

# BEING ALL WE CAN BE WITH UEB!

By Tanni L. Anthony

The UEB Code Project was started by the Braille Authority of North America in the early 1990s to reduce the complexity and increase the accuracy of braille transcription. The project grew to become an international effort among seven English-speaking countries under the auspices of the International Council on English Braille. UEB, developed primarily by braille readers, is based on current literary braille and is designed to be flexible, unambiguous, extensible, and computable. In 2012, the United States adopted UEB as an official code. Full US adoption is targeted for January 2016. Our country has been busy with UEB preparation!

Colorado is also embracing and preparing for the adoption of the Unified English Braille Code (UEB). The UNC VI Program now offers a UEB course for our TVIs-in-training. This past month the Colorado Department of Education trained over 120 TVIs and school district braillists in UEB. The message to the Anchor Center for Blind Children and Colorado public schools is to “get started with kids.” As such our braille students of all ages will be learning (or continue to learn, if already started) the UEB Code. Instructional materials prepared by school district personnel should proceed in UEB specific to literary work. TVIs will need to make good decisions about using UEB as a math code. The Nemeth Code is still an official US code. We are having discussions about the date for the use of UEB for state assessments. The current target is for the Spring 2016 Assessment Administration. One of the final pieces yet to fall into place is the production of textbooks in UEB. Our CIMC is hard at work with transcribers and braille producers across the country. By Fall of 2015, at least one major braille textbook producer will prepare new textbooks in UEB. Many devices using the braille code already have an option for UEB or are developing one.

It is a time of transition—but we are seeing forward movement in our own state and in our country one puzzle piece at a time. We are working hard to be all we can be with UEB! For more information, check out the *Dots of Interest* pages ahead.

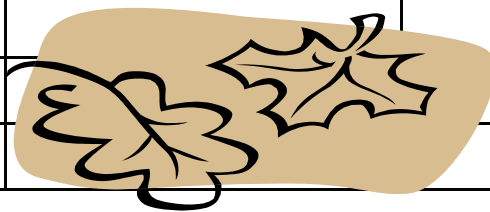
# KEEPING IN TOUCH!

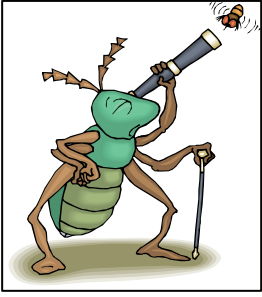
A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers  
of Colorado Children Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired

October 2014

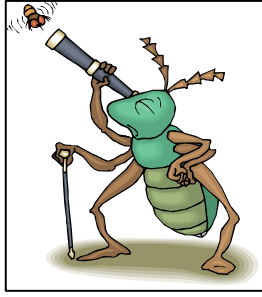
October 2014

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# LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



Region	Dates and Location	Paperwork Deadline	Site Coordinator(s)
Southern	<u>Colorado Springs</u> Friday, October 31, 2014	Monday, October 6, 2014	Donice Fennimore, TVI <a href="mailto:dfennimore@ppbooces.org">dfennimore@ppbooces.org</a>
Northern	<u>Ensignt Center - Fort Collins</u> Thursday, November 20, 2014 Friday, November 21, 2014	Tuesday, November 4, 2014	Elaine Karns, TVI <a href="mailto:elk@psdschools.org">elk@psdschools.org</a>  Carol Love, TV <a href="mailto:Love_carol@svvsd.org">Love_carol@svvsd.org</a>
Southern	<u>Colorado Springs</u> Friday, January 23, 2015	Wednesday, January 7, 2015	Donice Fennimore, TVI <a href="mailto:dfennimore@ppbooces.org">dfennimore@ppbooces.org</a>
Metro	<u>Anchor Center - Denver</u> Thursday, February 19, 2015 Friday, February 20, 2015 Saturday, February 21, 2015	Tuesday, February 3, 2015	Rebecca Warnell, TVI <a href="mailto:rewarnell@aps.k12.co.us">rewarnell@aps.k12.co.us</a>

### Western Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

The Western Slope Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic was held Friday, September 19<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, September 20<sup>th</sup> at Hawthorne Building in Grand Junction, Colorado. Seven students from three Administrative Units (Delta County, Mesa County District 51, and Mountain Boces) received evaluations. Six parents and four TVIs attended the evaluation with their students. The Clinic team would like to thank Sarah Sonnier and Angela Sims for their hard work, dedication and commitment in coordinating the clinic every year. We appreciate you! Thank you to Brooke Miller and Beth Myers for traveling to Grand Junction to attend the clinic with their students.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* **Attention all TVIs:** Please work closely with your Regional LVE Clinic Coordinators to ensure \*  
 \* that all paperwork is fully completed and turned into the clinic staff in a timely manner. You \*  
 \* can also find the paperwork on the CDE website at: [http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Vision_Activities.asp) \*  
 \* [Vision Activities.asp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Vision_Activities.asp) Please be advised that if you are recommending a student to attend the \*  
 \* LVE Clinic, it is your responsibility to prepare the student and parent for the appointment, \*  
 \* attend with them, and ensure that you assist with any needed follow-up training of the \*  
 \* prescribed device(s). Thank you for helping to ensure the success of the clinic for each student. \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*



# Calendar of Events



2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014 2014

- October 30-31** CNIB National Braille Conference, Toronto, Ontario  
Contact: [www.cnib.ca/en/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.cnib.ca/en/Pages/default.aspx)
- Oct 30—Nov. 2** 60th Annual State Convention for the CO—National Federation for the Blind  
Contact: Lisa Bonderson at [lbonderson@labarrelaw.com](mailto:lbonderson@labarrelaw.com)
- October 31** Southern LVE - Colorado Springs  
Contact: Donice Fennimore— [dfennimore@ppbores.org](mailto:dfennimore@ppbores.org)
- November 3-21** Tentative CMAS and CoAlt Science and Social Studies Assessment
- November 8** FAST Saturday at NCAR at the MESA Lab 10:00 am—2:00 pm  
Contact: Brent Batron 303-778-1130 x 222 or [bbatron@cocenter.org](mailto:bbatron@cocenter.org)
- November 12** CAER Board Meeting —CO Canter for the Blind, Littleton, CO  
Contact: David Gooldy at [dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org](mailto:dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org)
- November 13** CSDB Board Meeting  
Contact: Jacky Skinner at (719) 578-2102 or [jskinner@csdb.org](mailto:jskinner@csdb.org)
- November 14** Shark Dissection—10:00 am—1:00 pm  
Contact: Jacky Skinner at (719) 578-2102 or [jskinner@csdb.org](mailto:jskinner@csdb.org)
- November 20-21** Northern LVE Clinic—Ensignt Center—Fort Collins  
Contact: [elk@psdschools.org](mailto:elk@psdschools.org) or [Love\\_Carol@svvsd.org](mailto:Love_Carol@svvsd.org)



- January 8**                    **CSDB Board Meeting**  
 Contact: Jacky Skinner at (719) 578-2102 or [jskinner@csdb.org](mailto:jskinner@csdb.org)
- January 12-15**                **South Pacific Educators of the Visually Impaired (SPEVI). Melbourne, Australia**  
 Contact: <http://www.spevi.net/spevi/spevi-conference-2015.php#tab2>
- January 14**                    **CAER Board Meeting—CO Canter for the Blind, Littleton, CO**  
 Contact: David Gooldy at [dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org](mailto:dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org)
- January 23`**                    **Southern LVE Clinic—Colorado Springs**  
 Contact: Donice Fennimore—[dfennimore@ppboces.org](mailto:dfennimore@ppboces.org)
- January 29**                    **Braille Challenge**  
 Contact: Diane Covington [dcovington@csdb.org](mailto:dcovington@csdb.org)
- February 5-7**                 **PEP Conference—location to be determined**  
 Contact: [ramer\\_d@cde.state.co.us](mailto:ramer_d@cde.state.co.us)
- February 11**                 **CAER Board Meeting—CO Center for the Blind**  
 Contact: David Gooldy at [dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org](mailto:dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org)
- February 12**                 **CSDB Board Meeting**  
 Contact: Jacky Skinner at (719) 578-2102 or [jskinner@csdb.org](mailto:jskinner@csdb.org)
- February 20-21**               **Metro LVE Clinic—Anchor Center for Blind Children—Denver**  
 Contact: Rebecca Warnell—[rewarnell@aps.k12.co.us](mailto:rewarnell@aps.k12.co.us)
- March 9—April 3**             **Tentative CMAS: PARCC Testing**
- March 15**                    **Deadline for Education for Life Scholarship**  
 Contact: Dr. Tom Theune (719) 471-3200
- March 18**                    **CAER Board Meeting—CO Center for the Blind**  
 Contact: David Gooldy at [dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org](mailto:dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org)
- March 12**                    **CSDB Board Meeting**  
 Contact: Jacky Skinner at (719) 578-2102 or [jskinner@csdb.org](mailto:jskinner@csdb.org)
- April 9-11**                    **AFB Leadership Conference—Phoenix, AZ**  
 Contact: [www.afb.org](http://www.afb.org)

May 1 CAER Board Meeting—CO Center for the Blind  
Contact: David Gooldy at [dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org](mailto:dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org)

April 13—May 1 Tentative CMAS and CoAlt Science and Social Studies Testing

April 13—May 15 Tentative CoAlt and DLM Testing

April 27—May 22 Tentative CMAS PARCC Testing

April 30-May 2 PEP Conference—location to be determined  
Contact: [ramerd@cde.state.co.us](mailto:ramerd@cde.state.co.us)

June 11 Graduation at the Anchor Center for the Blind

June 11 CSDB Board Meeting  
Contact: Jacky Skinner at (719) 578-2102 or [jskinner@csdb.org](mailto:jskinner@csdb.org)

July 19-22 AER International O&M Conference— Pittsburgh, PA  
Contact: <http://co.aerbvi.org/>

July 6—9 15th International Orientation and Mobility Conference—Montreal, Canada  
Visit: <http://imc15.com/en/>

July 30—August 2 12th International CHARGE Syndrome Conference, Chicago, IL  
For more information: <http://chargesyndrome.org/>

January 4 Full UEB Implementation in the United States!



