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KEEPING IN TOUCH!

A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers
of Colorado Children Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired
August—September 2015

Act, Champion, and Inspire

By Tanni L. Anthony

I want to start out new the year with an adage that I learned now two years ago when I had the chance to attend a behind-the-scenes meeting of a world-famous business. The CEO shared her 3-part philosophy of what makes this business so successful. I have taken the liberty of adjusting it to the framework of our work in the education world and specifically with our learners with visual impairment, including blindness.


Act on what we must do: It is important not to diminish the importance of this first statement. All school professionals must work together to ensure that every student has first-best instruction in the core content areas. We are key partners with general educational professionals. We can help to increase frequency and intensity of the core instruction in our time with students. We must take action to ensure that our students have the same high quality instruction as their peers. We must strive to ensure everyone understands that our students are general education students first.

Champion what we choose to do: In addition to recognizing the core curriculum, our field embraces the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC), which targets the other learning needs of children with blindness/visual impairment. Much of the ECC's content may fall into the "need to champion" category as school personnel and family members work to support opportunities for students in recreation/leisure, social, and daily living skills— all critical for a learner's self-identity, health, and independence.

Inspire what we uniquely do: This final category is what truly defines one business from another, one educational service from another. In our case, it details what is unique about our specific role with a student. We are a self-standing profession because of this unique knowledge. From knowing the Unified English Braille and Nemeth codes (and others!), magnification or screen reader tools, electronic notetakers, or teaching a student to listen to traffic sounds to cross a street—we have a set of unique teaching skills for our students to learn and use. This is what we uniquely do. We are small, but-mighty field of practitioners and when we are the best we can be, so can our students be the best they can be.

We can and should act and champion – but always, we should inspire what is unique about our knowledge and skill set for the good of the student. My best wishes for a great school year – let's make it an inspirational one.

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Colorado Resources and Training /Support Activities Specific to Children and Youth who are Blind/Visually Impaired, Their Families and Service Providers for School Year 2015-16

Compiled By Tanni Anthony
State Consultant on Blindness/Visual Impairment, Colorado Department of Education

Legend for Acronyms:

CDE ESSU =	Colorado Department of Education Exceptional Student Services Unit
CIMC =	Colorado Instructional Materials Center
CMAS =	Colorado Measures of Academic Success
COMS =	Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist
CSDB =	Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind
TVI =	Teacher certified in the area of visual impairment
USABA =	United States Association of Blind Athletes

We have a lot of good things happening over the course of the upcoming school year. The following resources and activities are not exclusive to all that may be happening across the state in the area of supporting children and youth with blindness/visual impairment, their families, and service providers. If there is a resource or activity that was missed on this list, please be in touch with Tanni Anthony to post it in future editions of the newsletter.

Adult Role Model Team: The Adult Blind and Visually Impaired Role Model Team's purpose is to provide students who are blind or visually impaired, their parents and teachers the opportunity to meet successful adult role models who are blind and visually impaired. To openly and frankly discuss, from personal experience, topics related to low vision, vision loss and blindness. Team members share their experiences, triumphant and otherwise, on topics ranging from low vision aids and high-tech devices to overcoming denial and when and how to seek support. Discussion topics have included careers, social interaction, drivers' licenses, organizations, resources, orientation/mobility, daily living skills and other topics that are of interest to students and their families. Contact Laura Douglas at or ldouglas@csdb.org or (719) 578-2110 for more information.

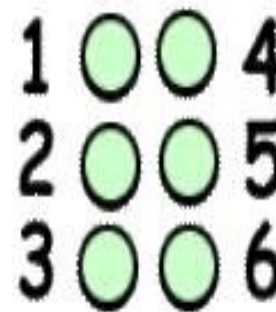
Anchor Center for Blind Children: This not-for profit organization dedicated to providing early intervention/education to very young (birth through five years) children who are blind and visually impaired throughout the state of Colorado. They have a staff of TVIs trained in early childhood and related service providers including occupational, physical, music, horticulture therapists and a speech pathologist. Anchor Center for Blind Children was founded in 1982 by a librarian from the Colorado Library for the Blind, who saw a need for services for blind and visually impaired children, and the local Delta Gamma Alumnae chapter. The first group of children included four preschool students and six home bound infants. Today Anchor Center serves more than 400 children and families each year from across the state. For more information, contact their staff at info@anchorcenter.org or (303) 377-9732.

Audio Information Network of Colorado: AINC is among the nation's leading resources for blind, visually impaired and print-disabled individuals, providing its listeners with free access to recorded programming 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The only service of its kind in Colorado, their services allow registered listeners to access audio programs online, through downloaded podcasts, on TV or over the phone. With recorded content from over 100 newspapers and magazine articles, our statewide programs provide over 1,500 listeners with everything from national news to local news and community events. AINC started two new initiatives this past Fall focused on serving school-age students, K-12, in schools throughout the State. A parallel initiative serves the Latino/Hispanic population of all ages, again in schools and their homes. AINC now has a 24-7 broadcast in Spanish. Many audio information services provide individual Spanish language programs along with their regular scheduled English language programming. For more information, please contact their Boulder office at studio at (303) 786-7777 or 1-877-443-2001 (toll free).

Braille and Large Print Format Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) Test Review: TVIs had the opportunity to meet with the CDE Unit of Student Assessment and the CMAS publisher in school year 2014-15 to review the large print and braille CMAS tests. There will be continued work specific to these new online assessments. For more information, contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

Brailist listserv: This listserv is exclusively for school braillists working in Colorado administrative units. It is a venue for braillists to share information, ask questions, and gather information. Persons wishing to be added to the listserv should contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

Braille Transcriber Mentor Project: The Braille Transcribers Mentor Project is for experienced Library of Congress certified braillists to mentor new braille transcribers who are working on their LOC certification. Arrangements will be made to pay the mentor for his or her time. Jim Olson is the contact at jolson@csdb.org or (719) 578-2195.



CDE State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment: The key professional development activity for TVIs during this school year will be on two topics. The first session will feature Dr. Lauren Lieberman on the topic of *Physical Education and Sports for Children and Youth with Visual Impairments and Deafblindness*. This full-day training will be held on Thursday, October 15th at Church Ranch Marriott, 7000 Church Ranch Boulevard, Westminster and is open to CO TVIs and COMSs. The second speaker will be Dr. Christina Roman Lantzy, who will provide two days of training on *Cortical Visual Impairment* on Friday and Saturday, October 16 and 17th. The Friday and Saturday training sessions are open to all CO TVIs, COMSs, VI-paras, and parents of children with CVI. Other interested parties may be considered depending on space availability. The CVI training will be held at the Doubletree Hotel in Denver. There are no registration costs for these training sessions, but participants must be approved for attendance pending space availability. For more information, please contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

Colorado Center for the Blind Summer Activities: Throughout the school year and over the summer, the CCB offers learning and recreation programs to students who are blind/visually impaired. For more information, please contact Brent Batron at bbatron@cocenter.org or (303) 778-1130 x 222.

Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC): Housed on the campus of CSDB, the role of the CIMC is to provide braille textbooks and serve as a repository for APH educational materials for all Colorado school-age students through twelfth grade who are blind/visually impaired. The CIMC also houses a lending library of professional materials for access by TVIs. For CIMC questions or assistance, contact Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org or (719) 579-2196. CIMC webpage: www.csdb.org; click on "Programs and Services," then "CIMC."

Colorado Talking Book Library: The CTBL provides free library service to Coloradans of all ages who are unable to read standard print material due to visual, physical or learning disabilities whether permanent or temporary. CTBL provides audio, Braille and large-print books and magazines postage paid through the mail. Audio and braille books are available for download through the BARD mobile app for either iOS or Android. For more information, contact Debbi MacLeod by email at ctbl.info@cde.state.co.us or by phone (303) 727-9277 or toll free at 1-800-685-2136.

CIMC Brailist Scholarships: The CIMC has a scholarship fund to help certified Library of Congress braillists from Colorado attend National Braille Association (NBA) Professional Development Conferences. Scholarship recipients are asked to share the conference information with other Colorado braillists. Conference information is posted at www.nationalbraille.org. For more information, contact Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org or (719) 578-2195.

CSDB Internship Placements: CSDB offers an educational setting with a diverse student population for university students completing their graduate training in vision to obtain internship or student teaching credits. For more information, contact Carol Hilty, CSDB Superintendent, at chilty@csdb.org or (719) 578-2102.

CSDB Lending Library: The library provides materials and information in a variety of formats for students who are deaf/hard of hearing and/or blind/visually impaired, as well as their parents and service providers. Most items may be borrowed the library's community use form. The libraries are open Monday—Friday during the school year from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Please call before coming in person to either library. For more information, please refer to the CSDB website at www.csdb.org

CSDB Summer Enrichment Program: Each summer programs are offered for middle school students who are blind/visually impaired across the state. The programs focus on Braille/O&M/ independent living, social relationships, and recreational activities. For more information, contact Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org or (719) 578-2251.

CSDB Touch Museum: Some animal specimens are available for loan within the State of Colorado. The contract person is Laura Douglas (ldouglas@csdb.org) or (719) 578-2110.

CDE Orientation and Mobility Seminar: This training is co-sponsored by CDE and CAER. A planning committee works together to determine the theme, presenters, dates and location. Be watching future newsletters for more details on the annual workshop. This training is reserved for Colorado Certified O&M Mobility Specialists (COMSs). The contact person is Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project (aka the Colorado Deafblind Project): The project will be entering its third year of a new five year grant cycle. There are currently 136 children and youth, age birth through 21 years, who have combined vision and hearing loss (deafblindness) in Colorado. Free technical assistance is provided the families and service providers of children and youth with combined vision and hearing loss (deafblindness). The project hosts an annual Summer Institute, which focuses key assessment of and intervention / instructional strategies for children and youth who are deafblind and/or who have significant support needs. The project website has over 100 fact sheets (in English and Spanish) on information specific to deafblindness. The library is open to parents and professionals and is stocked with great resources, including about 100 items specific to visual impairment. The library's inventory is listed on the website, where there also is a downloadable book-loan order form. For more information about the CO Deafblind Project's free technical assistance services, contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681 or Gina Quintana at Quintana_g@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6605 and/or go the project's continually updated webpage: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-DB.asp>

CO TVI COMS listserv: This listserv is exclusively for Colorado TVIs and COMSs working in Colorado administrative units. It is a venue for professionals to share information, ask questions, and gather information. Persons wishing to be added to the listserv should contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.



Family Learning Retreat 2016: The weekend retreat is for families who have a child who is deaf/ hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired, or deafblind. The retreat is a great opportunity for families to meet other families and share their stories, have fun, make friends, and learn together. More information about the Family Learning Retreat will be posted in future *Keeping in Touch* newsletters and on the CSDB website (www.csdb.org)

Family Literacy Packs: Each Family Literacy Pack contains several books (braille and print) along with a Video or DVD of each story and several Activity Kits placed in a colorful child's back pack. Students keep the items they make and return the extra materials with the backpack. Activities may include a game, a song, or an activity and can be enjoyed by the whole family. The packs are available for TVIs to check out by contacting Laurie Taylor (ltaylor@csdb.org) or (719) 578-2198.

Foresight Ski Guides: Foresight Ski Guides served upwards of three dozen students with visual disabilities from more than five Colorado school districts during the 2014-5 ski season in Vail and Beaver Creek. Students came with school groups and their TVI's while others came with their parents and families. Every student learned how to ski and how to be guided by our expert guides. Foresight Ski Guides can partner with TVI's, districts and parents to address several important areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum for the Blind, as well as Colorado State Standards for Physical Education for your students. Bring your students to Vail for the most fun they might ever experience, all while learning important life skills including a sport they can safely enjoy throughout their lifetime with family and friends. Coming this fall – How work with Foresight Ski Guides may qualify as a tool in your IEP Toolbox. Stay tuned or contact Foresight at (303) 506-6965 email us at foresightskiguides@gmail.com follow us on Facebook and Twitter, and visit our website at foresightskiguides.org



Keeping in Touch (KIT) Newsletter: This newsletter started about 20-plus years ago when folks across the state talked about a lack of communication continuity. It has mostly been a labor of love internal to CDE, but there are some great folks who actively contribute to each edition or from time-to-time. Please consider being one of them – there is always room to brag on the accomplishments of a colleague, post an announcement, or to share an article. The newsletter is sent out to CO parents of children and youth who are blind/visually impaired, TVIs, COMS, braillists, and VI paraeducators. It is also posted on the CDE Blindness/ Low Vision website for others to download. The following editions are planned for this school year: August / September 2015, October 2015, November / December 2015, January / February 2016, March / April 2016, and May 2016. For more information, please contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.



Low Vision Evaluation Clinics: The Low Vision Evaluation Team is once again funded for five regional clinics. The clinic team consists of an optometrist specializing in low vision services (Dr. Tom Theune), a certified low vision therapist / TVI (Jim Olson), certified low vision therapist (Wendy Stoltman), and a Clinic Coordinator (Debbie Haberkorn). The dates of the 2015-16 clinics are posted within this newsletter, as are the local site coordinators for each clinic (who have the clinic paperwork). The contact is Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

National Braille Challenge: The Colorado regional contest will again be held at CSDB in 2016. Students may also compete individually in their home school with their TVI administering the tests. Students compete in various categories such as spelling, reading comprehension, speed and accuracy, proofreading, and charts and graphs. Please hold January 27, 2015 for this event. For more information, contact Diane Covington (dcovington@csdb.org) or (719) 578-2225. Please visit www.brailleinstitute.org for additional information about the National Braille Challenge.

