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It's Independence Day!

By Tanni L. Anthony



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

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

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

As summer approaches, think about how to maximize personal independence skills of our shared children. Everyday should and can be Independence Day!

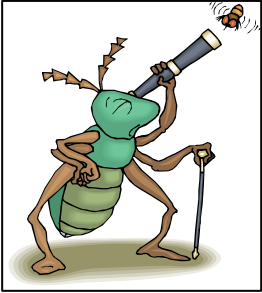
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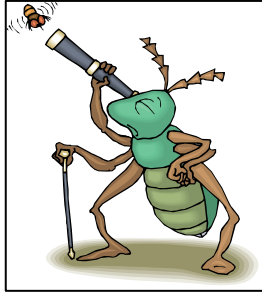
KEEPING IN TOUCH!

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

May 2015



LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



Proposed Schedule for 2015-16 Low Vision Evaluation Clinics

We are funded again for our Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics!

Regional Site	Proposed Dates	Site Coordinator
Western	Based on Need - 9/25/15	Sarah Sonnier and Angela Sims
Southern	TBD	Donice Fennimore
Northern	November 12 - 13, 2015	Elaine Karns
Metro	TBD	Rebecca Warnell & Wendy Schlageter

Snowshoe Weekend a Huge Success!
By Kaitlin Lombardi

Snow didn't stop us this time! After postponing the snowshoe trip from February to April, due to weather, we received 15 inches that allowed for a snowy and sunny trip! The weekend was action packed; full of games and physical activities; icebreakers, skits, snowshoeing, swimming, roller skating, fire building course, knot tying, and leather crafts (thanks, Trina!).

Students came from Adams 12, Aurora, Poudre R-1, Mountain BOCES, CSDB/D12, Cherry Creek, Denver, St. Vrain, and District 20 to enjoy the festivities. This trip was made possible by National Federation of the Blind Colorado Parents Division, Colorado Center for the Blind staff; Brent, Petr, and Martin; and our wonderful TVI volunteers Trina Boyd Pratt (Aurora), Barb Galgano (Cherry Creek), Jerri (Wyoming), Janet Anderson (Aurora), Wendy Schlegeter (Aurora), Mike Plansker (Adams 12), Kari McIntyre (Cherry Creek), David Gooldy (Cherry Creek) and Elaine Karns (Poudre).

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

[Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Along Existing Roads—ActiveTrans Priority Tool Guidebook](#)



TRB's National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 803: Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Along Existing Roads—ActiveTrans Priority Tool Guidebook presents a tool and guidance that may be used to help prioritize improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, either separately or together as part of a "complete streets".

http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_803.pdf

International O & M Conference Registration is Open

Join your colleagues in Montréal this July to learn about the latest developments in orientation and mobility research, environmental accessibility, developing technology in orientation and perception, preparing for innovative services for the older population, etc. The 15th International Mobility Conference is a worldwide gathering of O&M scientists, researchers and practitioners expected to convene July 6-9, 2014, at the Palais des congrès de Montréal, in Canada. They have planned 9 interactive and hands-on workshops.

Register early to secure your seat as workshops have limited capacity!

Learn more and register : <http://creation-samarkand.us3.list-manage.com/track/click>

Resources on Echolocation

Several resources on teaching echolocation were recently detailed on the AER O&M listserv:

"Learning to Listen, Listening to Learn" by AFB Press has a chapter on the major kinds of auditory space perception, including echolocation, as well as strategies for teaching various age groups. If you are interested, you can purchase just the chapter from the AFB website.

<http://www.afb.org/store/pages/ShoppingCart/ProductDetails.aspx?ProductId=LTLCh06&ruling=No>

AFB also offers a webinar on teaching auditory space perception with lesson suggestions.

<http://www.afb.org/store/Pages/ShoppingCart/ProductDetails.aspx?ProductId=ELISTWEB2ARCHIVE&ruling=Yes>

Tim Johnson writes a blog that describes lessons and strategies for teaching echolocation,

<http://learnecholocation.blogspot.com/>

Tim Johnson, also wrote a book, the *Beginner's Guide to Echolocation*. It is available in a variety of formats, and can be purchased in print on Amazon.com. It is also in the CO Deaf-Blind Project's lending library for loan.

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

Transportation Guide for Persons Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision

This new guide from the Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision offers a wealth of information, strategies, and tips on finding and using transportation options for individuals with vision disabilities and those who serve them. You can find the manual at:

<http://www.blind.msstate.edu/our-products/transportation-guide/>

CO SHAPE In Collaboration with APH Physical Education and Sports for Children and Youth with Visual Impairments and Deafblindness

October 15, 2015 with Dr. Lauren Lieberman

The workshop will focus on school age children with visual impairments and deafblindness and will review; 1) what is Adapted Physical Education?, 2) Assessments for children with visual impairments, 3) Appropriate programming for physical education and physical activity including training support staff, 4) Instructional strategies for motor skills, fitness, sports, and recreation, 5) Resources such as videos, products, equipment, web sites and summer camps, and 6) Advocacy strategies.

CDE State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment October 16 - 17, 2015 with Dr. Christine Roman

This two-day training will address up-dates on key assessment and intervention strategies specific to learners with cortical visual impairment, with a focus on literacy instruction.





State Model Evaluation Rubrics to Remain Constant Next Year

The State Model Evaluation rubrics for teachers and principals will not change for the 2015-16 school year. CDE has made adjustments to the rubrics for the past three years based on educator feedback, expert input and quantitative data. This year, the rubric will remain stable to allow educators to continue to practice with the same rubric. The CDE Educator Effectiveness team is working with external research and evaluation experts to determine the best cycle to make changes to the rubric to allow for continuous improvement, while supporting stability and understanding of the content.

For questions, call Dawn Paré at pare_d@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-5926

New Instructional Units and Sample Unit Overviews Available

Instructional units based on the Colorado Academic Standards for physical education are now available for kindergarten through high school teachers. The units include learning experiences, teacher and student resources, assessment ideas, and differentiation options. Each of the units was authored by a team of Colorado educators, including general education, special education, ELL, and other school professionals. The units are intended to provide support and/or conversation starting points for teachers, schools and districts as they make their own local decisions around the best instructional plans and practices for all students. <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunits-physicaled>

Special Education Data Reports

If you are interested in viewing the special education data reports for each district around the state, they have been posted on the CDE website.

The link to access the reports is below.

http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sped_datareports

OSERS Twitter Account

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS)
has a twitter account!

Click: https://twitter.com/ED_Sped_Rehab



Calendar of Events

2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015

- June 4** **CSDB Graduation**

- June 5 – July 31** **Summer for Success College Prep Program** — Colorado Center for the Blind
Contact: Brent Batron—bbatron@cocenter.org

- June 6—August 1** **Earn & Learn High School Program**—Colorado Center for the Blind
Contact: Brent Batron— bbatron@cocenter.org

- June 8—9** **SWAAAC Summer Symposium - Auraria Higher Ed Center – Denver**
Contact:
www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschoo/programs/atp/Pages/AssistiveTechnologyPartners.aspx

- June 8—26** **Confidence Camp for Kids** —Colorado Center for the Blind
Contact: Brent Batron— bbatron@cocenter.org

- June 10 – July 1** **Initiation to Independence**—Middle School Program—Colorado Center for the Blind
Contact: Brent Batron = bbatron@cocenter.org

- June 11** **Graduation at the Anchor Center for the Blind**

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

- June 13 -14** **CSDB Family Learning Retreat Presents “See It My Way”**
Contact: Diane Covington at dcovington@csdb.org

- June 21-25** **Sports Camp** - CSDB
Contact: Donna Keale – dkeale@csdb.org

- June 25—26** **2015 Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness**—Adams 12 Training Center
Contact: Tanni Anthony— anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015 2015

- June 26—27 **The 2015 American Conference on Pediatric Cortical Visual Impairment, Omaha, NE**
Contact:
- July 5—10 **National Federation of the Blind Convention – Orlando, FL**
Contact: www.nfb.org
- July 6—9 **15th International Orientation and Mobility Conference—Montreal, Canada**
Visit: <http://imc15.com/en/>
- July 13—17 **BELL: A Summer Braille Camp for Kids—Colorado Spring** (location to be announced)
Contact: Kaitlin Lombardi at kaitlinmlombardi@gmail.com 303-918-9465
BELL: A summer Braille Camp for Kids Metro Denver -Rocky Mountain MS Center, 8845
 Wagner St, Westminster CO.
Contact: Michelle Chacon at rascal.angel2@gmail.com or 303-507-6291
- July 30—August 2 **12th International CHARGE Syndrome Conference— Chicago, IL**
 For more information visit chargesyndrome.org/
- September 16-18 **Western Region Early Intervention Conference—Albuquerque, NM**
Contact: Joanne Whitson, WDE (307) 324-5333
- October 15 **SHAPE Conference—PreConference Session with Dr. Lauren Lieberman APE and VI)**
 More information to come in the next newsletter!
- October 16-17 **Hold the Date for the CDE State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment**
Contact: Tanni Anthony— anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- November 18-21 **Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference - Albuquerque, NM**
Contact: Linda Lyle, Janie Blome, or Cay Holbrook at gettingintouchwithliteracy@yahoo.com

2016 2016 2016 2016 2016 2016 2016 2016 2016 2016 2016 2016

- January 4 **Full UEB Implementation in the United States!**
- July 20-24 **AER International Conference - Jacksonville, FL**
Contact: www.aerbvi.org

2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017

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

2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018

- July 25-19 **AER International Conference - Reno, NV**
Contact: www.aerbvi.org

Resources and Materials

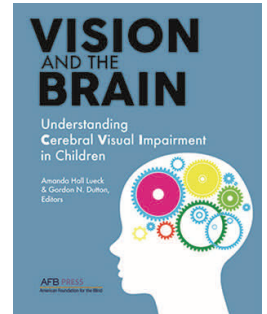
Vision and the Brain: NEW CVI Resource from AFB Press!

Cerebral visual impairment, also known as cortical visual impairment (CVI), has become the most common cause of visual impairment in children in the United States and the developed world. To support professionals working with children who have CVI, AFB Press is pleased to announce the release of a new and critical resource, ***Vision and the Brain: Understanding Cerebral Visual Impairment in Children***.

In *Vision and the Brain*, editors Drs. Amanda Hall Lueck and Gordon N. Dutton present the collected insights, comprehensive descriptions, and practice suggestions of a range of specialists around the world to illuminate the complexities of vision loss related to brain injury and neurological causes, and provide readers with approaches to assessment and intervention.

Vision and the Brain is currently available in paperback, and will soon be available in e-book and online subscription.

