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GOING FOR THE GOLD

By Tanni L. Anthony



The Olympics are inspiring! What a thrill to watch the best athletes in the world compete. Whether it is running, throwing, skating, snowboarding, swimming, vaulting, skiing, or gymnastic routines, the goal is to give it your all. To practice and perfect. To try and to master. To take the wins and take the defeat, knowing both are parts of life. There is so much to be proud of from country to country, sport to sport, and event to event. It makes me wonder about hosting our own CO Olympics with our students with visual impairment, including blindness. In this edition, you will evidence of an exciting statewide braille competition. We can do so much more to build our students as individual and team competitors, as we prepare them for success today and moving ahead to the post-school world.

How about an Olympic Expanded Core Curriculum where students demonstrate their talents in compensatory skills, technology, social skills, recreation and leisure, career education, independent living, sensory efficiency, self determination, and O&M. Think of it: Low Vision Device Medley; Braille Fluency on the Beam; Beeper Ball Throw, Long Cane Marathon, Slate Stylus Free Style, Explain My Need for Accommodations Beach Volley Ball, Wheelchair Sprint, and Vocational Archery (hit the bulls-eye of your dream job) ... you get the idea! Scoring would be based on efficiency, accuracy, personal effort, and accomplishment. It would not be enough to read a page of braille with solid fluency, but with full comprehension of the text. Extra points for those who show judgment about whether to use a low vision device or use braille on a reading task. Self-advocacy in and out of the classroom may tip the scale from a silver to a gold medal! Knowing all many jobs in a grocery store and which ones could be for summer employment gets a bronze. Getting the job at the grocery store for the summer earns a gold!

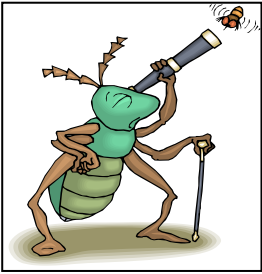
Happy winter, everyone! Let's go for the gold throughout the rest of year to ensure our students have the team spirit and sportspersonship to build and nourish relationships and have the competitive knowledge and skills for school success and future employment. Go Team Colorado!

KEEPING IN TOUCH!

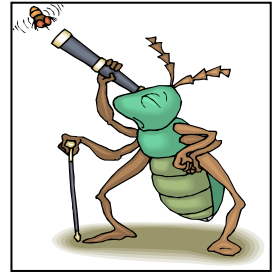
A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers
 of Colorado Children Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired

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LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



Low Vision Evaluation Clinics for School Year 2017-18

Region	Dates	Site Coordinator
Metro Region	Clinic paperwork due to Debbie Haberkorn on February 6, 2018 Clinic Dates: February 22-24, 2018	Nancy Knight
Southern	Clinic paperwork due to Debbie Haberkorn on March 22, 2018 Clinic Dates: April 6, 2018	Debbie Haberkorn

Northern LVE Clinic

By Debbie Haberkorn

The Northern Region Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic was held November 10th and 11th at Enight Skills Center in Fort Collins, Colorado. Five students from three Administrative Units (Boulder County RE1-J, Larimer County District 1, and Weld County District 6) received evaluations. Five parents and four TVIs attended the evaluation with their students.

The Clinic team would like to thank the Enight Skills Center for hosting the event, and **Melissa French, Carol Love, Janis Mountford,** and **Liz Wieder** for bringing students. We would like to express our gratitude to **Wendy Stoltman** for not only evaluating students, but also serving as the regional coordinator for this clinic.

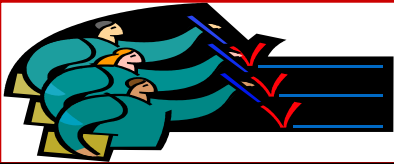


Attention all TVIs!

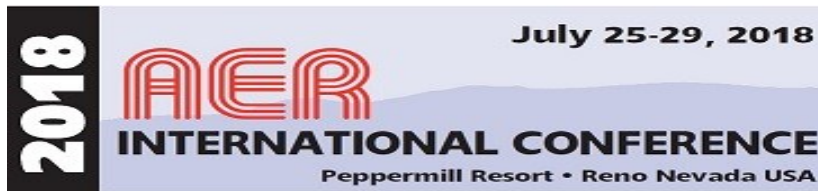
* Please be thinking now about which of your students are candidates for the Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics. We want to ensure that every slot is filled with a deserving student. It takes advance planning to get the paperwork completed to fully prepare for each student attending a clinic. You can find the LVE forms on the CDE website. http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Vision_Activities.asp

* Thanks for your partnership to promote a successful clinic for your student(s).





CHECK IT OUT!



Hope you will be there!

**AER International Conference 2018
July 25-29, 2018
Peppermill Resort, Reno, Nevada USA**

Learn more about submitting proposals for conference presentations and about our fabulous location. Brought to you by the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired. Go to www.aerbvi.org



HKNC Offers Online Learning Opportunities!

Did you know you can get continuing education credits with HKNC online learning? Courses are now available for continuing education credits in multiple fields. Vocational Rehab, Mental Health, Interpreting, and more. www.hkonlinecourses.org

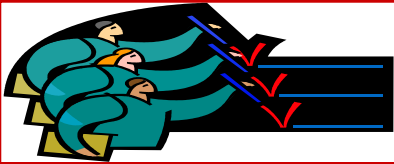
HKNC encourages you to take a look at some of the [free trainings](http://www.helenkeller.org/hknc/online-learning-tools) they offer by going to the link below. You will find informational videos on many topics, including Touch Signals, SSPs, and Advocacy in the Deaf-Blind World. <https://www.helenkeller.org/hknc/online-learning-tools>

Helen Keller National Center is pleased to announce a series of online courses aimed at providing professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to support individuals who are deaf-blind. Your organization is encouraged to take advantage of the online learning options available through HKNC.

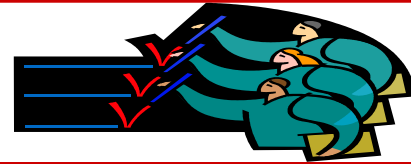
Please check our website for announcements of our new courses and informational videos at www.hknc.org or contact the Professional Learning Department with any questions about on-site or online professional learning opportunities at PLD@hknc.org

Anchor Center for Blind Children Promotional Video

Please be sure to check out this wonderful new video of the important services at the Anchor Center for Blind Children! Go to: <https://vimeo.com/236296367>



CHECK IT OUT!



The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado

The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado (NFBCO) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit made up of blind people of all ages, their families and friends. Our members and leaders provide advocacy and support to blind and visually impaired Coloradans across the state. We work together to promote full participation and integration of blind people in all areas of life, and we serve as an advocate for change when equal access and treatment of the blind is denied.

Chapters and divisions across the state offer community based forums for the blind and visually impaired to interact and work together on issues at the local level. As a state-wide group, the NFBCO brings the collective experiences of our members together to identify problems or needs and work for change at the state and national levels.

The NFB of Colorado believes that the real problem of blindness is not the loss of eyesight, but the general misunderstanding and lack of information about blindness that exist. We believe that with the proper training, opportunity and positive attitudes, blindness can be reduced to a mere physical nuisance.

As a member you will have the opportunity to:

- Participate in local chapters and divisions
- Learn about the techniques used to travel safely, manage a household, and obtain employment
- Help others experiencing vision loss
- Advocate for other blind Coloradans on state and national issues affecting the blind.

For more information go to: <http://www.nfbco.org/>

New! Milestone Tracker Mobile App

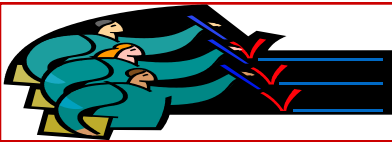
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently announced its free new app, the [Milestone Tracker](#), which allows users to track their child's development in a fun and easy way. This mobile app is a recent addition to CDC's popular suite of free, family friendly materials available through the [Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#) program.

The Milestone Tracker gives parents: (1) tips to help their child learn and grow; (2) a way to track milestones and to recognize delays; and (3) the ability to share this information with their child's healthcare provider.

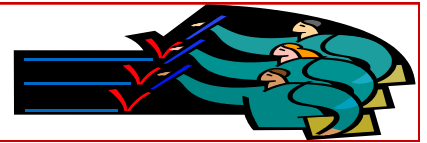
Specifically, the app offers the following:

- Interactive milestone checklists for children ages 2 months through 5 years, illustrated with photos and videos
- Tips and activities to help children learn and grow
- Information on when to act early and talk with a doctor about developmental delays
- A personalized milestone summary that can be easily shared with doctors and other care providers
- Reminders for appointments and developmental screenings

For more information, go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html>



CHECK IT OUT!



TOP NEWS: Department Releases Andrew F. Q & A

On March 22, 2017, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a unanimous decision in [Andrew F. v. Douglas County School District Re-1, 137 S.Ct. 988](#). The court held that “to meet its substantive obligation under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*, a school must offer [a child] an IEP [individualized education program] reasonably calculated to enable a child to make progress appropriate in light of the child’s circumstances.



As such, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) has released a question and answer (Q&A) document addressing the *Andrew F.* decision.

This document can be found at: https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/memosdcltrs/ga-endrewcase-12-07-2017.pdf?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

The Q&A document provides parents and other stakeholders with information on the issues addressed in the ruling and the impact of the court's decision on the implementation of *IDEA*. Earlier this month, Secretary DeVos published an [op-ed article](#) supplementing the Department's Q&A document.

This article can be found at: https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/12/08/a-commentary-by-betsy-devos-special-education.html?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term

BecDot Toy Created To Help Teach Kids To Read Braille!

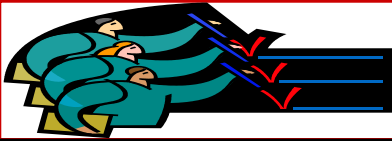


The BecDot is an interactive children's toy that helps teach braille to children with visual impairment in a fun and affordable way. The toy, programmed through an app, uses NFC (near field communication) to identify objects placed on its surface. Objects that are tagged through the app and placed on the toy's surface are detected. The detection causes braille letters to appear, that spell out the word of the object.

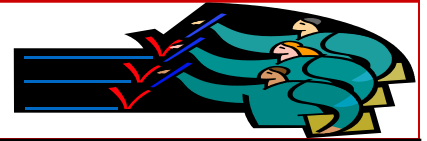
The BecDot is a prototype that is intuitive and easy to program. It can be used to tag any toy the child already loves, and even comes equipped with internal speakers that can play the corresponding sound-effects of tagged objects. This innovative design is an affordable solution for parents seeking interactive, educational and sensory learning experiences for children with visual impairments.

For more information, go to: <https://www.facebook.com/notimpossiblelabs/videos/1577983942283793/>

To hear-the warming and important story which aired on National Public Radio's "Here and Now" the story can be found at <http://www.wbur.org/hereandnow/2018/01/12/usher-syndrome-becdot>



CHECK IT OUT!



COLORADO
Department of
Labor and Employment
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRANSITIONAL SERVICES CAREER CLUSTER WORKSHOP AND FAIR

The Blind and Low Vision Services Unit will host a two-day workshop to start your journey and develop your career pathway.

Here's how this workshop will help prepare you for your career success:

- Investigate career clusters and employment opportunities that best compliment your interests, skills, and values.
- Identify experiences outside the classroom to be prepared for this career.
- Recognize education and training needed to pursue this career.
- Make a plan of action
- Learn how to meet and greet employers that recruit for internships and jobs.