Psychological Assessments and Consultation: Psychological assessments (cognitive and social emotional) provided to school districts to assist school districts in developing appropriate educational services and supports for students with vision losses. There is a fee for this service. The contact person is Laura Douglas at ldouglas@csdb.org or (719) 578-2110.

Sensory Safari: This event is in collaboration with the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo in Colorado Springs. It involves a special day for students with visual impairments – there is time to touch, hear, smell, and smell the exhibits! The event will take place in early Spring 2015. The contact person is Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org or (719) 330-7387.

Student Activities Mini-Grant Funds: To achieve the goal of supporting students with vision loss coming together for social and recreational opportunities, the CSDB Outreach program offers some funding for school districts and BOCES staff who want to offer Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) activities for their students in these areas. For more information, please contact Dr. Laura Douglas at ldouglas@csdb.org or (719) 578-2110. A mini-grant request form is also provided on the CSDB website.

TVI Mentor Project: The goal is to provide mentoring assistance to students enrolled in the UNC Visual Impairment Program, as well as new TVIs and/or COMSs in Colorado administrative units. Each participant will be paired with a mentor teacher currently working in Colorado. Mentors will receive a stipend for their time and commitment to mentoring over a full school year. In addition the CDE will fund up to ten mentor sessions for TVIs who need tune-ups with the literary braille code (specific to braille competency testing). If you would like to be a mentor or would like to have a mentor, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681

UEB Listserv: This listserv is exclusively for Colorado TVIs and school braillists working in Colorado administrative units. It is a venue for professionals to share information, ask questions, and gather information about the Unified English Braille Code. Persons wishing to be added to the listserv should contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

UEB Refresher Courses: Four to five regionally-based UEB Refresher Courses will be offered across the state in the months of January – February 2016. The two-day sessions will offer a review of key changes within the UEB Code. Five modules will be covered with an opportunity for participants to demonstrate UEB Braille Competency. All CO TVIs must demonstrate braille competency with the UEB code by May 2016. More information will be disseminated about these refresher courses at a later time. The contact is Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

United States Association of Blind Athletes: USABA is a Colorado-based 501(c) (3) organization that provides life-enriching sports opportunities for every individual with a visual impairment. A member of the U.S. Olympic Committee, USABA provides athletic opportunities in various sports including, but not limited to track and field, nordic and alpine skiing, biathlon, judo, wrestling, swimming, tandem cycling, powerlifting and goalball (a team sport for the blind and visually impaired). For information about Colorado outreach activities, contact Matt Simpson at msimpson@usaba.org or by phone at (719) 866-3019.

Vision Coalition: The Vision Coalition is a statewide advisory committee on the educational activities for students who are blind/visually impaired, support activities for their parents, and professional development activities specific to their service providers. Current members include: Deb Andrews (Southern Region), Tanni Anthony (CDE ESSU), Paula Conroy (UNC), Nancy Cozart (Metro region), LaVerne Dell (Vocational Rehabilitation), Paula Landry, (Anchor Center for Blind Children), Elaine Karns (Northern region), Jamie Lugo (School for the Blind– CSDB), Sara Noel (CSDB BVI Outreach), Jim Olson (CIMC), and Angela Sims (Western region). The VC meets three times a school year. For more information, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

Resources and Materials

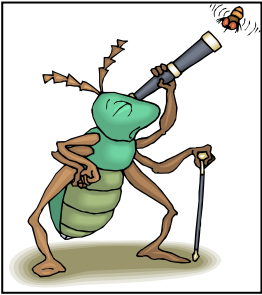
The Education Trust Report

The Education Trust has just published a report *Checking-In: Do Classroom Assignments Reflects Today's Higher Standards?* The report reflects the findings of a study that looked at the quality and alignment of language arts classroom assignments with standards.

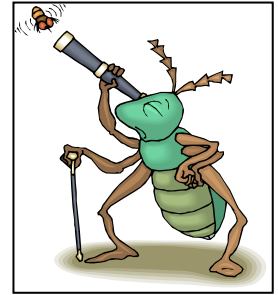
You can find the report at the link below.

http://1k9gl1yevnfp2lpq1dhrqe17.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/CheckingIn_TheEducationTrust_Sept2015.pdf





LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



Schedule for 2015-16 Low Vision Evaluation Clinics

Region	Dates	Site Coordinator
Southern	September 25, 2015 Paperwork Due by September 4	Donice Fennimore
Northern	November 12 - 13, 2015 Paperwork due by October 22	Elaine Karns
Metro	February 25-27, 2016 Paperwork due by February 4	Rebecca Warnell & Wendy Schlageter
Southern	March 31, 2016 Paperwork due by March 10	Donice Fennimore
Southern	April 1, 2016 Paperwork due by March 10	Donice Fennimore

***** * * **Attention all TVIs:** * *

* Please work closely with your Regional LVE Clinic Coordinators to ensure that all of the
* required paperwork is fully completed and turned into the clinic staff in a timely man-
* ner. You can also find the paperwork on the CDE website at:

* http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Vision_Activities.asp *
*

* Please be advised that if you are recommending a student to attend the LVE Clinic, it is
* your responsibility to prepare the student and parent for the appointment, attend with
* them, and ensure that you assist with any needed follow-up training of the prescribed
* device(s). Thank you for helping to ensure the success of the clinic for each student.
*

*
* *Your Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Team* *
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ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

Effective Snow Removal for Pathways and Transit Stops

Winter is coming in the next few months! If your community is updating or implementing snow removal policies to improve accessibility on sidewalks, at intersections, or near transit stops, ESPA's snow removal booklet is a 2014 publication that features common practices, community engagement and communication, planning, and innovations in snow removal and storage in both the U.S. and Canada.

Project Action: <http://www.projectaction.org>

O&M Video from Professionals and Consumers

Check out "Walk with me: Safe Guiding Techniques"?

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/consumer/disability-services/services-by-type/intellectual-disability/support/blind-vision-impairment/developmental-services-vision-training-and-events.html>

This collaborative video with DDS shows how human guide, also known as sighted guide, can be used by individuals with visual impairment, legal blindness, or deafblindness in a variety of everyday situations including walking through doorways, on stairs, and safely getting into or out of a car and van. This video also addresses the unique needs of individuals with vision loss who use walkers or gait belts.

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

Training Topic: 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.

Target Audience: This workshop is intended for Colorado school district physical education teachers, adapted physical education teachers (APEs), teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs) certified orientation and mobility specialist (COMSs), physical therapists (PTs), and occupational therapists (OTs).

Location: Church Ranch Marriott
7000 Church Ranch Boulevard
Westminster, CO 80021

Registration link: <http://www.shapeco.org/convention.html>

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY



White Cane Safety Day: A Symbol of Independence

Article retrieved from: <https://nfb.org/white-cane-safety-day>

By Marc Maurer



In February of 1978 a young blind lady said, "I encounter people all of the time who bless me, extol my independence, call me brave and courageous, and thoroughly miss the boat as to what the real significance of the white cane is."

The National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled on the 6th day of July, 1963, called upon the governors of the fifty states to proclaim October 15 of each year as White Cane Safety Day in each of our fifty states. On October 6, 1964, a joint resolution of the Congress, HR 753, was signed into law authorizing the President of the United States to proclaim October 15 of each year as "White Cane Safety Day." This resolution said: "Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives", that the President is hereby authorized to issue annually a proclamation designating October 15 as White Cane Safety Day and calling upon the people of the United States to observe such a day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.'

Within hours of the passage of the congressional joint resolution authorizing the President to proclaim October 15 as White Cane Safety Day, then President Lyndon B. Johnson recognized the importance of the white cane as a staff of independence for blind people. In the first Presidential White Cane Proclamation President Johnson commended the blind for the growing spirit of independence and the increased determination to be self-reliant that the organized blind had shown. The Presidential proclamation said: *The white cane in our society has become one of the symbols of a blind person's ability to come and go on his own. Its use has promoted courtesy and special consideration to the blind on our streets and highways. To make our people more fully aware of the meaning of the white cane and of the need for motorists to exercise special care for the blind persons who carry it Congress, by a joint resolution approved as of October 6, 1964, has authorized the President to proclaim October 15 of each year as White Cane Safety Day. Now, therefore, I, Lyndon B. Johnson, President of the United States of America do hereby proclaim October 15, 1964 as White Cane Safety Day.*

With those stirring words President Johnson issued the first White Cane Proclamation which was the culmination of a long and serious effort on the part of the National Federation of the Blind to gain recognition for the growing independence and self-sufficiency of blind people in America, and also to gain recognition of the white cane as the symbol of that independence and that self-reliance.

The first of the state laws regarding the right of blind people to travel independently with the white cane was passed in 1930. In 1966, Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, the founder of the National Federation of the Blind, drafted the model White Cane Law. This model act--which has become known as the Civil Rights Bill for the Blind, the Disabled, and the Otherwise Physically Handicapped-'contains a provision designating October 15 as White Cane Safety Day. Today there is a variant of the White Cane Law on the statute books of every state in the nation.

From 1963 (and even before) when the National Federation of the Blind sought to have White Cane Safety Day proclaimed as a recognition of the rights of blind persons, to 1978 when a blind pedestrian met with misunderstanding regarding the true meaning of the white cane, is but a short time in the life of a movement. In 1963, a comparatively small number of blind people had achieved sufficient independence to travel alone on the busy highways of our nation. In 1978 that number has not simply increased but multiplied a hundredfold. The process began in the beginning of the organized blind movement and continues today. There was a time when it was unusual to see a blind person on the street, to find a blind person working in an office, or to see a blind person operating machinery in a factory. This is still all too uncommon. But it happens more often and the symbol of this independence is the white cane. The blind are able to go, to move, to be, and to compete with all others in society. The means by which this is done is that simple tool, the white cane. With the growing use of the white cane is an added element' - the wish and the will to be free'-the unquenchable spirit and the inextinguishable determination to be independent. With these our lives are changed, and the prospects for blind people become bright. That is what White Cane Safety Day is all about.



COLORADO
Department of Education
Accountability, Performance and
Support Division

CDE State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment

Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI): Assessment to Instructional Strategies

Dates: Friday and Saturday, October 16 and 17th, 2015 (8:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m.)
Location: Double Tree Hotel, 3203 Quebec St, Denver CO 80207

Training Topic: Each year the Colorado Department of Education offers a statewide conference on topics specific to school-age learners with visual impairment, including blindness. The year's training topic will address Cortical Visual Impairment or CVI, the leading cause of pediatric visual impairment in developed countries and specifically in our state. This training will be considered intermediate-to-advanced on the topic of Cortical Visual Impairment. Dr. Roman Lantzy will address (a) brief overview of basic definitions and principles of CVI; (b) medical causes and diagnostic information including CVI characteristics; (c) introduction to the CVI Range / how to conduct the CVI Range; (d) interventions and a framework for itinerant teachers and classroom providers; (e) CVI and literacy; (f) implications of CVI and social skill acquisition; (g) vision—language learning; (h) Phase III CVI "simulation", and (i) update on new research.

Presenter: Our presenter is Dr. Christine Roman Lantzy. Christine is the Director of the Pediatric View Program at The Western Pennsylvania Hospital in Pittsburgh Pennsylvania where she has conducted evaluations of over 1000 children who have CVI. Christine has provided workshops and consultations across the United States and internationally.



Target Audience: This training has a restricted audience and will be limited to 120 participants. First priority to teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs), certified orientation and mobility specialist (COMSs) working in Colorado school districts or the Anchor Center for Blind Children, and Colorado parents of school-age children with CVI. Based on availability, this training will be open to other CO personnel working directly with children with CVI. First priority will be to accept participants who can commit to both full days of this training.

Costs: We are pleased to announce that the Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project (aka the Colorado Deaf-Blind Grant Project) within the Colorado Department of Education's Exceptional Student Services Unit will fund the costs of this training for approved participants. There are no registration costs.

Registration: The registration link for the training can be found at:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CDE_BVConference_2015

Registration will close on **September 25, 2015 at 5 p.m.**

PLEASE NOTE: Registration does not mean acceptance into this training. Confirmation of acceptance will be sent to the participants no later than October 2, 2015.



Spring 2016 Testing Windows

Recently PARCC announced that PBA and EOY windows will be combined into a single window. To test as close to the end of the year as possible, Colorado's testing window for all spring 2016 CMAS and alternate assessments will be April 11th - April 29th. The three-week window will allow districts to complete testing for all CMAS and alternate testing, including science, social studies, English language arts (ELA) and math if they are able to have single groups for each CMAS session. Schools administering paper-based testing should complete paper-based testing during this three week window, with the exception of students taking the paper-based form as an accommodation in a school taking the online assessments. Colorado will be moving to a sampling approach for social studies. One-third of schools will participate next year. All social studies and science tests must be scheduled and completed between April 11th and April 29th, but districts needing more time to complete their ELA and math testing due to device numbers (i.e., the number of computers available will require multiple groups for each test unit) may begin testing those content areas earlier. The maximum test window will be six weeks. Six weeks will allow schools needing three groups per CMAS session to complete testing.

To the extent possible, a student taking the alternate assessment in a content area for which the student is participating in a general education class should be assessed at the same time as the general education peers to avoid missed instruction. Schools may also ensure the student taking the alternate assessment does not miss instruction from that general education class through other means. Please see below for the 2016 assessment windows.

CMAS (science, social studies ¹ , PARCC English language arts ² and PARCC math) CoAlt (science and social studies) CoAlt DLM (English language arts and math)	
3 weeks (science, social studies, ELA and math)	April 11 - April 29, 2016
4 weeks (additional week for ELA and math)	April 4 - April 29, 2016
5 weeks (additional weeks for ELA and math)	March 28 - April 29, 2016 or March 21 - March 29, 2016 and April 4 - April 29, 2016
6 weeks (additional weeks for ELA and math)	March 14 - April 29, 2016 with one week of spring break in the middle ³

¹Social studies assessments will be administered on a sampling basis to one-third of the schools each year.