# Resources and Materials

## New Downloadable Manuals Available

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) offers a selected list of product manuals available for free download ([www.aph.org/manuals/](http://www.aph.org/manuals/)). You may print or emboss these as needed. We will continue to package hard copies of these manuals with their products and sell hard copy replacements.

Newly added manuals include: VisioBook,

Wilson Reading System: Adapted for Students who are Blind and visually Impaired

### VISSIT

A new tool to help teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs) determine the type and amount of their services has just been launched on the TSBVI website. You can find the *Visual Impairment Scale of Service Intensity of Texas* at <http://www.tsbvi.edu/VISSIT>>. The *VISSIT* is based upon evaluations in the Expanded Core Curriculum, because evaluation, instruction, and collaboration in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) are the primary roles for TVIs.

This instrument was developed by the Service Intensity Subcommittee of the Texas Action Committee for the Education of Students with Visual Impairments. The group recognized that decisions on the time needed by a TVI per student varies greatly, based on that student's needs and the team surrounding the student, including the student's family. Therefore there are ways within the *VISSIT* to factor in family needs as well as changes in setting (major transitions) and significant medical issues. At the *VISSIT* web page, you will find an introduction, overview and answers to frequently asked questions, instructions, and downloadable forms in doc and pdf formats. There are also samples of completed forms, a review of the validity and reliability studies completed so far, and relevant resources. The *VISSIT* can be used on mobile devices or computers as well as in paper form. Digital versions will add up scores from each section and pull totals together on a recommended schedule of service time. The TVI can consider the recommendation and then make a decision on how much time to suggest to the IEP committee for direct instruction and also for collaborative consultation services to support a student. The TVI will also designate a delivery schedule.

The *VISSIT* was developed over a period of several years with the input and support of itinerant TVIs across Texas. The results of an initial study demonstrated that the *VISSIT* is a moderately valid and reliable tool for helping TVIs determine type and amount of services needed by students with visual impairments based on student need. On going evaluation of its validity and reliability are planned now that it is going into active use. If you are interested in participating in these efforts, please contact Dr. Rona Pogrund at [rona.pogrund@ttu.edu](mailto:rona.pogrund@ttu.edu)>.

The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) eLearning Center is pleased to announce that the 5 part [CVI Focus Series: Assessment, Intervention, and Literacy for Individuals with Cortical Visual Impairment](#) is now available.

This series of five webinars by Dr. Christine Roman-Lantzy presents in detail a thoughtful, structured, and sequenced approach to intervention work with individuals diagnosed with cortical visual impairment (CVI). The cost of the series is **\$179**; individual webinars are \$49 each if purchased separately.

These webinars are pre-recorded and will be available to you for a full year to access as often as you like when it is most convenient for you. There is no specific date and time you need to be available.

For more information go to the AFB website—[www.afb.org](http://www.afb.org)

# just for PARENTS

## Parenting With a Visual Impairment: Advice for Raising Babies and Young Children

This book plus audio CDs shares helpful tips, techniques, attitudes, and preparatory experiences from successful parents who are blind and visually impaired.

The parents featured in the book each completed an extensive written questionnaire and a 90-minute phone interview about how they accomplished parenting tasks using non-visual techniques. This resource is currently being finalized by the American Printing House for the Blind. As soon as it is ready, Tanni will order it for our lending library.

If you would like to check it out, please send an email to Tanni Anthony at [anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:anthony_t@cde.state.co.us).

## New Webinar Series for English Language Learners

WIDA (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment) is proud to announce the release of a new webinar series designed specifically for families of English language learners (ELLs).

An Introduction to English Standards and Assessments for Parents is a three-part webinar series designed specifically for parents, or families, of English Language Learners in grades K-12. The series is available in English and Spanish on the WIDA website [www/wida.us](http://www.wida.us). Each webinar in the series is organized around three frequently asked questions by parents, including:

- What does it mean to be an English language learner?
- How is my child expected to use language in school?
- What does the ACCESS for ELLs Parent/Guardian Score Report tell me?

Families are critical stakeholders within the comprehensive system of standards and assessments of WIDA, and as such, have the right to know and understand how their child is progressing in his or her English language development. Educators are encouraged to share these resources with families throughout the year and in a variety of ways.

For more information, please go to: <http://www.wida.us/standards/eld.aspx>

## 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](http://www.peakparent.org).
- The Legal Center for People with Disabilities and Older People ([www.thelegalcenter.org](http://www.thelegalcenter.org)) and
- The Arc of Colorado ([www.thearcofco.org](http://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](http://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>

## 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](mailto:anthony_t@cde.state.co.us) or to Tanni Anthony, CDE ESSU, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1175, Denver, CO 80202. Or please leave a voice message at (303) 866-6681. Thank you so much!

# DOTS OF INTEREST



## UEB Resource from Australia

RIDBC Renwick Centre is delighted to announce the launch of its first online training course in Unified English Braille (UEB), entitled "UEB Online for Sighted Learners". UEB Online is an ideal course for professionals, parents and community members who wish to learn braille. It may be used by classroom teachers as a project for their students, or by specialist and mainstream educators and support staff who wish to obtain a qualification in braille.

UEB Online consists of 30 lessons that are sub-divided into two modules. The course may be accessed using a Mac or PC computer and any web browser (e.g. Safari, Internet Explorer). The course is not available via a tablet, e.g., iPad. Lessons are completed with a standard computer keyboard using a number of keys to replicate the keys of a braillewriter. Marking is fully automated so that learners receive immediate feedback as they progress through each lesson. There are a number of lesson support videos under "video resources" in the "resources" section of the course. The videos are also available via YouTube.

For those wishing a Certificate of Completion, RIDBC Renwick Centre offers certificates for each of the two modules, with a processing fee of AUD\$50.

Please visit <http://uebonline.org/> to sign up and get started!

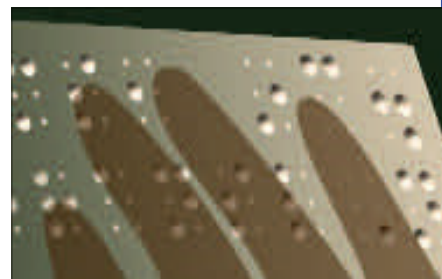
## UEB Chart Available for Download from Duxbury, Systems, Inc.

For Duxbury's one page chart/list of UEB symbols go to:

<http://www.duxburysystems.com/braillechart.asp>

or to go directly to the pdf of the UEB chart, here's the URL:

[http://www.duxburysystems.com/images/ueb\\_black.pdf](http://www.duxburysystems.com/images/ueb_black.pdf).



## About the American Printing House for the Blind

The American Printing House for the Blind, a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, is the world's largest nonprofit company devoted solely to researching, developing, and manufacturing products for people who are blind or visually impaired. Founded in 1858, it is the oldest organization of its kind in the United States. Under the 1879 federal Act to Promote the Education of the Blind, APH is the official supplier of educational materials for visually impaired students in the U.S. who are working at less than college level. APH was recently named Kentucky Mid-sized Manufacturer of the year.

APH manufactures textbooks and magazines in braille, large print, recorded, and digital formats. APH also makes hundreds of educational, recreational, and daily living products including computer software and an array of assistive technology items.

The American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. is located at 1839 Frankfort Avenue in Louisville, Kentucky. For more information, call (502) 895-2405 or log on to [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)





# DOTS OF INTEREST



## APH Press Release

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) has announced its plan for transition into Unified English Braille (UEB). In November 2012, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) voted to adopt Unified English Braille (UEB) as an official code for the United States. The formal motion approved reads as follows:

"Therefore, it is moved that the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) adopts Unified English Braille to replace the current English Braille American Edition in the United States while maintaining the Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation, 1972 Revision; the Music Braille Code 1997; and the IPA Braille Code, 2008. The official braille codes for the United States will be Unified English Braille, Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation, 1972 Revision and published updates; Music Braille Code, 1997; and The IPA Braille Code, 2008."

In October 2013, BANA conducted its first UEB Transition Forum, which was held concurrently with APH's Annual Meeting. This meeting of representatives designated by organizations directly involved in the adoption of UEB was convened to facilitate the planning of a coordinated transition between existing braille codes and UEB. Participants at this meeting collectively chose the date of January 4, 2016, as the date by which most phases of the transition to UEB will be completed or plans for completion will be in place. This date, Louis Braille's birthday, was affirmed by BANA at its November 2013 meeting. Following these votes, APH has been engaged in analyzing what this change will mean for the textbooks and educational materials APH provides to students who are blind and visually impaired in the United States and its outlying areas. General information on APH's UEB Transition Plan is indicated below.

- Orders for textbooks in subjects using literary braille (i.e., social studies and language arts), not previously transcribed, will be produced in UEB for the 2015-16 school year.
- Orders for textbooks in technical subjects (i.e., science and mathematics), not previously transcribed, will be produced in UEB and/or UEB with Nemeth Code for the 2015-16 school year.
- Textbooks previously transcribed will be available in their original codes, following APH's policy of not duplicating previously transcribed textbooks and supplementary materials.
- APH will transcribe assessment materials in the codes requested by customers who contract with APH to make assessments accessible in hardcopy and/or refreshable braille. APH recognizes that assessment materials must be available in the code that is used most efficiently by each test taker (as indicated on his/her Individual Education Plan or 504 Plan). APH is committed to providing multiple formats for these high stakes assessments.
- APH will gradually transition instructional and assessment-related catalog products and materials to UEB and UEB with Nemeth Code throughout the next several years.

The American Printing House for the Blind is committed to the highest standards of access to educational materials, textbooks, and assessments for students who are blind and visually impaired. APH remains committed to its customers and partners, and looks forward to working collaboratively as the United States transitions to Unified English Braille.

