Habrá habitaciones disponibles en los dormitorios de CSDB para las noches de viernes y sábado. Las comidas incluidas serán la cena de viernes, el desayuno y almuerzo en sábado y el desayuno en domingo.

El costo del Retiro de Aprendizaje de Familia es solo \$15 por adulto y \$10.00 por niño bajo la edad de 18. Interpretes de Español y Lenguaje de Señas serán disponibles por solicitar.

Los padres serán responsables de proporcionar cualquier alimentación asistida o procedimiento médico que requiere su hijo o hija. No habrá enfermeras disponibles durante el curso del retiro.

Vengan a relajarse. Conocer nuevas amistades. Disfrutarse en una experiencia de aprendizaje inolvidable

¿Tienen preguntas o quieren registrarse? Llame a Diane Covington en CSDB al **(719) 578-2225**. Participantes hispano-hablantes llamen a Gloria Romero al **(719) 578-2288**.





... Learning, Thriving, Leading



Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

33 North Institute Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

Check/orden de compra debe incluirse con este formulario.

Escribe el cheque al nombre: **CSDB**

Envíe por correo a:
Attention: Diane Covington
33 North Institute Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903
Email: dcovington@csdb.org

Retiro de Aprendizaje Familiar

Cuando: 14-16 de junio, 2013

Lugar: Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind



Familias de Colorado con un niño que es sordo/deficiencia auditiva, ciego/discapacidad visual o sordo-ciego asisten para establecer contactos, aprender y divertirse juntos. Padres/adultos asistirán entrenamientos durante el día, mientras que sus hijos participen en varias actividades proporcionado por un programa de la juventud.

Nombre de la Madre _____
Nombre Apellido

Nombre del Padre _____
Nombre Apellido

Dirección Postal _____ Ciudad _____ Código _____

Teléfono (h) _____ Correo Elec. _____

Nombre del Niño/a _____ Edad _____ Sordo, Ciego, Sordo-ciego, Otro, Nonguno

Nombre del Niño/a _____ Edad _____ Sordo, Ciego, Sordo-ciego, Otro, Nonguno

Nombre del Niño/a _____ Edad _____ Sordo, Ciego, Sordo-ciego, Otro, Nonguno

Adulto Adicional _____ Parentesco _____

Adulto Adicional _____ Parentesco _____

Haz UD. asistido previamente? (Encierre uno) Si No

Acomodaciones: _____ Intérprete de Señas
Especifique _____
Otro (por ejemplo Braille o Español)
Especifique _____

CUOTAS

_____ Registración del Adulto - **\$15.00/Adulto**

Total Adulto \$

_____ Registración de Niño- **\$10.00/Niño**

Total Niños \$

_____ Total

Para información adicional o si necesita cancelar antes del cierre de negocios 01 de junio de 2013, póngase en contacto con Gloria Romero en gromero@csdb.org o al 719-578-2288. No se entregara reembolsos para cancelaciones realizadas después de 01 de junio de 2013. Por favor solicite acomodaciones de ADA en el momento de la inscripción.

Vision Coalition Meeting Minutes – May 2, 2013

Persons in Attendance: Tanni Anthony, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, Barb Galgano, Charlotte Javier, Jennifer Langley, Judy Mumford, Jim Olson, and Angela Sims.

Persons Absent: Everett Romero and LaVerne Dell

Guest in Attendance: Sarah Sonnier

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

CAER	=	Colorado Chapter of the Association of the Education of the Blind/Visually Impaired
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
UNC	=	University of Northern Colorado

MEMBERS OF VISION COALITION FOR THE 2012-13 SCHOOL YEAR

Anchor Center for Blind Children – Charlotte Javier
Colorado AER Chapter – Barb Galgano
Colorado Department of Education – Tanni Anthony
Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – LaVerne Dell
Colorado Instructional Materials Center – Jim Olson
Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind – Adams School for the Blind – Jennifer Langley
Colorado Parents of Blind Children – Everett Romero
Metro TVI / COMS– Nancy Cozart
Northern TVI / COMS – Paula Conroy
Southern TVI / COMS – Judy Mumford
Western TVI / COMS – Angela Sims
University of Northern Colorado VI Program – Paula Conroy

PROGRAM UPDATES

Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)

Our final meeting of the year was on April 19th. Jim came up from CIMC and introduced the newest member of their team, Laurie Taylor. Jim shared his enthusiasm for a positive, hard-working group he now has serving the students in Colorado who have visual impairments. At the meeting, we received information on new APH products and we also received info on the Envision Kits. Several districts were able to take kits with them to put in to use right away. We also were informed that district electronics will need to be sent back to the CIMC labeled with the child’s name for the summer. It was also stated that braille writers are not coming back to CIMC this summer. I am sure I can speak for many, thank you, Jim and all the staff at CIMC for communicating with us as the TVIs and contact personnel what is needed and when, handling glitches when they happen and continuing to move forward in how to streamline information.

The metro low vision clinic was held in February this year. It was once again a success for many students and their families. A big thank you goes to Nancy Knight who has been our site coordinator for the last several years. She will be stepping down from this role next year. Amber Rundle Kahn will be the low vision clinic coordinator for next year.