On March 29, we will host a career cluster fair that will provide an opportunity for you to practice your meet and greet skills and have interactive conversations with professionals that are employed in a variety of career cluster options. You will exchange meaningful information to identify training/education needs, rehabilitation training to be employment ready, and work experience that will develop a path to your desired career choice.

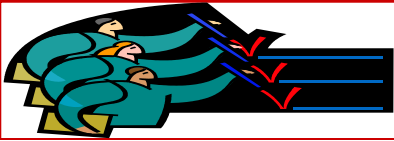
When: March 28 and March 29, 2018

Where: DVR Denver Metro Office
2211 W. Evans Ave
Denver, CO 80223

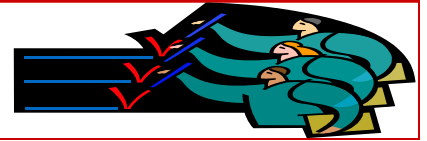
Time: 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

If you are a student between ages 15-21 who would be interested in career exploration, examining career clusters, and to meet professionals in your potential field of interest, please contact Michele Reed at (303)866-3512 or email michele.reed@state.co.us





CHECK IT OUT!



New Summer Program Announced – NFB Engineering Quotient (EQ)

Attention blind and low-vision students!

Are you or do you know a blind or low-vision teen who wants to spend their summer learning, meeting new people, and having a great adventure? Join the National Federation of the Blind at our NFB EQ program. NFB EQ is a jam-packed week of fun and learning. Participants spend each day engaged in activities designed to strengthen their knowledge of engineering as well as their problem-solving abilities. In the evenings, participants hang out with the 29 other teen participants while exploring the local community and participating in various recreational activities. Throughout the week, participants will forge new friendships while increasing their engineering knowledge, problem-solving abilities, self-confidence, and independence.

To learn more and to apply, visit <http://www.blindscience.org/nfbeg>

The Specs

Who: 30 blind and low-vision teens currently enrolled in grades 9-12 in the United States.

What: A weeklong summer engineering program for blind and low-vision teens.

When: Participants will travel to Baltimore on July 29 and they will travel back home on August 4.

Where: The National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute in Baltimore, Maryland.

Why: To meet new people, learn new things, and have an exciting adventure!

How: [Apply Now!](#) Applications are due May 1, 2018.

How Much: There is no registration fee for this program. Visit our frequently asked questions web page for more details: <http://www.blindscience.org/nfb-eq-faq>.

Additional Information

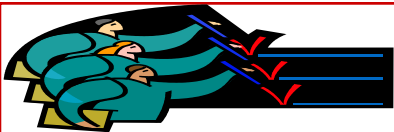
- To be eligible to apply students must: be enrolled in grades 9-12 during the 2017-2018 school year in a school (public, private, charter, residential, or home school) in the United States, be blind or have low-vision, and be available to attend the entire program.
- Participant's transportation to and from the program will be arranged by the National Federation of the Blind. Students will travel to Baltimore on Sunday and will travel home on the following Saturday.
- This is a residential program; students will stay in dormitories at the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute and all meals will be provided.
- In the evenings, after the conclusion of the instructional day, students will be engaged in various social and recreational activities.

Questions?

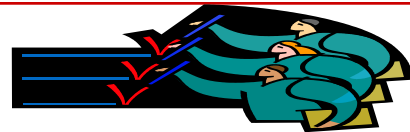
Send them to:

STEM@nfb.org

(410) 659-9314, extension 2418
National Federation of the Blind
200 East Wells Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21230



CHECK IT OUT!



Treasures from the APH Libraries

Over 1,300 in-copyright items from the APH Migel Collection are now available for digital check-out from Open Library. Formerly available only in Daisy format, these items can be borrowed digitally for two weeks with a free Open Library digital library card account. Books can be viewed in your browser or downloaded in PDF or ePub format with Adobe Digital Editions. Up to five books may be checked out at a time. Each loan will expire after two weeks and be removed from your device.

Open Library is a project by Internet Archive. Their goal is to provide a webpage for every published book that brings the user as close as possible to the actual document – be it a scanned version at Internet Archive, or a link to a bookseller where a copy can be purchased. The project began in November 2007 and has added catalog records from some of the biggest libraries in the world. Open Library has 20 million records, 1.7 million digitized books, and links to external sources like WorldCat and Amazon when available.

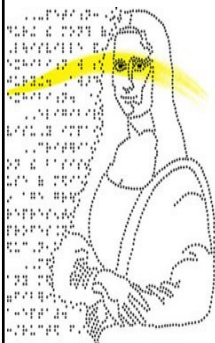
To create an Open Library digital library card account, click the “sign up” link at the top right corner of <https://openlibrary.org>. You will be prompted to enter your full name, user name, password, and email address. Click “sign up” when you are finished, and you will receive an email requesting verification of your account. Once you are registered, click the “log in” link at the top right corner of any page to enter your username and password. Click on the link to display a drop-down menu; here you can edit your Profile, manage your Loans, manage the Lists you create, edit your Settings, or log out.

Field Testers Wanted: APH is seeking field evaluators for the UEB Math Tutorial. The tutorial is designed for users who are visually impaired and sighted users, and can be used with or without a braille display. The topics covered in the tutorial begin with learning numbers and continue through to advanced mathematical concepts. The tutorial can be used with any major browser and is available on Windows®, Mac®, iOS®, and Android™ platforms. The field test is open to expert reviewers and/or students who are interested in learning about UEB math. Testing is scheduled to begin February 19th, 2018. Interested testers should complete an APH Field Test Form, and indicate your interest in testing for the UEB Math Tutorial.

APH Websites: They Want Your Feedback on Accessibility! When accessing the web, are you a synthetic speech user, screen magnification user, or user of other accessible technologies? APH would like your feedback on the accessibility of their websites! If you have thoughts about the accessibility of the following: www.aph.org or shop.aph.org, please email your comments to communications@aph.org

DEADLINE APPROACHING!

APH InSights Art Competition 2018



APH invites artists who are blind or visually impaired to submit artwork for the **2018 APH InSights Art Competition and Exhibition**. For 27 years, our renowned international contest has delighted the senses, provoked discussion, and most importantly, allowed artists who happen to have vision loss the opportunity to share their creative imagination with the world. Artists may enter original artwork created in any medium, including (but not limited to) painting, drawing, printmaking, fiber, metal, and wood. This year’s deadline for student artists from preschool through high school is **March 16, 2018**. The deadline for adult artists is **March 23, 2018**.

Complete rules and entry forms are now available for download on the APH InSights Art webpage.

Winning artwork in nine categories and other selected pieces will be displayed at the APH InSights Art Exhibit during APH’s 2018 Annual Meeting in Louisville, **October 4-6, 2018**. For more information, please e-mail insights@aph.org, or call Rob Guillen at 502-899-2242

Resources and Materials

Make-And-Take Northern Region Meeting

By Julie Hutchinson



On January 26, 2018 ten TVIs from the northern region participated in a Make-and-Take get together following Diane Sheline's presentation at the CDE State B/VI Conference. Our region was very impressed with Diane's presentation on making CVI-friendly books for students with CVI and agreed that we should modify some popular books to be used for students in Phase I, II and III of CVI. At this make-and-take, the TVIs listed below created three book sets (one book to be used with students on each of the three phases/levels of CVI (so three of the same book, modified with increasing levels of visual complexity) to encourage use of functional vision, literacy and/or concept development and inclusion with peers.

The first book modified was "Where is Baby's Valentine;" the group agreed that this would be a fun story to modify because we are so close to Valentine's Day and because it covers positioning concepts (under the blanket, behind the chair, etc.) and it could be adapted to then be Where is (insert student's name)'s Valentine? Where you hide something (preferred, familiar object) in a real-life setting. Or,

when it is not Valentine's Day anymore, you could just say where "is the heart?" and then introduce a shapes lesson from there or something. The book was quite easy to modify to address each of the three levels of CVI strategies and instruction.

The second book modified was "Clifford's Family," which is the exact book that Diane Sheline showed us at the conference and demonstrated how to modify on her Strategy to See website. The group really wanted to create this book set using the same process that Diane had, so we were sure we were modifying correctly. It ended up being a group favorite and, again, had so many concepts interwoven into the story that we all agreed we could do a great deal with it for teaching other concepts to our students while sharing the story.

The third and final book modified was "Pete the Cat: Too Cool for School." Although this was our most challenging book to adapt, it was definitely the most rewarding; the entire group collaborated on strategies for modification and ended up coming away with a great book set to be used in each of the three levels of CVI development! The story covers clothing items and being comfortable with yourself and the decisions you make, which we all agreed could lead to many topics and conceptual independent living lessons in the future for our students.

By the end of the Make-and-Take meeting, each of the 8 districts from the northern region left with the three stories, with 3 different modifications for each story – twenty-four books in total! It was so great to hear about how each of us were going to implement the stories and bounce ideas off of one another. We are so grateful for having the opportunity to come together, share ideas, and create books that will undoubtedly benefit our students' in multiple areas of their lives!

In attendance were: Teresa O'Brien – Thompson ; Janine Holmes – Thompson; Carol Love – St. Vrain ; Julia Hutchinson – St. Vrain ; Danielle Burden – Greeley; Janis Mountford – Greeley; Danielle Burden – Greeley, Sally Burch – Boulder Valley; Abby Horner – CBOCES; Lorraine Chevarria – Developmental Pathways, and Melissa French – Poudre.

Resources and Materials

An Administrator Crosswalk for Evaluation of LI Service Providers

The Michigan Department of Education-Low Incidence Outreach (MDE-LIO) has created a wonderful guidance document to assist administrators in evaluating educators working with students who are blind / visually impaired (BVI) ,Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH) and Certified Orientation and Mobility instructors (COMS).

The Administrator Crosswalk for Evaluating Low Incidence Service Providers is divided into six evaluation areas, which are aligned with all areas of the four MI state-approved evaluation tools. Your state may have different approved evaluations, but the Crosswalk gives valuable keys to the evaluation process.

Applicable professional standards are listed under each area of evaluation in the document, along with educator observables that provide specific knowledge and skill expectations. The educator observables are neither exclusive nor exhaustive, but are offered as guidance for evaluators and educators.

The document can be found on the MDE-LIO website. www.mdelio.org/news

News and Resources from UNC's Frank Porter Graham Child Developments Institute

Free Briefs Provide Info and Strategies for Building Self-Regulation Skills. This new series of reader-friendly briefs offers guidance about how to promote the development of children's self-regulation skills across settings and age groups. Click on the link below for more information.

<http://fpg.unc.edu/resources/self-regulation-briefs>

New *Disabilities Services Newsletter* Explores "Supporting Peer Interactions" In this issue, you can learn ways to enhance child-to-child interactions at home and in the classroom. Click on the link below for more information. <http://fpg.unc.edu/resources/head-start-disabilities-services-newsletter-issue-9>





Licensure Requirements for TVIs and COMSs

Colorado Initial Licensure in the Endorsement Area of Visual Impairment

For information about Colorado licensing requirements in the area of Special Education Specialist: Visual Impairment and/or School Orientation and Mobility Specialist, please refer to the information contained within Educator Licensing's Endorsement Requirements page at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/endorsementrequirements>

All candidates for initial educator licenses in Colorado have historically been required to take and pass one or more of the PLACE Content Assessments. Candidates for the special education endorsement in Special Education Specialist: Visual Impairment were mandated previously to pass the *PLACE Educator Content Assessment for Special Education Specialist: Severe Needs – Visually Impaired*. This particular content assessment is suspended currently as a licensure requirement. Whether this specific test will be revised to include a section specific to Unified English Braille or is fully replaced with another test as a licensure requirement is yet to be determined.