²Including Colorado Spanish Language Arts (CSLA)

³CoAlt DLM system is not scheduled to open until March 16th.

Additional Assessments	
ACCESS for ELLs® (K-12th grade)	January 11 - February 12, 2016
10th grade aligned to CAS and to the 11th grade college entrance exam (TBD)	TBD ⁴
11th grade college entrance exam (TBD)	TBD ⁴

⁴These assessments will be procured through a competitive Request for Proposal process expected to occur during the summer of 2015. Dates for the administration will be determined at the time of contract negotiation.



- ✓ **Complete the Commissioner Search Survey:** The state board of education recognizes that selecting a commissioner of education is one of its most important functions. The state board is interested in gaining input from constituents, staff, education groups, business groups, parents and others, before selecting the commissioner. Please take a moment to complete the online survey by Monday, Sept. 14, available at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeboard/commissionerinputsurvey>
- ✓ **View an Inter-rater Agreement Webinar:** To deepen the understanding of the Teacher Quality Standards, the Educator Effectiveness unit is offering an opportunity for educators to participate in an Inter-rater Agreement Professional Learning Community Webinar. This opportunity is available to individuals, teams, schools or districts to share expertise, learn and grow together in a risk-free environment. Learn more about this opportunity by viewing a recorded webinar, available at <http://connect.enetcolorado.org/p8rh8h17qx5/> Contact Dawn Paré at 303-866-5926 or pare_d@cde.state.co.us for further information.
- ✓ **Educator Effectiveness Support/Technical Assistance is Available:** As the new school year begins, the Educator Effectiveness unit is available to provide superintendents and principals with support and technical assistance related to educator evaluation, including identifying measures of student learning during the transition to new assessments. To find the most appropriate person to assist you, visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/contactus>
- ✓ **View a Resource Guide, Now in a New Format:** The *Resource Guide for Deepening the Understanding of Teacher's Professional Practices* supports observers and coaches in accurately identifying evidence of professional practices and assists classroom teachers in reflecting on their teaching and planning for implementation of specific practices in their instruction. In addition, the research and examples, along with the glossary, supports the development of a common language among Colorado school district employees as they analyze, reflect on and plan instruction. It's easier to find explanations of the professional practices for each element under Standards I-III at the three rating levels: Basic, Partially Proficient and Proficient. Check it out at http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/resourceguide_teacherprofessionalpractices
- ✓ **New Instructional Units Available:** Three new Colorado teacher-authored integrated elementary instructional units based on the Colorado Academic Standards are available at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/instructionalunits-integrated>. The units integrate the arts with another content area, providing instructional units that maintain the integrity of each discipline. The units were developed by a collaborative group of elementary classroom and arts educators and community arts partners in response to requests from the field. In the coming months, educators and arts specialists will create additional arts integrated units at each grade, beginning with kindergarten through grade five and then expanding into the middle school grade levels. These additional units will be published during the 2015-2016 school year. For more information, contact Karol Gates, arts content specialist, at gates_k@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6576.
- ✓ **View a Webinar on Kindergarten School Readiness:** A recording of the Aug. 25 webinar on the interaction of the READ Act and kindergarten school readiness is available at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/schoolreadiness> Questions about the school readiness initiative can be directed to Daryl Gagliano, Kindergarten Readiness Program Manager gagliano_d@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6971.



Calendar of Events

2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015	2015
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September 17	Metro Region TVI Meeting —Colorado Center for the Blind <u>Contact:</u> Jeannie Lei— jlei@cherrycreekschools.org or Mimi Schaper— mschaper2@cherrycreekschools.org
September 23	Southern TVI Meeting —Division of Vocational Rehabilitation <u>Contact:</u> Donice Fennimore— dfennimore@ppboces.org
September 25	Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic —CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Donice Fennimore— dfennimore@ppboces.org
October 12—16	Closing The Gap 33rd Annual Conference: - Minneapolis, MN www.closingthegap.com/conference/
October 15	White Cane Day!
October 15	SHAPE Conference —Pre-Conference Session with Dr. Lauren Lieberman APE and VI) To register: http://www.shapeco.org/convention.html
October 15-17	Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conference - Vail <u>Contact:</u> David Ramer at ramer_d@cde.state.co.us
October 16-17	State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment —Denver <u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony— anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
October 29—Nov 1	Colorado NFB Convention —Colorado Springs <u>Contact:</u> http://www.nfbco.org/
November 12-13	Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic —Ensign Center in Fort Collins <u>Contact:</u> Elaine Karns— elk@psdschools.org
November 18-21	Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference - Albuquerque, NM <u>Contact:</u> gettingintouchwithliteracy@yahoo.com
December 2	Vision Coalition <u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us



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

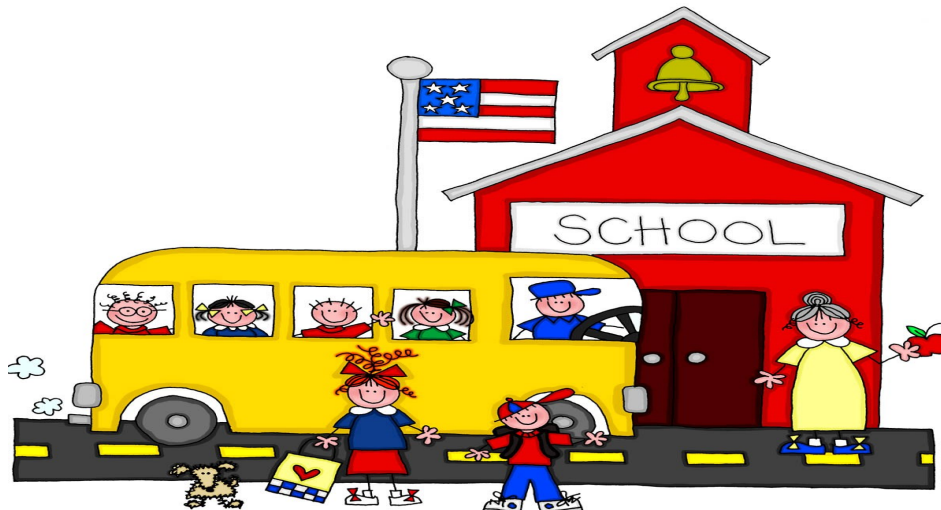
- January 4** **Full Implementation of UEB in the United States!**
- February 17** **Vision Coalition**
Contact: Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- February 25-27** **Metro Low Vision Clinic - Anchor Center for Blind Children in Denver**
Contact: Rebecca Warnell— rewarnell@aps.k12.co.us or
Wendy Schlageter— wschlageter@aps.k12.co.us
- February 29** **Final date to order “Braille Format” for Dynamic Learning Map ELA or Math Tests**
- March 31** **Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic—CSDB**
Contact: Donice Fennimore— dfennimore@ppboces.org
- April 1** **Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic—CSDB**
Contact: Donice Fennimore— dfennimore@ppboces.org
- July 20-24** **AER International Conference - Jacksonville, FL**
Contact: www.aerbvi.org

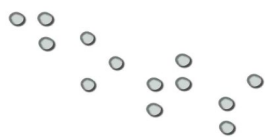
2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017 2017

- 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 2018

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





DOTS OF INTEREST



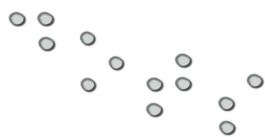
UEB Tools as Compiled by Dr. Frances Mary D'Andrea

Basic Tools

- ♦ **The UEB Rulebook, 2013:** Offers the official list of rules for Unified English Braille, can be downloaded at no charge from the website of the International Council on English Braille (ICEB) or from the BANA website. The direct URL is: www.iceb.org/ueb. This link will take you to three different versions of the Rulebook. A simple PDF version is suitable for printing. The "linked PDF" is ideal for downloading to a computer or tablet because the live links in the document can help the user navigate electronically. Lastly, a "braille-ready" version (BRF) is available and consists of six volumes.
- ♦ **Guidelines for Technical Material, 2014:** This resource provides additional rules and examples for using UEB in technical materials such as mathematics and chemistry. It can also be found at www.iceb.org/ueb and is available in PDF, DOC, or BRF versions.
- ♦ **Provisional Guidance for Using Nemeth within UEB Context:** Available as a PDF or BRF from this website: <http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb.html>

For Adults who Know Braille in the Current Code but Wish to Learn UEB

- ♦ **The ABC's of UEB:** Although this is not a complete instruction manual, this resource provides examples and practice exercises which allow people who already know EBAE to quickly build on their knowledge of braille to understand UEB. This document is available free on the BANA website. This link will take you to the HTML version, but PDF and BRF versions are also available.
<http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb/abcs/abcs-ueb.html>
- ♦ **Hadley School for the Blind courses in UEB:** The Hadley School for the Blind is offering a course called "[Transitioning to Unified English Braille](#)" for people who already know EBAE. During 2015, fees for professionals are waived.
http://hadley.edu/PR_detail.asp?t=20150119-Transitions-to-UEB-Braille-Course-Availability
- ♦ **CNIB Training Manual:** These materials from Canada can be downloaded and printed or used electronically. The course gives some practice materials and answer keys. It assumes that people know braille already. The materials are available as electronic files for print or braille that can be downloaded free of charge. <http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/braille/Pages/Transcribers-UEB-Course.aspx>
- ♦ **The Australian Training Manual 2014:** Available as a free download in PDF or BRF format, this course is for people who knew Australian Braille and are switching to UEB. The manual includes exercises and an answer key.
<http://brailleaustralia.org/unified-english-braille/unified-english-braille-australian-training-manual-2013/>
- ♦ **New Zealand training manual (PDF):** New Zealand previously followed BANA codes, but is now using UEB. Their training manual is similar to the one used in Australia and is available as a free PDF download.
<http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb/NZ%20UEB%20Manual%202011.pdf>



DOTS OF INTEREST



Targeted for Print-Reading Adults who do not Know Braille to Learn UEB:

- ♦ **UEB Online:** This is a free course for sighted people who wish to learn braille from the beginning. Because it is from Australia, there are some spelling differences from United States usage. It provides participants with immediate feedback and people can do lessons on their own and in their own time. <http://uebonline.org/>
- ♦ **Ashcroft Programmed Instruction: Unified English Braille:** The textbook was designed for university programs that prepare teachers of students with visual impairments. Because it was designed for pre-service teachers, its 13 chapters can be completed in a semester (approximately 15 weeks). The book is available in paperback and includes exercises and answer keys so the students can practice on their own and check their answers. Available from: www.scalarspublishing.com

Mathematics Resources

- ♦ **ICEB's Guidelines for Technical Materials:** This document was mentioned earlier; it is available in several electronic file formats from ICEB.
New Zealand resource: The Hitchhiker's Guide to UEB Maths: When New Zealand adopted UEB, it ceased using Nemeth code. Two teachers of students with visual impairments designed this resource, which can be downloaded in print from the website of the Braille Authority of New Zealand Aotearoa Trust (BANZAT). Called "The Hitchhiker's Guide to UEB Math," It can be found at: www.banzat.org.nz/documents/HHGMaths.pdf
- ♦ **Canadian Resource Guide:** Canada is currently making the transition from Nemeth to UEB. Heather Harland and Cheryl Roberts, teachers in British Columbia, designed a resource called "Unified English Braille for Math for Sighted Learners." It can be downloaded in print at: www.prcvi.org/files/braille/UEB_Braille_for_Math_2014.pdf
- ♦ **UKAAF Resource Guide:** The United Kingdom Association for Accessible Formats has created a document guide which gives advice on the approach to use when transcribing math into UEB specifically for school text books and state exams in the UK. While this may not apply to the U.S., it's still interesting to see the approach that was taken: www.ukaaf.org/braille-downloads/braille-standards/maths-guidelines
- ♦ **Provisional Guidance for Using Nemeth within UEB Contexts:** Nemeth code will remain an official code in the United States. This method of switching between the Nemeth Code and Unified English Braille has been developed to ensure the continued viability of the use of the Nemeth Code for mathematics. Available as a PDF or BRF from this website: www.brailleauthority.org/ueb.html

One-Page Resource Lists

- ♦ **Duxbury has a one-page chart that lists the contractions and short forms in alphabetical order:** duxburysystems.com/images/ueb_black.pdf
- ♦ **Aroga Technologies presents the UEB contractions and symbols by category:** www.aroga.com/unified-english-braille-chart-tabloid-11-x-17-pdf-format/



DOTS OF INTEREST



American Printing House for the Blind Resources

1APH plan for UEB implementation described in this press release:

www.aph.org/pr/20140724Policies-Regarding-UEB-Transition-at-APH.html

According to a message sent to Ex Officio Trustees on March 10, 2015 regarding Building on Patterns (BOP):

- APH will have BOP K and BOP 1st grade student materials available in UEB by the beginning of the school year.
- By January 4, 2016 APH will have the BOP 2nd grade student materials available in UEB.

Teachers will NOT need to buy new BOP teacher editions. APH will make a free download available that will tell the teacher what has changed instructionally. For more information, call APH at 800-223-1839

SPELLING DICTIONARY HELPS KIDS WITH NEW BRAILLE CODE

National Braille Press has published a spelling dictionary for elementary age students transitioning to and newly learning the UEB Braille code. It includes 1400 elementary-level words, listed alphabetically without definitions, enabling elementary school-age children to look up the spelling of words independently. Both the contracted and uncontracted Braille version of each word is given. The new edition is in print/Braille, so sighted and blind children and teachers or parents can use it together. For more information, please go to: www.nbp.org

UEB T00!