APH manufactures textbooks and magazines in braille, large print, recorded, and digital formats. APH also makes hundreds of educational, recreational, and daily living products including computer software and an array of assistive technology items.



# DOTS OF INTEREST



## What is BANA?

The mission of the Braille Authority of North America is to assure literacy for tactile readers through the standardization of braille and/or tactile graphics.

The purpose of BANA is to promote and to facilitate the uses, teaching, and production of braille. Pursuant to this purpose, BANA will promulgate rules, make interpretations, and render opinions pertaining to braille codes and guidelines for the provisions of literary and technical materials and related forms and formats of embossed materials now in existence or to be developed in the future for the use of blind persons in North America. When appropriate, BANA shall accomplish these activities in international collaboration with countries using English braille. In exercising its function and authority, BANA shall consider the effects of its decisions on other existing braille codes and guidelines, forms and formats; ease of production by various methods; and acceptability to readers. The Board of BANA consists of appointed representatives from seventeen member organizations of braille producers, transcribers, teachers, and consumers.

## BANA to Hold 2014 Fall Meeting

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA), which meets face-to-face semiannually, will hold its 2014 fall meeting November 7–9 in Alexandria, VA. This meeting will be hosted by the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER), a BANA member organization. Meetings—including an Open Forum from 10:00 AM through noon on Saturday, November 8—will take place at the AER headquarters, which is located at 1703 N. Beauregard Street, Suite 440, Alexandria, VA 22311.

Items on the Board’s agenda include updates of BANA’s numerous ongoing projects. The Board will review formal reports from all of BANA’s technical committees such as music, math, foreign language, and tactile graphics and will take action on recommendations when appropriate.

BANA continues to plan the transition to Unified English Braille (UEB) in the United States. In-depth reports will be presented by BANA’s UEB Task Force, which is made up of Kim Charlson (ACB), Frances Mary D’Andrea (AFB), Judy Dixon (NLS), Jennifer Dunnam (NFB), Cindi Laurent (NBA), Mary Nelle McLennan (APH), and Sue Reilly (CTEBVI).

As always, interested parties are invited to observe the BANA Board meetings and participate in the Open Forum. If you would like to attend either of these events, please contact BANA Chair Frances Mary D’Andrea at 412-521-5797 or by email at [literacy2@mindspring.com](mailto:literacy2@mindspring.com)

## BANA Offers New Publication — The UEB Reader

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) is pleased to make available The UEB Reader, a resource designed to introduce braille readers to Unified English Braille (UEB). This introductory hardcopy braille booklet incorporates into one document several key resources found on the BANA website. The UEB Reader is available free of charge upon request. The UEB Reader includes content from BANA’s publication, Overview of Changes from Current Literary Braille to UEB, plus several example documents transcribed in UEB for readers to use as practice. This resource was compiled to help current braille readers become more familiar with UEB and to assist braille readers, transcribers, teachers, and families as they make the transition to UEB.

To receive a free braille copy of The UEB Reader, send Kim Charlson your name, address, and phone number [kim.charlson@perkins.org](mailto:kim.charlson@perkins.org) <<mailto:kim.charlson@perkins.org>> . Requests for the UEB Reader including your name, address, and phone number can also be left on the UEB Information Line at 617-972-7248.

# DOTS OF INTEREST



## National Certification in Literary Braille Exam

The National Blindness Professional Certification Board (NBPCB) would like to announce a new certification being offered beginning January 2015: the National Certification in Unified English Braille (NCUEB). Although this certification is intended primarily for professionals in the blindness field, anyone is welcome to take the test, and there are no prerequisites other than knowledge of the UEB code.



Since the Braille Authority of North America (BANA), the governing authority of the braille code in the United States, has set January 4, 2016 as the official conversion date to Unified English Braille (UEB), the National Certification in Literary Braille (NCLB) will no longer be offered as of January 1, 2015. Obviously, there will still be a great deal of material in circulation for many years to come that has been transcribed in Literary Braille, and we recognize that many professionals may be interested in becoming certified in both UEB and Literary Braille, so we have scheduled a number of testing opportunities for the NCLB certification in 2014.

Here are the dates and locations for the final opportunities to take the National Certification in Literary Braille certification exam. Please note that this test will be replaced with the National Certification in Unified English Braille (NCUEB) in January 2015. This is an elective exam and not required in Colorado. It does not replace the requirement to demonstrate braille competency through CDE-approved testing procedures.

October 24 Ruston, Louisiana  
Deadline is October 10

October 25 Cincinnati, Ohio  
Deadline is October 10

November 1 Baltimore, Maryland  
Deadline is October 17

November 7 Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Deadline is October 24

November 21 Ruston, Louisiana  
Deadline is November 7

November 22 Richmond, Virginia  
Deadline is November 10

November 22 Tucson, Arizona  
Deadline is November 10

December 19 Ruston, Louisiana  
Deadline December 5

For more information, please contact: Maria Morais, Test Coordinator, National Blindness Professional Certification Board (318) 299-8310 <http://www.nbpcb.org/>

# DOTS OF INTEREST



## Important UEB Resources on the CDE Website

### UEB Resources on CDE Website

A list of support documents and resources can now be found on the following webpage:

[http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision\\_guidedocs](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_guidedocs)

The following items can be found in the section dedicated to Unified English Braille (UEB) Support Documents and Resources

- ✓ The ABCs of UEB by Constance Risjord
- ✓ The Rules of UEB, edited by Christine Simpson
- ✓ Unified English Braille Guidelines for Technical Material (2008)
- ✓ UEB Branded Modules
- ✓ Duxbury UEB Chart Form
- ✓ UEB "Cheat Sheet"
- ✓ Transcriber's UEB Online Course (Canadian National Institute for the Blind)
- ✓ RIDBC Renwick Centre online training course in Unified English Braille (UEB), entitled "UEB Online for Sighted Learners"

*The ABCs of UEB* would serve as a nice self-study guide. *The Rules of UEB* are a must for each district and it is recommended that, at a minimum, you put an electronic copy on your computer. It is a sizable download. The Duxbury and Cheat Sheets are easy downloads. The last two items are places where you can participate with online modules. The first one is with CNIB in Canada and the second is out of Australia.

If you find resources that you believe we should be added to this list, please be in touch with Tanni at [anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:anthony_t@cde.state.co.us).

### ABCs of UEB

BANA is pleased to share this new publication—The ABCs of UEB—authored by Constance Risjord. This document outlines the major differences between English Braille, American Edition (EBAE) and UEB. Although this is not a complete instruction manual, it provides examples and practice exercises, which allow people who already know EBAE to quickly build on their knowledge of braille to understand UEB. This is a valuable resource that will help us make the transition to UEB, and BANA sincerely appreciates the work of Constance Risjord who volunteered to design and create this project.



# DOTS OF INTEREST



## Field Test Opportunity: Nemeth Tutorial

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) staff, in a project with Northern Illinois University, is developing a web based Nemeth tutorial that works equally well for both sighted and blind users with a refreshable braille display. The tutorial requires an internet connection and a modern browser and, for blind users, a screen reader and refreshable braille display. Supported screen readers include JAWS®, Window-Eyes®, and NVDA® on Windows®, VoiceOver® (on both Mac® and iOS®) and TalkBack® on Android®. Supported browsers include Internet Explorer®, FireFox®, and Chrome® on Windows, Safari® on Mac and iOS, and Firefox and Chrome on Android.

Any braille display that the selected screen reader supports works with the tutorial.

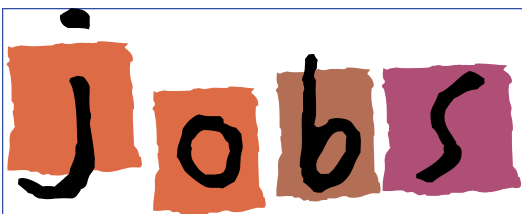
To participate in the testing, send a blank email to [nemeth-subscribe@tech.aph.org](mailto:nemeth-subscribe@tech.aph.org)>. This subscribes you to an email list where other test participants, developers, and customer service personnel exchange experiences, impressions, and suggestions.

## Seedlings Braille and Picture Books for Little Ones!

Seedlings Braille Books for Children is pleased to announce: 13 New Print-Braille-&-Picture Books for infants, toddlers, & preschoolers! They have over 1200 titles for older kids too ... and some new ones will be announced soon!

Since it is important to get children started at an early age, we have just added 13 new books (9 in Uncontracted Braille and 4 in Contracted Braille\*) that are perfect for family story time with any combination of blind, low vision, and sighted family members





## IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for this school year or the one starting in fall 2014. 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

### Southern Region Jobs

- ✓ For details about what positions may be open at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, please contact Chelle Lutz at [clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org) or (719) 578-2114.

### Western Region Jobs

- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (1 FTE) for San Juan BOCES. Please contact HR Director Paula Sublett at (970) 247-3261 x 203 or [psublett@sjboces.org](mailto:psublett@sjboces.org).

### Metro Region Jobs

- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (1.FTE) in Adams 12 School District. For more information, please contact Heather Greicius at [gre008602@adams12.org](mailto:gre008602@adams12.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!



## TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

Let Disability Employment Awareness Month ignite the fire in your career exploration and job search efforts! Make good use of the information and resources detailed in this article to help find the career that is best suited to you.

There are two articles on this subject that are a good read.

- ✓ [Editor's Page: AccessWorld Observes Disability Employment Awareness Month](#)
- ✓ [2014 Employment Resources for People Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired, by Joe Strechay](#)

## T E C H N O L O G Y   U P D A T E

### Refreshable Braille Display On the Horizon

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Orbit Research LLC and the Transforming Braille Group LLC are pleased to announce an agreement to produce a low cost, refreshable braille display. Orbit, an international engineering company based in Wilmington, Delaware, specializing in high quality, low cost products for people who are blind or who have low vision, will be undertaking the research, development and manufacture of this unique product. The Transforming Braille Group LLC is a global consortium of organizations of and for the blind which is investing \$1M in the project.