At this time, it is important to note there is not a Professional Services and Educator Licensing Unit content test that requires a candidate for the Special Education Specialist: Visual Impairment to demonstrate braille competency as a requirement of licensure.

It is further important to note that if such a content test is reinstated, it does not replace the Colorado Braille Competency Test administered through the Exceptional Student Services Unit. This latter test is not tied to CDE licensure.

Colorado's 21st Century Skills

CDE launched an opportunity for feedback on updates to Colorado's 21st Century Skills as part of the standards review and revision process. The 21st Century Skills are the essential skills students should develop to be successful in the post-secondary education and the workplace, such as initiative and innovation.

Those interested can review the Essential Skills Guidance document draft (PDF) and provide feedback at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/casreview-essentialskills>

For more information, go to : <http://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/casreview>

CDE Licensure Requirement for O&M Specialists

If you are working in a Colorado administrative unit as a School Orientation and Mobility Specialists, please know that you **MUST** have a current CDE license as a special services provider: School O&M Specialist.

If you do not have this license, your scope of O and M services should be severely restricted to those skills that could already be taught by a TVI. Without this license, you are placing yourself and your AU at risk for O&M-related liability. There is no temporary or emergency licenses for School O&M Specialists.

Questions or need some assistance? Contact Tanni at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us



Licensure and Endorsement Specific to Visual Impairment

For information about the endorsement requirements for the Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired Ages Birth -21, go to: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/endorsementrequirements>

<p>Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired Ages Birth-21: (9.02)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Must hold a Master’s degree or higher from a regionally-accredited institution in special education visual impairment or its equivalent, as determined by the Department. ✓ Must have completed a program from a regionally-accredited institution for special education specialists: visually impaired that includes prescribed field experience requirements
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For information about the endorsement requirements for the School Orientation and Mobility Specialist, go to: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof/endorsementrequirements>

<p>School Orientation and Mobility Specialist Ages 0-21: (11.03)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Bachelor’s degree or higher from a regionally-accredited institution ✓ Completion of a preparation program from a regionally-accredited institution for school orientation and mobility specialists ✓ Completion of practicum or internship, which must be in a school setting and equivalent to a minimum of 320 hours, full-time, under the supervision of an Academy of Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (ACVREP) licensed orientation and mobility specialist. ✓ Passing of the ACVREP exam ✓ Hold a current and valid ACVREP orientation and mobility certificate
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EDUCATOR TALENT

Effective Educators for Every Student and
Effective Leaders for Every School

Educator Talent Website

There is a new Educator Talent website! Their mission is to develop, deploy and support talent management and human capital development strategies for districts and schools so that the most effective educators are in every school and classroom and all students are prepared for college, career, and life.

Check it out at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent>

CVI Resources

APH Webpage on CVI

The American Printing House for the Blind has many resources specific to CVI. For more information, go to: <http://tech.aph.org/cvi/>

CVI Resources

Dr. Christine Roman has a website with information that includes publications, videos, endorsed products, etc. Go to: <http://cviresources.com/>

FamilyConnect CVI Resources

To follow their posted information specific to Resources on Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) in Children, go to: <https://www.familyconnect.org/blog/familyconnect-a-parents-voice/resources-on-cortical-vision-impairment-cvi-in-children/12>

Strategies to See

This is the website maintained by Diane Sheline. It features information about tools, forms, literacy, DIY projects, recommended products, videos and more.

Go to: <https://strategytosee.com/>

TEACHCVI

TEACHCVI is a partnership that aims to create collaborative tools for teachers and health care professionals. It is meant to build a bridge between teachers/educators and health care professionals so they can work together to benefit the target group: children with Cerebral Visual Impairment (CVI).

Aims of the project:

- Making a tool for health care professionals and educators to screen for CVI.
- Creating a common database of tools for CVI detection.
- Producing resources for teachers to support their work in the assessment of CVI.

Making teaching methodologies to enable the child's access to literacy, this includes training and teaching materials for teachers/educators of children with cerebral visual impairment.

For more information, please go to: <https://www.teachcvi.net/>






Calendar of Events

2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018

- February 22-24** **Low Vision Evaluation Clinic**—Metro Region
 Contact: Nancy Knight at nknight@lps.k12.co.us

- February 22-24** **Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP)** - Colorado Springs, CO
 For more information go to www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/PEP.asp

- March 9** **CCB Youth Program Astronomy Night**—CCB in Littleton
 Contact: Brent Batron at bbatron@cocenter.org

- March 14** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting**—CSDB
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org

- March 15** **CAER Board Meeting**—Colorado Center for the Blind—Littleton, CO
 Contact: Brent Batron at bbatron@cocenter.org

- April 1** **Braille Book Order Deadline to the CIMC for the Following School Year**
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org

- April 5** **Vision Coalition**— Talking Book Library
 Contact: Tanni Anthony - Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

- April 6** **Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic**—CSDB
 Contact: Debbie Haberkorn at dhaberkorn@csdb.org

- April 11** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting**—CSDB
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org

- April 12** **Metro Regional TVI/COMS Meeting**—Denver, CO
 Contact: Jeannie Lei at jlei@cherrycreekschool.org

- March 9** **CCB Youth Program Astronomy Night**—CCB in Littleton from 5—8 p.m.
 Contact: Brent Batron at bbatron@cocenter.org

- April 13** **CCB Youth Programs on Robotics** —Littleton, CO
 Contact: Brent Batron at bbatron@cocenter.org

- April 17** **Career and College Seminar**—CCB in Littleton
 Contact: Brent Batron at bbatron@cocenter.org

- April 20-22** **Winter Outdoor Adventure**—YMCA Camp
 Contact: Kaitlin Lombardi at kaitlinmlombardi@gmail.com






Calendar of Events

2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018 2018

- April 28** **Sensory Safari - Colorado Springs**
 Contact: Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org

- March 4** **CAER Annual Banquet** —Tentative at Anchor Center
 Contact: Brent Batron at bbatron@cocenter.org

- May 4-5** **CDE Annual O&M Seminar**—Denver
 Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

- May 9** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting**—CSDB
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org

- May 9** **CCB Youth Program Locating Bats Through Sonar**—CCB in Littleton
 Contact: Brent Batron at bbatron@cocenter.org

- June 8- August 3** **Earn and Learn High School**—CCB (residential)
 Contact: Martin Becerra at mbecerra@cocenter.org

- June 8- August 3** **Summer for Success College Prep**—CCB (8 week residential)
 Contact: Martin Becerra at mbecerra@cocenter.org

- June 11-12** **Initiation to Independence Middle School**—CCB (3 week residential)
 Contact: Martin Becerra at mbecerra@cocenter.org

- June 11-22** **Confidence Camp** —CCB
 Contact: Martin Becerra at mbecerra@cocenter.org

- July 25-29** **AER International Conference 2018**—Peppermill Resort, Reno NV
 Contact: www.aerbvi.org

- September 12** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting**—CSDB
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org

- October 4-6** **APH Annual Meeting**—Louisville, KY
 Contact: www.aph.org

- October 10** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting**—CSDB
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org

- October 25-28** **National Federation of the Blind of Colorado State Convention**—Denver Marriott
 Visit: NFBCO—<http://www.nfbco.org/>

- November 14** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting**—CSDB
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org

- December 12** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting**—CSDB
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org






Calendar of Events

2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019

Good for the Southern Region who have scheduled their monthly meetings into the 2018-19 school year!

- January 9** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting—CSDB**
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- February 13** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting—CSDB**
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- March 13** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting—CSDB**
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- April 10** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting—CSDB**
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- May 8** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting—CSDB**
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org



2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020

June 22-25 **International Mobility Conference (IMC) 17 – Gothenburg, Sweden**
 For more information: <http://ips.gu.se/english/cooperation/conferences/imc17>

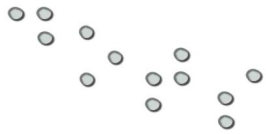
WE NEED YOUR HELP!

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.

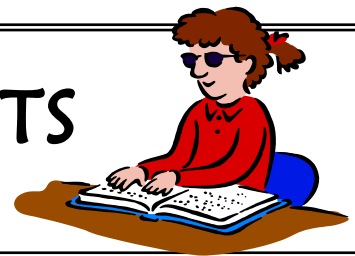
TVIs and COMSs: If you have any changes in program contact information, please Tanni these changes.

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 1100, Denver, CO 80202. Or you can leave a voice message for Tanni at (303) 866-6681. Thank you so much!



CONNECTING THE DOTS



Colorado Braille Competency Committee

Please keep this information handy, if you are in the process of earning your initial Colorado Braille Competency Certificate or working on your renewal modules. The CDE Braille Competency Committee members serve as part-time employees of the Colorado Department of Education Exceptional Student Services Unit for their important role in: (a) developing, refining, and reviewing braille competency testing and support materials, (b) proctoring test sessions for initial braille competency and renewal modules; (c) providing approved mentoring to test candidates, and (d) other duties as needed to support our UEB competency process across the state.

The committee consists currently of the following individuals:

Tanni Anthony	(303) 866-6681	anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
Nancy Cozart	(303) 905-4074	ncozart@lps.k12.co.us
Christine Maynard	(719) 229-4981	christine.maynard@asd20.org
Brenda Shepard	(303) 995-7913	brendashep@comcast.net
Sarah Sonnier	(970) 245-5228	sonnier.sarah5@gmail.com
Julie Wetzstein	(303) 819-7887	jwetzstein@jeffco.k12.co.us

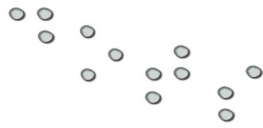
As far as regional representation for initial testing and renewal modules, Christine Maynard is our southern region proctor and Sarah Sonnier is the western region proctor. Nancy Cozart, Brenda Shepard, and Julie Wetzstein are metro proctors for the renewal modules. Brenda Shepard is our northern proctor for renewal modules. Tanni Anthony is the proctor for initial braille competency testing for the metro and northern area.

Be watching for practice test items to be posted on the braille competency webpage—that information and other resources can be found at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_guidedocs

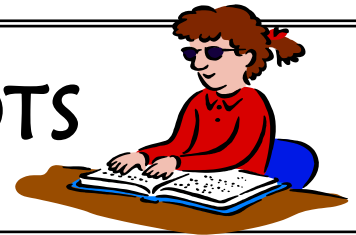


Braillewriter Repair

Mark Carpenter is available for braillewriter repair.
His contact information is: Phone: 719-634-8720 and
Email: carpdiane@yahoo.com



CONNECTING THE DOTS



Federal Quota Census Data Continues to Be Taken Out of Context

In today's world of data-driven decision making, we are constantly on the lookout for information that will support or negate the position or direction we have chosen. The relatively small population of people who are blind or visually impaired makes counting—and statistics—especially challenging.

Accurately depicting the number of braille readers relative to that population is also difficult. A frequently misused statistic comes from the federal Quota census: writers apply data which is gathered by APH to meet federal requirements and to inform APH product development to scenarios that are not connected to the intended use of the data. We want to help researchers better understand the data we provide and its appropriate use, so the following statement will appear on the APH website and other communication sources.