A supplement to the widely-used program Braille Too is being developed to align with Unified English Braille (UEB). The program, UEB Too: A Supplement to the Braille Too Curriculum, is designed to be used with Braille Too, the program for middle grade and high school students who are learning braille. Digital files will be provided in a USB flash drive and can be embossed using Duxbury Braille Translator software.

For more information, visit <http://brl2.com> or send an email to info@brl2.com



“Tools for Life” Scholarships

✓ Since 2007 –

Assist in purchasing necessary & appropriate adaptive equipment to support literacy and the pursuit of higher education. \$175,000 has been awarded to over 100 Families. Applications Due October 15th, 2015.



To apply for a “Tools for Life” scholarship and to obtain more information, please go to:

www.seethefuture.org

Click on “Tools for Life” then Click on “Application: Tools”

If you have any questions please call Tom Theune, OD – Chairperson of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund at 719.471.3200 or email: twtheune@comcast.net



“Education for Life” Scholarships

- Since 1997 –

To encourage and support the pursuit of higher education, which will enhance both career and personal success. \$490,000 has been awarded to over 97 Students. Applications due march 1, 2016.

To apply for an “Education for Life” scholarship and to obtain more information, please go to:

www.seethefuture.org

Click on “Education for Life” then Click on “Application Information”

If you have any questions please call Tom Theune, OD – Chairperson of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund at 719.471.3200 or email: twtheune@comcast.net

Jobs

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@csdb.org or (719) 578-2114.

Western Region — Jobs

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

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!

Best Colleges - <http://www.bestcolleges.com/resources/disabled-students/>

BestColleges.com is that resource for any prospective college student. They strive to help students make an educated choice about their future. Through the use of student surveys, faculty surveys, independent research, ranking systems and the input of highly credible and authoritative sources, we have created a database of schools to help students and their families learn more about their best options for higher education. This site has information specifically for students for disabilities who want to learn more about their legal rights, receiving accommodations, campus life, college application tips, and general resources.

National Association of Blind Students (NABS) - <http://nabslink.org>

For over four decades the National Association of Blind Students has worked, as an integral part of the National Federation of the Blind, to promote the equality of the blind by serving as a source of information, forum for networking and vehicle for collective action for blind students. Their work on the local, state and national levels is firmly rooted in the conviction that blindness need not prevent one from excelling in a chosen field of study or living a full and productive life. They are dedicated to changing what it means to be blind, by both changing perceptions among the general public of the capabilities of the blind and encouraging blind students to strive to achieve their maximum potential and realize their dreams. One benefit of membership is a subscription to *The Student Slate*, which is published quarterly and contains articles of interest to blind students. Topics range from stories about interesting things blind students have done, to tips about surviving college, and articles about National Association of Blind Students and National Federation of the Blind Events. To learn more about NABS and to find information about Colorado's state division, go to their website.

Going to College - <http://www.going-to-college.org/>

This webpage is a resource for teens with a disability. The website contains information about living college life with a disability. It is designed for high school students and provides video clips, activities and additional resources that can help a student to get a head start in planning for college. Through several interviews, college students with disabilities from across Virginia provided key information for the site. These video clips offer a way to hear firsthand from students with disabilities who have been successful.

Each module includes several activities that will help a student explore more about him/herself, learn what to expect from college and equip the student with important considerations and tasks to complete when planning for college.

Career Pathways Breaking Down Barriers to Employment for Individuals with Disabilities

Please take a moment and read the latest [U.S. Department of Education's Homeroom Blog](#) regarding career pathways by Michael Yudin, Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, and Johan Uvin, the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education.

Career pathways can offer an efficient and customer-centered approach to training and education by integrating the necessary educational instruction, workforce development, and human and social services and supports that are linked to labor market trends and employer needs, leading to stackable credentials.

<http://www.ed.gov/blog/2015/08/>



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

A Guide to Disabilities: How Colleges Help Visually Impaired Students

<http://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/colleges-helping-visually-impaired-students/>

This website provides the following:

- A breakdown of technologies central to visually impaired learning
- College success tips for students with visual impairments
- A detailed look at accommodations colleges are making for students with blindness/visual impairments

Two experts contributed to the development of this guide, including Chris Danielson, Director of Public Relations for the National Federation of the Blind, and Marcus Madsen, Senior Disability Services Advisor at Capella University.

T E C H N O L O G Y U P D A T E

Learning Ally's College Success Program for Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired

If you know a college-bound student who is blind or visually impaired, Learning Ally can help. In partnership with the Lavelle Fund for the Blind, Learning Ally is piloting The College Success Program, a research-based program designed specifically for college students who are blind or visually impaired. The program offers an online curriculum that includes articles, interviews, podcasts, quizzes and more to help you on the college journey. Explore ways to learn effectively, manage connections with professors and disabilities offices, discover technology and connect to the campus and BVI communities.

They have partnered with mentors who are blind or visually impaired and have recently completed college. They understand the barriers you might be facing and are ready to share their wisdom and advice with you..

This program is still in its early stages and they welcome your feedback about the content – they want students to begin the fall semester ready to succeed! To learn more about this program, visit

www.learningally.org/collegesuccess

Learning Ally is a national non-profit dedicated to helping students who are blind, visually impaired and dyslexic succeed in education. Started in 1948 in the New York Public Library as Recording for the Blind, the organization utilized volunteers to record books for blinded veterans returning from WW II. They now offer the world's largest collection of human-narrated audio textbooks and literature as well as solutions, support and community for parents, teachers and students. They provide audiobooks and assistive technologies to help students learn and excel in the classroom and in life.

For more information, please go: <https://www.learningally.org/>

Learning Ally))((
TOGETHER IT'S POSSIBLE



Described and Captioned Media Program

The DCMP provides services designed to support and improve the academic achievement of students who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf-blind.

The Library

Free-loan described and captioned educational media is available to students who are deaf, blind, hard of hearing, visually impaired, or deaf-blind. This educational media is made accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing via captioning and to the blind and visually impaired via description. With over 4,000 titles (and growing!) available for viewing, the DCMP is continuing to provide equal accessibility to these students and the professionals who serve them. There are no user-registration or service fees.

The Learning Center:

The DCMP offers a wealth of information related to education, accessibility, deafness, blindness, and other related topics. Use of this center is free to everyone. Learn about captioning, description, laws pertaining to accessibility, assistive technology, and an array of other subjects.

The Gateway

The gateway will allow individuals to selectively search across the entire clearinghouse of accessibility-related articles. You can also choose from several other search options, such as restricting results to those on the DCMP Web site, the DCMP media collection, or from "Other Videos," which provides immediate search results of media available for purchase from the largest database of accessible media in the world.

Guidelines for Captioning and Describing Media

The guidelines for both captioning and description are used by providers, government agencies, businesses, school technical departments, teachers, parents, students, and others. The DCMP's purpose is to present recommendations for technique, style, and technical considerations.

The DCMP is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and administered by the National Association of the Deaf.

\$4500 Tech Support Grants from Digital Wish

Digital Wish is providing tech support funds to school administrators who need help developing one-to-one computing programs for their elementary and/or middle school students. Grants are open to public, charter, and nonprofit independent school programs.

Digital Wish's goal is to help create pilot programs that school leaders can use to determine the effectiveness of having a mobile computer for each of its students; 28 schools as of early July 2015 have already received funding. Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis throughout summer 2015.

For a one-page application, go to <https://digitalwishes.wordpress.com/grants/>

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Bookshare

Bookshare is the world's largest online accessible library of copyrighted content for people with print disabilities. A person who is blind or has low vision and who is unable to read standard print qualifies for Bookshare® as long as a competent authority confirms that the person is legally blind. Legal blindness is a standard built into the law. Examples of Competent Authorities: family doctor, ophthalmologist, optometrist, teacher of the visually impaired, special education teacher, and the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, or similar government body outside the U.S.

Through its technology initiatives and partnerships, Bookshare seeks to raise the floor on accessibility issues so that individuals with print disabilities have the same ease of access to print materials as people without disabilities. Bookshare books are accessible through a variety of means, the student can: (a) listen to books with high quality text-to-speech voices; (b) hear and see highlighted words on screen; (c) read with digital braille or enlarged fonts; (d) create physical braille or large print; (d) read directly from your Internet browser; and (e) other means.

In 2007, Bookshare received a five-year award from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), to provide **free access** for all U.S. students with a qualified print disability. The Bookshare library now has over 150,000 books and serves more than 200,000 members. Bookshare is an initiative of Benetech, a Palo Alto, CA-based nonprofit which creates sustainable technology to solve pressing social needs.

For more information, go to: www.bookshare.org

Flip-Over Concept Books: FRACTIONS



APH is seeking field evaluators for Flip-Over Concept Books: FRACTIONS, an interactive print and tactile booklet for students with blindness or low vision who are beginning to learn about fractions, decimals, and percents. During the elementary years, grades 2-5 specifically, students build their understanding of fractions and the concept of equivalence as it relates to fractions, decimals, and percents. The goal of this FRACTIONS booklet is for students to learn about fractions by finding adjacent panels, included with the booklet, appropriate for the lesson being taught. The panels represent concepts such as fractions, percents, equivalence, comparison, and relationships. Once a panel has been selected and placed within the booklet, the student will flip through the panels to find the desired fractional, decimal, or percentage representations and then display them on the front of the booklet next to each other; panels with comparative symbols (less than, greater than, and equal to) are also included to facilitate additional activities.

Field evaluators will be asked to use the FRACTIONS booklet with multiple 2nd-5th grade math students with blindness or low vision. Evaluators will then complete and return a product evaluation form at the end of the testing period. Field test sites will be selected based upon geographic location, number of available students, and type of instructional setting. The number of prototypes is limited and preference will be given to those who have not recently field tested an APH product. The field test will begin in September and will be completed by the end of November 2015.

If you are interested in possibly serving as a field evaluator, please provide the following information:

- your name, title, school/agency, and type of setting (e.g., residential, itinerant);
- number of available students with ages, grade levels, and primary reading media indicated (please note that 2nd–5th grade students who are studying fractions, decimals, or percents in math classes are preferred);
- your preferred medium for reading evaluation materials and completing the evaluation form (regular print/large print/braille/electronic); and
- your complete contact information (phone number, mailing address, and e-mail address).

Please send this information to Li Zhou, Core Curriculum Project Leader, at lzhou@aph.org as soon as possible. You may also contact Li at 800-223-1839, ext. 424. Thank you!

Paths to Technology Announcement



The Perkins School for the Blind is excited to announce the development of Paths to Technology, a website to assist educators and families in learning and staying current on ever-changing technology for students with visual impairments and blindness (VIB).

The goal of this project is to enable students with VIB to succeed in paperless mainstream classrooms and post-school opportunities for employment by learning digital literacy and by staying current with rapidly evolving technology. This goal will be achieved through a new resource on Perkins eLearning that will help educators of the visually impaired to integrate the latest technology into the mainstream classroom. The web-based portal, *Paths to Technology*, will be a resource for defining and disseminating best practices, training, support and services for teachers of the visually impaired, braille transcribers, other education professionals and parents.

***Paths to Technology* will provide information, training and community. They will:**

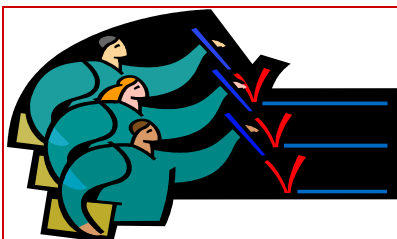
- Create and curate training modules, tips and techniques for mainstream content/applications and assistive technologies
- Facilitate a Community of Practice related to technology and digital literacy
- Create and curate best practices that enable braille transcribers and paraprofessionals to convert mainstream instructional materials to accessible digital materials
- Provide centralized dissemination of information about new technologies, new software/apps, and best practice teaching techniques for cutting edge digital materials
- Provide current information about upgrades and technology updates

Perkins would like to invite you to collaborate on the Paths to Technology project and to help contribute content for this website. For more information, please contact Diane.Brauner@Perkins.org. The projected launch date of the Paths to Technology website is January 2016.

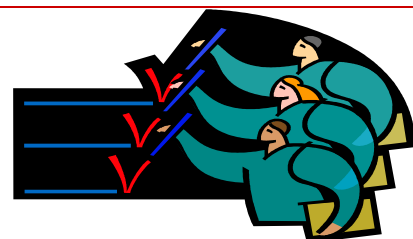
To view additional information and future updates, go to:

<http://www.perkinselearning.org/technology/announcement>





CHECK IT OUT!



Autism Spectrum Disorder

Working with Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Visual Impairment (ASDVI)

ONLINE CLASSES: Starts on September 21, 2015

Instructor: Kristine Davis, M.A.

We are excited to have Kristine Davis, M.A. returning this Fall to teach

Working with Learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Visual Impairment (ASDVI).

Early Bird Registration ends on September 7!!! Reserve your seat today!

This 8 week online course, starting on September 21, will lead participants through the development of a comprehensive implementation plan using five intervention strategies for at least one student with Autism Spectrum Disorders and Visual Impairments (ASDVI).



Student-Centered AAC Design and Intervention, Part 2: Practical, Collaborative Approaches for Learners with Visual Impairments and Additional Disabilities

NEW WEBINAR: Broadcast *LIVE* and **FREE** to attend

PRESENTERS: Christopher Russell, MS. Ed., TVI and Megan Mogan, MS-CCC-SLP
Wednesday, August 26, 2015—4:00 – 5:00 PM Eastern Time

Part 2: Implementation

Implementation strategies for teaching and using a student-centered AAC system will be presented, using case studies from current students.