Nancy Knight and Nancy Cozart are finishing their roles as metro teacher meeting coordinators. Mimi Schaper and Jeannie Lei will be the coordinators for the Denver metro area for the 2013-14 school year. Nancy will stay on the Vision Coalition for the next school year as the metro representative.

Nancy Cozart has just met a young adult contact of someone in the metro area who would like to start goalball team. If you know adults who would be interested, please let her know at ncozart@lps.k12.co.us. This person also has an overall interest in fitness and would like to share his interests with kids. The hope is to network with area resources to put his talents to use.

Discussion: *Parents and teachers, what fitness and physical activities would you like to see offered in the metro area? The Expand Program would be something to check out for what they offer children and youth. Another resource would be USABA. Barb Galgano would be willing to help with bicycle opportunities. It is important to also check out local park and recreation programs for opportunities. If others have possible resources, please be in touch with Nancy Cozart.*

Southern Region (Judy Mumford)

Southern Region teachers and students have been busy with a variety of activities from the Zoo trip and Beeping Egg hunt, (sponsored by CSDB) to our last low vision evaluation clinic to learning new tech.

Several of the BOCES purchased VisioBooks. The students say the most challenging aspect is learning to look at the screen and write but they are enjoying this highly portable device.

Another BOCES received a mini-grant from CAER and took a team of seven staff to observe Anchor Center for Blind Children in Denver. They send thanks to AER for supporting school teams, and to Anchor for their hospitality and openness to sharing their program.

The Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic was April 25-26. We want to give many thanks to Dr. Tom Theune and to Jim Olson for providing yet again a great clinic for our students. Thank you to Donice Fennimore for coordinating the last Southern Region Clinic of the 2012-2013 school year in Colorado Springs. Thank you to CSDB, Adams Building (School for the Blind) for hosting the location Thank you to the following TVIs/school districts who accompanied 7 students to the clinic: El Paso County District 11, Linda Campbell; Fremont County RE-1 (Canon City) Carol Davidson; Pikes Peak BOCES, Wendy Watson; Pueblo County District 60, Bev Cherry; and Ute Pass BOCES, Chloann Woolley.

The Southern Region TVI's monthly meeting was recently held at Mountain Metropolitan Transit in Colorado Springs who gave a good presentation and answered questions. New technology was demonstrated that will be rolled out in August 2013. A big thank you goes to Jim Olson for coordinating the Southern Region meetings.

Southern Colorado O&M project for next school year (2013-2014): Southern Region TVI Meeting participants will start an on-going group project next school year. The city of Colorado Springs does not currently have an accurate database of existing auditory and/or tactual signals. The Southern Region group will identify intersections with auditory and/or tactile signals throughout the city which will be compiled into a spreadsheet available to service providers in the region.

Discussion:

What is happening with Bonnie Snyder's retirement? *Yes, Bonnie is retiring! We thank her for all of her contributions. There is not a replacement for this position through CDE funding.*

What are district's options for providing services for 0-3? What are district's options for providing services for 0-3? If an administrative unit is interested in providing birth through three services to infants and toddlers, it should work closely with the local Community Centered Board to discuss fiscal and service arrangements and are not the responsibility of the AU to implement. Part C services are identified through the Individualized Family Service Plan. There are some instances where district employees choose to contract with Part C to provide Part C services under an IFSP and separately from their employment with an administrative unit. Funding for any service provided by a school district to a child on an IFSP is determined through the Part C funding hierarchy. There would be no reason for Part B providers/funds to support Part C services, outside of the initial or transition evaluation.

What is happening with the access for on line testing for MAPS etc, is there anything new? If an assessment is required by the state, the state has an obligation to address allowable accommodations and an alternate assessment for learners who have a significant cognitive disability. If an assessment is required by the district for a population of students (e.g., "all" third graders, then the responsibility to address allowable accommodations and an alternate assessment is on the district. One district worked with their assessment / special education personnel for approval to build a body of evidence of equivalency content information specific to their district-required online assessment.

Eye Doctor Form: Jim shared that the CIMC created for form for eye care specialists to use to validate eligibility for federal quota count when the eye exam notes are insufficient. It has been used by Anchor Center for the Blind with great success in helping to identify these students as being legally blind. Jim will send it out to the field.

Western Region (Angela Sims)

It is hard to believe we are wrapping up another school year. Due to schedules and distance the Western Slope TVIs were unable to meet as a group this year. Angela will stay on the Vision Coalition for the next school year as the western region representative. Kevin O'Brien will be retiring at the end of the school year. Two new TVIs will be hired for the Montrose and Delta School Districts.

Discussion:

Teacher Evaluations: The new teacher evaluations are an area of concern. If there is a rubric for teachers and a rubric for related support staff, how will teachers be evaluated when they are both a TVI and COMS? Will CDE be giving guidance or is this a district decision? If CDE gives guidance when will districts hear what they should do?

Courtney Cabrera from the CDE Teacher Effectiveness Unit provided the following response to these questions: First, it's sometimes tough to remember that, ultimately, districts can decide how they want to evaluate their licensed personnel under SB 10-191. This means that they are welcome to use the tools and resources CDE creates and distributes, but they can also decide to use their own systems of evaluation. They will, however, have to align their system of evaluation for Specialized Service Professionals (SPP) to whatever Standards and Elements are eventually passed by the State Board of Education (the work groups have made their recommendations to the State Council for Educator Effectiveness who will then make their recommendations to the State Board most likely in May). So yes, it can be up to districts to make the decision about how your TVI/O&M will be evaluated.