The objective of the project is to produce a stand-alone 20-cell refreshable braille display for \$300 (or £200) which will bring refreshable braille within the reach of children in developing countries and will provide libraries in developed countries with a viable alternative to hard copy braille. The product will be launched at CSUN in 2016.

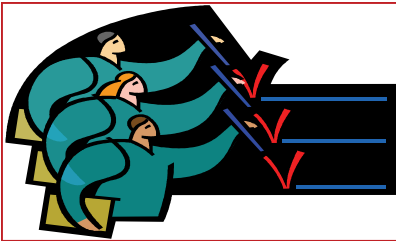
The display is designed to work through USB and Bluetooth connectivity with 'smart' phones and tablets. It is not intended to compete with high specification refreshable braille displays already on the market, primarily used in education and employment, but is intended to bring Braille-displayed e-books to a wide audience at an economical price.

**Contact for details:** Kevin Carey, President, Transforming Braille Group LLC

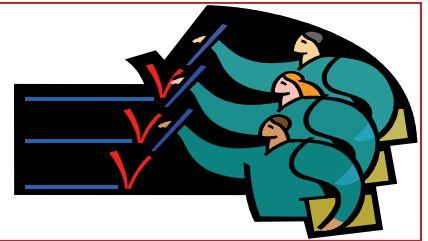
Tel: +44(0)1273 834321, [humanity@atlas.co.uk](mailto:humanity@atlas.co.uk),

### The Braille Institute App

The Braille Institute has developed an app called, "ViA," which lists apps for users who are blind/visually impaired. It allows the user to review (1 to 5 stars) apps. You can search by categories or do a search of the app name. It then will list an app's price and has tabbed categories for descriptions, images, reviews and discussion.



# CHECK IT OUT!



## Dynamic Learning Maps Instructional Training Webinars:

Teachers of students with significant cognitive disabilities who receive instruction based on alternate academic achievement standards and take Dynamic Learning Maps™ alternate assessment for English language arts and mathematics are encouraged to join in two training opportunities:

Colorado virtual community of practice webinars – Participants watch the listed self-directed modules, send in any questions to be addressed and join a webinar session with teachers across the state to discuss ideas for implementation.

Cross-state collaboration conference webinars - In addition, once a month, Colorado teachers have the opportunity to conference with teachers in North Carolina in an open forum with national experts from the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill.

## Low Vision Field Test Opportunity

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) is seeking field test sites for the Barraga Visual Efficiency Program (BVEP). The books will ship to teachers in mid December (to be read over the holidays) and the kit tangibles the first week of January. The BVEP provides information and materials to evaluate needs and to design instruction to maximize use of available vision. The information and materials in this program address the needs of students with low vision who have ocular impairments and who have achieved cognitive developmental skills at or beyond the 3-year-old level. If interested in this 3-month field test opportunity, please contact Denise Snow at [dsnow@aph.org](mailto:dsnow@aph.org)

## New Civil Rights Act Title VI Guidance

Secretary Duncan announced guidance, in the form of a Dear Colleague letter <<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-resourcecomp-201410.pdf>> to states, school districts and schools to ensure that all students have equal access to educational resources such as academic and extracurricular programs, strong teaching, technology and instructional materials, and safe school facilities, so that they have an equal opportunity to succeed in school, careers and in life.

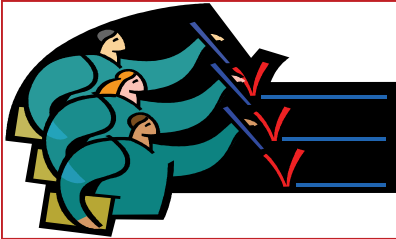
The guidance, issued by the Office for Civil Rights, provides detailed and concrete information to educators on the standards set in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The guidance is one part of President Obama's larger equity agenda, including the recently announced Excellent Educators for All <<http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/new-initiative-provide-all-students-access-great-educators>> initiative, and takes into account the ongoing efforts of states, school districts and schools to improve equity.

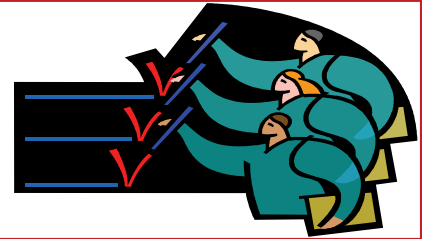
## CDE Webpage on Visual Impairment, Including Blindness

Tanni maintains a webpage specific to visual impairment, including blindness on the CDE website. All TVIs are recommended to have this webpage in their list of favorites! It has a host of information including the state eligibility criteria for visual impairment, including blindness; the forms for the regional low vision clinics; the braille competency testing procedures; local/state/national resources ... and a good bunch of other stuff. Please be sure to put this url in your browser: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision>.





## CHECK IT OUT!



### State NFB Convention

Make plans now to attend the 60<sup>th</sup> Annual State Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado, October 30-November 2, 2014. Come for the fun and comradery, stay for the education and inspiration. Bring your friends and family to Thursday night Beatlemania as NFB member Art Schreiber takes us on a journey with the Beatles during their first U.S tour. Art was one of two journalists with “a ticket to ride.” The fun will continue all weekend long with informative presentations, seminars, and much more!

**NOTE:** Exhibitors will be demonstrating their products on Friday and Saturday. Look for information about

### New FY14 OSERS Grants!!

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services announced yesterday more than \$121 million in grants to help improve the outcomes of children and adults with disabilities—from cradle through career. The investments are aimed at promoting inclusion, equity and opportunity for all children and adults with disabilities to help ensure their economic self-sufficiency, independent living and full community participation.

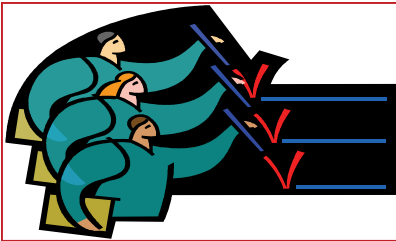
Highlighted below are three in particular that are focused on improving academic results and functional outcomes to help ensure that children and adults become college and career ready!

Funded at \$8.7 million, the Center for Systemic Improvement (CSI) becomes the largest technical assistance (TA) investment ever funded by OSERS. The focus of CSI is to provide TA to States to help build their capacity to support local school districts and early intervention services programs in improving educational results and functional outcomes for children with disabilities. This national center will help States implement the Department’s Results Driven Accountability framework by strategically delivering the TA necessary to implement bold, innovative, and systemic reforms that raise expectations for academic achievement and improve outcomes.

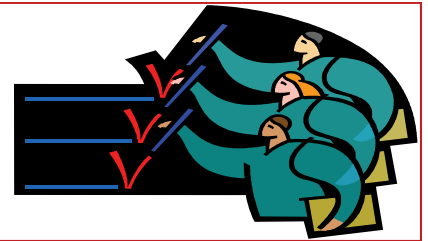
Funded at \$2.5 million, the National TA Center on Improving Transition to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students with Disabilities (Transition Center) is the first major investment funded jointly out of RSA and OSEP to create a seamless transition process from high school through employment. The Transition Center will work with States, school districts, and Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to implement evidence-based and promising practices and strategies to ensure that students with disabilities, including those with significant disabilities, graduate from high school with the knowledge, skills, and supports needed for success in postsecondary education and employment.

Funded at \$9 million for the next three years, the Job-Driven Vocational Rehabilitation TA Center (JDVRTAC) will provide TA to State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies to help them develop training and employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities that meet the needs of today’s employers and the demands of the local economy. This award, along with the passing of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act < <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/news.html#wioa>

(WIOA), will provide greater access to employment, education, job-driven training, and support services that give individuals with disabilities the chance to advance their careers and secure the good jobs of the future.



**CHECK IT OUT!**



## Upcoming Events at Colorado Center for the Blind

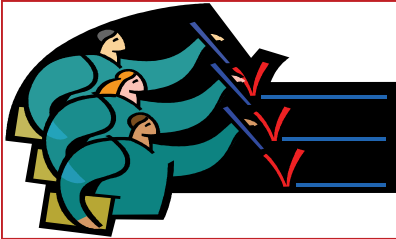
**October 30 – November 2** – National Federation of the Blind of Colorado annual state convention – Denver Marriott South Many exciting and informative items will be covered during this action packed weekend. We will start with Beatlemania on Thursday night. Art Schreiber who was one of only 2 reports to cover the Beatles first US tour will be sharing stories with attendees. The Fab Four, Beatles cover band will be performing all of your favorites from the Beatles. On Friday we will have policy setting meetings, education and breakout meetings. On Friday night we will have a costume contest and lots of great Halloween games and tables for trick or treating for the kids. On Saturday we will have more informative meetings and division meetings for several groups including students and parents. Saturday evening will be the high point of the convention with our annual banquet. Sunday morning will be the business meeting and elections.

**Saturday November 8** – FAST Saturday – at NCAR at the MESA Lab 10 am – 2 pm We will be joining John Ristvey at NCAR to participate in their Super Saturday Program. We will be learning to study the weather utilizing weather balloon launches, and the Doppler on Wheels. Bring your family, too, and feel free to pass this information along to others who may be interested. RSVP by November 6th.

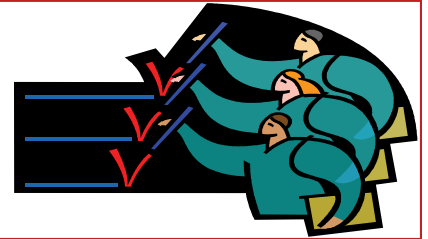
**Friday November 14** – Shark Dissection 10 am – 1 pm Join us as we work Terry Harrison from Arapahoe Community College to dissect a shark. This is one of our most fun events as we learn from a tremendous instructor in the field of biology. Bring your teacher, classmates and family for this exciting opportunity. Please RSVP by November 7th.