To purchase, go to the AFB Store at www.afb.org/store or call 1-800-232-3044. You can also purchase *Vision and the Brain* from amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com, and the iTunes store.



If you have 12 minutes to spare please watch this!

TED Talk about the importance of quality early childhood education.

After Only 3 Weeks, the "TED Talk They Keep Talking About" Is Already Among UNC's Most Popular Ever

This video has far more views than any other TED talk from UNC this year: FPG's Kate Gallagher spoke to a sold-out crowd about the most famous study on early education... [\[more\]](#)

<http://fpg.unc.edu/news/ted-talk-they-keep-talking-about-power-high-quality-early-ed>

Results Matter (Early Childhood) Video Library

We're very pleased that there are now 170 videos in the [Results Matter Video Library](#), related to a variety of topics in early childhood, including early care and education, early intervention, early childhood special education, assessment, and technology. These videos may be viewed online and downloaded at no cost for use in educational and professional development activities. We are also pleased to let you know that we are currently migrating the library to a new platform to make it easier to navigate, review topics, and even embed videos on other sites and in online courses. We hope the reorganization will be completed in a few months. In the meanwhile, we produced the attached catalog to help you find videos of interest .

Please check this listing of videos at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter/RMVideoSeries.htm>

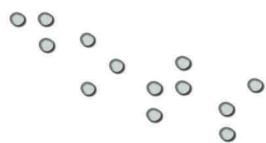
Have You Gotten Your Free Currency Reader Yet?



The Department of the Treasury's Bureau of Engraving and Printing is now providing a free iBill currency reader to all eligible blind or visually impaired individuals. The device is small, compact, and runs on a triple-A battery, which is included. To use the currency reader, simply insert a U.S. bill into the reader and press the button. The device will announce the note's denomination with voice, tones or vibration.

To request your currency reader, fill out an application form, which is available to download at www.bep.gov.

It must be signed by a competent authority, such as a doctor or social worker, who can certify your eligibility. Then simply mail it to the address on the application. Once the application is verified, a reader will be mailed to you at no charge. For more information about the U.S. Currency Reader Program, visit www.bep.gov or call toll-free 844-815-9388



DOTS OF INTEREST



BELL: A Summer Braille Camp for Kids

BELL is a one-week braille enrichment camp for kids ages 4-12. Both beginners and more accomplished braille readers will gain confidence in reading and writing while engaged in games, crafts and exciting outdoor activities.



BELL CAMP COLORADO SPRINGS: July 13-17 (site to be determined)

BELL CAMP METRO DENVER: July 13-17: Rocky Mountain MS Center, 8845 Wagner St., Westminster. CO

For more information contact program coordinator Michelle Chacon: rascal.angel2@gmail.com

Ready to apply? Applications for BELL are available on the NFB website: nfb.org/bell-summer-program-form

Braille Monster

Make Braille flashcards more fun! Cover a cereal box in felt and cut out a slot big enough for index cards to slide through. Make a monster face. The sample illustrated uses googly eyes and a multi-colored feather boa from the craft store, but you could use your own felt cut-outs. Braille letters or contractions on index cards. Clip one corner of the card to help the child keep the cards oriented correctly. Make up a game to fit the reading goal. For example, feed the monster all the dot 5 contractions found in a short Braille passage. (From the Blog on Blindness: Louisiana Tech)

A Picture Paints A Thousand Words

Did you ever wonder how a picture in a book is made into an illustration that is meaningful to a blind person? Colorado artist Ann Cunningham has spent years creating tactile art, teaching art to blind students, and interviewing blind people to better understand what makes an image understandable by touch alone. Ann was recently commissioned by National Braille Press to create a tactile illustration for the print/Braille book, *Dog Heaven*. To see how Ann developed the tactile image visit her blog page: Sensationalbooks.com/blog

There are two print UEB Symbol List Available

Both are pdf and best if printed on 11" x 17" paper.

The first is from Duxbury and lists the contractions and short forms in alphabetical order:

http://duxburysystems.com/images/ueb_black.pdf

The other is from Aroga Technologies and presents the contractions and symbols by category:

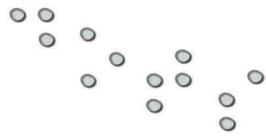
<http://www.aroga.com/unified-english-braille-chart-tabloid-11-x-17-pdf-format/>

Instruction Manual for Braille Transcribing, UEB Edition 2015

This new edition of the instruction manual from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, while intended to teach braille transcribing from scratch, contains drills and reading practices that can be used by any transcriber or proofreader for self-study.

Already-certified transcribers and proofreaders should not submit the lessons for grading.

The lessons can be downloaded from <https://nfb.org/braille-transcribing>



DOTS OF INTEREST



Field Evaluators Needed for Braille Literacy Project

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) is collaborating with the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) to produce a Practice Guide for the I-M-ABLE (Individualized Meaning-centered Approach to Braille Literacy Education) by Dr. Diane P. Wormsley. APH will pair the I-M-ABLE Practice Guide with several other APH literacy-related products, including a talking card reader. I-M-ABLE is an approach developed for students who have not been successful learning to read braille. The approach is a whole- to-part approach that begins with teaching whole words -- individualized vocabulary words that are meaningful to the student. Students move from reading whole words into reading charted stories and from there into phonics instruction and reading more sophisticated stories. The approach also focuses on proper hand and finger technique in reading as well as writing braille.

Field testing of the kit will begin in Fall of 2015 (mid-September) and extend through Spring 2016 (end of March). Evaluators must have a student or students with whom they will agree to use the approach for the entire six-month period. Students who are ages 7 through 18 and have made little or no progress in reading braille and who have additional disabilities, such as a mild to moderate cognitive impairment and/or ESL, will be considered for the field testing.

Field evaluators will receive training in the use of the I-M-ABLE and baseline data collection. They will be expected to work with students for at least three to four days a week using the approach and to keep track of and report student outcomes as part of the product evaluation. Included in the kit will be the I-M-ABLE Practice Guide, a Califone Talking Card Reader and a small set of blank cards, braille reward stickers, the Chunk Stacker game with braille labels (for phonics activities), along with record keeping sheets for reporting student progress. In addition APH will provide the APH Word PlayHouse for supporting phonics instruction when your student reaches a predetermined level of competence.

If you wish to be considered as an evaluator for the I-M-ABLE Practice Guide Kit, please complete a survey that will ask for information on you and the student(s) with whom you intend to use this approach.

Here is the link to the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CZ9DTWP>

Please contact sspicknall@aph.org.

if you have any difficulty completing the survey, or if you have questions about the field evaluation or the I-M-ABLE.

Unified English Braille (UEB) Training Guides!

Information from the BANA website [0 http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb.html](http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb.html)

Learn UEB

- 2015 UEB Training Calendar - File types in Word and Print PDF
- NLS Braille Transcriber Course - For information about the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) braille transcriber course: <https://nfb.org/braille-transcribing>
- CNIB Transcriber's UEB Course - File types in Word, Print PDF, BRF, and DXB
<http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/braille/Pages/Transcribers-UEB-Course.aspx>
- The Hadley School for the Blind UEB Courses; For information on Hadley UEB courses, visit
<http://hadley.edu/UEBTransition.asp>
- New Zealand UEB Manual - <http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb/NZ%20UEB%20Manual%202011.pdf>
- Unified English Braille: Australian Training Manual 2014 - aillaustralia.org/unified-english-braille/unified-english-braille-australian-training-manual-2013/
- UEB Online - New online UEB Course from the RIDBC in Sydney, designed for sighted readers - <http://uebonline.org/>



DOTS OF INTEREST



More UEB Training Resources

Wisconsin UEB online series

- Introduction to Unified English Braille
- Unified English Braille for Transcribers
- Unified English Braille for Vision Teachers

<http://www.wcbvi.k12.wi.us/outreach/ueb-introduction>

UEB Ready? Introduction to Unified English Braille Webinar

Videos from Fall 2014 Indiana teacher and staff training:

<http://dgmpresentations.pbworks.com/w/page/90921945/UEB%20Intro%20Videos>

Unified English Braille Online Training (UEBOT): Presented by Northern Illinois University

- Designed for teachers in the field
- Starts summer 2015 (possibly June)
- Free one-month massive open online course (MOOC), will be offered for four years

<https://www.facebook.com/UEBOT1>, or Google+ <http://bit.ly/uebot-google>

UEBOT-2: Presented by Northern Illinois University

- No prior training in English Braille American Edition (EBAE) needed
- Is scheduled to launch Fall 2017
- Free MOOC, 16-week braille training program

<https://www.facebook.com/UEBOT1>, or Google+ <http://bit.ly/uebot-google>

Unified English Braille through a Powerful and Responsive eLearning Platform (UEB PREP)

- Presented by Portland State University
- Target audience: Consumers who are blind and visually impaired, family members of individuals who are visually impaired, professionals who work with those who are visually impaired
- Pilot in September 2015 to train those currently familiar with EBAE
- www.uebprep.com

DOTS OF INTEREST



UEB Reading Practice

Many sample documents are available from the web site of the Braille Authority of North America in BRF as well as simulated braille PDF formats. There are recipes, chapters from books, famous speeches, and the like. For braille readers who are patrons of the National Library Service, some books are available for download from BARD in UEB. Currently these include book numbers from BRE00013 to BRE00022.

Most documents are available in BRF or simbraille,

For more information, go to:

<http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb.html>www.bana.org and scroll down to Example Documents in UEB.

Examination for Letter of Proficiency in Unified English Braille

To be eligible to take this examination, you must already hold a certificate from the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, as a transcriber or proofreader. Once you have used the above resources to become thoroughly familiar with Unified English Braille, you may request to take the examination for a Letter of Proficiency in Unified English Braille by emailing transcribers@nfb.org to be added to a waiting list.

The examination tests both braille reading and transcribing skills. Successful examinees will receive from the National Library Service a Letter of Proficiency in Unified English Braille, which is an add-on to an existing NLS certificate.



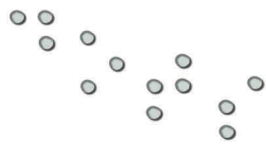
UEB Resources on the CDE Website

Please be sure to check out the following Unified English Braille (UEB) resources at:

http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Vision_GuideDocs

- ◆ The ABCs of UEB by Constance Risjord
- ◆ The Rules of UEB, edited by Christine Simpson
- ◆ UEB Branded Modules (November 2014) (PDF)
- ◆ Guidelines for Technical Material (August 2014)
- ◆ Technical Update for Colorado
- ◆ CCSO's Webinar on UEB
- ◆ BANA Statement – Implementation of UEB (November 2014)
- ◆ BANA Statement – Provisional Guidance for Transcription Using the Nemeth Code within UEB Contexts (Nov 2014)
- ◆ Duxbury UEB Chart Form
- ◆ UEB "Cheat Sheet"
- ◆ UEB Cheat Sheet 2 (PDF)
- ◆ 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"

We are adding new items as we find them—so keep this url in your favorites so you can stay in the know! If you find a resource that you believe will be good to add to our list of documents or weblinks, please be in touch with Tanni to have it added to this website list. Be all UEB!