Appropriate Use of Federal Quota Census Data

NOTICE: For Press Members and Researchers: The number of students who read braille in the United States CANNOT be determined from these data.

Before citing these data in a publication, please contact the American Printing House for the Blind at censusdata@aph.org

The specific purpose of the annual Federal Quota Census is to register students in the United States and Outlying Areas who meet the definition of blindness and are therefore eligible for adapted educational materials from APH through the Act to Promote the Education of the Blind.

Statements regarding student literacy, use of appropriate learning media, and students taught in a specific medium cannot be supported using APH registration data.

Tonal Braille

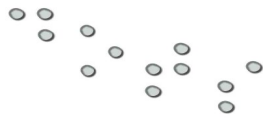
By Julie Vinikoor and Julie Novak



Tonal Braille is a project we have been working on, at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. This project was inspired by the observation that many of our students have a strong memory and affinity for pitch. We have especially observed this with many of our students who are diagnosed with Optic Nerve Hypoplasia. In the Spring of 2017, we created a pilot study to examine the use of pitch as a memory aide to assist students with braille learning. In our method, each pitch was assigned a dot number. The pitches were played in order of the dots, in the letter which allowed for a unique blend of pitches for each braille letter. Utilizing the pitches of bells and singing, the students rehearsed the sounds of the letters by singing them back to the teacher.

We completed the study with eight students and have found success with our students' ability to recall the correct dot numbers. Our hope is to continue to look at this method to increase the retention, for young students who are learning the braille code. We would love to share our work and get feedback from TVIs around the state. Please let us know, if you are interested in being part of this project or learning more about it.

Julie's email is jnovak@cldb.org or Julie's email is jvinikoor@cldb.org



CONNECTING THE



CSDB Braille Challenge

Congratulations to all of the students and adults who were involved with the Braille Challenge, which was held January 18, at CSDB. Twenty-one students participated in the Braille Challenge on this day. Thirty additional students participated in activities celebrating braille. Four volunteers from the community assisted CSDB staff members to implement the event. We appreciate **Mr. David Dawson** and the Audio Information Network for welcoming students and for the prize donations.

Thanks to the following CSDB staff for helping out:
 Proctors: **Julie Vinikoor, Tesia Nasehi, Kyle Berns, Amy Gunning, Julie Swegle, and Karissa Johnson.** **Support Staff: Tonie Libby-Clare, Eva Gonzalez, Joyce Smith, Julie Novak, Aimee Twaddle, Tiffany Sandlin, and Marty Rahn.**

Results are as follow:

Apprentice:

- 1st Izzabella Davila-Armendano
- 2nd Amaya Tellers
- 3rd Jose Gutierrez-Munoz

Freshman:

- 1st Jacksun Wesson
- 2nd Jake Weatherby
- 3rd Marcelo Saenz

Junior Varsity and Sophomores:

- 1st James Bewley
- 2nd Alacia Bates
- 3rd Liam Nicol

Varsity:

- 1st Quincie Mattick
- 2nd Gavin Uthe
- 3rd Jordan Rodriguez

Metro Area Braille Challenge

Congratulations to all of the students and adults who were involved with the Metro-based Braille Challenge, which was held on January 25 at the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton. TVIs who were in attendance or who sent their students to the Metro Braille Challenge included: **Jill Bookwalter, Elsa D'Angelo, Barb Galgano, Jasmine Gomez, Ashley Ives, Jeannie Lei, Kaitlin Lombardi, Anitha Muthumukaran, Natalie Palmer, Trina Boyd Pratt, Melinda Russell, Angela Sims, and Roberta Wiedemeyer.**

A big thank you to CSDB and the Colorado Center for the Blind on this shared collaborative event. CSDB Outreach staff who were assisted onsite included: **Diane Covington, Jayme Cusimano, Debbie Haberkorn, Teresa Kilbury, Sara Noel, Jim Olson, and Lori Wilson.**

It was wonderful to see so many students participating in the Metro Braille Challenge.

Results are as follow:

Apprentice:

- Sawyer Cybulski

Freshman:

- 1st Hayden Roswell
- 2nd Cadence Flores
- 3rd Salma Shareef

Sophomore:

- 1st Ty Gillespie
- 2nd Jasmine McCandless

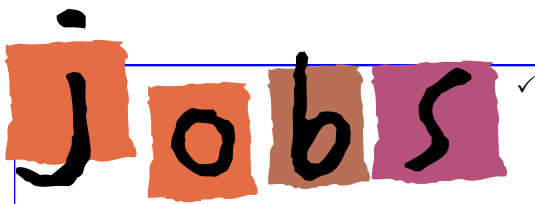
Junior Varsity:

- Cheyenne Argys

Varsity:

- 1st Deyannira Villa-Cazares
- 2nd Johnnie Jean Duran
- 3rd Christina Laty





IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with current vacancies for this school year or anticipated vacancies starting in the Fall of 2018. 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 O&M 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 of students with visual impairments and COMS = certified orientation and mobility specialist.

Northern Region—Jobs

- ✓ **TVI/COMS** (1 FTE) for Thompson School District. For more information about this position, contact Charlie Carter at (970)-613-5092 or charlie.carter@thompsonschoools.org
- ✓ **TVI/ COMS** (2 FTE) for Greeley Schools. For more information, please contact Kate Green at kgreen4@greeleyschools.org

Southern Region – Jobs

- ✓ **CSDB** - Please be in touch with Chelle Lutz for CSDB Openings. She can be reached at (719) 578-2100.
- ✓ **Possible 1 TVI / COMS** opening for Pikes Peak BOCES. For more information, please contact Trish Reitingger at Reitingger@ppbooces.org or 719 622-6205

Metro Region—Jobs

- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (1 FTE) - Immediate vacancy for Cherry Creek School District. For more information, contact Frances Woolery-Jones at 720-554-554-4228 or fwoolery-jones@cherrycreekschools.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 substitute work. Please keep in touch with Tanni, if you are interested in this type of work after your retirement!

Please keep Tanni in the communication loop about the status of your vacancies.

We need to work together to fill these positions! If you have ideas about how best to home grow and support new personnel to the field, let your Vision Coalition representative know!

VISION COALITION MEETING MINUTES

December 14, 2017

Persons in Attendance: Tanni Anthony, Dan Burke, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, Julie Hutchinson, Julie King, Paula Landry, Lori Mattick, Sara Noel, Jim Olson, and Trina Boyd Pratt.

Absent: Deb Andrews, Callie Robinson, Jamie Lugo, and Dana McMullen

Guest: Amber Rundle Kahn

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)

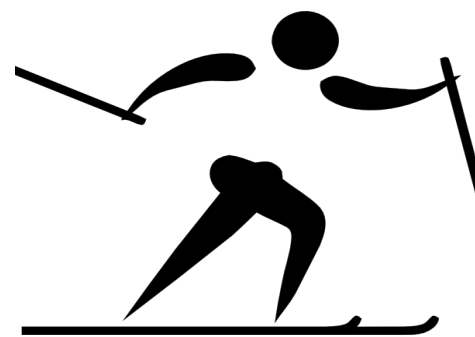
LEGEND OF ACRONYMS

ASV	= A Shared Vision
CAER	= CO Chapter of the Association of the Education/Rehabilitation of the Blind/Visually Impaired
CCB	= Colorado Center for the Blind
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
POBC	= Parents of Blind Children
TVI/TSVI	= Teacher of students with visual impairments

MEMBERS OF VISION COALITION FOR THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR

A Shared Vision – Paula Landry
Anchor Center for Blind Children – Callie Robinson
Colorado AER Chapter – Trina Boyd Pratt
Colorado Department of Education – Tanni Anthony
Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – Dana McMullen
Colorado Instructional Materials Center – Jim Olson
Colorado Parents of Blind Children – Lori Mattick
Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind – Jamie Lugo
Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind Outreach – Sara Noel

Colorado Center for the Blind Youth Program – Dan Burke
Metro TVI / COMS– Nancy Cozart
Northern TVI / COMS – Julie Hutchinson
Southern TVI / COMS – Deb Andrews
University of Northern Colorado VI Program – Paula Conroy
Western TVI / COMS - Julie King



PROGRAM UPDATES

Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)

We had our last meeting in Cherry Creek on November 16th. Quick updates included:

(a) CAER's open invitation for a Meet & Greet on December 21st at the Bob- Address is 3445 S. Broadway Englewood, CO 80113. Get to know CAER and how all serving those with vision loss can benefit! CAER also has open meetings through the school year. The 2017-18 monthly meetings are usually the third Thursday of the month. Come join us!

(b) Jeannie Lei shared info on new APH products! Slap Stack Math, Indoor Explorer-beacons, Graphiti, Matt Connect, Room with a View-Karen Poppe, Orbit Reader, Pre-Kindergarten Building on Patterns-Cay Holbrook APH art contest is coming again!

(c) CVI- TVI State Conference Training Feedback: We love the materials, but need help making them. Ideas included metro/regional meetings, TVIs set aside in-service days to train sped staff, including paras on how to create materials; Communications with Diane Sheline via email. We also need money to make materials. Ideas included grant money, Trina Boyd-Pratt will share a template for grant writing, Kennedy Trust, Howard Fund (Colorado Only); CAER mini-grants,

(d) SPOT Camera use was discussed among districts- if/when/how they are used; at the current time, this is used in preschools, child find and some kindergarten programs in the metro area.

(e) Thank you to Tanni, Jeannie Lei and Cherry Creek for organizing the make and take session to create the CVI Book "Where is the Yellow Spot?" or "Where is the Red Spot?"

The Metro region had discussion items that were addressed in later VC discussion items.



Northern Region (Julie Hutchinson)

Most Recent Meeting Date: October 6, 2017

Staff Updates in the North: Welcoming Vicki Chinski to the northern region! Vicki is working as a TVI with Poudre schools and we are very excited to welcome her to our region. Linda Stoval is our new DVR counselor now covering Fort Collins and Greeley.

Greeley Schools (District 6) is looking for two full-time TVIs for the 2017-2018 school year. Thompson School District is looking to hire a part-time TVI/COMS.

At our October 6 northern region meeting, TVIs participated in a Make-and-Take get together following Diane Sheline's presentation at the CDE State B/VI conference. Our region was very impressed with Diane's assessment and literacy tools for students with CVI and agreed that we should create some of these tools to use with our students, as many of the TVIs in this region have a high population of students with CVI or multiple impairments. At this make-and-take, the TVIs created two tools to encourage visual attention and test the preferred visual field, visual acuity at near, and color preference. The first item created was an assessment book Diane titled "Yellow Dot, Yellow Dot, Where Are You?" or "Red Dot" respectively. The second item created was a Mardi Gras bead curtain to be used with either the mini lightbox or an all-in-one board or something similar.

At our next meeting, TVIs will be introduced to DVR's new counselor, Linda Stoval (covering the Fort Collins and Greeley offices) and will have the opportunity to receive updates and ask questions regarding summer programs, etc. Once we have received updates from DVR, we will then move on to our second make-and-take opportunity; the goal is to create three literacy-related books for students with CVI - either by adapting books that already exist or by creating CVI-specific books – for each district in attendance. It is the hope that the districts will walk away with one book geared for use of children in each of the three Phases of CVI. We are really looking forward to this make-and-take and are so grateful to Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project for providing us with this opportunity!