Because the SSP groups are on a delayed implementation timeline (full implementation does not begin until the 2014-15 school year), we do have the time to think about the tools and resources we create and the messaging that goes into posting/distributing them. Based on our conversation, I think we do have the opportunity to either create the merged O&M/teacher rubrics into something that would measure both aspects of the job, or we can make a recommendation to the field once the tools/resources are released on if we would like those folks be evaluated on both full rubrics, or we can do a combination of both of those, or neither based on feedback. The one year delay buys us that time to conduct the pilot and learn what will work best for the educator and the system in which they are working. I'm not sure how helpful those responses are above, but I'm happy to provide more context if necessary. Unfortunately, we just don't know what the recommendation will look like, however, if your group would be willing, this is where their/your expertise can absolutely inform the process

Northern Region (Paula Conroy)

Christine Moe will be leaving her northern positions as she progresses through her doctoral program. Centennial BOCES is in the process of hiring a new person to work across several northern BOCES. We thank Christine for her work in the northern region. Elaine Karns has volunteered to be the northern region representative on the Vision Coalition for the next school year.

Discussion:

Technology Training: What is the status of the webinar Bonnie was putting together for using screen readers with Google? If people are interested, please be in touch directly with Bonnie.

Technology Loan Bank: What exactly is the technology loan bank and what is in it? How do we find out when items are added and where can we review the paperwork our districts must sign when borrowing from the loan bank? The only people that can check out this equipment are CO TVIs. The paperwork and equipment inventory can be found on the CSDB webpage – go to: <http://www.csdb.org/Default.aspx?DN=32db18c1-e9ae-4d94-af50-32e194303220>

Role of the TVI: There have been questions about what is our role these days---especially with learners with significant support needs who have a visual impairment. It is a challenge to have students with just vision impairment who require lots of time dedicated to teaching access and compensatory skills. Should we be reconsidering priorities? It would be helpful to have input on this from Vision Coalition. One recommendation is to use the caseload formula to document the FTE need for TVIs. Any child who is identified as having a visual impairment must have a Learning Media Assessment and services to support the child's educational needs (specialized instruction) specific to the impact of the visual impairment. This may be accomplished in a variety of service models, including consultation, with key classroom personnel to ensure access and learning. The frequency of service should be based on the needs of the child.

UNC (Paula Conroy)

Some fun staff updates: Paula Conroy has been promoted to full professor! Silvia Torres Correa was recently married! Kay Ferrell was recently awarded the AFB Migel Medal! There are quite a few in-state students with the program. The need for TVIs is increasing across the country. It will be important to help identify practicum placements for students. Jeannie Lei, Beth Myers, and Meghan Crosby will graduate this May. All three are already or will soon be employed in a Colorado administrative unit.

CAER (Barb Galgano)

CAER Board met on two separate occasions, March 6th and April 10th. There have been some changes to the Mini-Grants Program and updated events. Please visit our website for events state wide and nationally, mini grants for teachers, students and parents, membership information, award nominations, ACVREP reimbursement, and how you can become more active in CAER! Website address <http://co.aerbvi.org>

Changes to the Mini Grants Program process: 1) Amount to be distributed can be UP TO \$300, 2) as a current CAER member you can sponsor yourself, a student, parent, or group of individuals (with participant names attached,) 3) If the individual is awarded a mini grant they CANNOT apply for two years following their award (if award is not received, re-apply), and 4) Mini grant applications are reviewed by the CAER Board two times per year at the November and April meetings. BE MINDFUL OF WHO IS ASKING FOR MINI GRANT ASSISTANCE AND OF POSSIBLE FUTURE NEEDS. Mini Grant awarded this year to Brandon Skogen of Grandview High School (Cherry Creek) for optical aid assistance. Brandon will be attending Colorado School of Mines in the Fall. Chloann Wooley was the recipient of a mini grant that allowed prospective teachers to come to Anchor to observe the incoming student. Congratulations!

- CAER Annual Statewide Board Meeting and Awards Banquet will be held on Friday May 3, 2013 at the Cedar Creek Pub, 2100 North Ursula, Aurora CO 80045. Happy Hour @ 5:30 PM followed by banquet to begin at 7:00 p.m.

CAER and CSDB co-hosted the Annual Snowshoe event held at YMCA of the Rockies Snow Mountain Ranch March 1-3. This year was a great success with 38 participants enjoying the beautiful weather, snowshoeing, swimming, team building games, ice skating, tubing, camp fire and marshmallow roast! A great time was had by all!

- Bring your family, friends and co-workers to a fundraising event to be held at McAlister's Deli, 13950 E. Mississippi Avenue, Aurora CO 80012 (303-750-0292) on June 5th 5-8 PM. CAER member volunteers need to assist with event. Please contact Heather Parsons-Solberg at Heather.Solberg@va.gov

- Members are always welcome at CAER Board meeting! We are currently seeking new Board members, consider joining us, we would love to have you! Barb Galgano will stay on the Vision Coalition for the next school year as the CAER representative.

Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (LaVerne Dell)

Currently DVR is in a state of change. Nancy Smith, our former Director, has transitioned out of the Agency, and Todd Jorgensen will be the Acting Director until the position is filled. DVR has also implemented a waitlist for all clients who have been determined eligible for services who are not yet in a Plan. It is important to move forward with applying with DVR because an individual comes off of the waitlist based on his/her application date and significance of the disability(ies). If folks have any questions, they are welcome to call LaVerne at (303) 866-4210.

On another note, some DVR staff along with Barb Palmer, Tanni Anthony, Mike Plansker, Nancy Cozart, and staff from the Colorado Center for the Blind have been meeting to discuss collaborative approaches to serving youth with visual impairments. Although these meetings are in the early stages, we are optimistic that there will be a spectrum of comprehensive services for youth in the future.

Anchor Center for Blind Children (Charlotte Javier)

All past Anchor Center students and their families are invited to join us at our learning facility for a memorable Student Reunion. Reunite for an afternoon of reminiscing and commemorating our outstanding alumni group! Saturday, June 8, 2013 2:00-4:30 pm. Celebrating 30 years of students and family!

We are continuing to work on some type of Expanded Core Curriculum manual addressing birth to 5. This will be for parents and educators. We should have something ready to go by next fall. All staff is involved, but JC is leading the project. Ideas welcome!

It looks like we are still moving forward with the Denver Public Schools contract. The plan is to serve the kids here for their first year of preschool from 3-4 and then try to do a split with part Anchor and part DPS the next year. The goal is to provide services in a familiar environment to help very young visually impaired preschoolers develop key concepts, independence and social skills needed to move into larger classrooms. Anchor staff is helping with the Child Find and IEP process. The decision regarding location is being made after the IEP and is the sole responsibility of the location determination team at DPS.

Many staff members at Anchor are gearing up to attend the Western Regional Conference: "Assessment and Strategies for Infants, Toddlers, Students, and Adults with Sensory Loss," which is to be held in Jackson WY June 19-21, 2013.

We are very sad to say goodbye to Cathy Smyth. She has been with the Anchor Center for the Blind for many, many years. We wish her the best in all her future endeavors! Lisa and Stef have started Braille training for staff every Thursday. Preschool Graduation is Thursday June 6, 10:00 am.

We have 10 graduates this year moving on to their local kindergartens. Congratulations to the Anchor Center Class of 2013! Anchors Away! Sarah Bickford Vallese will be the new Vision Coalition representative for the next school year. *(We thank Charlotte for her time with the Vision Coalition!)*

Colorado School for the Blind (Jennifer Langley)

In March, our high school students competed in the Poetry Out Loud competition. Each student memorized and presented two poems. The winner then went onto the State competition. CSDB was proud to be represented by Ms. Chandler Williams. Chandler performed *Love Song* by Dorothy Parker and *Sing* by James Weldon Johnson. Although she did not qualify for the championship round, she gained significant public speaking experience and represented our school well.

Also in March, students from the School for the Blind attended a Career Day, hosted by the Employability Center here on campus. Many businesses from the Colorado Springs area participated and students had a chance to ask questions and learn about various career opportunities. The Employability Center is a CSDB program designed to assist students in gaining skills that will make them good employees.

To follow up from the Career Day, all the students participated in a *Build a Business Project*. Each group presented their business plan with jingles, slogans, budgets, business cards and a full color/braille display. Especially exciting were the presentations that utilized their newly acquired technology skills in multi-media presentations. There were ten groups that presented from third grade to twelfth grade. The winning group (an 11th and 12th grade duo) researched and presented their future business D2B - a bicycle shop. One of D2B's founders currently has an off campus job learning bicycle maintenance and is planning on pursuing a career in bicycle sales and repair. Getting involved with the community is one of our goals at CSDB. We were honored to have as one of our judges a gentleman that leads an organization that assists small businesses in getting organized and connected with the community. He is very excited to help our *Build a Business Project* grow and become an annual event by collaborating with the local public high schools in connection with our Career Center.

Congrats to Jamie Lugo on the birth of her son Elijah! Jamie will be coming back half time as a Daily Living Skills teacher. Bertha Guerrero (Braille Teacher) and Nick Pagani (elementary /TVI) will be leaving the School for the Blind. So there are several positions open at CSDB, including a technology specialist position.

Colorado Instructional Material Center (Jim Olson)

All technology checked out from the CIMC needs to be returned to the CIMC at the end of this 2012-2013 school year. This includes everything with a serial number, a battery, or an electrical cord, such as the APH Refreshbraille 18™, Book Port Plus, etc. Please clearly mark the technology devices and their components (cords, chargers, etc.) with the name of the student using the device so that the exact same device can be checked back out to the same student for next school year (2013-2014).

This May and June will mark Laurie Taylor's first end-of-the-year book return blitz! Please use the color-coded return labels mailed to your district's CIMC contact person, pack your boxes well, use sufficient amounts of tape to keep your box from exploding in transit, and if you are shipping one title in three boxes, label them "box 1 of 3", "box 2 of 3", and "box 3 of 3" ...you know the drill. Thank You!