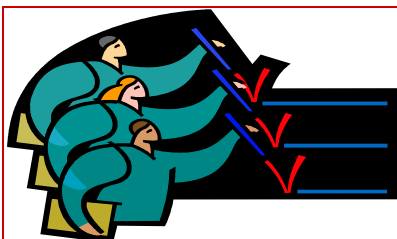
This one-hour webinar is the *second* in a *two-part series* that considers the unique needs of early communicators with visual impairment and additional disabilities (including deaf-blindness) when designing Augmentative-Alternative Communication (AAC) Systems.

Implementation strategies for teaching and using a student-centered AAC system will be presented, using case studies from current students.

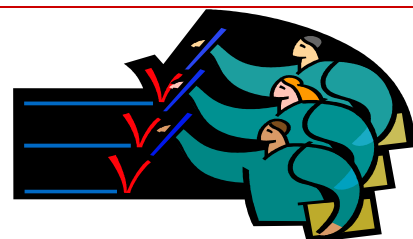
Upon Completion of the session, participants will be able to:

- Plan and implement multimodal AAC systems across daily routines and settings.
- Facilitate individualized access to AAC, including adaptations and strategies supporting interaction and use of systems.
- Include collaborative team roles in implementing an AAC communication system.
- Express goals of communication intervention.
- Assess progress and maintain ongoing support for AAC systems.

Click on this link to register: <http://support.perkins.org/site/Calendar?view=RSVP&id=107381>



CHECK IT OUT!



Video Fun from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH)

Get your popcorn and check out 12 new videos on the APH Physical Education (PE) website. Follow an adventurer underwater as he learns to scuba dive off the Australian coast. Watch the inspiring story (originally aired on ESPN) of two wrestlers, their friendship, and how one transforms into a judo Paralympian. The new videos are in the following categories: All-around, Dancing, Football, Golf, Gymnastics, Hiking, Ice Skating, Judo, Powerlifting, Scuba Diving, and Wrestling. www.aph.org/pe/videos.html



How Children's Social Competence Impacts Their Well-Being in Adulthood

New research findings suggest that kindergarten children who were rated by their teachers as demonstrating greater social competence skills (resolves peer problems, listens to others, shares materials, cooperates and is helpful) in kindergarten were more likely to attain higher education and well-paying jobs in adulthood. Children rated as demonstrating weaker social competency skills were found to be more likely to drop out of high school, abuse drugs and alcohol, and need government assistance. A summary of the study, [How Children's Social Competence Impacts Their Well-Being in Adulthood](http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2015/rwjf421663) (July 2015), provides an overview of major findings and implications for further action. The study was funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and published in the *American Journal of Public Health* (July 2015).

http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/issue_briefs/2015/rwjf421663

Office of Special Education Programs Leadership Conference Handouts

If you have an interest in the materials from the recent OSEP Leadership Conference held in Washington, D.C.,

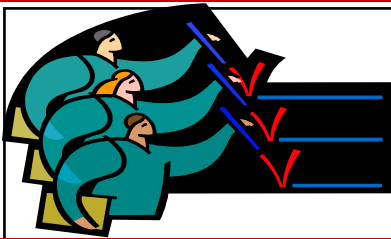
Please click or go to https://www.osep-meeting.org/confmats_lead.aspx to access archived materials from the 2015 Leadership Conference.

APH Survey Opportunity

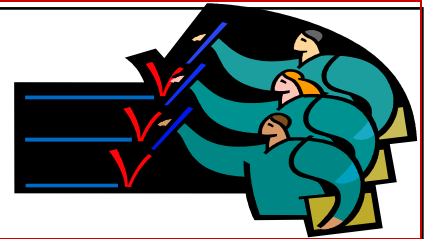
Each year, the U.S. Department of Education seeks input from vision professionals and consumers on the effectiveness of products and services provided through the Federal Quota Program, which is administered by the American Printing House for the Blind (APH). To collect your input, we are conducting an eleven-question, on-line survey, which is now available on the APH website. We encourage you to respond based on your experience with products provided through Federal Quota funds.

The 2015 APH Customer Satisfaction Survey is available at <http://www.aph.org/products/gpra.html> and on the products page of the APH website through Friday, September 19, 2015.

If you have questions or require assistance with the survey, please email: Mary Nelle McLennan at aphsurvey@earthlink.net.



CHECK IT OUT!



Field Evaluators Needed!

APH is seeking field evaluators for the following products in development. Jim Olson has copied and pasted requests from both the APH News and from emails sent to Ex Officio Trustees. If you are interested in being a field evaluator for any of the products below follow the instructions below to contact each individual APH Project Leader in charge of that specific product. We have had some great Colorado participation in the past and I know that APH looks for geographical representation across the U.S. when field testing their products. It may be too late for the iOS Talking Typer app but if you are interested, please contact them.

- ♦ iOS Talking Typer app
- ♦ Bright Shapes Knob Puzzle
- ♦ Gross Motor Development Curriculum
- ♦ Flip-Over Concept Books: FRACTIONS
- ♦ Place Value Setter

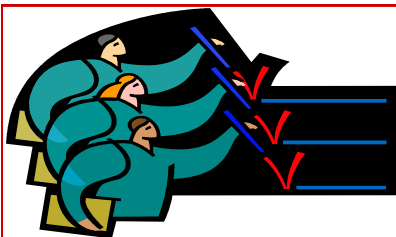
Beta Testers Needed for New App!

The Technology Product Research Department is looking for iPad users interested in beta testing our upcoming iOS **Talking Typer** app. The requirements to qualify as a tester are simple: 1) must have an iPad with iOS version 7.1 or above, 2) have or can install the TestFlight app, and 3) have an external keyboard that will provide the best experience (optional). If you meet these requirements and are interested in being a beta tester, download and complete the form located at www.aph.org/research/aphfieldtestform.doc and return to: lzierer@aph.org.

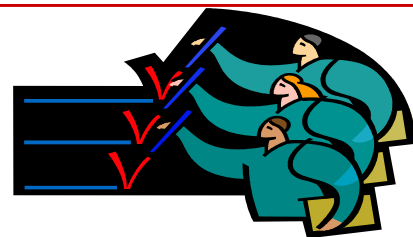
Bright Shapes Knob Puzzle

The early childhood project leader is seeking ten sites across the country to test Bright Shapes Knob Puzzles. These puzzles have brightly colored Plexiglas® shapes—circles, squares, and triangles—similar to those contained in the Light Box Materials Kits. However, these shapes have cylindrical handles for easier grasp by younger children or those children who have fine motor delays. This puzzle contains thick, interlocking foam frames to allow for ease of insertion and multiple arrangements of patterns. The puzzle can be used with or without the Light Box, but we would prefer TVIs, early interventionists, or therapists who are able to use the puzzles in both instances. Evaluators must complete and return a product evaluation form at the end of the testing period.

Field test sites will be selected based upon the population of students served, geographic location, and type of instructional setting. The number of prototypes is limited and preference will be given to those who have not recently field tested an APH product. **The field test will begin in September and will be completed by mid-November 2015.** If you are interested in possibly serving as a field evaluator for the Bright Shapes Knob Puzzles, contact Dawn Wilkinson, Early Childhood Project leader at: dwilkinson@aph.org



CHECK IT OUT!



Request to Participate in Survey on Cortical Visual Impairment

This research survey is being conducted by **Dr. Sharon Lehman** from Nemours/Al duPont Hospital for Children.

She is conducting a research study regarding attitudes of Teachers of the Visually Impaired about cortical visual impairment and would appreciate your responses regarding your education about cortical visual impairment, interaction with other caregivers and referral for services. She hopes to use the data to learn if gaps exist in education and communication as well as referral patterns for vision services in this patient population. The following survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

If you agree to participate, please go to the link below and complete the attached survey before **September 30, 2015**. Your responses are anonymous. Please answer all questions.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/7HRDJLF>

There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project, nor are there any direct benefits to you. There is no compensation for participation.

This research has been reviewed by the institutional Review Board (IRB).

Thank you for your help and collaboration.

Researcher contact information:
Sharon S Lehman, MD FAAP FAAO
Division of Ophthalmology
Nemours/Al duPont Hospital for Children

LIVING THE LIVES WE WANT!

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF COLORADO

61st ANNUAL STATE CONVENTION

October 29th through November 1st

The 61st Annual State Convention will kick off Thursday evening, October 29 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The fun will continue all weekend long with exhibitors, informative presentations, seminars, and much more! Their very special guest and national representative shall be Mark Riccobono, President of the National Federation of the Blind.

NOTE: Exhibitors will be demonstrating their products on Friday and Saturday.

Look for information about vendor times and location.

Antlers Hilton Colorado Springs
4 South Cascade, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903.

The original Antlers opened its doors in 1873 and is located in the historically significant and trendy area of downtown Colorado Springs, the Antlers Hilton hotel is just one block from the major downtown area of Tejon Street. To reserve your room by phone call: (866) 299-4602 or call the hotel directly at (719) 955-5600 extension 409 and mention that you are with the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado.

Room reservations must be made by Tuesday, September 22.

To reserve your room online use the following link:

http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/C/COSCSHF-NFB15-20151029/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG

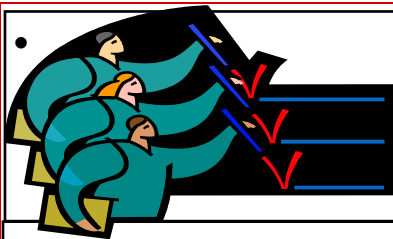
Product Need Survey

Talking Solar Pedometer

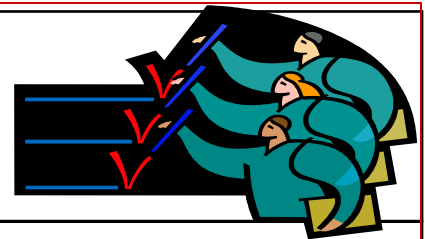
Many individuals track their daily number of steps, calories burned, distance traveled, and amount of physical movement time using small devices that interface with smart phones and computers. These devices can be beneficial for persons with visual impairments because they allow the user to listen to their daily log via their smart phone or computer speech output. However, there are many adults and young children in school who have visual impairments and who cannot afford or have access to these smart devices. The American Printing House for the Blind is interested in knowing if there is still a need for a new type of talking pedometer.

Let APH know what you think about a possible talking solar pedometer.

To take the survey, click <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TalkingSolarPedometer>

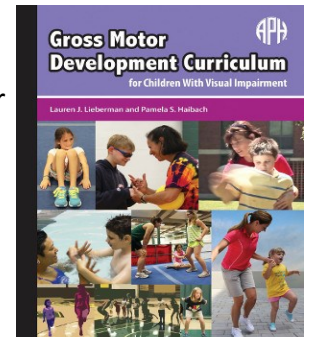


CHECK IT OUT!



Gross Motor Development Curriculum

APH seeks field test sites for the Gross Motor Development Curriculum (GMDC). Movement is an essential component of a healthy, happy life. This curriculum addresses the specific needs of children with visual impairment based upon research findings on fundamental motor skills. The book is divided into two parts: Part 1 discusses the general instructional strategies that are effective in teaching gross motor skills to this population; Part 2 describes specific teaching techniques, cues, and modified equipment for instruction of 16 gross motor skills.



To participate, field test sites need one or more students who:

- are elementary school age;
- are enrolled in a physical education class;
- have visual impairment, blindness, or deafblindness;
- lack the perceptual motor skill to balance on one foot;
- lack three or more of the following object control skills: striking a stationary ball, stationary dribble, catch, kick, overhand throw, and underhand throw;
- lack three or more of the following locomotor skills: run, gallop, hop, leap, skip, horizontal jump, and slide; and
- lack the physical fitness skills to perform curl-ups or sit-ups and push-ups.

Evaluators will need to confirm each participating student's baseline (i.e., lack of skill) for object control skills and locomotor skills prior to using the curriculum, and then document the student's progress on each skill throughout the semester. Practice Records and instructions to do this are included in the field test packet. Evaluators will complete a product evaluation form (online) at the end of the testing period, and send in the students' Practice Records by e-mail or USPS. This product includes the curriculum and Practice Records for each motor skill; it does not include physical education equipment (e.g., bats, balls, mats, cones, sound sources). A link to an accompanying video will be provided. Field test sites will be selected based upon geographic location, number of available students, and type of instructional setting.

Field testing is scheduled to begin in September and conclude at the end of December, 2015.

If you are interested in possibly serving as a field evaluator, please provide the following information:

- your name, title, school/agency, and type of setting (e.g., residential, itinerant);
- number of available students with ages, grade levels, and primary reading media indicated;
- your preferred medium for reading evaluation materials (regular print or electronic); and
- your complete contact information (phone number, mailing address, and e-mail address).

Please send this information to Tristan Pierce, Physical Education Project Leader, at tpierce@aph.org as soon as possible. You may also contact Tristan at 800-223-1839, ext. 380.



NCBYS: Expanding Accessible STEM Learning Opportunities to Blind Students, Parents, and Teachers

Calling all blind students, parents of blind children, and teachers working with blind students!

During the 2015-2016 school year, the [National Federation of the Blind](#) will facilitate three science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs across the country as a part of its [National Center for Blind Youth in Science](#)! [NFB STEM2U](#) will provide exciting accessible STEM learning opportunities for blind students in grades 3-6 and grades 9-12. Parents and teachers will also have the opportunity to join in the fun and learning!

Program Dates:

- NFB STEM2U Phoenix (AZ); November 5-7, 2015
- NFB STEM2U San Francisco (CA); March 3-5, 2016
- NFB STEM2U Minneapolis (MN); May 19-21, 2016
- NFB STEM2U Leadership Academy; October 2-4, 2015 (a special event for high school students)

Blind and low-vision students (and their parents and teachers) who are looking for more opportunities to learn about STEM and to have fun with their peers from across the country should apply to attend NFB STEM2U.