DOTS OF INTEREST



Typhlo & Tactus Tactile Book Contest 2015



Entries Due September 4, 2015

Once again, the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) is the U.S. national contact for The International Tactile-Illustrated Book Prize, a biennial competition created to encourage improvement of the quality and quantity of tactile books for young children with visual impairments. Don't miss your chance to submit your tactile book, designed for children with visual impairments from 3 to 12 years of age.

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

A panel of U.S. judges will review each entry and select the top five books to send overseas for final adjudication by an international panel of children and adults with visual impairments, as well as professionals in the field. First, second, and third prizes will be awarded. The first prize winning entry will be kept in the T&T Archives in the International Museum of Tactile Illustrated Books located in Dijon, France. Selected books may be featured on the T&T website, and appear in posters and promotional materials used by T&T.

U.S. entrants should send their completed tactile book, designed for a child with visual impairment from three to 12 years of age, to the American Printing House for the Blind by Friday, September 4, 2015.

Questions? Contact Roberta Williams, rwilliams@aph.org.

Information About the T&T Tactile Book Competition

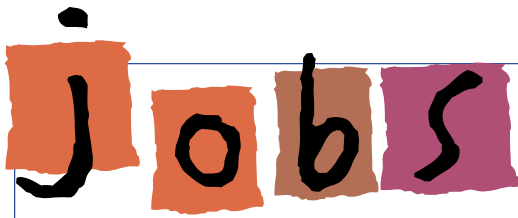
United States Information: Rules and forms for submission of the U. S. entries:

www.aph.org/research/tactile-book-contest/

General Information about the competition, and a list of last year's international entries:

<http://www.tactus.org/>

2013 Winners: <http://www.tactus.org/Results2013.pdf>



IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for this school year or the one starting in fall 2015. 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 and 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@cldb.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
- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (1 FTE) for Mountain BOCES. Please contact Joy Yudnich at (719) 486-2603 or joyy@mtnboces.org

Metro Region – Jobs

- ✓ **TVI (1 FTE)** Anchor Center for Blind Children. Please contact Steve Lindauer at 303-377-9732
- ✓ **TVI/ COMS** (1 tentative FTE) Denver Public Schools. Please contact Robert Frantum Allen at 720-423-3148 or Robert_Frantum-Allen@dpsk12.org
- ✓ **O&M/VRT** (1 FTE) in Metro Denver with DVR. For more info, go to: agency.governmentjobs.com/colorado

North Central Region – Jobs

- ✓ **TVI and COMS** (.5 FTE) Weld 6 School District for the 2015-16 school year. The contact person is Kathrynne (Kate) Ballard, ESS Coordinator. She can be reached at (970) 348-6298.
- ✓ **TVI and COMS** (.5FTE) St. Vrain School District for the 2015-16 school year. For more information, please contact Lynea Pearson at pearson_lynea@svvsd.org
- ✓ **TVI and COMS** (1.4 FTE) Poudre School District for the 2015-16 school year. For more information, please contact Christine Villard at cvillard@psdschools.org
- ✓ **TVI and COMS** (.25 FTE) Windsor School District for the 2015-16 school year. For more information, please contact Jon Paul Burden at dburden@greeleyschools.org
- ✓ **TVI and COMS** (.25 FTE) Weld RE5J Johnstown Millikin for the 2015 school year. For more information, please contact Marietta Sears at msears@weldre5j.k12.co.us

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!

THE WAITING LIST HAS ENDED:

SERVICES THE DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AVAILABLE WITHOUT DELAY

April 30, 2015

Dear Customers, Colleagues, and Community Partners,

Two years ago the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) had fewer resources than necessary to serve every eligible person. Today we can serve customers without delay! That means Coloradans with disabilities seeking to secure, retain, or regain work have a powerful resource available to help them achieve their professional goals.

Federal law requires vocational rehabilitation programs to prioritize who will be served when resources are insufficient. This leads to the creation of a waiting list for services and results in unfortunate delays for Coloradans with disabilities seeking assistance to be successful at work. In February 2014, 6,361 people were waiting. **All those who were waiting have been, or are being served. There is no waiting list for services.**

“This development will greatly benefit both Coloradans with disabilities and businesses across the state,” said Reggie Bicha, executive director of the Colorado Department of Human Services of the wait list breakthrough, “as we can now better match proven, skilled workers to an already vibrant Colorado workforce.”

“We’re very pleased with this milestone achievement by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation,” added Bicha.

According to Steve Anton, interim director for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, his office eliminated the wait list through judicious management of waitlist client releases. Starting in February of last year, the division began regularly releasing groups of individuals from the wait list in intervals so that case managers could support the increased caseloads without sacrificing quality service.

DVR recognizes and appreciates the patience of each person who experienced a wait. We are honored to assist customers to secure, retain, or regain employment. Doing away with delay has been our top priority. We are extremely pleased to see the end of this waiting list.

We applaud the staff in the field who work directly with those we serve. Their efforts ended the wait. Since October 1, 2014 DVR has assisted 1051 Coloradans with disabilities to become employed at an average hourly wage of \$11.76 statewide. If you or someone you know wants to be served by DVR, find the location nearest you, at:

<http://www.dvrcolorado.com/locations.php>

Always,

Joelle Brouner

Director of Community Access, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

NATIONAL CAMPS FOR BLIND CHILDREN

A traditional camp experience. One week.

Sponsored by Christian Record Services for the Blind

Glacier View (June 28-July 5)

Ages: 9 and older

8748 Overland Road, Ward CO 80481

Camp Coordinator: Peggy Hansen

(402) 488-0981 ext.224

Registration Closes: May 28, 2015

For more information, please contact the Jacobus tenBroek Library of the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute at 410-659-9314 or send an e-mail to jtblibrary@nfb.org

Attention High School Students Who are Blind / Low Vision

Do you have a student or child who is interested in pursuing work in science, technology, engineering, or math (STEM) after high school? Does the student enjoy investing his or her talent and energy in solving real-world problems? If so check out the National Federation of the Blind for NFB EQ, a week-long engineering program for students who are blind and have low vision.

At this program, students will collaborate with other students to solve authentic problems that exist in developing countries. They will spend the week working on a team to engineer solutions to a given problem. Their team will create proposals with accompanying models, which will then be pitched to various stakeholders.

After constructing life-size prototypes of your designs, the students will test them in authentic settings. Students will also have the opportunity to meet and collaborate with a number of engineers from across the country, some of whom happen to be blind.



Techvision

Thanks to Rita Albright who sent information about Techvision - they are a company that strives to show how children and adults, who have vision impairments or reading challenges, can learn the technology and skills that will help them succeed in life. There are costs to their lessons and some items are free.

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

Assistive Technologies for Visually Impaired



The U.S. Federal Highway Administration has released a fact sheet that describes research projects intended to assist with way-finding and navigation guidance for people with visual impairments and other disabilities. It can be found at:

<http://www.trb.org/main/blurbs/172394.aspx>



Assessment and Teaching Strategies for Learners with Visual and Multiple Impairments

June 22 – June 26

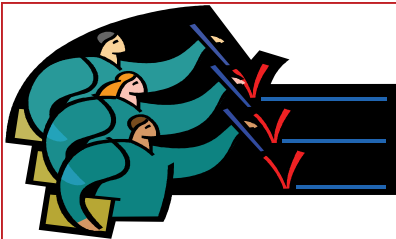
An onsite training presented by Millie Smith, Consultant, Developer of the APH Sensory Learning Kit and Symbols and Meaning Kit

Join us for a very special week with Millie Smith! Three different workshops will be offered during this week. Come to one session or come to ALL!

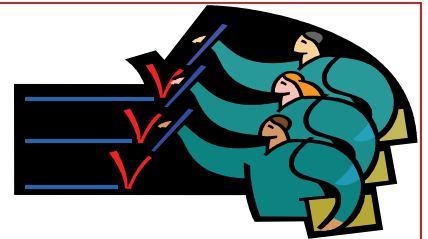
- **Session 1:** Sensing, Acting, Learning Assessment and Teaching Strategies for Learners with Visual and Multiple Impairments
- **Session 2:** The Development of Concepts and Use of Symbols for Learners with Visual and Multiple Impairments
- **Session 3:** Review Day Conversations with Millie Smith

Early bird discount available. Register by June 1.

<http://www.perkinselearning.org/earn-credits/onsite-training/perkins-summer->



CHECK IT OUT!



Orlando Site of 2015 NFB Convention

The 2015 convention of the National Federation of the Blind will take place in Orlando, Florida, July 5-10, at the Rosen Centre Hotel at 9840 International Drive, Orlando, Florida 32819. Make your room reservation as soon as possible with the Rosen Centre staff only. Call (800) 204-7234.

For more information about the conference, go to: www.nfb.org

The Provision of APH Products for University Research

American Printing House for the Blind (APH) Director of Educational Product Research Kate Herndon writes, "With ever-shrinking budgets, researchers struggle to get the tools they need to conduct research. At the same time, the American Printing House for the Blind seeks feedback in order to improve the products it develops. To that end, we have developed, in collaboration with Dr. Tiffany Wild who brought the idea to us, a product loan program. As with our University Product Loan program, researchers will have the opportunity to borrow APH products, but for an extended time, in order to collect invaluable research data on product effectiveness."

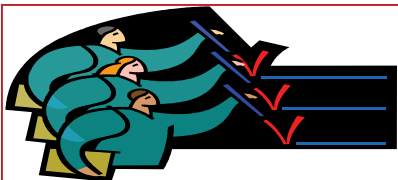
If you are interested in participating in this program, please contact Kate Herndon at kherndon@aph.org or 502-899-2234. We look forward to partnering with you in this new way to benefit those we serve.

NFB Listserv for Teachers

The NFB also sponsors a listserv teachers of blind children; to subscribe, visit:

<http://www.nfbnet.org/>





CHECK IT OUT!