Chris Maynard (El Paso County District 20) and Debbie Haberkorn (CIMC) attended the National Braille Association Spring 2013 Conference held in Gaithersberg, MD in April. Chris was the recipient of a \$200 scholarship sponsored by the CIMC to assist with her conference expenses. A copy of the conference handouts is available from the CIMC professional lending library inventory. The next NBA conference will be held in Colorado Springs in October 24-26, 2013. The CIMC has offered their assistance to the NBA planning committee. If any Colorado talent is interested in volunteering, please contact Debbie Haberkorn at dhaberkorn@csdb.org or (719) 578-2197.

In April Directors of Special Education for 95 school districts received color-coded copies of the January 7, 2013 CDE/ CIMC count of Colorado learners who have been identified as visually impaired, including blindness. The CIMC updates a working copy of this statewide count on a daily basis so remember to submit new "VI Registration" and "Exit" forms for students any day of the year.

Coming Soon! The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) (www.aph.org) will soon be introducing a new section of their website related to the Common Core State Standards. APH has already started pairing APH products with CCSS. Look for additional improvements to their website in the near future.

Jim Olson participated in the U.S. Department of Education Expert Review Panel (for fiscal year 2012) facilitated by Dr. Cay Holbrook on March 12, 2013. On April 8-11, Jim chaired the Educational Services Advisory Committee (ESAC) meeting. One of the roles of the Committee is to provide oversight and leadership in the planning, evaluation, and delivery of product-related services provided by the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind. The formal committee report will be presented at the formal meeting of Ex Officio Trustees at the Annual Meeting in October 2013. The approved report is printed in the Annual Report of APH.

The CIMC is happy to tailor a meeting specific to your school district to review services available from the CIMC and review procedures. The CIMC staff met with the supervisor, TVIs, and vision department staff, of Jefferson County District RE-1 (JeffCo) in February and will be meeting with the supervisor and staff of Arapahoe County District 28J (Aurora) in mid-May. Contact Jim Olson (719) 578-2195, jolson@csdb.org to set up a meeting.

CSDB – BVI Outreach (Jim Olson)

CSDB Outreach Services co-sponsored the 2nd Biennial Math and Science Institute for Instruction held April 17-20 in Denver. CDE provided clock hour certificates for this event. If you attended and did not tell Tanni your clock hours, it is not too late to do so.

The Technology Loan Bank for the Blind continues to actively ship equipment to Colorado TVIs. The APH VisioBook has been a particularly popular item this semester. Equipment inventory and Order Forms (to be signed by Directors of Special Education) are available on the CSDB website (www.csdb.org).

Upcoming Calendar of Outreach Related Events:

June 14-16, 2013 - ***“Family Learning Retreat”***. No Cost. Questions or to register, contact Diane Covington at (719) 578-2225 or dcovington@csb.org. For Spanish-speaking participants, contact Gloria Romero (719) 578-2288.

June 16-20, 2013 - ***“Yes, I Can! – Exploring the challenges of being independent”*** Students currently in 6th-8th grade who are blind or visually impaired. Hiking, bowling, swimming, bus travel, team building, preparing simple meals, and more! Deadline to register is June 3, 2013. Contact Donna Keale at (719) 330-7387; dkeale@csdb.org.

June 17-27, 2013 - ***“Bell Camp”*** (Colorado Springs, CSDB location) Children gain confidence in reading and writing braille while engaged in games, crafts and exciting outdoor activities. Contact Jessica Beecham for more information: jbeecham@cocenter.org or (303) 778-1130, ext. 223. A second camp will run July 15-26 at the Rocky Mountain MS Center, Westminster. CSDB has provided mini-grant funds for the camps.

June 23-28, 2013 - ***“Colorado Sports Education Camp”*** For students who are Blind/Visually Impaired Ages 10-16. Cost: \$50 per student (includes all food, lodging, and activities). To Register: Contact Donna Keale at (719) 330-7387; dkeale@csb.org

October 24-26, 2013 ***National Braille Association Fall 2013 Conference***

Colorado Department of Education (Tanni Anthony)

Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project: The project is in its fifth year of a five-year grant cycle. The project’s mission is free technical assistance to parents and services providers 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. We are still waiting to hear whether the OSEP will offer an opportunity for states to write for new grant projects beginning October 1, 2013. Please get ready for requests for letters of support!

- *Project Webpage:* The webpage url changed this fall and continues to be loaded with content for parents and teachers – <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-DB.asp>

◆ *Summer Institute:* The 2013 Summer Institute on Deafblindness and Significant Support Needs will be held in the Denver area on June 10-14th. We will once again featured two internationally-recognized experts in the field of literacy and learners with significant disabilities. This five-day training was a stunning event and continued the trend to ensure that all students are providing literacy instruction. Registration information will be shared in early March. The strong focus will be to target district teams for the trainings. Those personnel who have attended this training in the past will be considered, but not guarantee attendance.

- *Western Region Early Intervention Conference:* The project is involved in this June 2013 regional conference, which will be held in Jackson Hole, WY. The focus is on children ages birth through five who have sensory loss. The CO DB Project is sponsoring Millie Smith to speak on Symbols and Meaning (SAM). Travel scholarship applications for persons interested in attending this training were due into CDE by April 29th. We hope to support several people to attend the conference!