For more information or to RSVP for the above events contact Brent Batron 303-778-1130 x 222 or [bbatron@cocenter.org](mailto:bbatron@cocenter.org)





# CHECK IT OUT!



## ACVREP Fee Increase

The Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) announces its first comprehensive fee increase in five years. ACVREP, to meet the accreditation standards for certifying organizations, is required to update the exams of each certification program every five years. For the three existing certification programs, that total cost is approximately \$200,000. To add the new certification program in assistive technology the total cost increases to approximately \$300,000 every five years. Additionally, over the past five years, inflation has totaled 9.4% increasing the general operating costs of the organization.

Therefore, reluctantly, ACVREP announces its intention to raise fees on average by 15% to ensure the financial sustainability of the organization. The increase will be effective January 2015 for all new applicant fees. For recertification fees the increase will become effective with certificate expiries beginning March 31, 2015. Anyone choosing to recertify a March 31, 2015 certificate expiry within the 6 month early period will pay the increased fee.

ACVREP currently has a scholarship program of \$2,000 per year for the next 5 years to assist with demonstrated financial hardship in paying the exam fee. That scholarship program will continue.

Additionally, ACVREP is establishing a scholarship program effective January 1, 2015 of \$2,000 per year to assist with demonstrated financial hardship in paying the recertification fee increase. The program will be available to qualifying certificants who recertify on time. Details on that program will become available in January.

### **New fees will be as follows:**

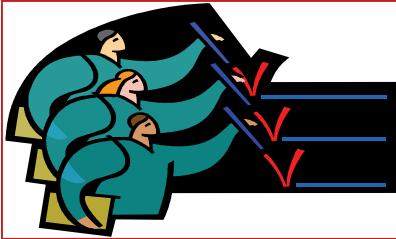
#### **New Applications:**

Eligibility Application	\$130
Exam Fee	\$435
Certification Fee	\$115

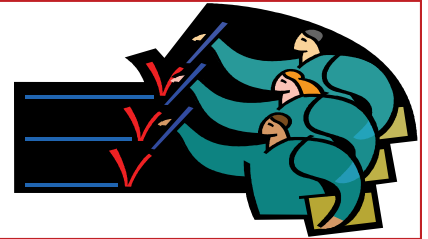
#### **Recertification:**

Recertification Fee	\$345
Recertification of 2nd Certification at the same time	\$275
Late Fee	\$75
Recertification Exam Fee	\$300

If you have any questions about this announcement please contact the ACVREP offices at 520 887 6816.



# CHECK IT OUT!



## Accessibility Assurance

Excerpts from a letter sent on behalf of Larry Wexler (Director, Research to Practice Division, and Office of Special Education Programs):

Hello OSEP funded Project Directors,

OSEP would like to take a moment to thank you for all of your hard work and dedication to improving outcomes for children with disabilities and their families. All of you go to great lengths to ensure your resources, including technical assistance (TA) products and website content are accessible to a variety of users. It has come to our attention however, that one area in particular continues to present a challenge for some of our TA recipients. While hearing and mobility accessibility are critical areas to address when making your TA available to all users, including during live and virtual presentations, visual accessibility also needs to be provided. This is especially important for PowerPoint and webinar materials prepared and archived for later use.

OSEP is asking that all TA providers work diligently to ensure that all materials including PowerPoint presentations, websites, and webinar content be accessible to all users. Ensuring accessibility includes providing TA materials in an accessible format to participants in advance of the presentation or webinar. To this end we are providing some resources to assist you in this important work. Please review the accessibility features of your materials and websites using the resources below and those attached. As you develop and produce new materials and content, and revise your website, include accessibility features as part of the production process. Please contact your PO should you have any questions.

GSA 508 Tutorials, Guidance, Checklists <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103565>

WebAIM: Designing for Screen Reader Compatibility <http://webaim.org/techniques/screenreader/>

WebAIM: Alternative Text <http://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/>

World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Standards <http://www.w3.org/standards/>



**THE SEE THE FUTURE FUND**  
Scholarships for the Blind & Visually Impaired

## Education for Life for Colorado Residents

***Application Deadline: March 1, 2015***

\$42,000 may be awarded to six deserving recipients. In addition, two “full-ride tuition” scholarships may be awarded to visually impaired or blind students through the Kane Family Foundation. Please visit our website for criteria and information.

To apply for an “Education for Life” scholarship and to obtain more information, please go to: [www.seethefuture.org](http://www.seethefuture.org) and click on “Education for Life” then “Application Information”. You may also call Tom Theune, OD – Chairperson of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund at 719.471.3200.

# Vision Coalition Meeting Minutes – September 26, 2014

**Persons in Attendance:** Tanni Anthony, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, LaVerne Dell, Barb Galgano, Karin Hensel, Elaine Karns, Jamie Lugo, Judy Mumford, Jim Olson, and Angela Sims

**Persons Absent:** Sarah Bickford Vallese and Everett Romero

**Special Guest:** Ellen Hunter (CDE Exceptional Student Services Unit, Literacy Specialist)

## 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 = CO Chapter of the Association of the Education/Rehabilitation 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

## MEMBERS OF VISION COALITION FOR THE 2014-15 SCHOOL YEAR

- Anchor Center for Blind Children – Sarah Bickford Vallese
- 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 – Chris Cockrill
- Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind Outreach – Karin Hensel
- Colorado Parents of Blind Children – Everett Romero
- Metro TVI / COMS– Nancy Cozart
- Northern TVI / COMS – Elaine Karns
- Southern TVI / COMS – Judy Mumford
- Western TVI / COMS – Angela Sims

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

We are so pleased to welcome Karin Hensel and Chris Cockrill to the Vision Coalition. Karin is representing CSDB Outreach and Chris is the new Principal of the CSDB School for the Blind.

## REGIONAL / PROGRAM UPDATES

### Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)

Thanks to Jeannie Lei and Mimi Schaper, it is clear our meetings will be organized based on teachers' input and filled with valuable information! A survey has already produced numerous ideas for topics this year and feedback was gathered that we are open to having braillists, paraeducators, and/or parents, etc. be a part of the metro regional meetings as specific topics are selected for individual meeting agendas. Meeting dates will alternate on Mondays and Thursdays this school year. Future meeting dates are at 3:30: Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup> in Littleton; Monday, February 9<sup>th</sup> in Douglas Co.; and Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup> in Denver.

Our 1<sup>st</sup> metro TVI meeting of the 2014-15 school year was on Monday September 8<sup>th</sup> in Cherry Creek. David Gooldy, CAER President, shared information about the Goalball program that is starting in the metro area. It will run on Saturdays through November 15<sup>th</sup>. There will NOT be a session on November 1<sup>st</sup>. The time frame is from 2:00-6:00. The first 2 hours will focus on younger/less experienced players and the last 2 hours will be for participants who are at a higher skill level.

Anchor Center for Blind Children is once again requesting TVIs to attend their monthly parent teas. The time obligation is only an hour this year, 9:15-10:15 am. There are spaces still available so check with Carol Puchalski at the Anchor Center. Jim Olson, from the CIMC, met with the TVIs to give updates on procedures for accessing materials for students & staff, the annual student registration process as well as answer questions about forms and funding. Jim also brought a variety of new APH materials and informed us of decisions that need to happen regarding how to distribute products fairly and equitably among school districts.

*Discussion: How will CIMC determine which districts and/or students will receive specific APH products that are significantly more costly and keep things equitable? We had a good discussion on the current plan to equalize high-cost items across districts. It was once again stressed that the CIMC cannot provide all the needed assistive technology and instructional materials to our Colorado students.*

*District on-line assessments were discussed again. How do we know what is considered "alternately acceptable" legally? What is the maximum amount of time we require students to complete an assessment before we say enough is enough? Can we check through Vision Coalition what national tests (i.e. MAPS, STARS, etc.) have large print and braille alternates that align with the common core? Assessments that are given at a district level include: IREADY, DRA2, MAP, and STAR. The biggest issue appears to be the availability of large print or braille formats for some of these tests. TVIs have been told that they cannot get access to the testing bank in order to braille a copy. This is very problematic with adaptive tests that have an extensive item bank. People are concerned as reading and math groups are assigned to result of tests such as MAPS and STAR. Also teacher evaluations may be tied to pre and post district-wide assessments. Some districts have designed an alternate pathway process to collect a body of evidence for the student on the specific constructs being tested on the district-wide assessment. TVIs have been asked by their District Assessment Coordinators to assist with determining a process and it would be helpful to have state-level universal guidance. There are issues with general accessibility for online assessments (JAWS, breaks without getting a time out response from the test computer program) or there is simply not a large print or braille assessment. There are problems from one school to the next within the same district based on the different software from one computer to the next. Tanni agreed to follow-up with the primary vendors and/or her contacts with the Assessment of Special Education Students (ASES) to determine existing test formats for students who need a braille or large print copy of the test. Nancy and Tanni will get started on a process to share information back to TVIs.*

### Southern Region (Judy Mumford)

First southern region meeting was held on Friday September 12. Dr. Theune gave an excellent presentation on Ipad accessibility features, apps and functional use of. Many thanks to Dr. Theune for the valuable presentation made in his unique style. We enjoyed it and learned a lot that can be implemented easily and make a difference for students every day. Donice Fennimore coordinated the meeting, showed a PowerPoint she created entitled "Focus on the World," as well as provided a folder with several useful handouts on UEB and computer assessments. Jim Olson demonstrated several new products from APH. Our October meeting has been canceled so that people could attend the Thursday and Friday UEB course.

*Discussion:*

*Eligibility for Visual Impairment, Including Blindness:* See the CDE webpage for guidance on the VIIB eligibility criteria. A student may have VIIB as a primary or secondary eligibility category. A student may also be VIIB within the category of “a child with multiple disabilities.” In all cases of eligibility determination, the VIIB Eligibility Form should be completed. In the latter circumstances, the child may require direct or indirect services. The IEP “should tell the story” of the child’s eligibility, needed accommodations based on his or her disability, and specially designed instruction needs / plans based on his or her disability. TVIs should work with their Special Education Directors as to procedures for where to best house their FVA / LMA reports. Some IEP programs allow for the report to be uploaded as a part of the IEP documentation of the triennial meeting.