Assistive Technology Partners

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS



Upcoming 2015 Courses Presented by Kelly Waugh, PT, MAPT, ATP

Standardized Seating Measurement: A Practicum

June 10, 2015 | 8:30am-5:00pm | Assistive Technology Partners

In this hands-on workshop, participants will learn how to take linear and angular measurements of a seated person's body and their seating support surfaces, based on A Clinical Application Guide to Standardized Wheelchair Seating Measures of the Body and Seating Support Surfaces, Revised Edition. Selected measures from each section of the guide will be explained and measurement methodologies will be demonstrated, followed by time for hands-on practicum.**

Link to more info & registration: <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschoo/programs/atp/Events/Documents/Standardized%20Seating%20Measurement.Flyer.pdf>

Improving Outcomes with Custom Contoured Seating: Theory and Practice

June 11, 2015 | 8:00am-5:00pm | RESNA 2015 - Downtown Denver

In this hands-on course, participants will learn and practice the 7 critical determinants of a successful outcome with custom contoured seating. The strategies and procedures discussed in this course are not product specific, and can be applied when using any type of custom contour system. Includes hands-on practicum.

Link to more info & registration: <http://www.resna.org/professional-development/continuing-education/courses/improving-outcomes-custom-contoured-seating>

Wheelchair Seating for Postural Control and Function

August 13-15, 2015 | 8:30am-4:30pm | Assistive Technology Partners

A unique, intensive two day course emphasizing client centered assessment and problem solving, with optional third day hands on practicum.** Link to more info & registration: <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/medicalschoo/programs/atp/Events/Documents/WS3Day.Flyer.pdf>

*Colorado Physical Therapy Board Standards:

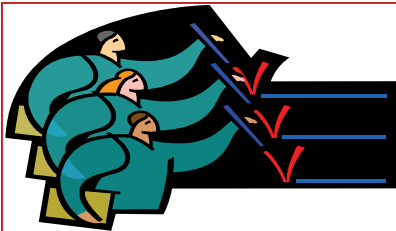
These trainings meets the qualifications for Category 1 Continuing Education Activity. All attendees will receive a Certificate of Attendance which documents contact hours .



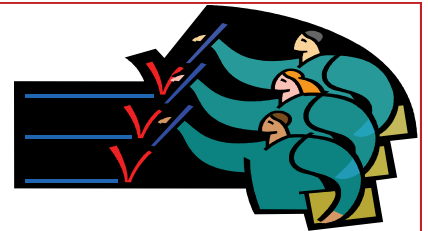
Kelly Waugh, PT, MAPT, ATP, is a nationally recognized clinician and educator with over 30 years experience, specializing in the assessment and provision of wheelchair seating and mobility equipment for children and adults with moderate to severe physical challenges. Ms. Waugh is currently a Senior Research Instructor and the Clinic Coordinator at Assistive Technology partners in the Department of Bioengineering at the University of Colorado Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus.

Ms. Waugh has been actively involved in RESNA - Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America - for many years, serving on a variety of committees and task groups. She served as chair of the ISO/RESNA Wheelchair Seating Standards Working Group that developed an international standard which defines measures of wheelchair seated posture and seating support parameters. Ms. Waugh is a leader in her field and a dynamic speaker who has lectured extensively on Wheelchair Seating, ISO Seating Standards, and Nighttime Positioning to varied audiences nationally and internationally. She received both her BA degree in Human Biology and her MA degree in Physical Therapy from Stanford University in Stanford, California.

Assistive Technology Partners |
College of Engineering and Applied Science
Department of Bioengineering | University of Colorado
Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus
303-315-1280 | TTY 303-837-8964 |
www.assistivetechologypartners.org
601 East 18th Avenue, Suite 130 | Denver, CO | 80203



CHECK IT OUT!



Information Sheet on Inclusion

The American Occupational Therapy Association has just released a new information sheet, "Inclusion of Children with Disabilities:

<http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/Practice/Children/Inclusion-of-Children-With-Disabilities.PDF>

This document is part of the School Mental Health Toolkit, which can be found here:

<http://www.aota.org/practice/children-youth/mental%20health/school-mental-health.aspx>

COOL EYEWEAR FOR KIDS

Stay-Put Glasses and decorative eye patches for babies and children can be found at Kids Bright Eyes.

kidsbrighteyes.com.

Survey Says! Consider Completing Two Surveys for APH



Short 40-Cell Braille Display Survey

The Technology Product Research (TPR) Department of the American Printing House for the Blind is looking for informed opinions about use of cases for 40-cell braille displays in the classroom. Whether you have used a 40-cell braille display or not, we need and value your input. The information we gather could help determine our course of action on future products. Please take 10 minutes of your time to complete the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/40celldisplay>

APH appreciates your time and valuable feedback. If you have any questions or are interested in field testing, please contact technology@aph.org

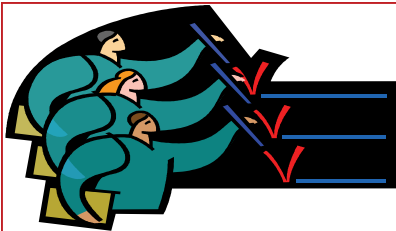
Survey on Teaching Students to Understand Landforms

APH is interested to know whether or not students who are blind or visually impaired are receiving instruction in understanding landforms (such as mountains, plains, rivers, canals, tributaries, and so on). We are also asking teachers and learners familiar with the subject whether existing materials available for teaching about landforms are useful or need improvement. If you have taught about or studied landforms in geography, social studies, mobility, or other classes, we would appreciate your responses and comments in the short survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PG6DNT6>

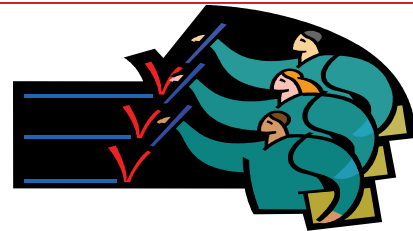
CDE Webpage on Visual Impairment, Including Blindness

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!



TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

My name is Jill Bezyak, and I am a faculty member at the University of Northern Colorado in the Rehabilitation Counseling Program. I am working with the Rocky Mountain ADA Center on a project to investigate the accessibility of public transportation in the Denver Metro area. We are hoping to increase our understanding of transportation needs and barriers for people with disabilities in order to improve services, programs, and related policies.

Feedback from people with disabilities in the Denver Metro area is crucial to helping us meet this goal.

Please take approximately 15 minutes to complete the survey on accessibility of public transportation using the link below.

<http://www.surveymzmo.com/s3/1970841/Accessibility-of-Public-Transportation>

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact jill.bezyak@unco.edu.



The 2015 American Conference on Pediatric Cortical Visual Impairment

Friday-Saturday, June 26-27, 2015

Omaha, Nebraska

Provided by Children’s Hospital & Medical Center, Omaha, Nebraska



<http://childrensomaha.org/workfiles/Conferences/PCViflier.pdf>

PROGRAM GOAL

The American Conference on Pediatric Cortical Visual Impairment brings together occupational therapists, ophthalmologists, optometrists, teachers of the visually impaired, neurologists, pediatric interventionists and physiatrists to increase interdisciplinary understanding of cortical visual impairment in children.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, ophthalmologists, pediatric ophthalmologists, neuro-ophthalmologists, neuro-optometrists, optometrists, teachers of the visually impaired, pediatric neurologists, neonatal and pediatric interventionists and pediatric medical specialists.



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

2015 Summer Offerings for Kids!

Confidence Camp for Kids

(elementary school day program)

June 8 – June 26

Initiation to Independence Middle School Program

(3 week residential program)

June 10 – July 1

Earn & Learn High School Program

(8 week residential program)

June 6 – August 1

Summer for Success College Prep Program

(8 week residential program)

June 5 – July 31

Contact: Brent Batron, Director of Youth Programs, 303-778-1130 ext 222, bbatron@cocenter.org

Call early to reserve a spot or email/ fax your application soon.

Applications will be reviewed in the order they are received.

The Colorado Center for the Blind is sponsoring an interactive, three week program for blind and visually impaired children ages five through eleven.

The highly qualified staff, including two certified TVIs, will work with students in a variety of age appropriate areas such as cane skills, daily living skills, Braille and beginning technology. Students will prepare lunch each day and focus on household activities like making beds, vacuuming, washing dishes, sweeping, etc. Several experienced and energetic blind role models will be paired with students as we believe that positive blind role modeling teaches success.

Not only will the students work on building their skills but, even more importantly, they will gain confidence in themselves by participating in a wide range of activities. Some of these activities will include a science fair, riding the light rail to parks and recreation centers, swimming, eating lunch at a restaurant and many more.

The students will cap off this experience by participating in a unique and fun performance that friends and families can attend. The skills and confidence they gain from this experience will be exciting.

The fee for this program is \$100 which covers all 3 weeks and all activities.

As many of you know, we normally use sleep shades in our programs but we do not require them in the elementary program. However, we will require that all students use a cane.

just for PARENTS

Eight 1-Minute Anxiety Relief Tools

Here are 8 research-based ideas that parents can try when their kids are they're feeling stressed or anxious. For more information, go to:

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/renee-jain/8-one-minute-anxiety-relief-tools-for-kids-big-and-small_b_6593752.html

Quick Guide to Dispute Resolution for Parents in English and Spanish!

New from CADRE is a comparison chart in Spanish of the dispute resolution approaches that parents have available to them, such as mediation, state complaint, and due process. What are the benefits of each, when would a parent choose one approach versus another, who initiates a given process, who pays? All this info in a handy chart! Now available in Spanish as well as English. Check it out at:

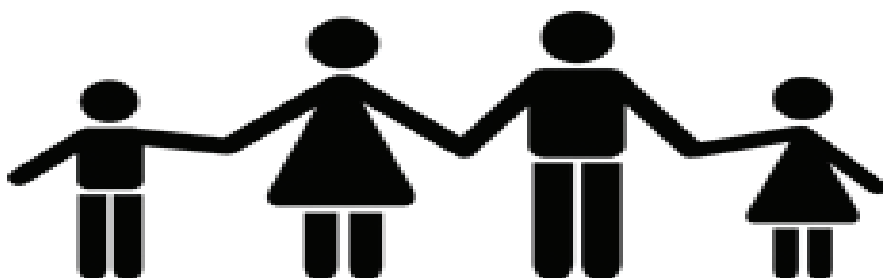
<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/cadre-guide-to-dispute-resolution-for-parents/>

Family Leadership Project

In September 2009, sixty parents of children who are deaf-blind and professionals came together to share ideas related to training, supporting and encouraging family leaders. We all agreed that families are the ones who can make major changes happen at the local, state and national level.

Those in attendance recognized that many organizations were doing similar family leadership activities, but they were not connected and working together as efficiently or effectively as they could be. The vision of this group was to build a network of people to share information and activities related to family leadership development for families of individuals with deaf-blindness or other severe challenges. This website is one of the primary components of this collaborative network.

The purpose of FamiliesLead.org is to bring a network of people and organizations together to share ideas, resources and support for leadership training for parents and other family members of individuals with disabilities. There are many valuable resources on this website.



just for PARENTS

Parent Resources From NFB and NOPBC

Blindkid Listserv: Want to talk about your child who is blind/visually impaired with other parents?