Specialized Service Professionals (SSP): Members of the O and M Specialist committee have met several times. The State Council for Educator Effectiveness has worked through all of the subgroup's recommendations for Standards, Elements, and Definitions. The rubrics have been drafted for each of the nine SSP groups and were reviewed at an April 30th meeting. The work will be reviewed at the Thursday session of the O&M / Low Vision training in early May.

CDE State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment: The training for the next fall must focus on English Language Arts, the focus of ESSU's Access, Learning, and Literacy Team. The proposed dates will be the first or second Thursday evening, Friday, and Saturday of the month of October. A target topic will be to address CDE literacy initiatives (Colorado Academic Standards and the READ Act), and include general education professionals.

Annual O&M Conference: This year's conference will focus on low vision. The Friday full-day session is open to TVIs and COMSs. Thursday evening and the all day Saturday session will be reserved only for Colorado COMSs. We are fortunate to have Dr. Duane Geruschat and Dr. Audrey Smith as our guest trainers.

Low Vision Evaluation Clinics: Five clinics were funded again for school year 2012-13. We thank our LVE Team (Dr. Tom Theune, Jim Olson, Wendy Stoltman, and Debbie Haberkorn) and all of our site coordinators (Sarah Sonnier, Donice Fennimore, Nancy Knight, Rita Albright, and Vicki Pearson).

Recruitment and Retention: We have recently filled two positions – Grace Katolas is on board with Aurora School District. Erin Keller has just been hired for Adams 12. Julie King is back as a Colorado TVI in Brighton School District. Meghan Crosby and Beth Myers will work in Montrose and Delta next year. We say farewell and thank you to Kevin O'Brien, Sue Newhart Larson, and Barbara Adams, as they move forward to retirement. Bonnie Snyder is also retiring from her CDE part-time technology consultant role. We also say goodbye to Cheri Aumueller and Pakaj Gaur (Adams 12), Bertha Guerrero (CSDB), and Nick Pagani (CSDB) as they move onto other states. Another change is that Amber Rundle Kahn will be working in Englewood School District next fall. Currently we have openings in the northern region (a composite FTE from several BOCES), Jefferson County, Aurora School District, and CSDB (Adams Building and Outreach).

Listservs: 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 COMs. The second one is specific to Colorado brailists. If anyone has questions about the listservs, please be in touch with Tanni.

Eligibility Definition - Visual Impairment, Including Blindness: The ECEA Rules were updated in October 2012 with all the eligibility definitions with the exception of "child with a developmental delay." This last eligibility definition was finalized in early March 2013. Training on the new definitions and eligibility criteria has occurred in several administrative units in the past few months and will be ongoing throughout the next school year. Administrative units have until July 1, 2016 to adopt the new definitions and eligibility criteria. For the training materials, please go to: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/Training_ECEAEligibility.asp

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Funded Projects for 2013-14

CDE ESSU Approved Funded Projects

State Conference on Blindness/Low Vision	Low Vision Evaluation Clinics
State Orientation and Mobility Training	Braille Format TCAPs
Braille Competency Testing /Mentor Support	Vision Coalition
IPad Training	TVI Mentoring

Funds have been reserved for an iPad training(s) and Tanni is thinking that this training will be offered in January 2014. It may be that we do two of the same trainings on different days to minimize the number of participants at one time. It was also suggested that there may be a Beginner Level and an Advance Level during the same day to divide the group. Two potential presenters have been identified.

CSDB – Blindness

CIMC
Low Vision Evaluation Clinics (CSDB staff)

CoAlt Discussion

The reading section of the CoAlt cannot be read to the child. This is also true with the TCAP. A recent situation came up that challenged this premise specific to a child whose primary / sole learning modality is auditory. There is a Level of Independence 2 scaffolding strategy, which does allow verbal modeling of the correct answer. This strategy is used when the student has not been able to demonstrate the answer to the question up to this point. This has been helpful in some situations as described above.

Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks for Braille

Tanni shared a 400 page document that the Maryland Department of Education prepared specific to their state standards (based on the Common Core State Standards) and “a braille framework.” The document embeds the braille and tactile graphics necessary to: (1) access the *Maryland Common Core State Curriculum Frameworks* at each specific grade/course level for ease of use; (2) encourage vertical and horizontal discussions regarding standards, curriculum, and instruction; and (3) provide guidance on grade-level expectation for students who read braille to the intended audience: teachers of students who are blind and visually impaired, general and special education teachers, related vision service providers (for example, O&M specialists, braille transcribers, paraprofessionals), and school / district / and state-level administrators, and parents. This document is not intended to be an instructional guide with strategies or procedures for teaching a braille reader. It is a framework for equal, grade-level expectations of the braille skills needed to access the general education curriculum. Additional materials, resources, and professional development are needed to promote effective instructional practices.

The Vision Coalition would like to take the summer to further study the document to determine if key recommendations per grade level can be extracted in a shorter document. It was also recommended that it be a tool to share at the fall CDE Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment.