*What software programs (JAWS, etc.) work with PARCC AND if the internal magnification of computers and/or Zoom work with the program for students with low vision.* The PARCC Accommodations Manual will soon be out for state review and use. It will be very important for TVIs to ensure that their students participate in the PARCC Cognitive Labs and release items to determine the best assessment format for the student and to provide the student with realistic experience on those formats ahead of the test. It is important not to assume that a student with low vision can or cannot participate in a computer assessment specific to visual endurance, visual closure, and so on without the opportunity to test out how the types of questions / response modes are designed.

TVIs continue to have questions about the new state tests and how our students will be participating. State Assessment questions should be directed to the District Assessment Coordinators (DACs). As information is disseminated from the CDE Office of Assessment, Tanni will share with TVIs.

*UEB related - will Duxbury, JAWS etc. be compatible with the new format; what about BookShare and other sources?* We are in a process of technology update and many tools already have UEB as the default.

The Western Slope just finished hosting the Low Vision Evaluation Clinic. There were students from Rifle, Grand Junction, and Delta seen this year. The team did an amazing job of answering student's and family's questions, making the students feel relaxed, and getting student's excited about high and low tech tools. Families appreciated the time taken with their children and all the valuable information they received. A huge thank you to the Low Vision Team!

This year computerized assessments continue to be a concern. In Mesa Valley School District elementary students are now using iReady. This computerized assessment is working with Zoomtext magnification and can be taken over several days with no time restrictions so our low vision students have been able to take it and demonstrate their knowledge. This assessment is not accessible to braille readers. Students are already voicing their concerns about the State Assessments. Since this is such a high stakes assessment some are requesting they be allowed to take it in paper format because the computerized assessments are visually exhausting and they do not feel they are able to demonstrate their knowledge in the time allowed.

The Western Slope has positions available! We know there has to be a couple of people who are tired of living in an area that is always busy and chaotic. Wouldn't you love to be where the pace of living is slower, more relaxed, and you can hear yourselves think? The San Juan BOCES, the NW BOCES, and Moffat School District are looking for full time TVI/COMS. You should consider coming to the Western Slope!

*Discussion:* What are districts using for braille readers to be in compliance with the Read Act? See notes for later discussion.

*How are districts evaluating TVI/COMS? Are they being evaluated on the teacher rubric, the special service provider rubric, or both? If both, are they using the RANDA system?* The CDE offers rubrics for administrators, educators, and 9 different special service providers. Districts can use these protocols or design their own. There are a couple of AUs who have developed a rubric specific to TVIs. We will work to get these examples out to the TVIs.

### **Northern Region (Elaine Karns)**

The end of September is fast approaching and our Low Vision Clinic is coming right up! On Thursday and Friday, November 20 and 21, the Ensign Center in Fort Collins will once again host our clinic.

We had a wedding! Teresa Barone and Tim O'Brien were married this summer and she is now known as Teresa O'Brien. Welcome Grace Katolas in Brighton School District and Danielle Burden in Weld 6 School District. We are glad to have you join us! Marty Rahn is now in the southern region as a TVI at CSDB.

Our biggest concern revolves around testing and accessibility, now that we have increased online testing. Is there a way that we can have more direction from CDE, perhaps a hands-on session, or support from our techs? We are expected to know so much and sometimes it is overwhelming. How we fit into the READ ACT is on the agenda, so it will be discussed. The new Special Service Provider Evaluation, which Thompson piloted last year is getting started but questions regarding the fairness of this when it represents such a small portion of our jobs. Who determines caseload size? How to build awareness with a district concerning FTE for VI students? There continues to be a question about the legality of sending confidential eye reports to other school districts or uploading into Enrich.

*Discussion:* See prior notes on the evaluation system and state assessments. The READ Act is detailed later in these notes.

### **CO AER Chapter (Barb Galgano)**

CAER met for the first time this year on September 3, 2014 at the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton. Your new board members and positions: David Gooldy-President; Heather Solberg-Past President; Brent Batron-President Elect; Trina Boyd-Pratt-Treasurer; Nancy Cozart-Secretary; Barb Galgano-Membership & Recruitment; and At Large: Sally Burch, Ann Cunningham, Michelle Chacon, Matt Simpson and Bill Muir.

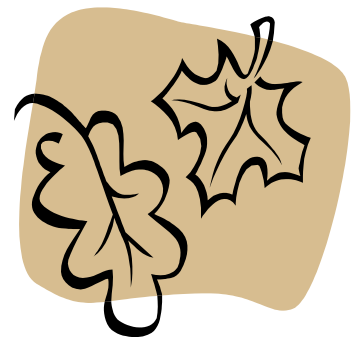
This year's CAER Board meetings will be held on Wednesdays @ 5:30 PM at the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton. Please check website: <http://co.aerbvi.org> for additional information. CAER Board Member dates: October 22, November 12, January 14, February 11, March 18, April 15 and May 1 during potential O&M Conference. All members are welcome to attend in person or via telephone. If you plan on attending by telephone, please contact David Gooldy for arrangements at [dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org](mailto:dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org)

**CAER Activities:** White Cane Safety Day t-shirt sales! CAER is selling White Cane Safety Day t-shirts to celebrate White Cane Safety Day on October 15<sup>th</sup>! Please see our website: <http://co.aerbvi.org> for picture description, sizing and ordering information. All proceeds go towards CAER Mini Grants Program. Thank you for your support!

Foundation for Fighting Blindness Vision Walk will take place on Saturday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at the City Park Bandshell and Pavilion in Denver @ 9:00 AM. Please visit their website if you are interested in participating [www.VisionWalk.org](http://www.VisionWalk.org)>. This is not a CAER sponsored event. Rocky Mountain Goalball is up and running! All information regarding this event can be found on the CAER website: <http://co.aerbvi.org> or by contacting David Gooldy at [dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org](mailto:dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org) >.

A workshop will be offered on basic braille writer cleaning will be offered October 18, 2014. It will be held at 755 Fulton Street in Aurora. For more information, please contact Trina Boyd-Pratt at [tboyd-pratt@aps.k12.co.us](mailto:tboyd-pratt@aps.k12.co.us) or (720) 883-7154. Attendance is limited to 25 people. There will be a nominal registration charge.

There are many opportunities for members to become involved in CAER. We are always open to members attending meetings, contributing ideas for fundraising and assisting with upcoming fundraising events. We would love to hear from you! Keep watching the website for upcoming events!





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

On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, DVR is hosting a low vision open house at the Laramie Building in Golden from 9:00 – 12:00. There will be product demonstrations and information about services for individuals who are blind/visually impaired. Please join us!

Individuals are being moved off of the waitlist; recently, 1,500 individuals came off of the waitlist. Please continue to send referrals to DVR specific to your students who are beginning to transition from high school. The clientel of the DVR should be of “working age for permanent employment” (full or part-time). TVIs who are interested in learning more about DVR services should go to [www.dvrcolorado.com](http://www.dvrcolorado.com) for the contact person in the different geographical regions of the state.

### **Anchor Center for Blind Children (Sarah Bickford Vallese)**

The Anchor Center for Blind Children is pleased to welcome several new staff members. We enthusiastically welcome Andrea Peralta as our new Program Director. We also have several additions to our Preschool program. Carol Jordan (TVI), Sue Kliner (ECSE), Amy Marians (PT), Lindsey Mohatt (OT), and Kelly Mitchell (teaching assistant) have helped us round out the team that provides preschool services twice a week for 28 students. Jennifer Klycsek (TVI) now heads up the outreach program (that will see 10 children in Grand Junction in September). Lorraine Chevarria (TVI) now heads the Toddler program and Stefanie Kirkwood (TVI) leads the Home Visit program. Sarah Vallese (TVI) will continue as the Preschool Coordinator until her upcoming maternity leave in November.

Anchor Center continues to work with CDE, Early Intervention (EI) Colorado and individual school districts to discover the best ways to provide services to the visually impaired EI community. Lisa Roll Moore TVI and her husband Rick welcomed a healthy baby boy on Tuesday Sept 9, 2014. In development news, Anchor Center recently hosted two successful fundraising events: Sunset in The Country and Cherrity Pie. In building news, work to clear the basement in preparation for office expansion is underway.

*Discussion:* Jim shared that the CIMC has developed a new “Registration” form specific to the Anchor Center for Blind Children and CSDB’s Baby VI Program that is unique to their registration needs. A question came up about how infants are referred onto school districts for Child Find. Tanni will get more information on this topic from her CDE colleagues.

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

We are excited to announce that CSDB has been awarded the 2014 Jan Stauber Grant through the efforts of Joyce Smith, our school librarian. The grant will promote a partnership between the School for the Blind and the School for the Deaf, with the goal of introducing our middle school students to the genre of ‘mysteries’ via Sherlock Holmes stories. This will be a collaborative effort involving our Language Arts teachers and Ms. Smith.

The School for the Blind will be involved in a partnership with the Colorado Center for the Blind this year. One of the major priorities will be a ‘mentor’ program developed for our middle school students. Through this partnership, representatives from the Center will discuss with students long-range goals, and steps to take which can lead to success. In addition, this will provide a forum to examine challenges that should be viewed as opportunities, not barriers. This ‘mentor’ program will also explore various topics related to life skills, as well as application strategies. We look forward to this endeavor with the Colorado Center for the Blind.

Our school is currently in the process of completing an exciting project that will enhance the physical environments within our classrooms. Current florescent lighting will be replaced with LED lighting throughout the building. The intent is to control the intensity, color, and color ‘temperature’ of the light fixtures. This project will greatly improve the learning environment and characteristics of light sources for our students and staff with low vision. Staff will have the capability to control lighting on a daily basis or preset for specified blocks of time.