Upcoming Meeting Date: January 26, 2018

Discussion:

- *Opportunity for follow-up with Diane Sheline regarding CVI-related strategies, tools, consultation, etc.; are we still planning on scheduling a time to confer with her and, if so, what would be the most appropriate way to do so?* People seem to want more time with her about strategies. It was suggested that we send some clips ahead of time for her to comment on. We would need to ensure we had parent permission for Diane to see the clip, as well as for the clips to be shown via a zoom experience. Assignment: Tanni will work with Diane Sheline to schedule our follow-up Zoom time with her and ask CO TVIs about their questions and ability to submit clips for a Zoom meeting.
- *Communicating eye medical report needs and concerns with eye care professionals within our region – how should we reach out? What is working for other regions?* There have not been any efforts to deliberately meet with eye care specialists since our last Vision Coalition meeting.
- *Has CIMC developed a consent form for distributing to parents whose children qualify for quota funding and/or need to be registered as visually impaired with the state?* They are coming soon! Assignment: Jim will be sharing this information within the next few weeks.

Southern Region (Deb Andrews)

The Southern Region has been busy! At our November meeting Julie Novak and Julie Vinikoor presented their Tonal Braille Project, Chris Maynard did a UEB refresher, and DVR provided us an overview of services and how they relate to our school age students. For our December meeting, we're doing a CVI make and take as a follow up to the state vision conference.

The Southern Region had a strong showing at the *Getting In Touch with Literacy* conference in New Orleans. Representing the region were Diane Fitzkee, Melissa Shular, Judy Mumford, Sara Noel, Deb Andrews, Amy Gunning and Julie Vinikoor. This was an incredible learning opportunity and we're all grateful we were able to attend.

The next Southern Region Meeting is scheduled for January 10th, 2018 at CSDB. Please RSVP with Jim Olson if you plan on attending.

Tim Richard is leaving DVR and starting his own consultant business. His focus will be on homemaker needs. He may also be available to work in Colorado school districts.

Western Region (Julie King)

The western slope teachers have been using the books and materials we made for students with CVI. We're planning another meeting in April to make more books.

Meghan's students are looking forward to skiing in Telluride this year (once we get snow!). Brooke and her husband welcomed their daughter in October. Brooke said, "We have four under four, it's crazy but awesome!" Congratulations Brooke!

Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (Dana McMullen)

Pre-ETS upcoming workshops:

⇒ Christmas Break Workshop

- Volunteer job experience at Café 180 in Denver
- December 22nd, 2017 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 pm
- Contact Michele Reed at Michele.reed@state.co.us if you have students who are interested in this experience. See attached fliers for more information.

⇒ Spring Break Workshop

- Career exploration and preparation
- January 4th, 2018 and March 29th, 2018
- Contact Michele Reed at Michele.reed@state.co.us if you have students who are interested in this two-day workshop. See attached fliers for more information.

Waitlist for Denver Metro Center Personal Adjustment Training (PAT) program is around 2 months.

As of November 1st, 2017 the entire DVR Blind and Low Vision Services (BLVS) counselor and teacher unit is fully staffed.



Discussion Item:

There is a question on how information is disseminated from DVR to our VI field?
Tanni will follow up with Dana to inquiry about whether there are more formal or regular communication vehicles with school district personnel. The Southern Region has regular attendance at their meetings from their DVR representative. The group also expressed a need to experience more DVR services for their students.

A list of DVR contacts was disseminated at the CDE State Conference on Blindness/ Visual Impairment. It is suggested that TVIs are proactive with working with families to reach out to DVR. It also may be an area of focus for our Parent Needs Survey. **Assignment:** Tanni will also follow-up to learn more details to share through future newsletters.

A Shared Vision (Paula Landry)

A Shared Vision is wrapping up a fantastic first year! We are now connected with 14 Community Centered Boards (CCBs) to provide home-based, Early Intervention services and have recently contracted with Children's Hospital of Colorado to provide weekly visits for children who attend *KidStreet* (their child care program for children 6 weeks – 4 years old who are medically fragile). It's been an extremely busy and exciting year but most importantly, in 12 short months we have served more than 130 families throughout the state!

Our 3rd outreach trip on the Western Slope was in October. In four days we met with 15 families for 2-hour intensive visits. Many of these visits included extended family members and other service providers, which allowed for some wonderful teaming! In addition to these trips, Sarah Vallese provides monthly outreach services to families in Eastern Colorado. Sarah also sees the children at *KidStreet* and provides consultation and training for their program and nursing staff.

ASV would like to welcome 3 new team members: Sally Burch, Kimala Rein and Edie Smith. Kimala is relocating to Grand Junction from Alaska where she has been an Early Intervention TSVI for the past 10 years (after graduating from UNC!). With Kimala on the Western Slope, children in Early Intervention will now have access to consistent services from a TSVI. In addition to their current teaching positions, Sally and Edie will be providing much needed O&M support for a few families each week in the Denver Metro area. We couldn't be more thrilled to have these incredibly talented TSVIs/COMSs join us in serving the families of our littlest ones across the state.

A HUGE thank you to everyone for your continued support and encouragement this past year!

Anchor Center for Blind Children (Callie Robinson)

Program Services: We are thrilled to announce the hire of Elise Darrow as the newest addition to our TVI team. Elise brings a delightful personality with a commitment and professionalism that will continue to elevate our team's success.

Our program continues to focus on understanding and assessing children with CVI, as we are proud to acknowledge Karen Jamison who has finished the Perkins CVI course and has received the national credential. Tammy Miller and Callie Robinson are also now enrolled in the Spring Perkins CVI course.

We are also proud to announce we will be offering the VIISA and INSITE birth to 5 training courses for children with visual impairments including additional disabilities beginning January 2018. We are working closely with UNC to include an option for college credit.

Family Services: October 2017: Anchor Center held a family event at Colorado's Children's Museum that provided free admission and a free year's membership for the families in attendance. We are teaming up with Colorado Center for the Blind to collaborate on a series of braille classes to offer Anchor Center families that will begin in January 2018. This month's parent education class covered the topic of transition to preschool and/or public school. The topic of grief issues was also discussed in October with infant and toddler parents.

November 2017: Our parent peer group began for preschool parents and one for infant/toddler parents as an opportunity to gather together and learn about various topics of interest to families of children with visual impairments. The topic this month was the process and use of a guide dog. We had a graduate of Anchor Center come and speak to families about her experience going through the process to be matched with a guide dog and how it has been having her own guide dog to date.

The parent peer group also covered the topic of holiday travel with a child with visual impairment and how to navigate through the holidays with all the festivities and changes in routine for your child. In honor of National Caregiver's month we spoke about self-care and shared how parents care for themselves while caring for their children and relationships. Handouts were provided to parents with ideas of how to incorporate self-care in their daily routines.

For our parent pull-out training we had a panel of home health professionals come and speak to parents about their options with supports and services for their child with visual impairment.

December 2017: We had a representative from National Federation of the Blind come in and speak to parents about their services and supports. The parent peer group covered the topic of feeding issues of children with visual impairment and had our speech therapist Zoe Morgese speak on the topic.

Fundraising: We were very pleased by the results from our biggest fundraiser of the year, Sunset in the Country, which was a record setting event. Below is link to find a video that was specially created to show the scope of practice and the support families receive by choosing Anchor. We were also very pleased to see the results from Colorado Gives Day as donations were matched by what was donated last year.

Check out the new Anchor Center for Blind Children's new video: <https://vimeo.com/236296367>

Colorado Chapter of AER (Trina Boyd Pratt/ Brent Batron)

News and Updates: Colorado Board is always looking for new members. We consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and 2 board members at large. Brent Batron is our current President. This is his last year. Please consider getting involved and help steer our professional organization. As a bonus, you are entitled to 50 ACVREP credits for two years of service on the board! We meet approximately eight time a year and calling in is an option, so don't think you must attend in person to be on the board. We would like to entice professionals in the outlying areas such as Western Slope and Southern Colorado to become involved.

Upcoming Trainings/Conferences: Calling all members! We need suggestions/ideas for trainings, nothing is out of the question so please submit ideas and the board can look at how to provide the training. Email: caerboard@gmail.com

We have been approved for ACVREP accreditation! Good news, we will be able to offer our workshops and trainings with credit attached. Fees will vary per training, but CAER members will be getting a discount.

Wreaths across America! Join CAER on Saturday December 16, 2017 to participate in Wreaths across America! Fort Logan National Cemetery 4400 W. Kenyon Ave, Denver, CO 80236.

In Kind donations also thought of as Assistive Devices: During November, CAER delivered, set up and trained a senior on the use of a CCTV. The idea behind the program is to turn in items your student/client or patient can no longer use and after a sanitization process they are given to another person who would benefit. Currently in our inventory are two large print desk top telephones for a landline, a 6 x 16 monocular, a Pebble CCTV (works on power, batteries may not recharge for long but could be replaced) and a desktop CCTV. If you know someone who could use them please contact Michelle Robinson, CAER Board member @ michelle.robinson5@va.gov with your need. If we cannot fill the need you have your request will go on the wish list.

Remember to look on the website for opportunities to apply for Mini Grants, given every November, and ACVREP reimbursement as members of CAER! Find information daily at <http://co.aerbvi.org/>

Grants were awarded in November for a variety of requests. Amber Kahn, Kaitlin Lombardi, Brandon Mapes, Ann Cunningham and Caitlin Bleything were the recipients of the mini-grants.



Upcoming Board Meetings:

- December 21, 2017- Optional meet and greet at The BOB is located at 3445 S. Broadway, Englewood, CO 80113. This is a Beer Brewery and Coffee House.
- January 18, 2018
- February 15, 2018
- March 15, 2018
- April 19, 2018
- May- TBD for Banquet/meeting, details to come as it gets closer

We plan on having CAER Board Meetings the 3rd Thursday of every month starting at 5:30 pm. Location will be at Colorado Center for the Blind, 2233 W. Shepperd Avenue, Littleton, CO 80120, unless otherwise indicated. If you would like to attend, or plan on attending, please email one of us on the list below to see where and when the meeting will be taking place. Due to schedules, meetings may need to be rescheduled or done by teleconference. If you would like to attend by teleconference, reach out to a board member and they can give you details on call in information as well. Look for updated information each month.

Fundraisers:

- THE BOB (The Brew On Broadway) “Pints For A Purpose” - March 5, 2018, From 11:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. They will donate \$1.00/pint and \$.50/coffee sold that day to CAER. The BOB is located at 3445 S. Broadway, Englewood, CO 80113.
- Applewood Plumbing Heater & Electric Caring Community Giveaway: Each month they give \$1,000 to a local charity or nonprofit... nominated by YOU! Go onto the following website to register:
<https://www.applewoodfixit.com/12in12/>

Contact Information: Please contact CAER Board Members by email if you have any questions or suggestions for the board. The board can be emailed at caerboard@gmail.com or individually as listed below.

Website: <http://co.aerbvi.org/>

CAER Board Contacts:

President: Brent Batron bbatron@cocenter.org

Board Members:

Heather Solberg hwparsons@hotmail.com

Trina Boyd-Pratt trinaboyd@comcast.net

Nancy Cozart ncozart@lps.k12.co.us

Sally Burch Sally.burch@bvsd.org

Ann Cunningham acunningham@cocenter.org

Michelle Robinson blindsign@yahoo.com

Amber Rundle Kahn amber_rundlekahn@engschools.net

If you have information that you would like added, please email Heather Solberg at caerboard@gmail.com

Colorado Chapter of Parents of Blind Children (Lori Mattick)

There were a few families at the Colorado NFB Conference. There appears to be a need to find more support mechanisms for families.