Would you like tips from knowledgeable blind adults who have "been there, done that?"

Ask questions, get and give advice, vent frustrations, brag about your child, share resources, and make new friends on this National Organization of Parents of Blind Children (NOPBC sponsored listserv).

To subscribe, visit the blindkid Web site at: www.nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/blindkid_nfbnet.org and fill out the form provided on the page.

Parent Stories: The National Organization of Parents of Blind Children has an objective to provide parents with the tools to help their blind child learn well and live happily.

They have posted excerpts from parents at: <https://nfb.org/nopbc-new-parents>

Connecting Families

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

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

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

www.p2p-co.org

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

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



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

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

TVIs and COMSs: If you have any changes in program contact information, please help us out and send Tanni these changes.

Thanks to everyone for helping to keep our mailing list up-to-date! Send changes to:

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

Family Learning Retreat presents...

See It My Way



June 13-14, 2015

Family Fun

Role Model Chat

Vision Loss
Simulation &
Activities

Mobility Outing

Dining in the
Dark

Providing and sharing
COLORADO SCHOOL



FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND
Established 1977

...Learning, Thriving, Leading
 33 North Institute Street
 Colorado Springs, CO 80903
 719-578-2100; www.csdb.org

Colorado families
 who have a child
 who is blind or
 visually impaired,
 join us to network,
 learn and have fun!

**Registration Deadline
 June 2, 2015**

Check/purchase
 order must
 accompany
 registration

Make checks payable
 to:
CSDB

Mail to:
 Diane Covington
CSDB
 33 North Institute St.
 Colorado Springs
 Colorado
 80903
 dcovington@csdb.org

Family Learning Retreat presents...

See It My Way

When: June 13-14, 2015

Where: Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

- **Mom's Name** _____
First Name Last Name
- **Dad's Name** _____
First Name Last Name
- **Mailing Address** _____ **City** _____ **Zip Code** _____
- **Phone(h)** _____ **Email** _____
- _____
1st Child's Name Age Blind, Low Vision, None
- _____
2nd Child's Name Age Blind, Low Vision, None
- _____
3rd Child's Name Age Blind, Low Vision, None
- **Additional Adult** _____ **Relationship** _____
Additional Adult _____ **Relationship** _____
- **Previously Attended?** (Circle) Yes No
- **Accommodations** such as Braille or Spanish Language
 Specify _____
- **Special Meal Accommodations** Vegetarian Allergies _____

For planning purposes, my family's preferred literacy modality for my child:

- Braille
- Large Print
- Regular-sized Print with Magnification
- Auditory

FEES (scholarships available upon request)

_____	Adult Registration - \$15.00/Adult
# _____	Total Adult \$ _____
_____	Child Registration - \$15.00/Child
# _____	Total Child \$ _____
_____	Totals
Total # _____	Total \$ \$ _____

For additional information or if you need to cancel PRIOR to the close of business June 2, 2015, please contact Diane Covington at dcovington@csdb.org. No reimbursements for cancellations made after June 2, 2015 Please request ADA accommodations at time of registration.

The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, religion, marital status, disability, and genetic information* in admissions, access to, treatment, or employment in educational programs or activities which it operates. Grievance procedures regarding unlawful discrimination and harassment have been established for students, parents, members of the public, and employees. * Nondiscrimination in relation to genetic information is applicable to employment only.

COLORADO SPORTS EDUCATION CAMP

Students who are Blind/
Visually Impaired

Ages 10-16

June 21-25, 2015



Activities ...
Wrestling, Judo,
Tandem Cycling,
Track & Field,
Goalball, & more

Enrollment limited to 20 students.

\$50.00/student (cost includes all food, lodging, and activities)

To register, contact Donna at 719-330-7387 or
dkeale@csdb.org



...Learning, Thriving, Leading

33 N. Institute Street ~ Colorado Springs, CO 80903
719-578-2100, 719-578-2239(fax), www.csdb.org

Vision Coalition Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2015

Persons in Attendance: Tanni Anthony, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, Barb Galgano, Karin Hensel, Elaine Karns, Judy Mumford, Jim Olson, Angela Sims, and Sarah Bickford Vallese.

Persons Absent: Chris Cockrill, LaVerne Dell

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
CSDB 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
University of Northern Colorado VI Program – Paula Conroy

PROGRAM UPDATES

Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)

We had our last metro meeting of the year on Thursday April 16th. The agenda included general announcements/questions to take to VC, a little re-fresher on how to use the Teller Acuity Cards as well as a show-and-tell of a new shoe tying technique from Cheryl Leidich. We requested that Cheryl share the video link with us via email.

Vision Coalition Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2015...cont.

In addition, some of the Cherry Creek teachers are planning for a social skills panel in September. They decided to open it up to the metro region and include other TVIs, students and families. So, the 1st metro meeting of the next school year is set for September 17th from 3:30-5:00. The first half hour will be general business including setting up the other meetings for the 2015-16 school year and at 4:00 we will have the panel on social skills. Littleton Schools will host.

A big focus of the meeting was Bob Zabuska from the Lions Club. He provided us history of the Lions and its mission. This service organization supports conquering world hunger, the environment, youth and the blind. Helen Keller gave this group the direction to be Knights of the Blind. Mr. Zabuska spoke to the metro TVIs about how the Lions Club often serve the youth with visual impairment through a variety of activities including summer camps and bowling. For example, many of our Colorado TVIs and COMS will be working at a Lions Camp this summer in Casper, Wyoming. They also have purchased equipment such as embossers and Braille writers. Sometimes individual Lions chapters work to serve a particular person with vision loss and other times it may benefit a group of people. Chapters can also work together and/or with the Lions Club International Foundation. This is a valuable resource and metro TVIs are already brainstorming on how we can serve students more effectively with the help of this wonderful service organization!

Discussion Item: It is critical for TVIs to share their feedback on state and district testing in varied formats (on-line, large print and braille) as well as timelines for accessing the material. This information should be shared with Tanni in a manner that does not breach test security specific to individual testing items.

Southern Region (Judy Mumford)

Master Drive is planning to have a drive blind day but logistics not yet decided. Contact: Jerry Mayes 719 260-0999

Bell Camp July 13-17 2015 Colorado Springs, location yet to be determined. Contact: Diane McGeorge 303 321-4268; Michelle Chacon 303 507-6291; Kaitlin Lombardi 303 918-9465

Diane Fitzkee has a student who has been accepted to National Honor Society and will also be participating in a Student Alliance group next year. He presented to Southern Region meeting on February 13 at UCCS, and presented to the district school board for Fantastic 49 on February 12.

Melissa Shular nominated a Rampart High School student for the "People First" Award. Only one student in the Colorado can receive the award and this high school senior was selected as the winner. The peer partner provided personalized instruction and guidance in the swimming pool in addition to many other things with the student having a visual impairment. "For her to be able to leap into the great unknown and know she'll come back up to the surface, she has to trust me...she's showed me no matter what type of disability you have, if you take a leap of faith, it's worth it." The two students were interviewed for the local newspaper.

Next year's Southern Region Meetings are yet to be determined.

Many thanks to Donice Fennimore for all her hard work, time and energy coordinating not only the Low Vision Evaluation clinics AND for coordinating the Southern Region Meetings this last year. We would like to thank all our guests and speakers this year: Dr. Theune (low vision devices in his life) and Sonya Teigen, PPBOCES, (indicator 13). Also thanks to Dr. Semwall, UCCS, and Bonnie Snyder for taking an interest in "future" products/devices for students in Colorado.

The Low Vision Evaluation Clinics in the Southern Region went well. The clinics were full, devices purchased AND parents have begun showing more interest in applying for the "Tools for Life" scholarship and have better understanding of the need for devices to be in the home, after attending the clinics.

Western Region (Angela Sims)

This spring has been spent administering state assessments. Between PARRC, CMAS, and DLM there has been little time for other things. In Grand Junction there have been many concerns expressed from SSN teachers about the new computerized DLM. The TVIs are working closely with them but do not currently have many answers to their questions.

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Brandon Mapes (Mountain BOCES) is thrilled to help run an outdoor recreation camp again this summer through Adaptive Sports in Crested Butte. The camp is for youth who are VI and blind and will run this June. Meghan Crosby, a TVI, and Danielle Goldman, an Adaptive PE teacher (both out of Montrose) will be working with him to help run the camp, along with staff from Adaptive Sports. This camp will be an awesome experience for everyone who attends.

Brooke Miller (Mountain BOCES) has officially passed all the braille renewal modules...Congratulations Brooke!! There are changes coming for her region since Eagle has become their own administrative unit.

Everyone is working to become proficient in UEB. Some are working their way through the online lessons, while others are working on the Hadley UEB Transition course. The transition has been challenging since there are limited UEB materials available for students. TVIs have to use customized materials in order for students to have practice with UEB.

Discussion:

- *Has anyone used DLM with his or her blind students? We estimate about 15 student are taking a braille-format DLM assessment and Tanni has asked each TVI to send her test feedback to be shared within CDE for DLM.*
- *Is there a paper format version of the DLM? No – see response below from the CDE on the braille format option for DLM.*

The Dynamic Learning Maps assessment is an adaptive online assessment. This is the first time we have had an online alternate assessment and this is the only state adaptive test in Colorado. As such, it is not a sit-down-take-it-all-at-once assessment. This means there is not one standard item bank for all students - as the items are based on student response (success or not success with answering a specific set of questions will take the student to another set of questions).

The test is comprised of testlets that have 7-10 questions. We believe there are about 7 testlets per content area (ELA and Math) to choose from based on the learner's responses to a previous testlet. As such each student is designed to have a unique testing experience based on their response to test items.

This is the current process: All District Assessment Coordinators have the responsibility to enter the student in a DLM database and the student is then linked to a specific teacher. It is likely that this person is not a TVI (unless it is CSDB). Most likely this teacher was the SSN teacher. The identified teacher completes two surveys to get ready for the assessment. One is the First Contact Survey. This details the level that the child will enter the test at - for example, is the student pre symbolic or symbolic. The second survey is the PNP (Personal Needs and Preferences Profile). This is how the student is expected to interact with the test. This is where most TVIs would have come into the picture to communicate if the student is a braille (emergent) reader. As next year rolls out, we will work to be highly proactive with these data to ensure that the TVI and SSN teacher are working together to ensure that students are identified as needed braille and/or human readers on the PNP.