Our Music department continues to promote strengths and talents of our students. Students will be involved in upcoming engagements that include attendance at the Black Forest League Honor Chorus later in October and our winter music program in December.

The only anticipated open position in the School for the Blind is a part-time brailist.

## **CSDB Outreach Services (Karin Hensel)**

*What's New:* The goal of CSDB Outreach's Strategic Plan is to respond to the needs of students that are visually impaired/blind or deaf/ hard of hearing, their family members, professionals and community members within the mission of CSDB. CSDB has implemented a new website and CSDB Outreach has a new webpage and QR code for easier access to accurate information about programs, resources and supports offered.

CSDB Outreach has also upgraded the Live Stream Channel and added a You Tube Channel where webinars and role model videos are available. The CSDB website has links to the Live Stream and You Tube Channels. The following videos related to the field of blind/visually impaired are currently available: Role Model Matt Simpson, Music Strategies, Behavior Support, Orientation & Mobility –Describing an Environment and Getting into the Game. More are on the way and you can expect to see them soon. The role model video is especially student friendly and informative – check it out!

Over the summer, CSDB sponsored the Bell Camp in conjunction with the Colorado Center for the Blind, and offered the "Ready, Set, Go" Camp for middle school students and the Family Learning Retreat.

### ***Upcoming events:***

*October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2014: "Coors Field Exclusive Tour" for students that are visually impaired and their families and teachers: an opportunity to meet with other students and families in the local area for a 90 minute tour of the Dugout, Press level, Club Level, Suite Level and Concourse areas. For information, contact Karin Hensel at [khensel@csdb.org](mailto:khensel@csdb.org).*

*October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014: "Fall Harvest" Early Education event for children that are visually impaired (0 to 8 years) and their families featuring art, music, movement and time to socialize on the CSDB campus in Colorado Springs. For information, contact Donna Keale at [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org).*

*October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014: "The New Union Station & Bus Concourse" For students who are visually impaired, their families, TVI's, and COMS – a private tour of the new Union Station and Bus Concourse, a fun time for exploration and social interaction with other students that are visually impaired. For information, contact Karin Hensel at [khensel@csdb.org](mailto:khensel@csdb.org).*

*We want to know:* CSDB's outreach services would like your feedback and ideas for ways to support students, their families and you! Submit your suggestions to Laura Douglas at [ldouglas@csdb.org](mailto:ldouglas@csdb.org).

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

**98.048%:** The number of books submitted by the May 1, 2014 CIMC deadline that were delivered to Administrative Units at least partially complete at the start of this new 2014-15 school year.

**More than 5,000:** The number of volumes of braille that have been delivered to Colorado administrative units for use during the first semester of the 2014-15 school year.

**2,088:** The number of individual Volumes of braille currently showing as "checked out" of the CIMC database (not counting the volumes being used this 2014-15 school year) that should have been returned by Administrative Units from years past. Please be on the lookout for CIMC barcoded materials and call (719) 578-2198 or email Laurie Taylor ([ltaylor@csdb.org](mailto:ltaylor@csdb.org)) in the CIMC *before* returning any items.

### **Count 1: The CDE statewide count of students with Visual Impairment, Including Blindness (VIIB)**

**Count Window:** October 1 through November 21, 2014. CIMC manages a database of students with Visual Impairment, Including Blindness (VIIB) for the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). This database is updated on a daily basis from "Registration" and "Exit" form data submitted by TVIs in Colorado Administrative Units (AUs). On October 6<sup>th</sup>, the CIMC sent a printed database report to each district designated CIMC contact person for updating by the TVIs working with each student. They are due back to the CIMC in their final form prior to November 21, 2014.

**Count 2: The Federal Quota Census (of students who are legally blind):** The final phase of the Census closed on 8/22/14 for the Count day of January 6, 2014. TVIs across Colorado were able to verify eligibility and register a total of 507 students for the two CDE accounts. The CIMC will be able to access these funds generated by eligible students beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Great Braille Giveaway:** The final data showed that Colorado AUs were gifted braillewriters worth just under half a million dollars. If you come across a classic braille that should have been part of the Great Braille Giveaway that still has a white CIMC barcode on it, please contact Laurie Taylor in the CIMC so that it can be removed from our inventor

**Website:** Go to: [www.csdb.org](http://www.csdb.org), click on "Programs and Services" and select "CIMC" from the dropdown menu. There you will find: (a) the most current version of all form and (b) calendar of dates for the 2014-15 school year

#### **American Printing House for the Blind (APH) Updates:**

**Colorado has a winning artist!** Each year the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) sponsors the APH InSights Art Competition and Exhibition, a contest for visually impaired and blind artists of all ages. This project reflects APH's mission to "promote the independence of blind persons" by encouraging individuals to create original art. The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) has announced that Kaitlyn Davidson (Arapahoe County District 5, Cherry Creek) has won a First Place award for her artwork "Claygirl Kaitlyn" in the category for First, Second, Third Grades. Both Kaitlyn's family and her teacher, Barb Galgano will be attending the awards banquet for the winning artists as part of the APH Annual Meeting in Louisville, Kentucky in October.

**The APH Website: Did you know?** There is an "APH Downloadable Product Manuals" page on the APH website: <http://www.aph.org/manuals/> There is a "New and Revised APH Products" page on the APH website: <http://www.aph.org/products/new/> This page lists all major APH products released in the last two years. APH wants your feedback. Have you used an APH product recently? Us the "Products Feedback Form" (<http://www.aph.org/products/feedback/>) to share your experience with an APH product.

#### **New APH Products released since the last Vision Coalition Meeting:** ([www.shop.aph.org](http://www.shop.aph.org))

**Math Robot** - (iPad App) \$4.99 from the Apple App Store! While there are many arithmetic apps, most are not accessible to students who are blind or visually impaired. Math Robot was designed for use by blind, visually impaired, and sighted students alike, making it ideal for use by an entire class. Math Robot provides fun drills and practices for simple math problems. The app is both self-voicing and accessible with VoiceOver. Math Robot announces each problem as it comes up. Teachers, parents, and students can set the range of numbers, the mathematical operations, the number of tries, and more. A low vision mode adds extra contrast. When using a refreshable braille display, like APH's Refreshabaille 18 Bluetooth device, VoiceOver shows the problem in braille and allows the user to enter their answers using the display's braille keyboard. Features: compelling interface, animations, and sound; free and drill modes; low vision mode; retina graphics; hardware keyboard support; VoiceOver support; and braille support

**VISUAL BRAILLER** (iPad App) Turn your iPad into a virtual braillewriter. Free from the Apple App Store. Features: 6-dot braille on-screen keyboard; support for any and all 6-dot braille codes; an indefinite number of 40-cell braille lines; cut, copy, and paste braille manipulation; refreshable braille display input and output; and BRL (unformatted) and BRF (formatted) braille file export

**Braille Beads: APH Starter Kit**, 1-08879-00, \$195.00. Braille Beads are small, plastic rectangles that have braille on one side and incised print letters on the other side. Each bead (red, yellow, blue, green, orange, pink, white, and black) has two holes through which wire or cord may be threaded. Also included are fun image bead manipulatives, such as flower, peace sign, heart, and circle.

**Braille Beading Trays with Jars**, 1-08877-00, \$59.00. APH offers this as a separate product from the Braille Beads: APH Starter Kit.

**Boehm-3 Preschool Tactile Edition Kit**, 1-03882-00, \$469.00 & **the Boehm-3 Preschool Big Picture Kit**, 1-03880-00, \$239.00. Boehm-3 Preschool is an easy-to-administer tool that helps identify children who need help with basic relational concepts. Boehm-3 Preschool measures 26 basic concepts relevant to preschool and early childhood curriculum.

This test helps identify children who lack understanding in basic relational concepts so you can provide intervention sooner, increasing their chance of success in school. Each concept is tested twice, to verify the child's understanding. Age Range: 3 to 5. The CIMC has versions of each kit available in our Professional Lending Library. The order form is available on our website.

**APH SMART Braille** by Perkins Catalog Number: 1-00820-00, (Introductory price until September 30, 2014: \$1,895 + shipping). The manual is available as a free download in three formats on the APH website ([www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)): APH SMART Braille by Perkins, epub edition (61-011-001); APH SMART Braille by Perkins, HTML edition, browsable (required internet connection)(61-011-001); and APH SMART Braille by Perkins, HTML edition, zipped for downloading to your device (61-011-001)

**Wilson Reading System Instructional Materials, Print-Braille Magnetic Tiles and Journal**, 6-79506-00, \$59.00. The Magnetic Journal with Letter Tiles allows students to manipulate word parts in preparation for written work. Each tile includes large print and braille. Additional tiles have been added to the original Wilson Reading System set to include letter combinations in contracted and uncontracted braille. Tiles are color-coded in ivory, salmon, and green for low vision users. Tactile symbols alert the braille reader to the type of file. Grade Level: 2 and up.

**Wilson Reading System Instructional Materials, Print-Braille Card Sets with Carry Case**, 6-79505-00, \$139.00. WRS Card Sets with Carry Case includes: Sound Cards w/CD-ROM, Word Cards, Syllable Cards, and Carry Case. Grade Level: 2 and up.

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

Paula and Silvia are back in full force with the vision and O&M programs. Ours numbers are strong as are our students! We have been busy completing assessment reports in preparation for our Higher Learning Commission visit in the spring and re-accreditation shortly thereafter through CAEP. Dr. Kay Ferrell is retiring from UNC in December.

*Discussion:* Paula stressed the importance of working closely with supervising practicum teachers to ensure an honest appraisal of a student teacher's performance. She can be proactive with the student when she has feedback to know areas of need. It was suggested that Paula and Tanni work together to identify mentor support of new TVI to Colorado school districts to ensure that there are established systems of supports for someone new to the field.