LEARN MORE AND APPLY: www.blindscience.org/nfb-stem2u

Application periods will close in late summer; don't miss your opportunity to apply!

If you have questions, please contact Natalie Shaheen by email at STEM@nfb.org.

This material is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Grant No. 1322855.

Children's Success in School

The U.S. Department of Education, America Achieves, National Council of La Raza, National PTA and the United Negro College Fund released a parent checklist with questions and resources that parents and caregivers can use to help ensure their children are getting the education they deserve. The checklist suggests key questions, tips for educational success and resources for more information. For more information, please go to:

<http://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/parent-checklist.pdf>

Sample Materials Created to Help Communicate with Parents about State Tests

The Communications Unit has created several tools to help superintendents, principals and teacher communicate with parents about CMAS in 2015-16. The materials incorporate all test reductions required by 2015 legislation as well test design changes made by PARCC. The materials include a fact sheet, frequently asked questions and templates for newsletter articles. Additional materials will be available later this fall to help parents understand the new PARCC score reports. Access the communications toolkit at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/tools>

just for PARENTS

Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conference

The Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) plan conferences throughout the year that are family-centered and designed to offer support, information, and education to parents and professionals. We call them PEP Conferences! PEP and its conferences promote partnerships that are essential in supporting and including children with disabilities and their families in schools and the community.

The conference dates and locations for 2015-16 are:

- October 15-17, 2015 - Vail, CO
- January 28-30, 2016 - Fort Collins, CO
- April 7-9, 2016 - Location TBD

For more information about the PEP Conferences, please go to:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/pep>

PEP Is Parents Encouraging Parents!

The Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) plan conferences throughout the year that are family-centered and designed to offer support, information, and education to parents and professionals. We call them PEP Conferences!

PEP and its conferences promote partnerships that are essential in supporting and including children with disabilities and their families in schools and the community.

Are you a Colorado parent or guardian who has a child with a disability? Are you a Colorado administrator, principal, teacher, medical or other service provider who is interested in the family-professional partnership? We encourage and invite you to participate in a PEP Conference.

Read what past PEP Conference participants have said!

"I was truly inspired with this conference! The amount of information and resources made available to us was so valuable. I could not be more grateful for the opportunity. My daughter will benefit big time!"

– Parent

"It is probably the best educational conference I've been to because of the content and participants. I think administrators should be encouraged to attend!" – School Professional

- See more at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/PEP_WhatISPEP#sthash.6bVv8NqM.dpuf

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!

Vision Coalition Meeting Minutes

September 2, 2015

Persons in Attendance: Deb Andrews, Tanni Anthony, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, LaVerne Dell, Elaine Karns, Paula Landry, Jamie Lugo, Sara Noel, Jim Olson, and Angela Sims

Special Guest: Christina Martin

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 2015-16 SCHOOL YEAR

- * Anchor Center for Blind Children – Paula Landry
- * Colorado AER Chapter – to be determined
- * 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 – Jamie Lugo
- * Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind Outreach – Sara Noel
- * Colorado Parents of Blind Children – position currently unfilled
- * Metro TVI / COMS– Nancy Cozart
- * Northern TVI / COMS – Elaine Karns
- * Southern TVI / COMS – Deb Andrews
- * University of Northern Colorado VI Program – Paula Conroy
- * Western TVI / COMS – Angela Sims

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Congratulations to Jamie Lugo on her new position as the Principal of the School for the Blind!
- Welcome to new Vision Coalition Members: Deb Andrews from the Southern Region, Paula Landry from the Anchor Center for Blind Children, Jamie Lugo from the School for the Blind, and Sara Noel from the CSDB Outreach Program.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)

New staff in Adams 12 includes Jeff Hadala who is a TVI and COMS.

The first Metro Regional Meeting will be on Thursday, September 17, 2015. Please note that we would love for parents and students to attend the panel event. It will be held at the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton (CCB) in Littleton. It will include a panel of adults with visual impairments to talk about social skills: teachers, support staff, parents and students are all invited!

Southern Region (Deb Andrews)

The Southern Region welcomes new staff: Sara Noel, Frank Militello, and Julie Vinikoor with CSDB and Nicole Cop-pinger with Douglas Country School District. It's been a hectic start to the school year here in the Southern Region. Everyone is working to sort out schedules, meet the new students and a few are off and running with IEPs.

Our first Low Vision Evaluation Clinic is fast approaching on September 25th. There are six students from four different administrative units attending. It will be held at the CSDB Lions Conference Room. Please remember to check in at the Administration Building for your Visitor's Badge. All six appointment times are filled with students from four school districts.

The first Southern Region meeting, to be held at the DVR, is on September 23rd. The rest of the meeting dates and times are still to be determined.

Western Region (Angela Sims)

We would like to welcome Sherry Bainbridge who will be working as a TVI for the Mountain BOCES. Brandon Mapes will continue providing O&M services with Mountain BOCES, as well as TVI/O&M services to Eagle County. The CSDB Outreach Program will serve Moffat School District. There are still positions available in both the NW BOCES and the San Juan BOCES.

A big thank you goes out to Brandon Mapes and Megan Crosby for taking time out of their summers to help with the "Mountain Mobility" outdoor recreation camp for visually impaired youth in Crested Butte. Megan reported, "Brandon Mapes and I had 11 campers with the help of Danielle Goldman, the APE teacher for Montrose County. The campers were between 12-16 years old and many hadn't done this type of camp before. The campers prepared most meals and many of them loved learning to make burgers on the grill. We did a sunrise hike (woke the kids up at 3:30 am), rock climbing, a high and low ropes course, canoeing, and a giant swing, just to name a few activities. Crested Butte Adaptive Sports was excellent and got the campers out of their comfort zone in a great way. Brandon was of course awesome and really made the camp educational, engaging, and fun. I had a blast!"

Discussion:

- *There was a question about whether CIMC still has a Technology Loan Bank. The inventory is on the CSDB Web-site. TVIs with questions about the Technology Loan Bank should contact Jim Olson. Dale Wolfe is the person who receives the request form for a piece of equipment.*
- *A question came up about Scholastic Newsletters in a braille file format. They are available in braille. There is a question if they can come in braille file format to assist with the speed of getting each edition embossed in time for its use in the classroom. Jim will follow up with APH.*

Northern Region (Elaine Karns)

Staff Changes in the North: Congrats to Abby Beaton, now Abby Horner on her marriage. Abby is now working in Centennial BOCES, Windsor, and Johnstown Millikin. Vicki Pearson retired from Poudre School District last spring and is now working part time in Weld 6. Christina Martin moved from Adams 12 to Poudre. Tina Martin is a new TVI in Poudre. Tina is completing her practicum this semester. Pat Lewis is providing O&M Services in Poudre. Elaine Karns will retire after this school year after 16 years in Colorado and a total of 33 years in our field.

Thanks to CIMC for continuing to respond in a timely manner to questions and requests. Boulder Valley School District received parts of a math book that a teacher wanted to use that was brailled by a Colorado inmate and it was excellent braille! Thank you, Jim, for suggesting we try this avenue.

The Boulder Valley School District VI Program has had quite a few transfer IEPs this year. The out-of-state IEPs have been challenging due to lack of information, eligibility documentation, very general and non-measurable goals. The in-state transfers have been challenging also. One TVI has expressed that she is puzzled as to how districts qualify students under "vision impairment, including blindness" and can provide direct TVI service hours for students who do not meet eligibility criteria---i.e. acuities in the 20/40 range with stable vision; a FVA that states the visual channel is the primary learning channel; general goals in the social/emotional domain, self-advocacy, visual fatigue arenas. There is a question about how the eligibility criteria are being applied across the state.

The Boulder Valley School District is implementing the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) that is coming out of CDE. The special education director welcomed his special education staff back with the statement "All kids are general education kids first!" Though MTSS at first looks a lot like the RtI model, it is worth looking at. They are excited about it in BVSD.

The Northern Low Vision Clinic will be held November 12 -13, 2016 at the Ensign Center. Elaine Karns is the Site Coordinator for this clinic.

Discussion:

- *According to the CIMC database, the second leading cause of visual impairment in Colorado is "nystagmus." This is a puzzle as typically sensory nystagmus is a symptom of a diagnosis specific to bilateral, early onset visual impairment. TVIs shared that nystagmus is often what is listed in the eye report without further explanation of a diagnosis. Jim shared that this field is not always well defined in the database. All TVIs are encouraged to do due diligence on this field so we have a more accurate sense of our leading causes of pediatric visual impairment.*
- *Learners on 504 Plans and the APH quota funds eligibility (e.g. 20/200) can get materials with quota money through the CIMC. There is a question whether TVIs should register students with visual impairments who are on a 504 Plan. These learners are not eligible for services or equipment funded through IDEA funds. They are eligible for APH Quota fund products. The CIMC would like to know about our 504 learners. It would be helpful to note whether the student is receiving any services from a TVI.*

Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (LaVerne Dell)

A couple reminders as the school year begins. DVR no longer has a waitlist. Secondly, please refer your students when the focus is shifting from the academic world (K-12 grades) to the work world. DVR does work with individuals who are interested in or who already pursuing academic training in a post-secondary setting.

For the Metro TVIs, Lin Rutland has retired. This position has not been filled. Your referral source will be Kristy Penk at (303) 866-2209 Denver and Englewood, Richele Pennock at (303) 866-3168 Denver Englewood, or Michael Bolarinwa at (303) 755-1839 Aurora, Centennial and Greenwood Village. LaVerne will send Tanni a list of rehabilitation counselors and their contact information for the October *Keeping in Touch* newsletter.

Anchor Center for Blind Children (Paula Landry)

Big Changes: Last year saw many changes amongst our staff, including 4 retirements (each with 19+ years at Anchor). Our interim Executive Director, Steven Lindauer, will remain in this capacity until the Board of Directors finalizes its recruitment/hiring process. We have filled most of our open positions, but continue to search for an Occupational Therapist, Developmental Psychologist and Volunteer Coordinator. Callie Spotted Elk has been hired as a new TVI.

Infants/Toddlers/Home Visits: Enrollment in our Infant and Toddler center based programs continues to grow. This year, Anchor Center staff will be introducing the ECC to families in a more structured way, including monthly themes/topics, parent discussions, hand-outs and community days that focus on the specific ECC domains. ****Please note:** times for these programs have changed. On Mondays and Wednesdays, the Toddler Program runs from 9:30 – 11:15 and the Infant Program from 12:00 – 1:30.

Addressing the growing number of families who need home visits continues to be a priority. Anchor Center is working with Early Intervention Colorado and local CCBs to ensure we are taking the right steps to meet these challenges. The number of children we assess during Outreach visits is also growing, with more than double the number of children seen during our last visit to the Grand Junction area.

Preschool: Following the trend of increasing enrollment numbers, the addition of a 5th preschool class was necessary this year! And in keeping with our goal of increasing families' understanding of the ECC, we will be embedding activities throughout our daily centers that address specific ECC domains. Monthly newsletters, parent meetings and family fieldtrips will also focus on the ECC.

Due to a number of factors (increasing numbers of children, building capacity, etc.), Anchor Center will be implementing a formal process for determining preschool eligibility for Fall 2016, including the use of the ECEA Rules. Our goal is to support each child as best we can, yet we also recognize the need for families to understand these guidelines as they go through the transition process.

Anchor TVIs and staff would welcome the opportunity to host a "focus group" with other interested TVIs to discuss how we can best support each other and our families through the transition process.

Discussion: It is important to remind the state that CSDB provides infant and toddler services for the southeast part of the state (Castle Rock south, Alamosa east). It is being staffed through the CSDB Outreach Program and contract school TVIs to serve these families.

CSDB – School for the Blind (Jamie Lugo)

October 15th is White Cane Day: Students in the School for the Blind will educate the community by walking downtown Colorado Springs with posters and information to disseminate about White Cane Day. Students will also have the opportunity to explore a metro bus parked on campus. A select group of students will experience a private bus ride and bus terminal tour.

The Black Forest League Festival is October 26th: Students from the School for the Blind will participate in a daylong choral workshop with other students from surrounding Colorado Springs schools. The students will rehearse choral music, in order to prepare for an evening concert. Students will begin preparing for this special event during music class and independent study. The Annual Winter Concert in the School for the Blind: It will be held on December 8th. The snow date will be on December 10th. Students involved in music therapy, general music, choir, and band class will show off their many talents and gifts. We hope you are able to attend this very special performance.

Semester-Long Expanded Core Curriculum Classes: This semester we are offering Self-Determination, Social Skills, and Assistive Technology in the School for the Blind for children from kindergarten through 12th grade. Pre and post checklists were developed over the summer for the teachers to use as a guide and also to show growth in the chosen areas for the first semester. They are using the Empower Curriculum from the Texas School for the Blind for their Self Determination class. Jamie also referenced a Social Skills Curriculum. They have developed an Assistive Technology scope and sequence curriculum. Jamie will share this information at the next VC meeting.

Discussion: Jim shared that APH has a social skills product called *Getting to Know You: A Social Skills and Ability Awareness Curriculum*. *Getting To Know You* is a social skills/awareness curriculum for grades K-12 in which blind and visually impaired students and sighted students interact and get to know each other. The *Getting to Know You* kit is designed for TVIs, COMSs, other related service personnel, general education teachers, and families. Authors Nita Crow and Stephanie Herlich have created a curriculum that engages students who are blind and visually impaired with their sighted age-mates in activities that promote social competence and awareness of the ways in which students who are blind or visually impaired learn social skills. It is available for check out from the CIMC.