A heartfelt thanks to the members of the Vision Coalition for school year 2012-13: **Tanni Anthony, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, LaVerne Dell, Barb Galgano, Charlotte Javier, Jenn Langley, Judy Mumford, Jim Olson, Everett Romero, and Angela Sims.**

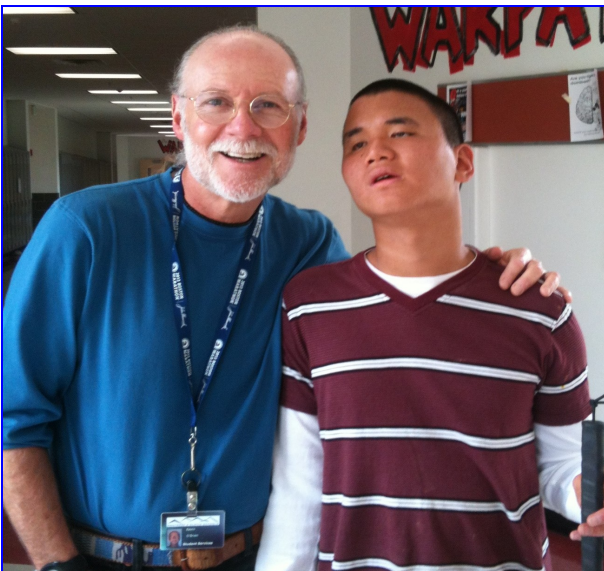
Task	Person Responsible	Date Due
Send Tanni program report updates	All VC members	September 20, 2013

Date and Agenda for next Meeting: September 25, 2013 at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Meeting

IN GRATITUDE AND HONOR, WE GIVE OUR THANKS

Barbara Adams is retiring from Mountain BOCES. She moved from Tennessee to Colorado to work in the Easter Seals Handicamp in 1973. When she found that there was no humidity and very few bugs in Colorado, she stayed and went on to get a Bachelor's Degree in Special Education from UNC. After that, Barbara went to work as the first special education teacher for students with severe disabilities (remember PL 94-142?) for the Roaring Fork School District in Glenwood Springs, Carbondale, and Basalt, a job she held for 18 years.

After receiving a Masters Degree in Special Education from UNC in 1998, Barbara was employed by Mountain BOCES as a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments, including Blindness and an O&M Specialist. She has been covering an area of 8,000 square miles for Mountain BOCES for the past 14 years! Barbara was chosen as a Fulbright Exchange Teacher and taught in Warwick, England for the 1993/94 school year. She notes that she has had the opportunity to work with many fabulous teachers, para-professionals, other service providers and administrators, school districts, SWAAC teams, CDE groups, and of course, the students and their families from around the state for 32 years. The photo shows Barbara in Australia at a solar eclipse experience. We thank Barbara for all she has given to our field and students and wish her the very best as she continues to travel the globe!



Kevin O'Brien attended graduate school at UNC in 1986-88. His TVI practicum in 1988 was at Perkins School for the Blind and his COMS practicum was at Helen Keller in Sands Point, New York. He worked for the Vermont Association for the blind in 1989-1991. He returned to Colorado in 1991 and worked in Widefield School District in Colorado Springs in 1991-1994. In 1994 until this May, he has worked as the TVI/COMS in Montrose and Delta County School Districts. Kevin has also worked at various times including Grand Junction, Ridgway, Ouray, Norwood, Nucla, and Naturita.

Kevin has been a past member of the Vision Coalition and a dedicated contributor in many statewide efforts specific to educating children with visual impairments. He has recently wowed us all with his many marathons (including the most recent one in Boston) and his amazing backyard garden that could feed our next state conference attendees! Kevin is known for his thoughtful problem solving, kind heart, and amazing knowledge ... truly a great role model, colleague, friend, and teacher.

IN GRATITUDE AND HONOR, WE GIVE OUR THANKS



Sue Newhart Larson has been without question an insurmountable part of the profession of Teachers of the Visually Impaired for countless years! She was a staff member at the Anchor Center and has served as a board member. Sue has been a TVI with Jefferson County since 1983. Here are a few quotes from her co-workers, student and a classroom teacher that express how fortunate all were to have had her as a teacher and team-mate!

“Sue has been a rock for our team, a true inspiration! Sue has touched so many hearts and helped so many students achieve independence and academic success!”

“Mrs. Larson made my future possible, I am going to CU studying computer science, received a full scholarship! It has been amazing to have had her as my teacher! Thank you, Mrs. Larson!”

“What a compassionate and caring teacher! Whenever I see Sue with students, I am always impressed with her knowledge and abilities.” “As a classroom teacher I can’t express how grateful I was that Mrs. Larson was there when I first learned that I would have a “blind student” in my classroom. She was a wealth of information and provided all that I needed to ensure that I could make accommodations that were needed! She was a jewel and I can’t thank her enough for all that she did to make teaching my/our student a wonderful experience!”

The great TVIs in the JeffCo School District and the rest of us in the state TVI community would like to take this opportunity to give a resounding and heartfelt “THANKS” to Sue Newhart Larson! It has been a pleasure to work with Sue for the past years, be it 1 or 30+ years, her wisdom and collegiality will be sorely missed. Sue has been both a mentor and a friend over the years and her personal insight has been an invaluable resource for all that have had the privilege and opportunity to work with and receive her services. She has never hesitated to share her wealth of knowledge with others, including special expertise in the areas of low vision and early childhood development. She has put in hours and hours above and beyond expectations to insure that our department functions smoothly and to guarantee the success of her students. Students, parents and staff across the district will most definitely be affected by the retirement of such a capable and knowledgeable individual. And, we personally, will find it difficult to replace such a special person. It has been an honor to work with Sue, and is a pleasure to wish her much happiness in her retirement and many new and glorious adventures!