Discussion Item:

- *What can we do support families coming together?* There are activities around the state with parents being offered braille instruction or activities through the Colorado Center for the Blind. There is a range of parent involvement / requests for activities across school districts. Tanni shared about two recent parent events in other states that she was involved with – the first was a Parent Conference held in UT and the other was a 0-5 Emergent Literacy Weekend for families in Texas. Tanni can investigate the costs. It also may be collaboration with CSDB. We need to look at budget.

Colorado Center for the Blind Youth Programs (Dan Burke)

This Saturday, December 16, is our FAST Holiday Party, held in conjunction with the NFB of Denver Chapter. Families are invited and Santa will be on hand with toys for the kids.

We will be participating in the Try Blind Hockey event on January 17, starting at noon at the Pepsi Center. Colorado Avalanche players will be there to work with aspiring blind hockey players.

CSDB Mentoring starts in January. Our FAST Saturdays will become FAST (Fun Activities and Skills Training) Friday evenings starting at 6:30 p.m. We're pleased to again host the Braille Challenge for Denver, which will be held on January 25. Shark Dissection, which we were unable to schedule in the fall, will be on February 16, 2018 at the Colorado Center for the Blind.

Here's the calendar through June:

12/20 Metro Vision Teachers Cooking Project from 12:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Events with CSDB

January 25	Braille Challenge at CCB
- January 29	CSDB mentoring – relationships at CSDB
- February 26	CSDB mentoring – blind parenting at CSDB
- March 19	CSDB mentoring –Careers at CSDB
- April 30	CSDB mentoring – Shopping and Cooking at CSDB
- May 29	CSDB mentoring – Fitness & Shopping at CSDB (mostly led by Jessica)

FAST dates – moving to Friday

- January 12	Circuits and drawing
- February 16	Shark dissection
- March 9	Astronomy
- April 13	Career Fair
- May 11	Bat Finding
- June 8 - August 3	HS/CP program
- June 11 -29	MS program



Colorado Instructional Material Center (Jim Olson)

Book orders for next year are due April 1, 2018. This new date is being implemented for the first time this fiscal year so please work with your curriculum departments to plan accordingly.

The final release of “Braille Formats, 2016” is now available on the BANA website: The 2016 revision of *Braille Formats: Principles of Print-to-Braille Transcription* aligns BANA’s braille formatting guidelines with Unified English Braille (UEB). Earlier this year, BANA posted a pre-publication version and offered an open comment period for users to provide input. BANA has incorporated this feedback and now provides this final publication on the BANA website. We have also posted a change log that lists critical changes made to the Pre-Publication version. Links are provided below.

Braille Formats: Principles of Print-to-Braille Transcription, 2016 is available in three accessible electronic versions: BRF, enhanced PDF, and online HTML. Hard copy print and braille will be available at a later date from the American Printing House for the Blind (APH).

BANA is grateful to its Braille Formats Committee for their diligent work in revising BANA’s formatting guidelines to align with UEB. We especially thank Cindi Laurent, Formats Committee Chair, and Clovernook’s Saul Garza, Board Liaison to the Formats Committee, for their expertise in braille transcription, which made this revision possible, and for their tenacity in creating the BRF files.

We also owe a huge debt of gratitude to BANA Publications Committee members Susan Christensen, Sandy Smith, and Ruth Rozen for their immense skill and tireless work in creating the PDF and HTML versions of *Braille Formats, 2016*, and for assuring accessibility of its content.

Available versions:

- *BRF download:* BRF (zipped) and BRF (zipped individual BRF files)
- *PDF download:* individual PDF files (zipped), single PDF file (zipped), enhanced PDF portfolio (zipped) is a collection of individual files in a single PDF container. The portfolio is useful for those who want the files packaged together. Those who use screen readers will likely find the individual files easier to use.
- *Online: HTML version:* This online version includes a customized search function specific to the online files. The HTML version is not formatted for printing.
- *Change Log for Braille Formats 2016:* The Change Log provides a list of the critical changes made to the Pre-Publication version. PDF file, Excel file available.

The Federal Quota count is the first Monday in January annually. This year’s count is on Monday, January 1, 2018. The biggest change for this year’s count is the additional requirement of signed parent permission forms. As far as we know, this will be a one-time requirement, and there will not be an annual requirement to obtain signatures.

The CIMC does not provide administrative units with tractor feed (continuous feed) braille paper for use with braille embossers. Several years ago, Directors of Special Education agreed to purchase continuous feed paper for use in their own administrative units (AUs). The CIMC shipped every AU in the state a 2-year supply of paper based on their average paper orders. An explanation of this new procedure was disseminated via email, the CDE newsletter, and posted to the CIMC website. Recently, several districts have been inquiring about ordering paper. Please contact the CIMC, if you need additional assistance of available braille paper vendors.

From the December 2017 APH News: On January 23, 2018, the American Printing House for the Blind will celebrate 160 years of being in business. To celebrate this significant milestone, APH will host a community-wide Open House on Tuesday, January 23. During the day's festivities, they will kick off a National Writing Contest for students and adults who are visually impaired and the professionals who work with them every day. The deadline to submit work for this contest will be June 1, 2018, and they will celebrate the winning essays in each age group at APH's 160th Anniversary Banquet to be held on October 5, 2018 during our Annual Meeting. Cash prizes will be offered for first, second, and third place winners.

New APH Products:

- Color-by-Texture CIRCUS Coloring Pages 1-03333-00, \$27.00
- AnimalWatch Vi Suite (for iPad). Free-of-Charge, Visit <https://awvis.aphtech.org/>
- An accessible app

BrailleBlaster™ Question and Answer Day Coming from APH and AFB. BrailleBlaster™ software is a revolutionary new tool for braille transcribers who need to produce high-quality braille material quickly and efficiently. BrailleBlaster™ is not just for transcribers. This advanced yet easy-to-use braille translation program is available to parents, students, and teachers – and it is free of cost! For more information, go to www.brailleblaster.org

CSDB – School for the Blind (Jamie Lugo)

Student News and Opportunities: On October 5th, 10th - 12th grade students attend the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Resource Expo. The upper elementary and supported secondary students worked together to create their very own comic book characters. They created an adventure and costume to match their characters. They dressed up as their comic book character and created comic books panes and stories during literacy class as their final project.

The elementary geography students learned about Colorado geography and map-making. They all participated in an in-class competition called "Map Masters." The secondary classes just finished up a unit learning about natural disasters. Students discussed ways to help victims of tragedy and how to prepare for common emergencies in Colorado. Two seniors are enrolled in an online Hadley Braille Music class.

The Science classes are performed sheep pluck dissections (lungs, trachea, and heart) to study the respiratory system. Our Friday Workshop Theme for the months of September and October was Orientation and Mobility. Students participated in various activities to include a cardinal directions scavenger hunt, O&M bloopers, and obstacle courses under blindfolds or simulators. Our Friday Workshop Theme for the months of November and December is Social Skills. We hosted our 2nd Annual Lunch in the Dark on December 1st. A handful of students participated in the Veterans 5K with Achilles Running Club and USABA on November 11th. Students from CSDB attended the Low Vision Clinic on November 30th. Two of the student leaders from the junior class attended CASB to represent CSDB.

Campus Events: CSDB Celebrated White Cane Day at Acacia Park in Colorado Springs on October 13th with speeches, music from the Bulldog Band, a picnic lunch, and yard games. The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado (NFBCO) and The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind hosted a screening of “Do You Dream in Color?” at the Stargazers Theatre on October 18th. CSDB hosted the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired during our Homecoming weekend, October 20th - 22nd.

Staff News: Two staff members attended the Getting in Touch Literacy in New Orleans.

Parent News: Parent Braille Classes will be starting up 2nd semester on Tuesday nights from 5:30—6:30 p.m. 9 sessions beginning January 23rd and ending March 20th.

CSDB Outreach Services (Sara Noel)

We held our annual Fall Festival on October 29, 2017. Six families attended and participated in art, music and movement activities. CSDB staff led the activities from CSDB and the parents remarked that they loved getting to talk to the teachers and learn about new ways to engage their children.

We held the Southern Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic on Thursday November 30th and Friday, December 1st. The location of the clinic was Low Vision Services of Southern Colorado. Nine students received evaluations from: CSDB – 4 appointments, Mount Evans BOCES (Bailey) – 1 appointment, El Paso County District 8 (Fountain Fort Carson) -3 appointments, El Paso County District 12 (Cheyenne Mountain) – 1 appointment.

Colorado Braille Challenge-Denver Metro will be held at the Colorado Center for the Blind on January 25, 2018.

Braille Challenge volunteers needed: Particularly Library of Congress certified braille transcribers for the Scoring Room for January 30th– contact Debbie Haberkorn, dhaberkorn@csdb.org or call (719) 578-2197.

University of Northern Colorado – VI Program (Paula Conroy)

Congratulations to our five December graduates from the Visual Impairment Specialist program. Two of these graduates are from Colorado: Erin Kerr and Elise Darrow. They will both be completing their O&M coursework over the next year. Cathy Smyth graduated with her doctorate this semester as well. This is quite an accomplishment and we are all very proud of her.

We are in the midst of preparing for another reaccreditation review through CDE and the Higher Learning Commission. This process will take place in 2018 with deadlines throughout the upcoming year. Our programs at UNC continue to have healthy enrollment. We have accepted our students for the first year of the new Personnel Preparation grant, which focuses on behavior. These students will take supplemental coursework in behavior intervention techniques for students with visual impairment. This includes students diagnosed with autism and those without an autism diagnoses. In our research we have found that behavior intervention is a real area need in our field.

The new grant award is in progress. The slate is currently full for this first cohort. This includes people from out of state, as well as Colorado. The grant offers some financial supplement to the fiscal requirements of the program. Candidates will also have personal financial requirements.

Colorado Department of Education (Tanni Anthony)

Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project: We are in the final 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 deaf-blind 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 Herrera coordinate the grant project. We have three Technical Assistance Specialists. Callie Robinson has been hired to do specific work on the topic of interveners. She will be building networking opportunities for our existing interveners and information materials on the role of the interveners. Callie joins Kathryn Daniels and Wendy Stoltman as Technical Assistance (TA) Specialists for the project. Kathryn and Wendy provide onsite child-specific consultation and customized training to the educational teams of the children with deaf-blindness. Shannon Cannizzaro is our Family Specialist. To request FREE technical assistance, please contact Gina Herrera at (303) 866-6681 or Herrera_g@cde.state.co.us

Annual Deaf-Blind Census: The December 1, 2017 Census forms were mailed to agency and school district contract personnel by mid-November and are due back into CDE by January 15, 2018. Thank you in advance for helping to keep our census data up-to-date. A child can be registered at any time in the school year. If you work with a learner with both vision and hearing loss, please be sure to work with Tanni to register the child. 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 dates, topic, and presenter(s) have not yet been determined.

Annual CDE O&M Seminar: The 2017 CDE O&M Seminar will be held on May 4-5, 2018. Dr. Wendy Sapp will train on O&M for learners with deaf-blindness and other disabilities on Friday, May 4th Susan Chandler will train on balance / body work on Friday, May 5th. The training will be held at the Double Tree Hotel on Quebec Street in Denver. Tanni will be sending out the flyer and registration information by mid-February.