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

**Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project:** The project will soon be starting the second year of its new five-year grant cycle. The new five-year cycle is October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2018. 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 a multitude of electronic resources that are available to families and educational personnel.

- **Project Staff:** Tanni Anthony and Gina Quintana coordinate the grant project. Kathryn Daniels and Wendy Stoltman are the Technical Assistance (TA) Specialists. Shannon Cannizzaro is our Family Specialist. To request technical assistance, please contact Gina Quintana at (303) 866-6605 or [quintanta\\_g@cde.state.co.us](mailto:quintanta_g@cde.state.co.us).
- **Census:** The December 1, 2014 Census revealed 134 identified learners birth through 21 years with combined vision and hearing loss.
- **Project Webpage:** The webpage url is <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-DB.asp>.
- **Summer Institute:** The 2014 Summer Institute on Deafblindness and Significant Support Needs was held in the Denver on June 16-20<sup>th</sup>, 2014. We once again featured two internationally recognized experts in the field of literacy and learners with significant disabilities. Dr. Karen Erickson and Dr. Penny Hatch provided two 2.5 days of advanced sessions on *Literacy for Students with Deaf-Blindness and/or Significant Supports Needs*. The participants who attended the level-one trainings held during June 2011, 2012, and 2013 were invited to the level-two training. We had a good representation of TVIs at this training! Evaluation data were overwhelmingly positive.

- **Western Region Early Intervention Conference:** The next WREIC will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico in September 16-18, 2015. Both Tanni and Gina are on the planning committee and the CO DB Project will sponsor at Suzette Wright from the American Printing House for the Blind to speak on the topic of emergent literacy for young children who are blind/visually impaired.
- **Early Intervention DB Training:** The CO DB Project co-sponsored an Early Intervention Deaf-Blind training on September 20<sup>th</sup> for personnel working for the Colorado Home Intervention Program / CSDB, the Early Education BVI Infant and Toddler Program / CSDB, and the Anchor Center for Blind Children. CSDB and the Anchor Center were the other two co-sponsors.
- **DLM Module Professional Development:** The CO DB Project has teamed up with the North Carolina Deaf-Blind Project to sponsor a series of webinar forums with national experts from the Center for Literacy and Disability Studies at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

**Annual O&M Seminar:** Be watching the newsletter for more details about the April or May 2015 annual O&M Seminar. We hope to get dates and a topic soon!

**Low Vision Evaluation Clinics:** We just finished our first Low Vision Evaluation Clinic of the year in Grand Junction for the Western Region. Many thanks to Site Co-Coordinators Sarah Sonnier and Angela Sims and our great LVE team (Dr. Theune, Wendy Stoltman, and Debbie Haberkorn)!

**Recruitment and Retention:** We have openings /contact work with NW BOCES, Moffat School District, Adams 12 District, and San Juan BOCES.

**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 COMSs. The second one is specific to Colorado braillelists. If anyone has questions about either listservs, please be in touch with Tanni.

**Specialized Service Professionals (SSPs):** The current draft is posted on the CDE website for feedback. The website is: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/specializedserviceprofessionals>

**State Assessments:** A work team of Tanni Anthony, Michelle Chacon, Nancy Cozart, Melinda Holtz, and Shelley Moats, convened in mid-September 2014 to preview the braille-format Colorado Measures of Academic Success assessments in the area of Social Studies and Science. Tanni and other VI-based personnel have been working with PARCC on VI-specific accommodations specific to the ELA and Math tests.

## DISCUSSION ITEMS

### **UEB Training Plans and Proposed Colorado UEB Adoption Timelines**

The *Unified English Braille Code: Be All UEB!* will be offered in two training sessions to CO TVIs and school district braillelists. The first session will be October 7-8 and the second session will be October 9-10. Both sessions will have the same content and different participants. Currently well over 100 individuals have signed up for the training. The instructors are from Ontario, Canada and have developed a series of UEB modules. A series of events / timelines for CO's participation in UEB Adoption was discussed. A first-round draft document will be shared at the October statewide UEB training.

### **READ Act for Students with Disabilities**

Ellen Hunter joined us to discuss the READ Act. There are currently challenges for some learners to access the READ Act screening and diagnostic tools. This includes some learners with visual impairment, hearing impairments, traumatic brain injury, autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability, and multiple disabilities to access these tools either physically and/or cognitively. There are also learners who have a speech language challenge that prevents the child from verbally responding to task that require, for example, rapid naming of letters. Each disability subgroup is meeting this fall to organize a workgroup to build an alternate pathway. The Vision Coalition will be involved in the workgroup specific to the challenges and solutions for learners who are blind/visually impaired.

The Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act replaced the Colorado Basic Literacy Act (CBLA) in 2012. The READ Act focuses on K-3 literacy development, literacy assessment, and individual READ Plans for students reading below grade level. If a student is determined to have a Significant Reading Deficiency (SRD), the student must have a READ Plan, which details needed instructional interventions. Students identified with a SRD will generate funds for the district to focus on literacy. These funds can be used for approved activities that support literacy instruction.

Colorado is one of 26 states with some kind of legislation concerning students reading by third grade. Third is a turning point – of children moving away from learning to read to using reading to learn. If a child is not reading by third grade, it is unlikely that the child will not go onto be a high quality reader.

The READ Act is for all children in kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades. It is a general education initiative. All learners are general education students and some of those learners are eligible for special education services. It is important to understand that the READ Act is for all students. It involves a screening process of all learners in the identified grades within the first 30 school days of the school year using CDE-approved screening protocols. If the student falls below the cut-point (the child appears to have a SRD), he or she will then have deliberate instruction in the area of the need over the course of 30 days. A second screening measure is then used to determine the reading status of the student following this instruction. If the child is on track with reading skills, a SRD will be ruled out for the student. If the student continues to be below the cut-score, the child will be determined to have a SRD. A SRD indicates the child is below the 25% of reading skills. At this point in time of the process, the child will require a diagnostic assessment to better determine the students area(s) of instruction need(s).

The original screening tools were DIBELS, PALS, and DRA2. Current approved screening tools: DIBELS Next, aimsweb, FAST, iReady, ISP ER, Istatio, PALS, and Star Early Learning. DRA2 has been eliminated for the next school year. Each tool has cut-scores. Districts can choose their tools and in some district, schools can choose their screening tools from the approved list. The screening tool must be an interim tool and have a progress-monitoring component. New tools may be added in the future if they meet the designated criteria.

There is currently an exemption process of students based on a variety of reasons. Currently a student can be exempted due to a disability status. The plan for school year 2014-15 is to develop recommendations for “alternate pathways” that can be used by school district personnel to ensure that all learners with disabilities

All learners with a determined SRD must have a READ Plan. A student with a disability can have both a READ Plan and an IEP. To get off of a READ Plan, there must be a body of evidence that shows the child is at grade level. A READ Plan can follow a student beyond the third grade status. For those learners who are enrolled in grades after grade 3, the READ Plan

Tanni is organizing a workgroup to address a possible alternate pathway for students with visual impairment, including blindness who cannot access the currently approved screening and diagnostic tools. The following Vision Coalition members are interested in participating: Tanni Anthony, Nancy Cozart, Elaine Karns, Karin Hensel, Jamie Lugo, and Tanni Anthony. Other TVIs who were recommended include: Judy Dixon and Jeannie Lei. It will be important to tap our national experts in early reading for learners who are blind/visually impaired and to tap into our empirical literature.

**Next Meeting Dates:**

**January 15, 2015**

**April 17, 2015**





# colorado connections

- ◆ Lots of thanks to the following people who participated in the CMAS Braille Format Review in early October: **Tanni Anthony, Michelle Chacon, Nancy Cozart, Melinda Holtz, and Shelley Moats.**
- ◆ Congratulations to **Meghan Crosby** for earning her ACVREP O&M Certification!
- ◆ A huge thank you and bravo to **Beth Conly-Edwards** and **Shirley Caron** for four days of simply stunning training on the Unified English Braille Code! We learned so much in a very informative and user-friendly way. These ladies really helped to move Colorado forward in our adoption of UEB. Thanks also to all the attendees - in total we trained over 120 TVIs and administrative unit braillists.
- ◆ A special thank you to the wonderful staff to the CIMC staff (**Jim Olson, Marla Wallace, and Laurie Taylor**) who brought so many goodies to the UEB training for the AUs.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR VERY OWN LOU TUTT!



Colorado is so proud to report the selection of Mr. **Louis M. Tutt** as the 2014 recipient of highest honor of the American Printing House for the Blind, the Wings of Freedom Award. The award was presented at the recent October APH Annual Meeting. Lou is currently the Executive Director of the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) and is a past Ex Officio Trustee (EOT) of APH, serving over 30 years in that capacity. As an EOT, Lou served on every standing advisory committee of APH, and multiple times on some. His support and counsel have been instrumental in the operations of the organization for decades. Lou is a former Principal of the CSDB School for the Blind prior to his current role with AER. Colorado is thrilled with this high honor of Lou.

- ◆ Congratulations to **Sally Burch** and husband Jason on the birth their son Warren. Warren was born on June 23rd and is the brother to big sister Elsie. On this happy note, it is also important to share that Sally and family will relocate to Michigan in December to be closer to family. We thank Sally for her years of service in Colorado. She will definitely be missed!



- ◆ **Tanni Anthony** represented State Consultants on Blindness/Visual Impairments at the October 23 BANA UEB Transition Forum.
- ◆ Colorado was well represented at the recent October **American Printing House for the Blind Annual Meeting**. In attendance **Barb Galgano, Debbie Haberkorn, Jim Olson, and Cathy Smyth**. **Cathy Smyth** presented on the Boehm Test of Basic Concepts (3rd edition). **Barb Galgano** and her Cherry Creek School District student **Kaitlyn Davidson** attended. **Kaitlyn** was one of the selected artists from the Art InSights 2014 contest! She won first place in the First, Second, and Third Grade Category. Her art medium was clay.



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**Colorado State Board of Education**

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