Once a student is flagged as a braille student, the DAC receives a BRF (which comes in uncontracted braille) specific to the grade level for that student. It is then the TVI's or brailist's responsibility to put the items in braille for the student. The braille is to be customized, as needed for the student. The first testlet will be assigned based on the student's PNP and grade level. This one could easily be braille ahead of the test administration. Then.... as the student is taking the test, there is a time period between the first testlet and the next testlet that comes the student's way - remember this is an adaptive test. This means that the state is asking (for this small population of students) that the TVI or brailist is available for the next set of testlets comes through with new items. So it requires braille production onsite during the multiple days of test administration. This is a new way of doing alternate assessment business. There is not one braille version of the test because there is not one flat file of test items for each student based on the adaptive nature of the test.

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Northern Region (Elaine Karns)

Rita Albright reports they have had the opportunity to have students in the UNC vision program come and spend time observing her and Paula working with students. She noted that it has been a wonderful opportunity for them and us. They have asked stimulating and practical questions and have made us reflect more on our practices and services. We encourage other TVIs to let UNC know you would like a student in training to come spend a half or whole day with you.

It has been noted that the CMAS does not allow previewing its braille material except to determine if it is contracted or uncontracted braille and earlier than 24 hours prior to administration per the test manual directives. This makes people a bit nervous since tactual graphics are a big item with science and social studies. Based on the iPat sample 7th grade social studies practice test questions there are multiple questions that refer to specific items on maps. PARCC allowed for earlier preview access. We will see what happens since we begin administration of CMAS later in April.

Boulder School District TVIS reports they have had a big increase in inquiries from school administrators, general education teachers, and special education teachers requesting help in figuring out why students do fine when reading and writing with paper, but are now struggling with doing the same electronically--e.g. computers, chrome books, iPads. They have contacted an optometrist who we go to a lot and she is putting together information about appropriate use of electronics for reading and writing. She will be sending up that information this week, but she goes on record as stating that no longer than 20 minutes at a time sitting in front of a screen is healthy for the eyes.

There appears to be a lack of consistency between districts in our State as to eligibility as well as service hours for kiddos moving into our district from other districts. We feel like a state discussion among TVIs needs to happen so there is consistency across the state.

Sherry Bainbridge reports that the ARC of Weld County has been very helpful for both the parent and IEP team of one of my students, great advocacy liaisons for both student / parent and educational teams.

Sally Burch left St. Vrain in December for Michigan, and Julie (Julia) Hutchinson started in January. She has a Master's degree in Vision/O&M from Florida State University. Julie did her TVI practicum with Sally and her O&M practicum in Florida. St. Vrain also has a half-time hire; Liz (Elizabeth) Wieder who is currently in the Severe Needs: Vision degree program with Paula Conroy at UNC.

Discussion Items:

Eligibility: *There may be a need for more statewide discussion on eligibility of students with visual impairment, including blindness. One district has noted significant discrepancies in how the eligibility criteria are applied with young children coming into the school district. It is especially important to ensure that families coming from Part C or birth to three specialization programs have an understanding that a visual impairment does not automatically qualify the child for school-based special education services. Anchor Center for Blind Children has an active Eligibility Committee. Sarah Bickford Vallese will take this information back to this committee. It was suggested that the Vision Coalition work on a handout that could be disseminated through Part C. This will be a task for our Fall 2015 meeting.*

Visual Hygiene Handout: *There have been more conversations about eyestrain with online work. The Boulder TVIs have been asked to do more consultation on this topic. A handout on "Visual Hygiene" was given to Paula and Rita from a local optometrist. Paula shared a copy of this handout, which was not written specifically for learners with VI but the general population. Their district will look at how to customize it to their assessment needs. It was suggested to also check with CAST to see if there are any resources on this topic. Another resource might be Elaine Kitchell from the American Printing House for the Blind. We will check-in with Paula next fall to learn more about the status of this handout .*

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Secondary Label: One issue coming up in districts is the need for a secondary label on the IEP. We are seeing that children who “get into the door” as a student with an IEP with a visual impairment may not be given further evaluation to determine other disability needs and/or the information put into other sections of the IEP does not fully capture the needs of the student to best address the needs of a true secondary (or co-primary disability). The TVIs present had several stories to corroborate the challenge of only listing a primary disability and are in favor of the IEP having an option to list secondary disabilities. There was not concern about the time needed to complete other eligibility category paperwork as this process confirms more discussion about the service and instructional needs of the involved student.

CO AER Chapter (Barb Galgano)

CAER is very excited to be co-hosting this year’s O&M Conference with CDE taking place on Thursday April 30th - Saturday May 2nd at the Colorado Center for the Blind, in Littleton CO. This year’s presenter will be Dr. Sandy Rosen Ph.D. from San Francisco State University, she will be presenting on Proprioception. It is sure to be very exciting and informative.

Also taking place on Friday night will be the CAER Annual General Meeting and Banquet. The meeting and banquet held at CCB from 5:30-9:00 PM. There are current openings on the CAER Board. If you have an interest in becoming a board member, please let David Gooldy know prior to banquet. He can be reached by email

dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org

Thank you for taking an interest in your organization. At the banquet annual awards will be presented. Thank you for all the nominations submitted. Please consider nominations again for next year!

One mini-grant application was submitted and funded for \$300 by Kaitlin Lombardi for support of the Annual Snowshoe Weekend. Congratulations and have fun!

One final CAER meeting to be held at Colorado Center for the Blind on Tuesday May 13th at 5:30 PM. All welcome to attend!

CAER is very proud to announce this year’s recipients of our annual awards:

Gary Schmidt Award: **Barb Galgano**, Cherry Creek

Lifetime Achievement Award: Rita Albright, Boulder Valley

Connections Award: Ann Cunningham , Visual and Tactile Artist

President’s Award: Brandon Mapes, Mountain BOCES

Congratulations to all the award winners and thank you for all you do to make the lives of individuals with visual impairments a better place. Thank you for your submissions and look forward to next year’s banquet and awards.

Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (LaVerne Dell)

We have good news! The waitlist is nearly exhausted, which means in the near future individuals who are determined eligible for VR services will not go on a waitlist. Additionally, DVR has hired two new teachers; one works out of the Pueblo office and the other works out of the Metro office.

Discussion: People have heard that there are federal funds tied to a recent state law that would support youth programs or services. LaVerne has shared that more information will be coming out in the fall as this program is finalized.

Anchor Center for Blind Children (Sarah Bickford Vallese)

Anchor Center for Blind Children is not just a school, but also a community, and we realize that all the more when a member of our community leaves us. We recently said goodbye to two of our family members. After 19 years, our Executive Director Alice Applebaum will be moving on to her next chapter in retirement. She has surely left a very positive mark on the Anchor Center community. Anchor Center would not be where it is today without Alice’s devotion to serving children with visual impairments. We wish her all the best.

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Andrea Peralta, our Director of Programming, also started a new chapter and accepted a job elsewhere. She truly gave 100% in all she has done for Anchor Center. We wish her all the best, as well. In addition the staff will say farewell to Carol Puchalski, who will be retiring in June. Carol is a psychologist who has worked specifically on social emotional development of the children at the Anchor Center

Anchor Center is at an exciting time of change as we continue to grow and foster the full potential of children with visual impairments in the state of Colorado. Infant, Toddler, Home Visit, Outreach and Preschool programs continue during this time of change.

CSDB – School for the Blind (Chris Cockrill)

A group of students from the Colorado School for the Blind had a unique opportunity to travel to Crested Butte ski area to experience several days of skiing and adventure. These students participated in a program designed specifically for specific needs of the participants. Coordinated by the staff at Crested Butte, students engaged in various activities including: Daily Living Skills (DLS) opportunities, such as meal preparation; daily reflections focusing on student goals; building new relationships with staff at the Adapted Sports Center; distant learning lessons, prepared and videotaped by School for the Blind staff; sighted guide instructors assigned to students; and Orientation and Mobility skill building. Our PE instructor assisted in the coordination and supervision of this exciting experience for the students involved. Future opportunities at Crested Butte are definitely on the horizon for a return trip.

Our music department has had various opportunities for community involvement and establishing partnerships, including a recent choir performance at the 36th Annual Arts, Business, and Education luncheon in Colorado Springs. Our band and choir has represented CSDB in a very positive manner, as well as demonstrating the unique talents our students are developing in the area of music. In addition, students were provided an opportunity to attend a performance of the Colorado Springs Philharmonic, as well as the Colorado Youth Symphony performing at the School for the Blind.

CSDB Outreach Services (Karin Hensel)

CSDB OUTREACH SERVICES – CSDB has a state mandate to provide services across the state to students who are visually impaired and their families.

What's New: CSDB hosted "Sensory Safari" at the Cheyenne Zoo in Colorado Springs in April. Nineteen families spent a Saturday morning being introduced to the smells, sounds and "slop" of some of the most distinctive animals. This CSDB Outreach event provided a special day for children, who are blind and visually impaired. The families visited the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo learning stations and talked with zoo and wildlife staff. Zoo docents brought lizards, turtles, and an armadillo for a hands-on experience. The families also fed the giraffes and then touched animal pelts/bones.

CSDB hosted an informational workshop for professionals working with or wanting to learn more about serving students with a visual impairment on April 10th. Thirty-five attendees from thirteen school districts/BOCES, listened to seven presenters, as well as networked through a lunchtime job-alike Q&A session. Attendees included general education teachers, para-professionals, school counselors and psychologists, special education teachers, occupational and physical therapists, orientation & mobility specialists and a brailist. The activities included talking with a panel of adults, who are blind/visually impaired, discussion on instructional strategies and accommodations, hands-on simulations, while blindfolded, and new resources available.

Upcoming CSDB Outreach Events:

- **Family Learning Retreat**, June 13th – June 14th. Please share the flyers with your families. This is an opportunity for families to learn more about their student's visual impairment, their needs and best practices to implement at home.

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- **Sports Camp** June 21nd through 25th. The Sports Camp is for learners ages 10- 16. There will be Goalball, tandem biking, swimming, track and field, judo, and wrestling. For more information, contact Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org

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

Book Orders for next school year (2015-16)

- Due on Friday May 1, 2015.
- Orders submitted after May 1 are not guaranteed to be delivered during the 2015-16 school year. Vendors work on a first-come first-served basis and we compete with every other state for a place in their production queue. The sooner you can get your orders to the CIMC the better.
- Please use the newly revised Book Order Form, (designed with input from district contacts and TVIs) which was posted to the CIMC webpage in April.
- There is now an additional step in the ordering process: Please read the CIMC implementation procedures on the "book orders" page of the CIMC website. It helps answer questions about EBAE and UEB formatted books.
- New curriculum in your district? Be sure to include the NIMAS language in your contracts and give the CIMC the ISBN numbers of the books you need as quickly as possible, followed by an ink print when available.
- Please do not hesitate to call the CIMC if you have questions. (719) 578-2196.

A few helpful hints about returning your books:

- Tape your boxes sufficiently. Every year we receive boxes that have exploded open. This results in thousands of dollars of lost product. Please, please, please reinforce your boxes sufficiently.
- Use the pre-printed CIMC return labels. Please print legibly.
- Please try to use 12x12x12 boxes to return your books, preferably the same boxes we used to ship the books to you. Please DO NOT use large microwave boxes, banana boxes,
- If one book takes three boxes to return, label your boxes "Box 1 of 3", "Box 2 of 3", and "Box 3 of 3" and NOT "Box 1 of 1", "Box 1 of 1", "Box 1 of 1" (it really does happen every year).
- As you know, one book title can be produced in multiple volumes. Please return all volumes of one book together at the same time. Please do not return partial volumes of a book. We do not have the storage space to accommodate partial books. Simply wait until you are done using the entire book and return it all at once.
- Tape your boxes sufficiently.
- Return ALL of your CIMC barcoded books – some districts have been discussing getting rid of their EBAE formatted novels and books and some have asked about CIMC textbooks and novels. Please DO NOT throw away any volume of a book with a CIMC barcode. Return everything.
- Tape your boxes sufficiently.

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- If you discover a book in your district that may have been checked out some time ago please call Laurie Taylor in the CIMC at (719) 567-2198 with the barcode number. There are still more than 2,000 volumes checked out to districts that have not been returned. It could be we have already purged the rest of the book. We can tell you what to do with the found book once you call Laurie and she looks it up in our database.

New procedures regarding tractor feed braille paper approved by Vision Coalition: The CIMC asked, and received, approval from Vision Coalition representatives to revise our policy around providing tractor feed braille paper to districts. In accordance with our current paper policy, the CIMC will continue to provide one box of APH produced (non-tractor feed) braille paper per academic school year per student who is eligible for the Federal Quota Census and is a braille learner or user. The CIMC will no longer provide tractor feed paper to school districts. Each Administrative Unit (AU) will be responsible for purchasing their own tractor feed paper. The CIMC does have a transition plan to assist district TVIs and braillists as they work with the Directors of Special Education to incorporate this cost into their budgets. Based on orders received from school districts over the past two years, the CIMC will be delivering the equivalent of a 2 year supply of tractor feed paper to each district by the end of this 2015 school year. We anticipate that this will be enough paper to get each district through the 2016-2017 school year. Over the next two school years, please work with your district on budget planning, which includes the cost of tractor feed braille paper, currently approximately \$50.00 per 1,000-sheet box.

APH: Ex Officio Trustee Craig Meador has been selected as the Vice President of Educational Services and Product Development (a new title at APH). Craig currently serves as Director of Outreach Services/State Vision Consultant for Washington State. Prior to that, Craig was Principal/Director of On Campus Programs at the Washington State School for the Blind.

Discussion: Does anybody know if/when Bookshare will have UEB formatted materials available for download? It was suggested that Bookshare be contacted for this information. Bookshare has had a representative at UEB Transition Forum and are likely addressing this issue.

University of Northern Colorado – VI Program (Paula Conroy)

There have been serious challenges with starting the UEB course last fall. One specific challenge is with our current CDE VI PLACE test, which still has a braille section that is in New English American Edition code. Colorado students must take and pass the CDE VI PLACE test prior to their practicums. They have been trained in UEB and yet are facing a state assessment that remains in the former code. Paula and Tanni are working to address this issue with the CDE Licensure Unit.

Note: Following the VC meeting, the decision was made to suspend the VI PLACE test until a new test can be designed and/or there is an approved replacement of this type of test. For the time being, the VI PLACE test is no longer a requirement of licensure. It is up to the individuals' university to vouch for the person's met competencies as a TVI.

There are also challenges with finding observation hours / field experience for UNC students. We need Colorado TVIs to assist with welcoming TVIs-in-training for these observation hours. This is different than the need for practicum sites.

Discussion: We discussed having some kind of sign-up of TVIs who would be willing to be available to have an UNC student come do observation hours. It is important to understand that all students have gone through a background check to enroll in the UNC Program. School TVIs need to ensure that they have district approval to "host" an observing student. It was recommended to create a handout that could be disseminated to the TVIs at the fall CDE Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment to invite a sign-up process. Paula will decipher the expectation differences between the requirements between a field experience and a practicum.

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Colorado Department of Education (Tanni Anthony)

Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project: We are in the second year of our five-year cycle. The grant is funded from 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 during the school year and across the summer months, please contact Gina Quintana at (303) 866-6681 or quintanta_g@cde.state.co.us

Census: The December 1, 2015 Census is currently being tallied. Thank you to all the wonderful people who have assisted with updating, completing, and returning the AU or agency-specific census forms.

Project Webpage: The webpage url is <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-DB.asp>

Summer Institute: The 2015 Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness will be held in the Denver area on June 25-26, 2015. The focus will be mathematics instruction for learners with significant support needs, including deaf-blindness. The registration for this training was capped at 100 persons and we are official full and putting people on the wait list pending any cancellations. We are in the process of sending out email confirmations to selected attendees.

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. Persons interested in registering for this conference, should go to: <http://www.nmsd.k12.nm.us/publications/WREIC2015HomePage.htm>

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. These modules were offered over the fall and will be back again next fall in a similar capacity.

Advanced UEB Training: Part 2 of our statewide Unified English Braille training was offered to over 25 TVIs and school braillists on January 21-24, 2015 with featured UEB experts Darleen Bogart and Phyllis Landon. Follow-up activities are occurring in different regions with face-to-face trainings and on the Colorado UEB listserv.

Annual O&M Seminar: The seminar will be held April 30 –May 1, 2015 at the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton. The featured speaker for the Thursday night session will be Dr. Kara Hansen, who will address low vision devices specific to travel. The featured speaker for the Friday and Saturday full-day sessions will be Dr. Sandra Rosen from San Francisco State University. Dr. Rosen will address a variety of topics with a strong focus on proprioceptive assessment and intervention. Registration is currently closed with over 60 participants!

Low Vision Evaluation Clinics: A big thank you to all those individuals who contributed to this year's clinics. Over the course of the year, **47** children across **24** administrative units were evaluated for their low vision needs. In total **96** devices were prescribed and **35** were purchased.

Recruitment and Retention: We are sad to say goodbye to Sally Burch in St. Vrain, who recently moved out of state. Julie Hutchinson has filled this position. St. Vrain, Johnstown Milliken, Windsor has also hired Liz Weider half time. We have TVI/COMS openings at CSDB, Weld 6, Poudre, St. Vrain, and Anchor Center for Blind Children. We have some serious recruitment work to do!

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

Parent Database: We currently have about 280 parents registered on the CDE Parent Database. This is out of over 1,000 families across the state. The database is used only to mail out the *Keeping in Touch* newsletter and, on rare occasion, other mailings. It is important to keep it maintained with accurate addresses AND families of children with visual impairment, including blindness that are currently enrolled in Anchor Center for Blind Children or Colorado public school programs. As children graduate or families move out of state, we need to ensure that we remove those families. As new families come into the system, please help Tanni be proactive with getting families registered on the database. This is a voluntary process – so families need to complete and sign their registration forms.

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>

DISCUSSION ITEMS

CDE ESSU Proposed Projects for School Year 2015-16

- State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment (with CVI as the key topic)
- Low Vision Evaluation Clinics
- Orientation and Mobility Training
- Braille Competency Testing and Mentor Support
- Regional Unified English Braille Code Refresher Course
- Keeping in Touch Newsletter
- Vision Coalition

CSDB – Blindness

- Low Vision Evaluation Clinics (CSDB staff)
- CIMC

UEB Game Plan for Colorado

Tanni shared a document called *Next Step Guidance for CDE Braille Competency Requirements*, which details the process and timelines for all Colorado TVIs to demonstrate braille competency in UEB. This information was shared at the April State Directors Leadership Team meeting. It will be sent to Colorado TVIs and braillelists next week.

The CDE Braille Committee (Nancy Cozart, Lucia Hasty, Brenda Shepard, Sarah Sonnier, and Julie Wetzstein) is in the process of converting the CDE Braille Competency Test and renewal modules into UEB. We are hopeful the test will be finalized by June 2015 and the modules will be finalized by August 2015.

Another discussion occurred specific to Colorado's game plan for using UEB as both a literary and math code as opposed to implementation of UEB for literary and Nemeth for math. These decisions are critical for instruction and state assessments. A decision was made to further investigate UEB as a literary and math code for students who meet the participation guidelines for an alternate assessment and with children ages birth through 3rd grade for the next school year – with a roll-out plan to capture future grades as this cadre of children moves forward through their school years.

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The thinking is that Nemeth would be reserved for students entering into higher math needs in their later school years. There are many things to consider and VC members will talk to CO TVIs, TVIs in other states, and national experts. Jim Olson will collect data on the number of our 1-3 braille readers in the next school year to determine needs for securing math textbooks in UEB. Tanni will roll out this discussion on Colorado's UEB listserv in the next couple of weeks.

Child Find and Children with Visual Impairments

The responsibility of Child Find is to locate and identify children suspected as having a disability. The role of the TVI in the Child Find process may be varied depending on a local administrative unit. A TVI may be involved in the administrative unit's vision screening process. In the event that a child is diagnosed with a visual impairment ahead of the Child Find process, the TVI will actively contribute to the evaluation process. If a visual impairment is only suspected at this time and the child fails the vision screening, the next step will be to work with the family to pursue a clinical vision evaluation with an eye doctor, usually an ophthalmologist. Only an eye doctor can make a diagnosis of visual impairment, determine whether the child has a refractive error (would benefit from a prescription to correct near/farsightedness or astigmatism), quantify the visual prognosis, and determine whether the child needs medical intervention to restore or correct some/all impaired vision. The eye doctor report is required for the ECEA eligibility process of all learners identified with "visual impairment, including blindness."

It is important to clarify that a Functional Vision Assessment cannot be completed with any level of professional confidence with a child who has not been evaluated by an eye care specialist first. The FVA is designed to evaluate the learner's everyday visual functioning with best correction of refractive error or treatment of other possible ocular issues. As such, it should occur only after an eye care specialist has evaluated the child.

READ Act for Students with Disabilities

The Colorado READ Act (HB12-1238) requires teachers to assess the literacy development of students in kindergarten through 3rd grade in the areas of phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, including oral skills, reading fluency, and reading comprehension. K-3rd Grade personnel must use CDE State Board of Education approved interim assessments to measure each child's reading competency. If the child is found to have a significant reading deficiency (SRD), diagnostic tools are used for further analysis of the child's reading needs.

There are seven approved CDE English interim assessments: (1) Aimsweb; (2) Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills Next (DIBELS Next); (3) Formative Assessment System for Teachers (FAST); (4) iReady; (5) ISIP ER, Istation; (6) Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS); and (7) STAR Early Learning.

To determine a SRD, each child must be screened using a CDE-approved interim instrument. The challenge is that not every child CAN BE screened for a SRD with the existing tools. The approved tools are not normed for learners with a disability and there are issues of sensory and cognitive accessibility, as well as issues specific to communication and physical response abilities.

A subgroup of the Vision Coalition met on December 15 to discuss needed steps to include all learners with visual impairment and blindness with the READ Act requirements. Baseline data from the Spring 2014 reporting period include the following:

Eligibility Category	NA	CoAlt	ELL	PA	All Exempt	No SRD	Yes SRD	Total (82)	Dec Count
VI IB	4	3	0	2	9	58	24	91	13

Vision Coalition Meeting Minutes

April 17, 2015...cont.

Key Findings:

- 04 learners exempted due to disability status
- 03 learners anticipated /are “alternate assessment” status
- 09 / 91 or 10% exempted
- 58 / 82 or 71% tested and found NOT to have a SRD
- 24 / 82 or 28% tested and found to have a SRD
- 13 learners all together missing from the READ Act Count

Currently DIBELS is the most popular English interim tool. DRA2 was the second most popular tool in the 2013-14 administration. This tool will no longer be approved in the 2014-15 school year. As such, the popularity of other tools may increase next school year.

The subgroup spent time going through the DIBELS assessment, which involves a paper copy test. There are different components to each grade level. All items on the DIBEL involved a timed trial of data collection. Items that were discussed include: (a) putting DIBELS in braille (there is already an existing braille version) with customization of contractions across the K-3 grades as needed; (b) adding information to the scoring measures such as the frequency of reversals; and (c) adding an option of extended time. It was concluded that it is essential that a TVI be involved in the READ Act screening process to determine if a child with visual impairment, including blindness does or does not have a significant reading deficiency (SRD). The TVI can assist in the accessibility, administration scoring, and interpretation of the screening protocol results. If a child is found to have a SRD, the TVI should be involved further in the diagnostic process.

A final product with READ Act recommendations specific to children with visual impairment, children blindness will be crafted over the 2015 summer months.

State Assessments

The state assessments are in full process and there have been many discussions across administrative units and at regional TVI meetings. Tanni has asked TVIs to share their concerns with their DACS in a proactive manner. She is also collecting information on what worked or did not work for this Spring 2015 administration to share internally with CDE. Dynamic Learning Maps and PARCC have specifically asked for information about test administration with students with visual impairments, including blindness.

Vision Coalition Membership for 2015-16:

We thank each representative of the Vision Coalition for his or her time and contribution during school year 2014-15. A big thank you to Judy Mumford and Sarah Bickford Vallese for their time with us, as they will leave their roles on the VC for the next school year.

Anticipated VC members for the next school year include: Tanni Anthony (CDE), Paula Conroy (UNC), Nancy Cozart (metro region), LaVerne Dell (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation), Karin Hensel (CSDB Outreach), Elaine Karns (northern region), Paula Landry (Anchor Center for Blind Children), Jim Olson (CSDB), Deb Andrews (southern region) and Angela Sims (western region).

We still need to confirm representation from the CSDB School for the Blind, Parents of Blind Children, and CAER.

Next Meeting Date: September 11, 2015

Year Round Continuing Education Through AER Knowledge Center

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IN GRATITUDE, WE SAY FAREWELL

Commissioner Robert Hammond Announces Retirement



Education Commissioner Robert Hammond announced he will retire effective July 1, 2015

Hammond, age 64, has been with the Department of Education for seven years. He was hired in 2008 as its deputy commissioner and promoted by the State Board of Education to commissioner in 2011.

Hammond said he announced his retirement now in order to give the state board time to develop a plan for selecting his replacement and allow for a smooth transition.

The board is expected to discuss its process for hiring Hammond's replacement at its May meeting.

For more information: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/20150424hammondretirement>

IN GRATITUDE, WE SAY FAREWELL

Alice Applebaum

Director of the Anchor Center for Blind Children for 19 years, is retiring. Her official day of retirement will be August 1. Before her work at the Anchor Center, Alice was the Director of Volunteers and Patient Representatives at Children's Hospital and also served for a short time at the Colorado SIDS Foundation, where she managed special events. The Anchor Center was a perfect fit for Alice because of her nonprofit background and Masters degree in Early Childhood Education.



Under Alice's leadership, the Anchor Center for the Blind Children has grown in many ways. Staff size has increased from 8-10 people to its current 30 people. When she started, they were in half of a cottage on the Clayton Campus. They then grew to use the full cottage and moved next into their own beautiful building where Anchor Center exists today. One of her greatest contributions was the new building that was completed in 2007 after a capital fund raising effort of 8 million dollars that was a true staff/board partnership. The Julie McAndrew's Mork Building was opened in the fall of 2007. Named after Julie Mork, who has been a supporter of the Anchor Center since it opened in 1982; was an early board president. Alice shares that Julie and her family not only kept the doors open once, but continue to support Anchor Center in many capacities. All who have been in the building know of the great effort by the Anchor staff to ensure it is marvelous building for our youngest children with visual impairments to learn and grow.

In addition to the new building, Alice has seen the Anchor Center's budget grow over the years from \$300,000 to \$2.3 million! The budget is used to maintain the building and grounds and, most importantly, to expand programs and services. TVI staff have been added, as well as a social worker. Anchor Center offers the Parent COMPASS Group, which involves parents guiding parents. The depth and range of services has grown to include more rural outreach and greater numbers of children coming into the center. The Anchor Center completes over 600 visits each year. They offer a Lillis Internship, funded by the Lillis Family Foundation, to provide an internship for those interested in becoming TVIs for early childhood education. Dr. Jim King and the Eye Exam Program provides eye exams on site for children in the Anchor Center program or for referrals for children who need eye reports to qualify for services.

Alice is known for her work as a great liaison to the community and raising both money and public awareness on behalf of young children who are blind/visually impaired and their families. She lights up when talking about the possibilities for Anchor Center's role to assist children and families. In true Alice fashion, she shares that she "is most grateful for is the children and families who have allowed Anchor Center to be a small part of their stories -- and who have taught us what we need to learn about children with visual impairment." It has been a true pleasure to watch her hand in the increase of staff and services for Colorado's youngest children with visual impairments and their families. Alice, we say "thank you" and wish you all the best in your retirement.

IN GRATITUDE, WE SAY FAREWELL

Carol Puchalski

Carol Puchalski is retiring this June after a 33 tenure at the Anchor Center for Blind Children. Carol started working for Anchor Center in 1982 when the Center was first established with a Director, Teacher of the Visually Impaired, and four therapists including an OT, PT, SLP, and Carol in Developmental Psychology. Prior to that, she worked for several years with the JFK Child Development Center in Denver. The last part of her time there was spent on a clinical grant studying early development of 0 – 3 year old children with visual impairments living along the Front Range.



Carol's focus over the years has been on healthy social-emotional development/infant mental health, behaviors surrounding sleeping and eating, working with parent groups regarding early childhood development in general and the impact of visual impairment in specific, and assessment of young visually impaired children and Deafblind children. Nine years ago when the Anchor Center received an ongoing grant offering an internship to undergraduate and graduate students, she became the grant site supervisor and has worked with 29 students since 2006.

In 1985 when Carol's son was an infant, she made the decision to work part-time at Anchor Center and also became a Suzuki Piano Teacher. She taught lessons in her home studio for 23 years. Currently, she plays in an all women's marimba band, The Low Flying Knobs, and hopes to continue working part-time closer to home combining her early childhood and music backgrounds.

We thank Carol for her profound contributions to our field, our state, and to countless children and family. You have been an inspiration, Carol, to all of us. Thank you!

Jamie Lugo



CSDB and Colorado is losing the fine talent of **Jamie Lugo**, who will move to Austin, TX with her family over the summer months. Jamie has been in Colorado for seven years, first starting as a Case Manager and Staffing Coordinator at Palmer Day and Night School. She began work at CSDB in 2009 and has been an elementary, daily living skills, and middle school / high school English teacher! She has been involved with Vision Coalition and, most recently, contributed to the READ Act subcommittee.

She has accepted a position as lead teacher at the Texas School for Blind. We are so fortunate to have had Jamie with us in Colorado for these past seven years and wish the Lugo family all the very best!



colorado connections

👂 A Big Hats off to **Kari McIntyre** for earning a CDE Certificate for Braille Competency.

👂 Hats off also to the following people who earned CDE renewal hours for Braille Modules: **Jeannie Lei; Lesli Tigert; Ashley Ives, and Jessica Hank.** Thanks to proctors: **Julie Wetzstein** and **Sarah Sonnier.**



Many, many thanks to a whole bunch of people who contributed to the success of the recent CO O&M Seminar, which was held April 30 - May 2 at the Colorado Center for the Blind. Thanks to **Tanni Anthony, Barb Galgano, and Trina Boyd Pratt** (our O&M Seminar planning committee for this year). Thanks to **Brent Batron** and CCB staff for their hosting of the training in their new conference room. Thanks to CAER for providing breakfast and snacks and organizational work to host the event. A huge thanks to **Dr. Kara Hanson** and **Dr. Sandy Rosen** for their presentations on Thursday night and full day Friday and Saturday. And thank you so much to all who attended over the 2.5 days and brought the needed equipment for the hands-on activities. We had over 60 participants! If anyone would like to be on the Spring 2016 O&M Seminar Planning Committee, please let Tanni know.

CAER Awards to Well Deserved Colleagues and Friends

At the May 1 CAER Banquet Dinner, the following awards were given to our Colorado colleagues and friends. Congratulations to Brandon, Rita, Barb, and Ann.

President's Award: This award recognizes outstanding leadership in the service to people with visual disabilities. The current CAER Board President (David Gooldy) will select and present this award. This award was presented to **Brandon Mapes** of Mountain BOCES

Lifetime Commitment: This award is presented to a professional(s) who have given of themselves to clients/students throughout their career and possibly preparing to retire. This award was presented to **Rita Albright** of Boulder Valley School District by her colleague Dr. Paula Conroy.

Gary Schmidt Award: This award honors an AER member who works directly with students/clients. Nomination criteria include: ethical standards, sense of humor, degree of excellence in job performance, and professionalism. The CAER Board and Janice Schmidt review the nominations and make selection. This award was presented to **Barb Galgano** by her colleague Sarah Sonnier.

Connections Award: This award recognizes cooperative efforts that cross organizational lines, perhaps even groups working collaboratively to benefit our field. The CAER Board considers the nominations and makes the selection. This award was presented to tactile artist **Ann Cunningham** by colleague Brent Batron.

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