CDE Low Vision Evaluation Clinics: Three clinics have happened thus far in the school year with favorable results. They have been held in the Western, Northern, and Southern regions. The Metro Low Vision Clinic is scheduled for February. There will also be one additional day clinic in the Southern Region. We thank our Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Team of Dr. Tom Theune, Wendy Stoltman, Jim Olson, and Debbie Haberkorn.

Recruitment and Retention: We have a 1 FTE opening in Thompson School District, two full time TVI/COMS openings in Greeley, a full time opening in Cherry Creek, and possible full time TVI/COMS opening in Pikes Peak BOCES. We continue have work to do to be proactive with existing and anticipated openings across the state. CSDB just filled a newly vacant position with TVI Julie Swegle. Fort Collins filled a TVI position with TVI Vicki Chinski. Denver Public Schools has hired Jill Bookwalter and Morgan Fitzpatrick as new TVIs to their crew. It is so exciting to see four new TVIs employed by Colorado school districts!

Listservs: The CDE ESSU maintains three separate listservs specific to personnel working in BVI programs in Colorado school districts. One is specific to Colorado TVIs and COMSs. The second one is specific to Colorado brailists. The third is specific to Colorado TVIs and brailists. It is important to remind all users of these listservs that personally identifiable information (PII) on students and parents should never be posted in any listserv messages. If anyone has questions about the listservs, please be in touch with Tanni.

Parent Database: We currently have about 210 parents registered on the CDE Parent Database. This is out of over 1,214 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 our Colorado early intervention or 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 to be proactive with getting families registered on the database. This is a voluntary process – so families need to complete and sign their registration forms.

0-5 Vision Screening Committee: The CDE is updated its *0-5 Vision Screening Guidelines*. Committee members include Tanni Anthony, Paula Landry, and Wendy Stoltman from our TVI community.

Braille Competency: The CDE Braille Committee just did an item analysis review of the multiple choice test portion of the Colorado Braille Competency Test. The review targeted items that have a higher-than-expected error frequency rate. No question was found to be incorrect, but three small adjustments were made to the design of the question or the provided answer slates. The committee is also in the process of finalizing a Practice UEB Test that will be posted on the CDE website.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Parent Need Survey

The Vision Coalition has a strong commitment to provide support opportunities for Colorado families with a child with visual impairment, including blindness. In this capacity, it is critical to glean the needs of families to the extent possible on a statewide basis. A Parent Needs Survey was disseminated to families of children with visual impairment, including blindness in 2008. That survey was mailed to parents who receive the *Keeping in Touch* newsletter through CDE, as well as personal dissemination of the survey to parents by TVIs. That survey was reviewed and suggestions were made for updated content. Assignment: Tanni will make the needed adjustments and return the next draft iteration to the Vision Coalition members by January 15th. The finalized survey will be mailed to families receiving the KIT newsletter in hard copy format. Families will also have the option of completing the survey electronically via Survey Monkey. TVIs will also be asked to share the survey / survey link with families.

Eye Report Form

Julie has updated the example state Eye Report Form. Our goal is a reasonably standard Eye Report Form for TVIs to use across the state, rather than each TVI developing their own. The one we finalize will be a template that people can customize (if this is truly needed beyond contact information). Assignment: Tanni will send to the TVIs for their recommendations for changes. The deadline for feedback will be January 15, 2018. Assignment: Paula Landry will edit specific to the 0-2 populations and then we will solicit feedback from A Shared Vision, Anchor Center, Developmental Pathways, and CSDB Infant/Toddler Program.

Eligibility for Visual impairment, Including Blindness

Tanni will be presenting the OSEP Memo specific to the eligibility category of Visual Impairment, Including Blindness with the State Director Leadership Team (SDLT) on December 14th. The SDLT is a composite group of special education directors who represent their geographical representation. A goal is to seek support to create a small stakeholder group to make recommendations about revising the ECEA criteria of this eligibility category.

There was considerable discussion about the needs of students with oculomotor-based visual problems. Assignment: It is suggested that we work with the optometric community to learn more about accommodations specific to poor binocularity, convergence insufficiency, etc.

Resource Allocation Document (Amber Rundle Kahn)

Amber shared that the workgroup has completed each section of the document. It moved from an original of six sessions to now 10 sections. The former medical section has been deleted and the ECC section on Sensory Efficiency was not included. There will be language that details the need for full-bodied sensory efficiency assessment with attention to programmatic implications. The latter can be also addressed in the needs section specific to the results of the Learning Media Assessment. This document is not used to determine eligibility, but after eligibility is determined. This document is not intended to determine O&M service needs. It also is recommended that the Vision Services Severity Rating Scale for Students with Additional Disabilities from the Michigan Department of Education supplement the proposed CDE Guidelines for a Caseload Formula tool further for learners with VI and additional disabilities.

Assignment: Amber and crew will complete the final tweaks on the document. It will then go out for a quick field review before a deliberate pilot. Tanni will also bring the document to the SDLT for their input and review. Amber, Nancy, and Tanni will review the *Vision Services Severity Rating Scale for Students with Additional Disabilities* from the Michigan Department of Education.

Retention and Recruitment

It is critical that Colorado develop a strong strategic plan for retention and recruitment of its VI-specific trained workforce. We are entering a phase ahead of significant retirements as many TVIs and COMSs prepare to leave the field after a career of service. We also need to be ready for unexpected vacancies as personnel leave the state or even the field. Tanni has asked our state to let her know of expected vacancies for this next school year, in addition to the currently unfilled positions. At this point in time, it is expected that there may be up to 10 vacancies across our state.

A key strategy will be an organized recruitment effort. Key factors include:

- Proactive recruitment of personnel training programs in the winter/ spring of the school year
- Specific recruitment target of personnel with BA degrees
- Specific recruitment target of personnel who have had experiences with learners with visual impairment, including blindness and/or significant support needs and/or the fields of TVI / COMS

Tanni and Paula Conroy have met twice with Poudre School District special education leadership and district Human Resources on the topic of recruitment and retention. Information from these meetings, as well as the VC discussion have results in the following proposed next steps:

Steps for Recruitment

- Anticipate vacancies – be in the know of expected retirements
- Develop recruitment materials such as a “recruitment module” to use for presentations
- Be deliberate with recruitment efforts of both undergraduate and MA level educators
 - ⇒ Provide experience with students with visual impairments, including learners with additional disabilities
 - ⇒ Provide experience with TVIs and/or COMS
- Deliberately appeal to undergraduates
 - ✓ Community Colleges (with a prepared module)
 - ✓ Career Center
 - ✓ Extended Campus - UNC
 - ✓ Finding undergrads to come to VI specific events

- Explore tuition reimbursement / incentive pay through CDE ESSU
- Explore funding sources such as the Lions Club to sponsor graduate training
- Work with HR to:
 - ✓ Honor years of teaching experience – do not cap an expert teaching of veteran personnel
 - ✓ Hire personnel on temporary authorizations
 - ✓ Increase salary of personnel who are dual certified as TVIs / COMs
- Utilize mentor supports for newly hired personnel
- Be a host site for a practicum or intern student (both in and out of state)
- Contact university programs in January – detailing Colorado licensure requirements

Steps for Retention

- Work with HR to:
 - ✓ Honor years of teaching experience – do not cap an expert teaching of veteran personnel
 - ✓ Increase salary of personnel who are dual certified as TVIs / COMs
- Define the role of the TVI for administrators
- Define the role of the COMS for administrators
- Identify reasonable caseload expectations
- Provide evaluation support documents to administrators
- Hire braillists to support the braille production needs of the students.
- Understand the abilities and limitations of the role of a braillist and a VI paraprofessional
- Allow opportunities for field-specific training, networking, and support
- Consider stipends to support personnel to have an addition credential such as COMS
- Utilize mentor support for new personnel.

Assignment: Tanni will be working with Special Education Directors in districts with current / expected vacancies on early advertisement, search for qualified candidates for the VI MA at UNC. Julie H., Julie K., and Paula will look at the existing AER templates specific to the role of a TVI and the role of a COMS to amend for millennial population. Tanni will start of Recruitment PPT that could be used for presentations at regional Community Colleges.

Next Meeting Date:

Thursday, April 5, 2018 – Talking Book Library





Colorado Association for Education and Rehabilitation
of the Blind and Visually Impaired

CAER IS FOR YOU!

As professionals who serve the community of individuals who are blind/visually impaired, we have an active Colorado chapter of our national AER professional organization. Within our specialized field, there are a number of ways to access continuing education, network with peers and learn to serve the needs of our clients and students more effectively. We take pride that CAER is comprised of members from school district administration units, the Department Veterans' Affairs, CO Center for the Blind, Vocational Rehabilitation and community members with an interest in vision loss.

Benefits of Membership:

- Professional Development & Support (Colorado members receive reduced rates to CAER sponsored events!)
- Financial support (See Mini-grants and ACVREP reimbursements)
- CAER Newsletters
- Adaptive donations to us – and then returned to the community through you
- Advocacy at local and national levels

2017-18 Board Members:

- **President:** Brent Batron
- **President:** Elect: Nancy Cozart Past-President: David Gooldy
- **Treasurer:** Trina Boyd-Pratt
- **Secretary:** Nancy Cozart
- **At Large Members:** Ann Cunningham, Sally Burch, Michelle Robinson, Amber Rundle-Kahn, Heather Solberg

Website: <http://co.aerbvi.org/>

Contact CAER at: caerboard@gmail.com

CAER News

The Colorado Board is always looking for new members. They consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, and 2 board members at large. Brent Batron is the current President, this is his last year. Please consider getting involved and help steer our professional organization. As a bonus, you are entitled to 50 ACVREP credits for two years of service on the board! We meet approximately eight times a year and calling in is an option, so don't think you must attend in person to be on the board. We would like to entice professionals in the outlying areas such as Western Slope and Southern Colorado to become involved. If you have projects or educational ideas you would like to tackle, we are the answer! For more information contact Heather Solberg at Heather.Solberg@va.gov



TRANSITION INFORMATION

THE GRADUATION EFFECT

This website publishes the economic impact data for all 50 states and 150 metro areas. As we are talking about the importance and focus on increasing graduation rates for students in Colorado, this type of data will be useful in engaging community and business leaders. Click on the link for more information. <http://impact.all4ed.org/>



“Education for Life” for Colorado Residents

Application Deadline: March 1, 2018

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

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

A Guide to Visual Disabilities: How Colleges help Visually Impaired Succeed

Go to this webpage to learn more about a variety of resources for students who are college-bound. There is information about scholarships, technology resources, tips for effective and successful college learning. The webpage is: <https://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/colleges-helping-visually-impaired-students/>

KEEPING IN TOUCH NEWSLETTER POSTED ELECTRONICALLY

Each edition of the *Keeping in Touch Newsletter* is posted on line at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Vision_Activities

Since there are so many links in each newsletter, this electronic version will give you



TRANSITION INFORMATION

Scholarship Information

2018 American Council for the Blind Scholarships

The American Council of the Blind has a great opportunity for students who are legally blind to earn a scholarship, whether you are going to a technical college, an entering freshman, undergraduate or a graduate student. The 2018 scholarship application is now open! To learn more, visit: <http://acb.org/scholarship>

2018 American Foundation for the Blind Scholarships

- **The Rudolph Dillman Memorial Scholarship:** Four scholarships of \$2,500 each to undergraduates or graduates who are studying full-time in the field of rehabilitation or education of persons who are blind and/or visually impaired.
- **The Paul and Ellen Ruckes Scholarship:** Two scholarships of \$2,000 each to a full-time undergraduate or graduate student in the field of engineering or in computer, physical, or life sciences.
- **The R.L. Gillette, Gladys C. Anderson, and Karen D. Carsel Memorial Scholarship:** One scholarship of \$3,500 given to a female undergraduate student studying music. In addition to the general requirements, applicants must submit a music performance in a digital audio format such as MP3, WAV, or OGG. Performances should be sent directly in a digital format to the e-mail address "info@afb.net". When submitting your sample, please use the subject "AFB Scholarship Musical Performance Submission."
- **The Delta Gamma Foundation Florence Margaret Harvey Memorial Scholarship:** One scholarship of \$1,000 to an undergraduate or graduate student in the field of rehabilitation or education of persons who are blind or visually impaired

For more information, please go to: <https://www.afb.org/info/afb-2018-scholarship-application/5>

NFB Kenneth Jernigan Scholarship

The American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults annually sponsors the largest scholarship granted in the United States to a legally blind person*. Named the Kenneth Jernigan Scholarship, it honors the man who changed perceptions regarding the capabilities of the blind in this country and throughout the world. Dr. Jernigan, who was active in affairs of the blind for over half a century, taught that with proper training in the skills of blindness and a proper attitude toward blindness, any blind person can be as successful as a similarly situated sighted person. Finally, Dr. Jernigan taught that the real barrier to success as a blind person is the public's misconceptions concerning blindness, often shared and even affirmed by the blind themselves.