Low Vision / O&M Conference Thank You, Thank You!

There are always so many people to thank after a statewide training ... so let’s get started! First and foremost, we thank our esteemed speakers at the recent Enhancing Colorado: From Low Vision to High Vision (O&M Conference) training: **Dr. Audrey Smith** and **Dr. Duane Geruschat**. We so thank them for returning to CO and, once again, sharing their deep expertise and commitment to our field. We also thank **Shelley Moats**, **Edie Smith**, and **Mike Plansker** for their presentation roles at the Thursday evening O&M Night session. Thank you to **Jim Olson** for bringing low vision simulators and low vision devices. Thanks to **Nancy Cozart** and **Angela Sims** for helping with the registration table. Thank you to the ladies at Anchor Center (**JC, Lisa, Lorraine, Stefanie, Charlotte, and Alice**) for ensuring we had a slide projector for Audrey’s slides. Thanks to the folks (and you know who you are!) who added a little levity to Duane’s presentation on Friday – may I just say, you added some real oomph to the talk about paying attention to the visual environment! Thank you to **all the attendees** who came to learn and grow as professional stewards for the education of learners with low vision.

You all are so appreciated!



colorado connections

- 🔊 Congratulations to **Kerry Auld** for earning her CDE Certificate of Braille Competency! Also “woo hoo” to the following folks who have earned CDE renewal hours on braille competency: **Karin Hensel, Jeannie Lei, Peg Collins, Edie Smith, Elaine Brown, and Paula LaBossiere**. Thanks so much to proctors **Julie Wetzstein, Brenda Shepard, and Lucia Hasty**.
- 🔊 Heartfelt thanks to the members of the Vision Coalition for school year 2012-13: **Tanni Anthony, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, LaVerne Dell, Barb Galgano, Charlotte Javier, Jenn Langley, Judy Mumford, Jim Olson, Everett Romero, and Angela Sims**.
- 🔊 Colorado was once again well represented at the Council of Exceptional Children's' Conference, which was held in San Antonio, TX in early April. Colorado / UNC presenters included: **Kay Ferrell, Kat Botsford, Cathy Smyth, and Nana Plan Dewald**. The Division of Visual Impairment Board now includes two Colorado folks: **Tanni Anthony** and **Silvia Torres Correa** and one former Colorado TVI and UNC doctoral graduate, **Loana Mason**.
- 🔊 Hats off to **Debbie Haberkorn and Christine Maynard** of the CIMC who attended the April 2012 National Braille Association Spring Conference.
- 🔊 Hats off to two wonderful people - **Mike Plansker** and **Debbie Mendoza** from Adams 12 were awarded a My Favorite Teacher Awards from Barnes and Noble. They were each nominated by their students who submitted testimony letters on why they were deserving of the award. Wow!
- 🔊 Thank You Big Time to **Shelley Moats** who did TVIs proud as a state-selected review of the PARCC test items. Shelley gave close to 30 hours for this task!
- 🔊 Thanks so much to CSDB for co-sponsoring the recent POSB Science Institute, which was held in Denver. The following TVIs took time out of their busy schedules to attend: **Rita Albright, Tanni Anthony, Lisa Brocard, Suzan Barlow, Kyle Berns, Mary Chambers, Nancy Cozart, Elsa D'Angelo, Jasmine Gomez, Amy Gunning, Diane Fitzkee, Lucia Hasty, Donna Keale, Jackie Jackson, Anitha Muthukumaran, Jan Megarry, Debbie Mendoza, Sue Newhart-Larson, Marci Reid, Amber Rundle Kahn, Trina Boyd-Pratt, Wendy Schlageter, and Janice Schmidt**.
- 🔊 Our most wonderful congratulations to **Jamie and Alex Lugo** on the birth of their son. Elijah Alexander Lugo joined the family at 6:45 p.m. weighing 6 lbs 1 oz on May 1st!
- 🔊 **Thank YOU** so very much to the following people who sent in TCAP and/or CoALT Item Review Forms: **Kerry Auld, Trina Boyd-Pratt, Elaine Brown, Michelle Chacon, Mary Chambers, Nancy Cozart, Elsa D'Angelo, Judy Dickson, Diane Fitzkee, Kathy Gallina, Eva Gonzalez, Amy Gunning, Jennifer Hervey-Langley, Leslie Kelly, Nancy Knight, Shelley Moats, Mimi Schaper, Julie Wetzstein, Roberta Wiedemeyer, and Chloann Woolley**.
- 🔊 The **CAER Chapter** hosted a banquet on May 3rd that honored the following important people for their service:
 - President's Award: Pam Newton** of Veteran Affairs. This award recognizes outstanding leadership in service to people with visual disabilities.
 - Gary Schmidt Award: Brent Batron** of the Colorado Center for the Blind. This award honors an AER member who works directly with student/clients. Nomination criteria include: ethical standards, sense of humor, degree of excellence in job performance, and professionalism.
 - Connections Award: Kevin Hughes** of HumanWare. This award recognizes cooperative efforts that cross organizational lines, perhaps even groups working collaboratively to benefit our field.

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