Modified Friday Schedule Pilot in the School for the Blind: This schedule allows for innovative workshop time every Friday afternoon. Reading buddies/peer tutoring, low vision device practice, dance class, one act plays, song composition, pottery, swimming, and team-building are just a few of the ideas our team has begun to brainstorm and develop in order to implement these activities effectively.

CSDB Outreach Services (Sara Noel)

The goal of the CSDB Outreach Strategic Plan is to respond to the needs of consumers within the mission of CSDB by collaborating and implementing an action plan to meet the identified needs.

<http://www.csdb.org/programs-services/outreach-programs-3/>

On the Outreach Programs page, find the new “Keep Me Posted” button. Click on this button to find out what’s new and ongoing in the CSDB Outreach Program.

What’s New: To help provide information to community members, CSDB is broadcasting 30-minute segments on Comcast TV Channel 20, Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. and Saturdays at 10:00 a.m. CSDB video segments tell the stories of people who are deaf/hard of hearing or blind/visually impaired, and provide American Sign Language lessons to community members. The individual clips are all currently on the CSDB YouTube channel as well. The weekly 30-minute segments will also be available on a Broadcast playlist at

http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL4V2VlXorHid5hmB_X1wY7NP10gJcltAX

Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, location of the Mashburn-Marshall Tactile Gallery, invited CSDB staff and students to present to volunteer docents and train the docents on human guide technique. The presentation was well received and the group has been invited back to expand the training. The committee has offered to host the second Southern Region TVI Meeting. RSVP to Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org. *The Tactile Gallery is free to the public to view at any time during normal business hours.*

Upcoming events:

October 3, 2015: CSDB Homecoming – Goalball competitions begin at 1:00 p.m. in the CSDB Gymnasium. The New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired will be our guests.

October 21, 2015: Steps to Success will occur on the campus of CSDB. For more information, contact Diane Covington at dcovington@csdb.org

October 22, 2015: Fall Harvest Festival 4:30 to 6:30 – For families with children who are blind/visually impaired ages 0-8 years of age. For information, contact Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org

November 14, 2015: “See It My Way” A day-long opportunity for families to experience simulated vision loss in a variety of activities to include daily living skills, orientation & mobility, and recreation & leisure opportunities. For information, contact Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org

January 21, 2016: Colorado Braille Challenge at CSDB. For more information, contact Diane Covington at dcovington@csdb.org

January 28, 2016: Denver Metro Braille Challenge at CCB. For more information, contact Diane Covington at dcovington@csdb.org

Information about the Braille Challenge can be found at the Braille Institute’s website: www.brailleinstitute.org. Click on the Braille Challenge link at the bottom of the homepage. The Braille Institute invites you to visit their Facebook page to get updates, engage with other contestants and their families, and share your #BrailleChallenge experience.

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

Colorado Instructional Materials Center (Jim Olson)

Missing, Non-returned, Lost and/or Damaged Books: As per the CIMC policy, the CIMC is invoicing administrative units for equipment and books that are either missing or damaged. At the start of each school year, the CIMC informs all CIMC designated contacts in writing of their AU/district’s missing items from the previous school year. The CIMC gives districts one last opportunity to locate any missing items and return them in good condition to the CIMC prior to an invoice being mailed.

Some districts have already received invoices for books because the book was not returned and had been requested by another district. In order to fill the order and provide the braille material to the student in a timely manner, the CIMC had to purchase the missing book and an invoice needed to be generated at that time. The CIMC is requesting that if a district discovers any missing books after an invoice has been paid that the book be returned to the CIMC so it can be returned to our circulation inventory. Refunds will not be able to be issued under these circumstances because new budget funding was already spent to replace the missing book.

The CIMC appreciates your efforts in recovering any and all missing items. Invoices will be mailed to AUs by the end of September.

Status of Book Orders: May 1st annually is the established deadline for ordering books for the upcoming school year.

247 total number of orders received by the May 1, 2015 deadline.

221 have been delivered complete to districts

26 are in the process of being produced.

444 total number of orders received by the end of the day on August 26, 2015.

325 have been delivered complete to districts

22 have been shipped partially complete

36 titles have been cancelled after the orders had been processed

61 orders have had zero volumes shipped (ALL of these orders were ordered after the May 1, 2015 ordering deadline)

Books range in price from \$14.50 (Because of Winn-Dixie) to \$21,182.00 (Algebra). 54 titles have been produced in the new UEB format. Everything that has not shipped at least partially was ordered after the May 1 ordering deadline. Order early!

New "UEB Compliant" rubber stamp:



The CIMC has ordered new "UEB compliant" rubber stamps, which look similar to the UEB compliant logo the American Printing House for the Blind is incorporating on their new UEB materials. CIMC staff has been stamping the bottom right hand covers, title pages and envelopes of student materials as we prepare them for shipment. Some items were already delivered to districts before our stamps arrived. Districts do not need to do anything; we will stamp them when they are returned to the CIMC.

CIMC Technology Order Form Updated: The CIMC Technology Order Form has been updated to include the Orion TI-84 Plus Talking Graphing Calculator (APH Cat No. 1-07340-00, \$599.00 + shipping). The form will be revised as new technology is released and available from the CIMC repository of APH Instructional Materials.

APH updates: Annual Meeting 2015 (October 8-10). The 147th Annual Meeting of Ex Officio Trustees and Special Guests will be held October 8-10, 2015. Coming Soon! In the near future, APH will launch a web page listing their UEB transcribed products.

University of Northern Colorado – VI Program (Paula Conroy)

We just started a new semester at UNCO and we are going strong. We have a full grant and many students who are already employed in the state of Colorado as TVIs. This year we will focus on assessment and efficiency.

Colorado Department of Education (Tanni Anthony)

Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project: We are already in our third 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
- ✓ **Annual Deaf-Blind Census:** The December 1, 2015 Census will be sent to AU / agency contacts in mid to late October. Thank you in advance for helping to keep our census data up-to-date. All learners identified as having combined vision and hearing loss are eligible for free technical assistance.
- ✓ **Project Webpage:** The webpage url is <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-DB.asp>
- ✓ **Summer Institute:** The 2016 Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness was held in the Denver area on June 25-26, 2015. The focus was on rethinking mathematics instruction for learners with significant support needs, including deaf-blindness. Over 100 persons participated and the evaluation feedback was very positive. Plans are underway for the 2017 Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness.
- ✓ **Western Region Early Intervention Conference:** The next WREIC will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico in September 16-18, 2015. Both Tanni and Gina have been 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.
- ✓ **DLM Module Professional Development:** The CO DB Project will sponsor a series of webinar forums specific to math and English Language Arts. Stay tuned for roll-out details.

CDE State Consultant on Blindness/ Visual Impairment Activities

Annual O&M Seminar: The seminar for the last school year was held April 30 –May 1, 2015 at the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton. The featured speaker for the Thursday night session was Dr. Kara Hansen, who addressed low vision devices specific to travel. The featured speaker for the Friday and Saturday full-day sessions was Dr. Sandra Rosen from San Francisco State University. Dr. Rosen taught a variety of topics with a strong focus on proprioceptive assessment and intervention. Over 60 CO COMSs participated in the training. Thanks to the Colorado Center for the Blind for being such excellence hosts. The dates and speaker(s) for the spring 2016 CDE O&M Seminar are yet to be determined. If you have ideas, please be in touch with Tanni.

Low Vision Evaluation Clinics: The Low Vision Evaluation Clinics have been scheduled for this school year. We are grateful for our returning LVE Clinic returning team of Dr. Tom Theune, Jim Olson, Wendy Stoltman, and Debbie Haberkorn. The Western Region is sitting this year out.

Recruitment and Retention: There was some impressive recruitment over the summer months! Welcome to Jeff Hadala in Adams 12 School District; Tina Martin in Poudre; Callie Spotted Elk at the Anchor Center for Blind Children, Nicole Coppinger in Douglas County School District, and Julie Vinikoor, Sara Noel, and Frank Militello at CSDB. Vicki Pearson is now half time with Weld 6, Christina Martin is now with Poudre School District, Karin Hensel is now with Denver Public Schools, Sherry Bainbridge is now with Mountain BOCES, and Brandon Mapes is splitting his time between part time O&M with Mountain BOCES and TVI/O&M with Eagle School District.

Listserves: 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 braillists. The third is specific to Colorado TVIs and braillists. 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.

Licensure: We are currently in process of updating licensure for special education professionals. Thanks to many people who commented Fall 2014 on the licensure language specific to Vision Impairment Specialist and School Orientation and Mobility Specialists. Be watching for Tanni to send out more information on a period of public comment.

Full CIMC Funding: Effective immediately, the Colorado Department of Education is thrilled to announce that there will no longer be an Administrative Unit Assessment Fee to supplement the costs of our CIMC braille books. The Exceptional Student Services Unit has fully funded the braille book budget of the CIMC for this school year and here-ever-after! This is the way that it used to be a few years back and now it is back to the good old days. This means that we still ask each TVI to be timely and prudent with braille book orders so that we are fiscally responsible. We need to shore up all volumes of books at the end of the school year and follow all CIMC guidance to ensure that our inventory stays in good shape. Administrative units will still be billed for lost volumes of braille books. We all thank Jim, Debbie, Marla, and Laurie (the CIMC staff) for their ongoing work on behalf of our students.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Approved CDE ESSU Projects for School Year 2015-16

- ◇ State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment (with CVI as the key topic)
- ◇ Low Vision Evaluation Clinics
- ◇ CDE Orientation and Mobility Seminar
- ◇ 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 (now with full funding from CDE for braille books – no more AU Assessment fees!)

UEB Game Plan for Colorado

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 September 2015 and the modules will be finalized by October 2015. The plan is to host four to five regional UEB Braille Refresher Courses in January – February 2016 as a means to work with veteran TVIs to demonstrate braille competency in UEB. All Colorado TVIs must demonstrate braille competency in the UEB Code by May 2016.

There is a lot of national and state specific discussions on the Unified English Braille Code as both a literary and a math code for instructional purposes. The National Federation of the Blind has written to the heads of State Education Agencies with an appeal to maintain the Nemeth Code as the braille math code. This letter was sent to the CDE Interim Commissioner Elliot Asp and then sent out to Colorado TVIs. It is a complicated issue with state math assessments in Nemeth and the lack of UEB (math) braille transcribers and textbooks.

The intent of NFB is to keep a uniform math code across the country. There continue to be concerns about the complexity of code switching from UEB to Nemeth and back to UEB (etc.) with elementary grade math problems. It will be important to monitor the national movement to see if there are systems put in place to train UEB (math) braille transcribers and move forward with production of math text books in the UEB Code.

State Assessments

Colorado is a member of two national assessment consortiums—PARCC and DLM. We also have assessments produced specifically for Colorado. We will continue to participate in the following state assessments.

CO Measures of Academic Success: Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)	English Language Arts for Grades 3-9 Math for Grades 3 -9
Colorado Alternate Assessment (CoALT) - Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM)	English Language Arts for Grades 3-11* Math for Grades 3-11* * DLM will be used for the 10 th and 11 th grade assessments parallel to the College Readiness Assessments
CO Measures of Academic Success	Science for Grades 5, 8, and 11 Social Studies for Grades 4 and 7
Colorado Alternate Assessment (CoALT)	Science for Grades 5, 8, and 11 Social Studies for Grades 4 and 7

High School Assessment Update: Legislation that included changes to the state's assessment system was passed last spring. Among these changes is a reduction to the frequency of social studies assessment administration within schools, a shift in the grade level of high school science and social studies assessments and the addition of a preparatory exam that is aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards and to the 11th-grade college entrance exam.

Grade 10 Preparatory Exam, Grade 11 College Entrance Exam and their Alternate Assessments

Last spring, House Bill 15-1323 added the requirement for a new 10th-grade preparatory exam that is aligned to both the Colorado Academic Standards and the eleventh grade college entrance exam and set the requirement that the Department of Education request competitive bids and contract for these assessments every five years. Colorado is in the process of issuing a single RFP (request for proposal) for both the 10th-grade preparatory exam and the 11th-grade college entrance exam. Details regarding both of these exams for 2015-16 will not be available until the completion of the competitive RFP process, selection of a test vendor and signing of a contract. The anticipated date for announcing the winning vendor is November 2015. For further information, please contact Will Morton, 303-866-6997, or morton_w@cde.state.co.us

Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities are required to take an alternate form of the preparatory and college entrance exams. In spring 2016, students with the most significant cognitive disabilities will take the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) English language arts and math assessments in tenth 10th- and 11th-grade. The 11th-Grade Alternate Assessment that has historically served as an alternate to the Colorado ACT will be available as a resource for district use; however, the DLM assessment will replace the eleventh 11th-grade Alternate Assessment for the 11th- grade College Entrance exam. For further information, please contact and Mira Monroe (DLM summative questions), 303-866-6709 or monroe_m@cde.state.co.us and Linda Lamirande (historical alternate for the CO ACT), 303-866-6863 or lamirande_l@cde.state.co.us

Braille Format Update: At this time, all assessments will be provided in English Braille American Edition (EBAE) and Nemeth. CO TVIs are being asked to indicate (immediately) if they believe they have a braille student in any of the testing grades that will require a Unified English Braille format Test.

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 before a READ Plan is developed to address the specific student's reading challenges.

There are nine currently 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*. Both (8) *DiBELS 6th edition* and (9) *DRA2* may only be used through July 1, 2016. Each administrative unit (AU) chooses which interim assessment(s) it will use to screen for Significant Reading Deficiencies. Some AUs actually use different tools across their schools.