The Kenneth Jernigan Scholarship is given annually to a legally blind student who exemplifies the fruits of Dr. Jernigan's teachings. The Kenneth Jernigan Scholarship is valued at \$12,000.

Applications for this scholarship are available for five months, from November 1 to March 31 of the following year. To obtain an application and read the directions to know how to apply for the \$12,000 Kenneth Jernigan Scholarship, go to www.nfb.org/scholarships



TRANSITION INFORMATION

**COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS
& SUCCESS Center**
at American Institutes for Research ■

Promoting College and Career Readiness for Students With Disabilities!

As states and districts move toward better alignment of education and workforce needs, it is important that all students, including students with disabilities, have access to the same education and career opportunities. Students with disabilities need meaningful opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies to complete high school, succeed in postsecondary education, and find employment that leads to independence, self-sufficiency, and a living-wage career. States can leverage the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) to support college and career readiness for students with disabilities by developing and supporting meaningful career pathways, offering personalized and competency-based learning, and providing greater access to a well-rounded education. The College and Career Readiness and Success Center is pleased to share two new resources highlighting strategies to promote college and career readiness for students with disabilities.



How ESSA and IDEA Can Support College and Career Readiness for Students With Disabilities | January 2018

ESSA provides states with the opportunity to support college and career readiness for all students, including students with disabilities. This brief explores how states can leverage ESSA and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to promote college and career readiness for students with disabilities. It provides guidance to state leaders on the connections between ESSA and IDEA. It explains how to better support college and career readiness for students with disabilities through high expectations and access to the general curriculum, a well-rounded education, career pathways and transition planning, personalized and competency-based learning, subgroup accountability, and alignment across policies and programs. For more information click on the link.

https://ccrcenter.org/sites/default/files/ESSA-IDEA_CollegeCareerReadiness.pdf



Why Is Career and Technical Education Important for Employment Success for Students With Disabilities? | January 2018

Persons with a disability are less likely to graduate on time, attend college, or be employed than individuals without a disability. This college and career readiness gap between students with and their peers without a disability is a persistent challenge in states throughout the nation. This infographic highlights how participation and concentration in career and technical education programs can help improve readiness and success in college and careers for students with disabilities. For more information click on the link.

https://ccrcenter.org/sites/default/files/CTE_SW_D_Infographic.pdf

Vision Rehabilitation Services



iSightRehab

- ◆ Free Consultation
- ◆ Resources and Referrals
- ◆ 20+ Years of Experience
- ◆ ASL Skills/Deaf-Blind Instruction

Tim Richard, M.A., M.S.

Certified Assistive Technology Instructional Specialist, (CATIS)
Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist, (COMS), M.A.
Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (VRT), M.S.



Assistive Technology

iPhone / Droid
Adaptive Typing
Computer Classes
Screen Magnifiers
Screen Readers
OCR Programs
and More...



Vision Rehabilitation Therapy

Personal
Management
Adaptive
Communication
Daily Living Skills
Adaptive Cooking
and More...

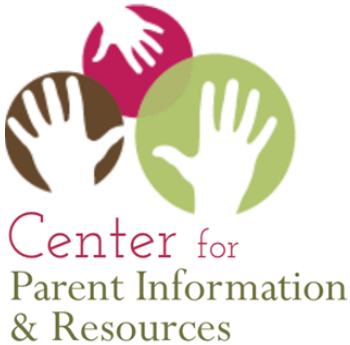


Orientation & Mobility

White Cane
Training
Alternative
Transportation
Bus Travel Skills
Street Crossings
and More...

719-229-8000 / timrichard@isightrehab.com
www.iSightRehab.com

just for PARENTS



Center for Parent Information and Resources

This website was produced under U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs No. H328R130014. It has links to Resources and Parent TA Centers.

Check it out at: <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/>

There is a specific webpage for Visual Impairment, Including Blindness.

Go to: <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/visualimpairment/>

2017 - 2018 Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conferences

Decades of research show that the participation of families in their child's education, through specific coordinating between home and school, results in improved outcomes (Jeynes, 2012). PEP Conferences are designed to promote family and school partnerships that are essential in supporting students with disabilities and their families in schools and the community. PEP brings parents and professionals together by sharing ideas, discussing concerns, celebrating successes and obtaining information related to parenting, educating and partnering to support student learning.

PEP Conferences are offered at no cost to attendees.

2017 - 2018 PEP Dates:

February 22 - 24, 2018 - Colorado Springs, CO

April 26 - 28, 2018 - Mt. Crested Butte, CO

To learn more about PEP Conferences and to register, please visit: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/PEP.asp>

Supporting Children by Improving Family Outcomes

This 13-minute video describes the importance of supporting families, collecting data on family outcomes, and using the data to improve the program. The video highlights how three families who received early intervention benefited from support to their family. From the DaSy Center, the ECTA Center, and collaborating partners.

To watch the video, go to: <http://dasycenter.org/supporting-children-by-improving-family-outcomes/>

National Organization of Parents of Blind Children

The National Organization of Parents of Blind Children (NOPBC) is a national membership organization of parents and friends of blind children reaching out to each other to give vital support, encouragement, and information. They have over 3,000 members in all 50 states and divisions or parent contacts in about 30 states plus Puerto Rico.

For more information: <https://nfb.org/Parents-and-Teachers-of-Blind-Children>

just for PARENTS

Native America Parent Technical Assistance Center New Guide

NAPTAC begins the New Year with a new publication, *Reaching Native Youth with Disabilities*. It's a comprehensive resource guide that explores how Parent Centers can plan and conduct outreach to American Indian and Alaska Native youth with disabilities. The guide supports Parent Centers in addressing the federal priority of connecting directly with youth who have disabilities and increasing their capacity to be effective self-advocates. A wide array of resources unique to Native youth with disabilities is now available to you in this new guide.

For more information and to access the guide, go to:

<http://naptac.org/resources/for-parent-centers/reaching-native-youth/>



colorado connections

- ◆ After working with DVR for more than 10 years, **Tim Richard** left the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Services this year to start his own business, iSight Rehab. With the changes in the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, those who are not planning on going to work are no longer eligible for DVR services. This leaves a large hole in vision rehabilitation services for these individuals who are blind or visually impaired and are not planning on employment. One of Tim's long-term goals will be to develop funding and create services for these adults and seniors who no longer have access to DVR services. Congrats to Tim on this next step to provide this service in Colorado.
- ◆ Good for **Karen Jamison** of the Anchor Center for Blind Children. Karen successfully completed the CVI Endorsement Program through Perkins School for the Blind.
- ◆ **Tanni Anthony** recently contributed to the November-December *Journal of Blindness & Visual Impairment* with a commentary entitled *Partnering with Parents and Families to Facilitate the Learning of Children with Visual impairments*. A special thanks to **Paula Landry** and **Stefanie Hamilton** for their conversational support to the commentary.
- ◆ Hats off to **Karyn Pocernich** who earned her CDE Certificate of Braille Competency. Karyn became interested in the Unified English Braille Code from a DPS TVI colleague and took it upon herself to learn it herself! She is hopeful to take this new knowledge and skillset and work as a brailist. Hats off to both **Erin Noe**, of Mesa Valley School District and **Jayme Cusimano** from CSDB Outreach for earning their CDE Certificates of Braille Competency! Hats off also to **Sherry Bainbridge** for earning her renewal certificate! Good for **Abby Horner**, **Danielle Burden**, **Jeff Hadala**, and **Erin Keller** for completing braille renewal modules! Thanks to proctors **Brenda Shepard**, **Nancy Cozart**, **Chris Maynard**, and **Julie Wetzstein**.



colorado connections

- ◆ Congratulations to **Erin Eligen Kerr** of Aurora School District and **Will Reynolds** of Westminster School District for earning their Masters Degree Special Education: Visual Impairment!
- ◆ Hats off to the following Colorado people who attended and presented at the December 2017 Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference held in New Orleans: **Paula Conroy, Silvia Correa-Torres, Amber Rundle, and Tara Brown-Oglivie**. The four presented on *Voices from the Field: Literacy Skills Needed to Access Disability Services for College*. Amber and Paula also presented on the topic of *Managing Behavior in Braille Literacy Instruction*. Also in attendance making Colorado proud were: **Deb Andrews, Diane Fitzkee, Amy Gunning, Judy Mumford, Sara Noel, Melissa Shular, and Julie Vinikoor**.
- ◆ Congratulations to **Dr. Catherine Smyth** who was the recipient of a Graduate Dean's Citation Award at her recent graduation from UNC.
- ◆ We are pleased to share that **Taryn Galow** is now employed with Denver Public Schools as one of their braillists. Glad to see her talents put to great use!
- ◆ **Jill Bookwalter** has been hired on as a TVI for DPS. She shared that she is excited to work with the vision team and other providers. Jill will be graduating this summer and is very excited about that! She also plans on completing her O&M certification this year. Jill has been a stay-at-home mom for the last 20 years, so this is a big change for her. She has four kids, the oldest is 20, the youngest is 12. Jill loves spending time with her family and enjoys any outdoor activities, reading, baking, and crafts.
- ◆ **Morgan Fitzpatrick** is in her fifth year in the field of special education and she notes that she is thrilled to be serving as a TVI for Denver Public School District. She has worked with students with moderate to severe autism, as an intervener with children with deaf-blindness, and most recently, as a teaching assistant at Anchor Center for Blind Children. Morgan will be graduating from UNC in Spring 2019 and plans on pursuing my Orientation and Mobility certification shortly after. In her free time, she enjoys snowboarding, running, and camping.
- ◆ We are CEC Proud! **Dr. Silvia Correa Torres** and **Dr. Sandy Bowen** from UNC shared the results of their study on the needs of personnel serving students who are deafblind at the recent Council of Exceptional Children Conference held in Tampa, Florida. Also **Genevieve Francoeur Anderson, Dr. Silvia Correa Torres, and Lane McKittrick** presented and represented UNC well. Gena and Silvia gave a presentation on *Determining Educational Services for Students who are Deaf-Blind: Insights from the Field*.



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COLORADO
Department of Education

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