When a K-3rd grader has visual impairment, including blindness, it is likely that the child can participate with any of the approved READ Act interim assessment tools. Most tools can be accommodated for children with low vision with the use of magnification. Some pictures or illustrations in the online tools may present visual challenges. A TVI should work closely with the general education personnel administering the interim assessment with a child with low vision in order to anticipate how best to provide allowable assessment accommodations and to assist with interpretation of the results to rule in/out any problems tied to visual access as opposed to reading challenges.

When a child is a braille reader, it is recommended that the school / AU use the UEB braille format of *DiBels Next*. A small inventory of this tool across K-3 grades will be housed at the CIMC for this purpose. This may mean that the braille student will participate in a different assessment than what is used by his or her school / administrative unit. Again, a TVI should work closely with the general education personnel administering the interim assessment with the child in order to anticipate how best to provide allowable accommodations and to assist with interpretation of the results to rule in/out any problems tied to visual access as opposed to reading challenges.

Tanni will provide more training at the CDE State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment on the READ Act and our learnings with visual impairment, including blindness, deaf-blindness, or with multiple disabilities, including visual impairment.

Next Meeting Dates for the Vision Coalition

- December 2, 2015 (agenda to include ECC Products and UEB Update)
- February 17, 2016





WELCOME TO COLORADO

- ✿ **Nicole Coppinger** is excited to begin her first year as a TVI in Douglas County School District. She is currently completing her 2nd year of coursework at the University of Northern Colorado online. For the past 10 years, she has worked as a Significant Support Needs teacher at Gold Rush Elementary in Parker. This summer was a blur of excitement since she got married and will soon be Nicole Andersen. In her free time she enjoys spending time with her husband, Jeff and sweet 10 year old Husky, Tikaani, and doing anything outdoors.
- ✿ Welcome to **Jeff Hadala** to Colorado and Adams 12. Jeff recently graduated from Northern Illinois University with a Master's degree in NIU's visual program. He recently moved to Colorado from Illinois with his girlfriend. Jeff notes that he has always dreamed of living in Colorado! He will be an itinerant TVI / COMS covering 10 different schools. Jeff also holds a Bachelor's degree in art and is a certified K-12 art teacher. He continues to make art and has participated in the Chicago Art of Futbol for the past three years. He shared he looks forward to making a difference here in Colorado.
- ✿ Welcome to **Frank Militello** who is a graduate of the TVI/O&M Master's program at Western Michigan University. He is now an COMS at CSDB. He has been an itinerant O&M and TVI in Indiana for the last two years. Frank is originally from Michigan where he taught middle school science for 12 years. Frank loves camping and hiking so Colorado has been an awesome experience!
- ✿ Welcome back to Colorado **Sara Noel** is back in our state and working at CSDB. She shared, "I feel so blessed to be able to return, not only to my hometown of Colorado Springs, but also to CSDB as a TVI/COMS with their Outreach Department having previously worked at CSDB from 1996-2000. In the last 15 years I have worked as a TVI/COMS serving 2 counties in the southwestern corner of Virginia and as the Education Coordinator for the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired in the city of Roanoke and its 19 surrounding counties. During my time in Virginia I also served on several committees including the Standards of Learning Special Forms Test Committee and the AIM-VA Coordinators Council. On the test committee I was part of a 15 person team reviewing every test item on every test offered to students in Virginia looking for visual bias. On the AIM-VA Council, I worked with a team of about 20 to assure every student in Virginia had access to accessible instruction materials. Even though I enjoyed my time in Virginia, I am very happy to be home and can't wait to catch up with old friends and make new friends as I travel the state for CSDB. In my free time I like to hike, bike and quilt as well as spend time with my family and friends."
- ✿ We welcome **Callie Spotted Elk** to Colorado and to the Anchor Center for Blind Children. Callie, her husband and two sons, recently relocated to the Denver area from Utah. Callie shares that she is thrilled to have found a place with the Anchor Center as an Early Childhood Special Educator and Teacher for the Visually Impaired. She has nearly 8 years of experience in the vision field in various positions, with many of those years at the state schools for the blind and visually impaired in both Utah and New Mexico. Callie is originally from Ogden, Utah, where she developed a love for biking and the mountains. She received her M.Ed. in Visual Impairments from the University of Utah. Callie also participated in varsity swimming, while receiving her undergraduate degree in Early Childhood Special Education, also at the University of Utah. Her academic interests are related to adaptation of learning environments and materials as it relates to differing visual impairments and developmental needs. Callie is also interested in early learning and as it relates to relationships and play. Outside of work, she participates in triathlons and mountain bike races and enjoys being a mother. Callie shared that she is excited to be a member of the Anchor Center team and is impressed with the commitment of the staff and leadership of the Anchor Center in their mission to deliver services to the children of Colorado.



WELCOME TO COLORADO

✧ Welcome to Colorado to **Julie Vinikoor**, who is now working at the School for the Blind. Julie is originally from Philadelphia PA. She received my Bachelors Degree from University of Delaware, and graduated with her Masters from Salus University. She has worked with students in a wide variety of settings including positions in China, Alaska, Alabama, and North Carolina. Julie shares that she has always had a passion for teaching, and is excited to join the team at Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind.



colorado connections

🔊 Hats off also to the following people who earned CDE renewal hours for Braille Modules: **Jeannie Lei**; . Thanks to proctors: **Julie Wetzstein**

🔊 Hats off the following recipients of the Education for Life Awards - and Congrats to each of them!

Ms. Emily Romero

Ms. Maribel Rodriguez-Ramirez

Mr. Damien Blood

Ms. Sara Robinson

🔊 TVIs were well represented at the 2015 Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness; in attendance were: **Tanni Anthony, Rita Albright, Elaine Brown, Mary Chambers, Danielle Burden, Gene Francoeur-Anderson, Barb Galgano, and Abby Horner.**

🔊 Colorado sensory disability personnel were well represented this summer at the first meeting of the National Leadership Center in Sensory Disability: **Tanni Anthony** (CDE), **Kay Ferrell, Silvia Correa Torres, John Luckner, and Harvey Rude** (UNC), and **Janet DesGeorge** (Hands and Voices). NLCS is a federally funded project through the Office of Special Education Programs to fund doctoral scholars in the fields of deafness, blindness, and deafblindness.

Who Ya Gonna Call? School Year 2015-2016

Anchor Center for Blind Children at (303) 337-9732

Deb Andrews at (719) 234-1386 or Deborah.Andrews@ASD20.org

- Southern TVI/COMS Region Representative at Vision Coalition Meetings

Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

- Braille Competency Testing/Braille Certification Renewal / UEB Training
- CDE web pages on Blindness/Low Vision, Deafblindness, and O&M
- CDE Initiatives specific to State Assessments, Standards, READ Act, School Readiness Act, etc.
- CDE TVI and COMS listserv
- CO Services for Children and Youth w/ Combined Vision & Hearing Loss Project
- Eligibility of Learners with Visual Impairment, Including Blindness or Deaf-Blindness
- IEPs, Learning Media Assessments and LMA Plans, instructional accommodations
- Job Clearinghouse – TVI and O&M Specialist positions within Colorado
- Licensure and Highly Qualified Status of TVIs and COMSs
- Listservs for TVIs/COMs, braillists, and UEB
- MTSS for students with BVI or deafblindness
- NIMAS and NIMAC procedures within Colorado
- Policy / Guidance documents pertaining to learners with BVI and/or DB
- State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment / Annual O&M Conference
- *Keeping in Touch (KIT)* newsletter
- Vision Coalition



Brent Batron at (303) 778-1130 x222 or bbatron@cocenter.org

- Colorado Center for the Blind Youth Programs

Dinah Beams at (720) 413-7567 or dbeams@csdb.org

- CSDB CO Home Intervention Program (0-3 children with DHH or DB)

Deb Branch at (719) 578-2168 or dbranch@csdb.org

- CSDB Distance Learning Coordinator
- CSDB Strategic Plan, Outreach Facilitator



Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC) at (719) 578-2196

- CIMC webpage: www.csdb.org; click on “Programs and Services,” then “CIMC”
- CIMC Email Accounts:
- “APH order form” submissions & questions: cimcaphorders@csdb.org
- braille & large print book sourcing inquiries, questions & orders: cimcbookorders@csdb.org
- braille request” & “braille repair” form submissions & questions: cimcbrailers@csdb.org

- “braille request” & “braille repair” form submissions & questions: cimcbrailers@csdb.org
- (719) 578-2195, Jim Olson (Coordinator) jolson@csdb.org
- (719) 578-2196, general CIMC phone line (rings all CIMC computer-based phones simultaneously)
- (719) 578-2197, Debbie Haberkorn, dhaberkorn@csdb.org (braille transcriber)
- (719) 578-2198, Laurie Taylor, ltaylor@csdb.org (shipping & receiving related questions)
- (719) 578-2199, Marla Wallace Raynor, mwallace@csdb.org (Count 1: CDE Registration / Count 2: APH Fed Quota)
- (719) 578-2207, CIMC FAX and Mailing Address: CIMC, 1015 East High Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80903-3559

Paula Conroy at (970) 351-1651 or paula.conroy@unco.edu

- UNC’s Teacher Training Program on Visual Impairment
- UNC Representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Diane Covington at (719) 578-2225 or dcovington@csdb.org

- CSDB School and Community Liaison
- Braille Challenge
- Family Learning Retreat

Nancy Cozart at (303) 734-3090 or nCozart@lps.k12.co.us

- Metro TVI/COMS representative at Vision Coalition meetings
- Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Mark Davis at (866) 860-0972 or info@foresightskiguides.org

- Foresight Ski Guides

Julie Deden at (303) 778-1130 or jdeden@cocenter.org

- Colorado Center for the Blind

David Dawson at (303) 786-7777 x 101 or ainc@aincolorao.org

- Audio Information Network of Colorado

LaVerne Dell at (303) 866-3562 or Laverne.DELL@state.co.us

- Colorado Rehabilitation Services representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Laura Douglas at (719) 578-2110 or ldouglas@csdb.org

- CSDB Outreach Services (DHH and BVI)
- BVI Adult Role Model Team Regional Student Activity Mini-Grants
- Touch Museum

Family Literacy Packs at familylitpacks@csdb.org

- Request CSDB Family Literacy Packs

David Gooldy at (720) 554-3037 or dgooldy@cherrycreekschools.org

- CO Chapter of AER President

Donice Fennimore at (719) 290-6441 or dfennimore@ppboces.org

- Site Coordinator of the Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic
- Southern Regional TVI / COMS meetings

Debbie Haberkorn at (719) 578-2197 or dhaberkorn@csdb.org

- Statewide Low Vision Clinic Coordinator

Lucia Hasty at (719) 339-2935 or Lucia@TactileGraphics.org

- Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Carol Hilty at (719) 578-2102 or chilty@csdb.org

- CSDB Superintendent
- CSDB Intern Placement

Elaine Karns at (970) 231-1854 or elk@psdschools.org

- Site Co-Coordinator of Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic
- Northern TVI Region Representative at Vision Coalition Meetings

Donna Keale at (719) 578-2251 or dkeale@csdb.org

- CSDB Summer Enrichment Program

Paula Landry at (303) 377-9732 (ext. 126) or plandry@anchorcenter.org

- Anchor Center for Blind Children representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Jeannie Lei at (720) 810-1363 or jlei@cherrycreekschools.org

- Metro TVI / COMS Regional Meetings

Jamie Lugo at (719) 578-2200 or jlugo@csdb.org

- CSDB School for the Blind Principal

Debbie MacLeod at (303) 727-9277 or Macleod_d@cde.state.co.us

- Colorado Talking Book Library

Sara Noel at (719) 578- or snoel@csdb.org

- CSDB BVI Outreach representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Terrie Noland at (325) 260-3911 or tnoland@learningally.org

- Learning Ally – authorized CO NIMAS file user

Teresa O'Brien at (970) 613-5564 or teresa.obrien@thompsonschoools.org

- Northern Region TVI / COMS Meetings



Jim Olson at (719) 578-2195 or jolson@csdb.org

- CIMC registration of Colorado students who are blind/visually impaired 9 (year round)
- Annual Federal Quota Program (first Monday in January) registration
- Ex Officio Trustee for the Colorado Department of Education Federal Quota Accounts
- CIMC Braille Book Orders and APH Loan Materials—authorized CO NIMAS file user
- CIMC National Braille Association Conference stipend Scholarships for Braillists
- Braille Transcribers Mentoring Project
- CIMC Professional Lending Library
- CIMC representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Gina Quintana at (303) 866-6605 or quintana_g@cde.state.co.us

- Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project

Mimi Schaper at (720) 519-8026 or mschaper2@cherrycreekschools.org

- Metro TVI Regional Meetings

Wendy Schlageter at (303) 343-3664 or wschlageter@aps.k12.co.us

- Metro Low Vision Evaluation Site Coordinator

Brenda Shepard at (303) 995 7913 or Brendashep@comcast.net

- Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Angela Sims at (970) 254-5414 or sims@mesa.k12.co.us

- Western Slope TVI/COMS Representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Matt Simpson at (719) 866-3019 or misimposn@usaba.org

- USABA Membership and Outreach Coordinator

Jacky Skinner at (719) 578-2102 or jskinner@csdb.org

- Executive Assistant to the CSDB Superintendent / CSDB Board of Trustees' meetings

Sarah Sonnier at (970) 254-5414 or ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us

- Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Jon Vigne at (719) 578-2177 or jvigne@csdb.org

- CSDB Director of Special Education
- CSDB and Enrollment Questions

Julie Wetzstein at (303) 216-6124 or jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us

- Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Rebecca Warnell at (303) 343-3664 or rewarnell@aps.k12.co.us

- Metro Low Vision Evaluation Site Coordinator



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COLORADO
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COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Exceptional Student Services

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MAIL TO: