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KEEPING IN TOUCH!

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

A Profession to Cherish, A Profession to Behold!

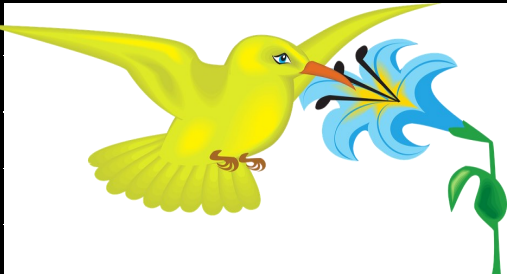
By Tanni Anthony

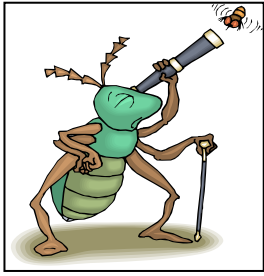
The definition of *profession* according to one web source is, “a paid occupation, especially one that involves prolonged training and a formal qualification.” Another definition by online Merriam-Webster adds a bit more clarity: “A calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation ... and ... “the whole body of persons engaged in a calling.” Thus, is the profession of being a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI) and/or an orientation and mobility specialist (COMS).

It is true that we are a paid occupation and one involving extensive training and credentialing. We are paid on local salary schedules and in the smiles and outcomes of our students. As for training, Colorado TVIs must complete a comprehensive university training program and then must demonstrate braille competency within their first year of employment. Colorado COMS also complete a rigorous university training program and then must pass a test to be nationally ACVREP certified. Now combine the two sets of training and credentialing requirements, as well over half of our TVIs are also COMS! Professional training continues over the course of a career lifespan with the many ongoing updates to our profession. New technology, a new braille code, new assessments, improved strategies, a better understanding of brain-based visual impairment, all on top of continual changes of academic learning standards and other general education initiatives.

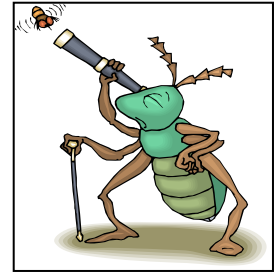
There are close to 100 TVIs and 55 COMSs working currently in Colorado early intervention programs and school districts. Some administrative units have one person to represent our profession, some have dyads, and some have up to six teammates. We are a small, but mighty body of persons engaged in a true calling that came to the field mostly because for love of children, a love of teaching, and the lure of a profession that brings joy and challenge. Our profession also brings amazing colleagues. This is where we shine—we are a force, a community, and a family. Truly a profession to cherish, a profession to behold! Thankful to and for each of you!

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LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

By Debbie Haberkorn

The Metro Region Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic was held February 22-24th at the AMES Facility in Littleton, Colorado. Thirteen students from seven administrative units (Adams County District 50, Adams/Arapahoe County District 28J, Arapahoe County District 5, Arapahoe County District 6, Denver County District 1, Douglas County, and Jefferson County) received evaluations. Thirteen parents and eleven TVIs (Will Reynolds, Janet Anderson, Erin Kerr, Bryan Kugler, Jeannie Lei, Nancy Knight, Jill Bookwalter, Elsa D'Angelo, Charlotte Javier, Anitha Muthukumaran, and Kari Finholt) attended the evaluation with their students.

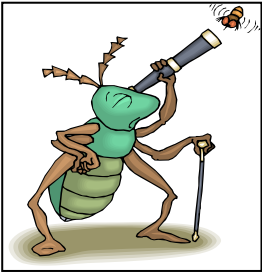
The Low Vision Evaluation Clinic team would like to thank AMES Center for allowing us to utilize their wonderful facility. The team would like to express our gratitude to Nancy Knight. Nancy does a phenomenal job in her role as Regional Coordinator for the Metro Clinic. Thank you to all the TVIs and parents who brought students.

Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

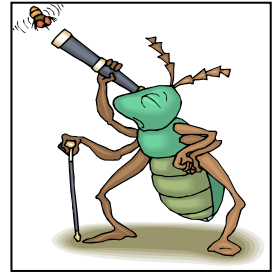
By Debbie Haberkorn

The Southern Region Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic was held April 6, 2018 at Low Vision Services of Southern Colorado in Colorado Springs. Four students from three Administrative Units (El Paso County District 11, San Juan BOCES and South Central BOCES) received evaluations. Four parents and four TVIs (Deb Andrews, Judy Mumford, Karen Pacheco, and Kathy Gallina) attended the evaluation with their students. The Low Vision Evaluation Clinic team would like to thank all the TVIs and parents for bringing their students.

**THANK YOU ALL WHO PARTICIPATED IN OUR
REGIONAL LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINICS THIS SCHOOL YEAR!**



LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



Thank You for a Wonderful Two Decades!

* Colorado just completed its 20th year of regional low vision evaluations thanks to CDE funding
 * (through federal IDEA set aside funds), a partnership with CSDB, the contributions of our Low Vision
 * Evaluation Clinic Team and the site coordinators, and all of the participating TVIs, families, and
 * students. A least a thousand students have been evaluated since that first clinic and at least that many
 * low vision devices have been prescribed, purchased and utilized. Large print books are mostly a thing
 * of the past as students use devices across school, home, and community environments—taking the
 * power of magnification with them to familiar and unfamiliar environments.

* The clinics were a result of a CDE Low Vision Task Force designed to review the low vision evaluation
 * clinic models utilized in other states. As information was collected, the LV Task Force recommended
 * our original model, which remains essentially the same model as we use today. The goal was a
 * regional design to bring the clinic site closer to the home communities of our students. While this has
 * targeted four broad geographical regions of the state, it has also involved moving the clinic within
 * these regions from time to time. In general, the clinics have been held in Grand Junction, Colorado
 * Springs, Fort Collins, and Denver / Aurora. Another key goal has always been to provide the
 * prescribed devices at a reasonable cost (essentially the exact cost from the vendors).

* The regional low vision evaluation clinics are funded primarily through CDE with contributions from
 * CSDB for their van, storage space, and some staff time. Our extensive low vision device inventory are
 * stored at the CIMC. These tools have seen changes over the past two decades, as we continue to
 * provide state-of-the-art magnification tools.

* Our Low Vision Evaluation Team has retained two of its original crew since those early days. Our
 * beloved Dr. Tom Theune, low vision optometrist extraordinaire, and our very own Jim Olson from the
 * CIMC, who is a low vision therapist. Other team members have included low vision therapists Jan
 * Barron, Debbie McCune, and Nancy Knight. Most recently we have appreciated the low vision
 * therapist support of Wendy Stoltman and clinic coordinator Debbie Haberkorn.

* The site coordinators over the past 20 years have been many—local TVIs who have given of their time
 * and energy to host a local clinic. At that risk of missing someone, they have included: Rita Albright,
 * Donice Fennimore, Kathy Gallina, Elaine Karns, Nancy Knight, Christine Martin, Judy Mumford, Vicki
 * Pearson, Amber Rundle Kahn, Angela Sims, Sarah Sonnier, Wendy Schlageter, Wendy Stoltman, Wendy
 * Unwin Watson, Rebecca Warner, and Julie Wetzstein. Also we have had an impressive roster of TVIs
 * who have brought students to clinics and done the needed follow-up training and support of the
 * prescribed devices. It truly take a team to support our students across Colorado with low vision needs
 * and we have done it well for two decades! Next year will make year #21! Thank you to all!



ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

Cane Quest 2018



CSDB is once again hosting the State of Colorado Cane Quest Event! The contest will be held on May 18, 2018, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind in Colorado Springs. Cane Quest seeks to motivate youth who are blind and visually impaired to practice proper safe travel techniques and overall orientation and mobility skills. It is designed to promote a student's confidence in any surrounding and build true mobility independence. Cane Quest, a program of Braille Institute, is open to visually impaired students in grades 3-6 who have received instruction in the use of the white cane, and who are both cognitively and physically able to walk independently for an hour at a time. A student's visual acuity must fall within the B1 through B2 classification range as defined by the United States Association of Blind Athletes.

Class B1 - No light perception in either eye up to light perception, but inability to recognize the shape of a hand at any distance or in any direction.

Class B2 - From ability to recognize the shape of a hand up to visual acuity of 20/600 and/or a visual field of less than 5 degrees in the best eye with the best practical eye correction.

Students must use a white cane for this contest, and must wear closed-toe shoes. Scout participants form teams of one sighted volunteer and one visually impaired student. Teams earn coins based on how well they demonstrate each orientation & mobility skill as they travel through various checkpoints. Skills assessed at each checkpoint include those listed on the Scouts Skills Sheet. All student contestants will receive a certificate of participation and a commemorative t-shirt. Information was disseminated to Colorado O&M specialists on April 10th. The needed paperwork is due back to CSDB by May 11th.



For more information contact Frank Militello at fmilitello@csdb.org or Lisa VanDam at lvandam@csdb.org

CSDB ... "Learning, Thriving, Leading"
Celebrating 140 Years of Excellence



ORIENTATION & MOBILITY



Calling All Interested Presenters!! **Teaching with Technology 2018**

The California Association of Orientation and Mobility Specialists (CAOMS) seeks presenters for its annual statewide conference, November 2-4, 2018 at the beautiful Renaissance Marriot Hotel in Long Beach, California. Presentations must address at least one of the 13 ACVREP approved content areas listed in the application below. Applications must be received by May 7, 2018.

“Teaching with Technology” is this year’s conference theme. The focus will be on tips and techniques for O&M Instruction from experts such as specialists, parents, and students. We are looking to expand education and knowledge in the visual impairment field through collaboration to meet the needs of the whole child or adult education experience. Topics may be presented as an individual, panel, facilitated discussion, or student review.

Click on the link to download application <http://www.caoms.org>

O&M: Information about Pedestrian Safety

For anyone working with traffic engineers and or administrators of agencies to advocate for pedestrians, you may find the following resources helpful.

Identification of High Pedestrian Crash Locations:

<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/research/safety/17107/17107.pdf>

Pedestrian Safety Guide and Countermeasure Selection System:

<http://www.pedbikesafe.org/PEDSAFE/countermeasures.cfm>

These resources have also been added to Chris Tabb’s Pedestrian LiveBinder at, <http://www.livebinders.com/play/play?id=2149132>

ORIENTATION & MOBILITY

Mountain Mobility:

Outdoor Adventure Camp for Youth Who are Visually Impaired and Blind

June 23— 28th, 2018



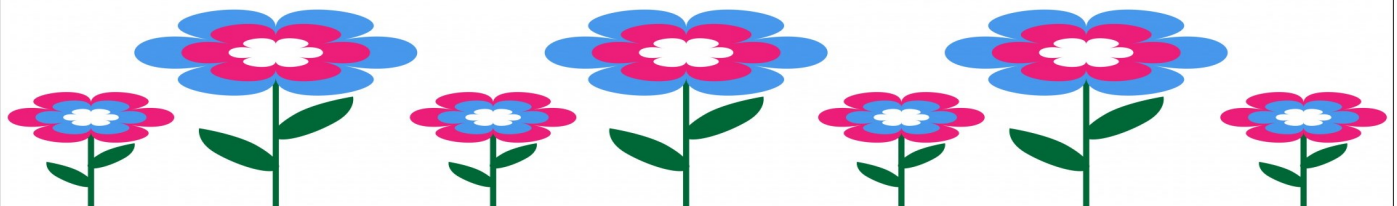
adaptivesports.org

This summer, the Adaptive Sports Center in Crested Butte, will be running a camp specifically designed for blind or visually impaired middle school and high school students, June 23rd through June 28th. The camp will bring young adults together for a week of outdoor adventure in the Rocky Mountains. From hiking to rock climbing, campers will be exposed to new activities, while making connections and building confidence along side other blind and visually impaired youth.

Connecting to the outdoors through a variety of activities will be a large aspect of the camp. In addition, campers will also focus on a variety of invaluable life skills throughout the week. Our youth will shop for groceries, prepare their own meals, and interact in a team setting. Campers will also advance their orientation and mobility skills as they learn to travel through the bustling town of Crested Butte, Colorado.

Reflecting and journaling will be a priority during the week. Each evening, campers will be writing as they recall and relive the most exciting and perhaps the most challenging moments from the day. At the end of the week, campers will have a narrative to bring home to share with their friends and family.

Applications and more information were sent out in an email to Colorado TVIs just recently. If you need additional information, please contact Brandon Mapes at brandon.mapes@summitk12.org





Hope you will be there!

AER International Conference 2018

July 25-29, 2018

Peppermill Resort, Reno, Nevada USA

The conference will be held this summer. It would be wonderful to have a strong Colorado turn-out! To register, go to the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired. at www.aerbvi.org



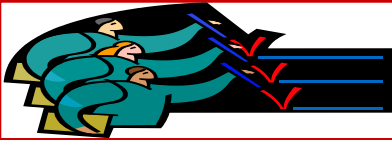
CAER News

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!

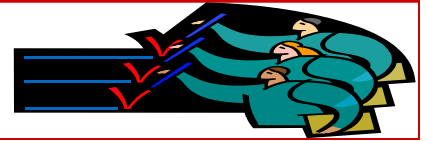
We meet approximately eight times a year and calling in is an option, so don't think you must attend in person to be on the board. We would like to entice professionals in the outlying areas such as Western Slope and Southern Colorado to become involved. If you have projects or educational ideas you would like to tackle, we are the answer! For more information contact Heather Solberg at Heather.Solberg@va.gov

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!



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*. Secretary DeVos has 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=

New! Teacher's Guide for Partner Reading

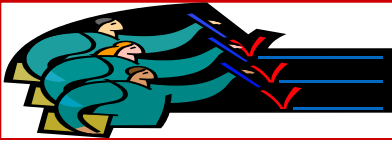


We invite you to check out Partner Reading: An Evidence-Based Practice – Teacher's Guide from the OSEP-funded Promoting Adolescents' Comprehension of Text (PACT) Plus project. PACT Plus is an initiative of the University of Texas at Austin's Meadows Center for Preventing Educational Risk. This teacher's guide focuses on partner reading in content-area classrooms, and was developed as part of OSEP's model demonstrations on adolescent literacy. For more information, go to: https://www.meadowscenter.org/files/resources/PartnerReadingBrief_final.pdf?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

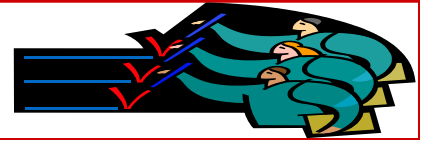
U.S. Department of Education Seeks Comments on New Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Website

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) is seeking input from users of the IDEA.ed.gov website as part of their effort to provide updated, easy-to-navigate IDEA resources to children with disabilities and their families, teachers, administrators, advocates, and other stakeholders.

To help facilitate this effort, OSERS has posted a [blog](https://sites.ed.gov/osers/2017/03/department-of-education) at <https://sites.ed.gov/osers/2017/03/department-of-education> for users of the IDEA website to provide comments. OSERS continue efforts to improve their online resources as part of their commitment to ensure that infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities and their families have the supports and services they are entitled to under the IDEA.



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:

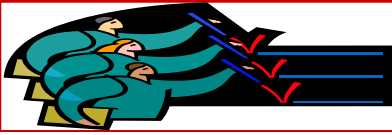
STEM@nfb.org

(410) 659-9314, extension 2418

National Federation of the Blind

200 East Wells Street

Baltimore, Maryland 21230



CHECK IT OUT!



160th Anniversary Writing Contest



The American Printing House for the Blind invites you to share your story about the impact of APH products on your life and celebrate your personal successes! Students and adults who are blind or visually impaired*, as well as professionals in the field are encouraged to enter. Cash prizes will be awarded in each category:

- First Place — \$500
- Second Place — \$250
- Third Place — \$100

First Place winners in each category will also be invited to travel to Louisville, Kentucky, to read their entries at the APH 160th Anniversary National Writing Contest Awards Ceremony, to be held in October 2018! APH will cover travel and hotel expenses, as well as APH Annual Meeting registration fees, for each first place winner and one guest.

The deadline for all entries are **June 1, 2018**. For more information on the writing topics, eligibility, topics, rules, and evaluation criteria, please go to: <http://www.aph.org/contest/160th-anniversary-essay/>

Questions? Contact Nancy Lacewell at nlacewell@aph.org or 502-899-2339, or Lauren Hicks at lhicks@aph.org or 502-895-2405.

Helen Keller National Center

Do you want to know more about the Helen Keller National Center and what services they offer? The State Deaf-Blind Project of North and South Dakota have collaborated with HKNC in creating a short, informative video.

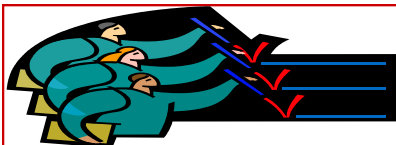
This video briefly describes:

- The role of the regional representative;
- HKNC Programs and services;
- HKNC website;
- And most importantly- how to learn more!

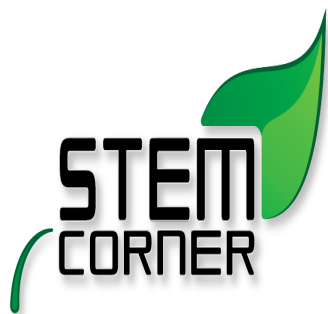
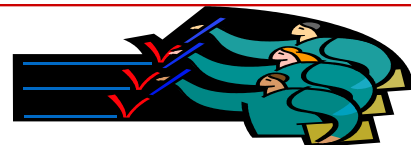
To watch this Adobe Connect recorded presentation please select this link:

<https://usdcd.adobeconnect.com/pp0sy5ycc472/>. This video includes a PowerPoint and close caption. Attached to this email, you will find the PowerPoint in both PPTX format as well as DOCX. PowerPoint attachments include image descriptions.

For more information about HKNC, please contact our new regional HKNC representative Laura Benge at: laura.benge@hknc.org, 801-518-9401, or 385-355-8392 VP.



CHECK IT OUT!

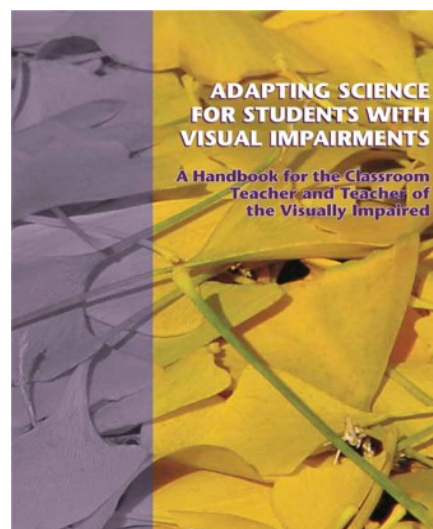


APH is updating the 2006 publication

Adapting Science for Students With Visual Impairments!

Do you have tips for teaching any and all aspects of STEM education to students with visual impairments? Content areas include biology, chemistry, physics, Earth science, astronomy, and math. If you do, please share them with APH, and they will consider incorporating them into the revised edition of this handbook. Please email comments and suggestions to:

Rosanne Hoffmann at rhoffmann@aph.org



New on the APH Physical Education Website

Spring into action with two new features!

[Beep: Inside the Unseen World of Baseball for the Blind](#), by David Wanczyk, is the first book published about this remarkable sport.

Information can be found on this product at: <http://www.nbba.org/beep-baseball-book/>

[Including Young Athletes with Visual Impairment in Track & Field](#) is the third in a series of videos designed to help coaches, sports assistants, and parents with teaching strategies, modifications, and equipment adaptations.

Check it out a <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyuqMgThBG0&feature=youtu.be>

Resources and Materials

Early Literacy Resources From ED's Institute of Education Sciences (IES)

IES' What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) recently released a practice guide, *Foundational Skills to Support Reading for Understanding in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade*. It is divided into four recommendations for improving students' literacy skills in the early grades. WWC also published two accompanying resources, listed below, that can help parents and caregivers put the guide's recommendations into action outside of the classroom.

Tips for Supporting Reading Skills at Home: a six-page set of tips for parents and caregivers to help them carry out the recommended strategies in the practice guide.

Evidence on Tips for Supporting Reading Skills at Home: a summary describing the research evidence that supports the approaches included in the guide and tips.

For more information about each of the above noted documents, go to:

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/PracticeGuide/21?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/practiceguide/wwc_fr_tips_022118.pdf?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/practiceguide/wwc_fr_tips_summary_022118.pdf?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

RESEARCH NEWS:

New Special Education Research Briefs From IES Center

The "Did You Know?" series, presented by the IES-funded National Center on Assessment and Accountability for Special Education (NCAASE), has released new one-page summaries (DYKs) of timely research completed by NCAASE researchers. Below are the latest releases, and be sure to keep checking the website for future DYKs!

DYK #3: on mathematics achievement growth rates

DYK #4: on how academic achievement gaps are measured and reported

DYK #5: on how school performance can vary based on accountability model used

DYK #6: on school performance, accountability, and student composition

DYK #7: on how school performance varies among student cohorts

DYK #8: on student gains with alternate assessments

DYK #9: on using vertically scaled tests to track student performance and progress



Resources and Materials

Agents of Their Own Success: Self-Advocacy Skills and Self-Determination for Students with Disabilities in the Era of Personalized Learning

From the National Center for Learning Disabilities can be found at: https://www.nclld.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Agents-of-Their-Own-Success_Final.pdf This document is for students with learning disabilities, but has good content for many learners.

Webinar | Endrew F: A New Tool for Enhancing the Family Voice at the IEP Decision-making Table A webinar featuring Diana MTK Autin and Michael Yudin examining the *Endrew F.* decision by the Supreme Court and its implications for the education of children and youth with disabilities. To check it out, go to: <http://www.parentsatthetable.org/storage/app/media/resources/Main%20Resources/?dir=Endrew%20F.%20Webinar>

RESOURCES FOR YOU: All About Literacy

Kid Zone! From the National Center on Improving Literacy

The National Center on Improving Literacy (NCIL) has launched an exciting new online portal, Kid Zone! Through Kid Zone!, kids and families can listen to audio and video books, play literacy apps and games, and read books at their level. The site also features the Kid Zone! exclusive comic book: Adventures in Reading, featuring Kayla, a student with dyslexia.

The Kid Zone! was created with kids in mind, but it also is a place where families can connect with one another. Parents and caregivers play an important role in promoting and supporting children's literacy development. You can do this by listening, looking, helping, and encouraging while your child explores Kid Zone!



For more information, go to: https://improvingliteracy.org/kidzone?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=



Live the life you want.

So You Thought You Needed To See!

*Hosted by the Mile High Chapter
of the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado*

What: An Open House on Blindness
When: Friday May 11, 2018
Time: 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Where: The Commons on Champa, 1245 Champa Street, Denver, 80202

The Mile High Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado invites you to our first Open House on Blindness. The event will be held at The Commons on Champa, Friday May 11 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

- Do you have a family member who is blind or going blind?
- Ever wonder what kinds of jobs blind people hold?
- Want to know how blind people manage the college life?
- Are you curious about the technology used by the blind?
- Do you wonder how we parent, if we enjoy the arts, or participate in sports?
- Do you have questions regarding anything else about our lives?

Drop in to get answers to these questions, see technology demonstrations and hear from blind people on how they manage their daily lives. Light snacks will be available.

Contact: Monique Melton, Chapter President mmelton@cocenter.org or call 757-582-6758.

please RSVP if interested in attending.



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>



Submit feedback on Proposed Updates to Educator Talent Rules

CDE and the State Board of Education are seeking public content on recommended updates to the following:

1. Rules for the Colorado Educator Licensing Act of 1991 (1 CCR 301-37),
2. Rules for the Administration of Educator Licensure Endorsements (1 CCR 301-101)

Rules for the Administration of a Statewide System to Evaluate the Effectiveness of Licensed Personnel Employed by School Districts and BOCES (1 CCR 301-87).

Interested stakeholders can review the complete set of rules online and provide input during the formal rulemaking phase [via the online form](#) or by emailing state.board@cde.state.co.us. Submit feedback by Friday, April 20.

For more information on Educator Talent rule feedback and to learn about rulemaking hearings, visit the Educator Licensing Office webpage at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdeprof>

View Final Drafts of Proposed Revisions to Standards



Final drafts of all proposed revisions to the Colorado Academic Standards are now available on the Standards Review and Revision webpage at:

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/standardsandinstruction/casreview>

CDE cautions districts from revising local standards and curriculum until the final approval of revisions by the State Board of Education. The state board is expected to take action on all proposed revisions by July 1 in alignment with state law.

Districts will have two years to review and revise their local standards as needed with implementation scheduled for the 2020-21 school year.

iAdvocate 2

Guided Practice with the Expanded Core Curriculum

DATE: JUNE 24-28, 2018



Pikes Peak and Garden of the Gods

Hiking

Goalball

Bus Travel

Team building

Eating out at a restaurant

Preparing simple meals

... and more!

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

Activities designed for students, currently in 6th-10th grade, who are blind or visually impaired.



Location: Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind
33 North Institute Street/Colorado Springs, CO
719-578-2100; www.csdb.org

Due to construction, lodging areas are not air conditioned.

Cost: \$50.00 (Minimum 5 students; Maximum 10 students)

DEADLINE TO REGISTER: JUNE 8, 2018

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

The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind and its Board is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment where all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. The CSDB does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or veteran status. Accordingly, no otherwise qualified student, employee, applicant for employment or member of the public shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to unlawful discrimination, harassment, or unwelcome behavior under any CSDB program or activity on the basis of disability, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, religion, age, or veteran status.

Date: June 2, 2018

9:00 - 9:20 a.m. ~ Meet Donna Keale at the zoo parking lot

9:30 - 11:30 a.m. ~ Tour



Sensory Safari



**Cost: \$8.00 per adult
\$4.00 per child**

Children with vision loss are free

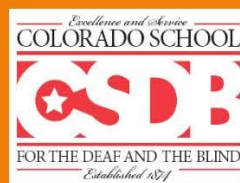
Who: Children, birth-age 8, who are blind/visually impaired and their families

A special day for everyone who have visual impairments. Attendees are welcome to touch, hear, and smell the exhibits. Visit the interpretive stations and talk with zoo and wildlife staff. If you like, bring a sack lunch to eat on the zoo grounds, and spend the rest of the day exploring. The zoo is on a mountain, so dress in layers.

*Cheyenne Mountain Zoo
4250 Cheyenne Mountain Zoo Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80906*

**To register contact: Donna Keale, 719-330-7387
dkeale@csdb.org
Registration deadline: May 18, 2018**

Please provide your name, cell phone number, number of people attending (adult & children), and city in which you live.



... Learning. Thriving. Leading

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

*33 North Institute Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80903*

*Phone: 719-578-2100
Fax: 719-578-2239
www.csdb.org*




Calendar of Events

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

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

- March 4** **CAER Annual Banquet** —Anchor Center for Blind Children
Contact: Heather Solberg at Heather.Solberg@va.gov

- May 4-5** **CDE Annual O&M Seminar**—Double Tree Hotel in 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

- May 11** **Open House on Blindness**—CCB in Littleton
Contact: Monique Melton at mmelton@cocenter.org or call 757-582-6758

- May 17** **Cane Quest 2018**—CSDB
Contact: Frank Militello at fmilitello@csdb.org

- June 2** **Sensory Safari—Cheyenne Mountain Zoo**—Colorado Springs, CO
To register contact:: Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org

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






Calendar of Events

2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018	2018
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- 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 in Littleton
 Contact: Martin Becerra at mbecerra@cocenter.org
- June 23-28** **Outdoor Adventure Camp for Visually Impaired and Blind Youth**—Crested Butte, CO
 Contact: Brandon Mapes at brandon.mapes@summitk12.org
- June 24-28** **iAdvocate 2: Guide Practice with the Expanded Core Curriculum**—Colorado Springs, CO
 Contact: Donna Keale at dkeale@cldb.org
- July 25-29** **AER International Conference 2018**—Peppermill Resort, Reno NV
 Contact: www.aerbvi.org
- June 21-22** **2018 Early Childhood Summit**, - Keystone Convention Center, Keystone, CO
 Contact: Heidi McCaslin at McCaslin_H@cde.state.co.us
- June 26-27** **2018 Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness and SSN**— Lowry Conference Center
 Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- September 12** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting**—CSDB
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@cldb.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@cldb.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@cldb.org
- December 12** **Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting**—CSDB



Calendar of Events



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

- January 9** Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting—CSDB
Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- January 17** Braille Challenge Southern Region—CSDB
Contact: Jamie Lugo—jlugo@csdb.org
- January 24** Braille Challenge Metro Location – Colorado Center for the Blind
Contact: Diane Covington – dcovington@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

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

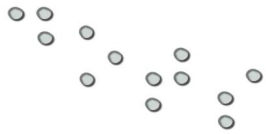
WE NEED YOUR HELP!

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.

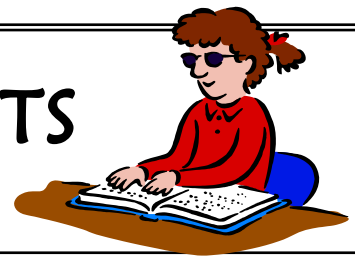
TVIs and COMSs: If you have any changes in program contact information, please Tanni these changes.

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:

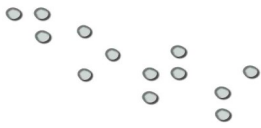
Tanni Anthony	(303) 866-6681	anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
Nancy Cozart	(303) 905-4074	ncozart@lps.k12.co.us
Christine Maynard	(719) 229-4981	christine.maynard@asd20.org
Brenda Shepard	(303) 995-7913	brendashep@comcast.net
Sarah Sonnier	(970) 245-5228	sonnier.sarah5@gmail.com
Julie Wetzstein	(303) 819-7887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

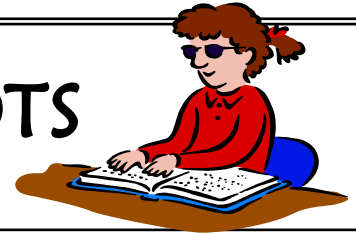
The Practice Test items have been posted on the braille competency webpage—that information and other resources can be found at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_guidedocs

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



Join the Fun and SPRING INTO BRAILLE with Hadley!

Thousands turn to Hadley to learn braille. And each year, we offer this fun way to challenge readers to dust off, brush up and show off their braille reading skills.

Hadley's Spring into Braille program is open to anyone who reads braille, and runs from April 2 through May 31.

Entering is as easy as 1, 2, 3!

1. Register for Spring Into Braille.
2. Find braille books & get reading.
3. Log your progress.

All participants will receive a Certificate of Participation to show off to their friends, and there's even a chance to win a prize!

To register by phone, call 800.323.4238, and request SPRING INTO BRAILLE registration.

The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States

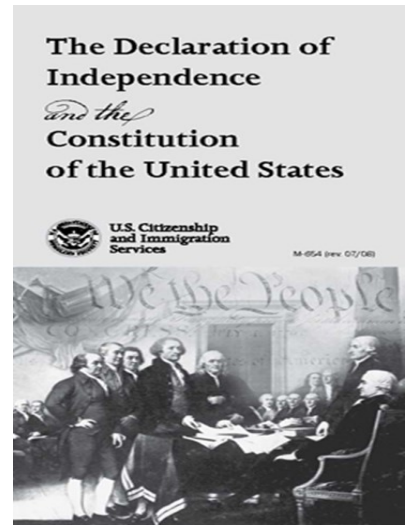
In braille (1 volume) or downloadable BRF: Free!

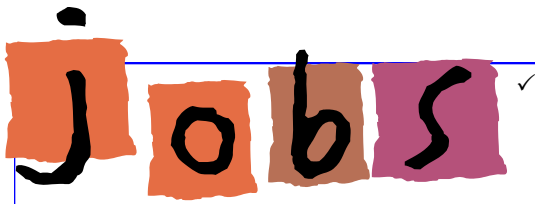
April in Boston means we're getting ready for Patriot's Day (April 16th, also the day of the Boston Marathon). But everyone can celebrate Patriot's Day: Thanks to the generous support of the American Legion Child Welfare Foundation, we're pleased to offer this new UEB edition of *The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States!*

Limit: One per customer. To order more than one copy, please email us at orders@nbp.org to discuss cost.

To order any books, send payment to:
NBP, 88 St. Stephen Street, Boston, MA 02115-4302
Or call: toll-free (800) 548-7323
Email: orders@nbp.org

Or order any of their books online at
<http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/publications/index.html>.





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** (2 FTE) for Greeley Schools. For more information, please contact Kate Green at kgreen4@greeleyschools.org
- ✓ **TVI/ COMS** (1FTE) for Poudre School District For more information, please contact Romie Tobin at rtobin@psdschools.org

Southern Region – Jobs

- ✓ **CSDB** - Please be in touch with Chelle Lutz for CSDB Openings. She can be reached at (719) 578-2100.

Metro Region—Jobs

- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (2 FTE) openings in Denver Public Schools. For more information, please contact Brandy Samuels at BRANDY_SAMUELL@dpsk12.org

Western Region—Jobs

- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (1 FTE) openings in Summit School District / Mountain BOCES. For more information, please contact Mary Kay Dore at marykay.dore@summitk12.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!



TRANSITION INFORMATION

Post-Secondary Transition Guide 2017

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS), of the U.S. Department of Education (Department), is pleased to publish, *A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth with Disabilities*.



OSERS' mission is to improve early childhood, educational, and employment outcomes and raise expectations for all individuals with disabilities, their families, their communities, and the nation. To assist students and youth with disabilities to achieve their post-school and career goals, Congress enacted two key statutes that address the provision of transition services: the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* and the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act)*, as amended by Title IV of the *Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)*.

The *IDEA* is administered by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), and Titles I, III, and VI, section 509, and chapter 2 of Title VII of the *Rehabilitation Act* are administered by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). OSEP and RSA, both components of OSERS, provide oversight and guidance regarding the administration and provision of transition services by State Educational Agencies (SEAs), Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), and State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agencies.

To check out this resource and other Secondary Transition resources, go to:

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

A Guide to Visual Disabilities: How Colleges Help People with Visually Impairment 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 direct access to the content tied to each link.



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

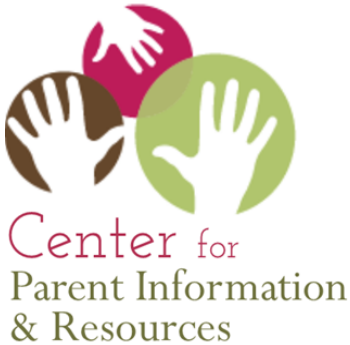


Why Is Career and Technical Education Important for Employment Success for Students With Disabilities? | January 2018

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_SWD_Infographic.pdf

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.

Remaining **2018 - 2019 PEP Dates:**

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 (NAPTAC) New Guide

NAPTAC begins the New Year with a new publication, Reaching Native Youth with Disabilities. This is 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/>

Everything You Need for the Month of the Military Child

From the Military PTAC, the Branch, just in time for April's Month of the Military Child.

Go to: <https://branchta.org/everything-need-month-military-child/>

Summer Camp Guide 2018: From the Family Support Program. This is a free resource for families with children who have special needs.

Go to: http://fsp.unc.edu/sites/all/files/attachments/Summer_Camps_2018.pdf

Accommodations for Common Core Tests

If your state has adopted use of the PARCC or Smarter Balanced, here's what parents need to know about securing the testing accommodations their child needs. This guidance is also available in **Spanish** (*Adaptaciones en las pruebas estandarizadas comunes*).

Go to: <https://www.understood.org/en/school-learning/partnering-with-childs-school/tests-standards/accommodations-for-common-core-tests>



VISION COALITION MEETING MINUTES

April 5, 2018 at the Colorado Talking Book Library

Persons in Attendance: Deb Andrews, Tanni Anthony, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, Julie Hutchinson, Julie King, Paula Landry, Jamie Lugo, Lori Mattick, Dana McMullen, Sara Noel, Jim Olson, Callie Robinson, and Trina Boyd Pratt.

Absent: Dan Burke

Guest: Judy Mumford

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 (Blind School) – Jamie Lugo
- Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind BVI 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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dan could not join us today, as he is involved in a new House Bill 18-1104, the Family Preservation Safeguards for Parents with Disability Act. For more information about the bill, go to:

<http://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb18-1104>

Dan shared this proposed legislation ensures that "disability alone" cannot be the determinant in matters of custody, adoption and "dependency and neglect" cases, and that "reasonable accommodations" have to be provided in some cases, making Colorado's family law more in line with the ADA.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)

February 12th was our last meeting. Announcements included:

- Snowshoe aka "The Winter Outdoor Adventure" April 20-22nd 2018:
- Confidence Camp: Job Opening: for more information, contact Brent Batron at Colorado Center for the Blind
- Wyoming Camp: May need volunteers: contact Brandon Mapes
- Heather's Camp: we are waiting for information

The February meeting involved a presentation by Amber Rundle Kahn. She spoke about managing student behavior during braille literacy instruction. Amber has been asked to send a copy of her PowerPoint to share the information with others.

The next Metro Meeting: April 12th in Denver 3:30 to 5 p.m. The location is the Tattered Cover downtown Denver. Dr. King and a guest from DVR will provide a question/answer period. TVIs are being asked to send in questions ahead of time, if possible.

Discussion Items:

- *We want to clarify the updated eye report form with Dr. King at the April regional meeting and need an update on its status. Response: The VC finalized the example Eye Exam Report Template at today's meeting. Nancy will share at the upcoming regional metro meeting that will include a discussion with Dr. King.*

Northern Region (Julie Hutchinson)

Staff Updates in the North: Welcoming Jeanine Holmes to the northern region! Jeanine is working as a full-time TVI with Thompson School District and we are very excited to welcome her to our region. Greeley Schools (District 6) is looking for two full-time TVIs.

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 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 three adapted books were: "Where is Baby's Valentine?," "Clifford's Family," and "Pete the Cat: Too Cool for School." It was a fantastic learning and collaborative experience for all of us and we thank Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project for providing us with this opportunity! The northern region was also introduced to DVR's new counselor, Linda Stoval (covering the Fort Collins and Greeley offices) and had the opportunity to receive updates and ask questions regarding summer programs, etc.

At our next meeting, we plan to discuss the information provided at the Vision Coalition and to discuss information learned in the Perkins e-learning class "Alternate Routes," which was about adapted mobility techniques for learners who are not able to use a "perfect" cane grasp and techniques while using the cane.

We have an upcoming meeting date on April 27, 2018

Discussion: Keeping professionals who have retired "in the loop" email loop. We have heard from retired vision professionals that they are no longer receiving emails about conferences and other Professional Development opportunities; they want to keep their licenses up to date so that they can come back and help out when there is strong need, but need to continue to receive information on PD opportunities. Are we able to keep them included in email chains and threads so that they can continue to receive necessary information? Response: Tanni shared that retired professionals should reach out to her for this information. There are three established trainings each year specially designed for TVIs and/or COMSs: the fall CDE BVI Conference, the CDE O&M Seminar, and the Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness. The Keeping in Touch Newsletter is posted online for all to access. Retired TVIs / COMSs will not be included on the KIT mailing list or the CDE email distribution list or listserv unless they are actively working in the field. With that said, Tanni is happy to keep people in the loop on trainings. If the intent is for a retired TVI and/or COMS to stay in the field, they are more than welcome to have a seat at any CDE offered professional development. In fact, this is encouraged!

Southern Region (Deb Andrews)

The Southern Region is active as always. We were recently able to take a tour of the brand new CIMC on CSDB's campus and Jim Olson has demonstrated some of the new APH products. Quite a few of us are gearing up for the Low Vision Clinic on April 6th.

Discussion: How do you know what the size of large print is? This question has come up with in the medical community with a southern school district. Response: Westcott has a graphic arts combo ruler – item GA-96. This is a plastic clear ruler that can be laid over paper with print on it to measure the font size. It looks to be a valuable tool for FVA and LMAs. It is also in the APH NEWT Kit. Amazon Prime has the Westcott 12 inch Graphic Arts Combo Ruler (GA-96) at \$4.56 each.

Western Region (Julie King)

Everyone is doing well on the western slope. We are going to try and schedule another Make and Take training at the beginning of the next school year. We're looking forward to building on what we have focusing on more materials for CVI Phase 2 and 3.

There are a few positions available in the western region. First, Brandon Mapes will be moving to Vermont over the summer. Summit School district has posted this position and has also contacted Tanni to post it in the newsletter. Currently it is posted as a full-time position with plans to possibly combine services for Summit and Mountain BOCES (Chaffee county, Park county, and Lake County). San Juan BOCES has posted a part-time position for a TVI/COMS. Karen Pacheco is currently working part-time (2 days per week). There is a possibility to combine the two part time positions into full-time.

Discussion: Tanni has been in touch with the special education directors in Summit and Mountain BOCES to address possible employment scenarios. One hope is for this area to grow a person. Until such time, we are advertising a full time position and working with possible contract personnel.

Brandon Mapes is coordinating two summer camps in June and July.

(1) Adaptive Sports Summer Camp in Crested Butte: This summer, the Adaptive Sports Center in Crested Butte, will be running a camp specifically designed for blind or visually impaired middle school and high school students, June 23 – June 28th. The camp will bring young adults together for a week of outdoor adventure in the Rocky Mountains. From hiking to rock climbing, campers will be exposed to new activities, while making connections and building confidence alongside youth who are blind and visually impaired. Connecting to the outdoors through a variety of activities will be a large aspect of the camp. In addition, campers will also focus on a variety of invaluable life skills throughout the week. Our youth will shop for groceries, prepare their own meals, and interact in a team setting. Campers will also advance their orientation and mobility skills as they learn to travel through the bustling town of Crested Butte, Colorado. Reflecting and journaling will be a priority during the week. Each evening, campers will be writing as they recall and relive the most exciting and perhaps the most challenging moments from the day. At the end of the week, campers will have a narrative to bring home to share with their friends and family. Applications and more information will be coming soon. More information will be coming on the application process.

(2) Wyoming Lions, Allen H. Stewart Summer School: The 2018 Wyoming Lions Summer School for the Visually Impaired will be taking place, Sunday, July 16th, through Friday, July 20th, on Casper Mountain. This Camp experience is hosted by the Wyoming Lions Foundation and the Montgomery Trust Foundation and is open to visually impaired individuals age 9-18. There is no charge to attend. Allen H. Stewart Lions Camp is nestled in the pines of Casper Mountain at 8,000 feet elevation, just nine miles from downtown Casper, Wyoming. The mission of the Summer School and the staff is to incorporate the Expanded Core Curriculum for Students with Visual Impairments into a fun "summer camp" experience in a beautiful setting.

For both camps, please email Brandon Mapes for more information at bran.mapes@gmail.com

Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (Dana McMullen)

The waitlist for Denver Metro center Personal Adjustment Training (PAT) program is around 2-3 months.

Family and Friends Day: April 18th from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. at 2211 W Evans Avenue Denver, CO. It is an open house style event. Bring your transition students to tour our center based program and learn more about DVR!

Stay tuned for more Pre-ets transition workshops in Denver and vision expos in the northern and southern parts of the state in fall 2018.

The Colorado Springs Vision Expo will be on October 4th from 9:30 to 1:00. It will be at Library 21C.

There will be information coming on summer workshops. *Assignment:* Dana will send Tanni the information as it is ready. Michelle Reed is the lead contact person. Tanni will also reach out to Michelle to request timely information. Trina noted that CAER may be willing to do a calendar of events. This could be a central place for all of these details.

Discussion: There are questions about what happens depending on the age of the youth and the planned next step (e.g., return to a transition program versus go onto college). *Assignment:* Dana will follow up on services and information specific to Youth Participant. Tanni also noted that it may be helpful to have DVR present at the fall CDE State BVI Conference to share updates.

A Shared Vision (Paula Landry)

The ASV team got off to a busy start this year! We currently have 8 TSVIs providing services, including O&M, to 88 children and families around the state. In the first 3 months of 2018, ASV provided over 330 home visits, attended ophthalmology appointments with families and held trainings for other Early Intervention providers

ASV continues to deliver weekly services and support to the team at KidStreet. We're launching additional outreach support for Colorado's rural communities made possible with a generous grant.

Anchor Center for Blind Children (Callie Robinson)

Program: Anchor Center is getting ready to graduate 12 preschool students this year on June 7th. It is a larger group than what we've had in the last few years. We are also planning for the new preschoolers next year and anticipate full class sizes again.

Anchor Summer Camp for children ages 3-5 will be held June 10th-13th and June 17th - 20th. Registration is open to Anchor Families and when full, will then open to outside families. Infant and Toddler Summer program will be July 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th.

We are continuing our efforts in supporting our teachers in receiving The Perkins-Roman CVI Endorsement. Karen Jamison has completed everything required and has received the endorsement. Callie Robinson and Tammy Miller have completed the course and anticipate taking the test soon. We are also in the middle of the INSITE course, a 6-day training of in-depth information on working with children birth to age five who have deaf-blindness and/or significant support needs.

Family Services: Our Family Services department held their 2nd Bi-annual Anchor Resource Fair where over 12 different community agencies that serve families of children with a visual impairment were present to support and answer questions. We had a strong showing from our families who received great information from our partners. Colorado Center for the Blind has supported our families in a Braille class that is almost complete. It's been a treat to see some of our families getting excited about learning braille.

Admin and Fundraising: We would like to announce the opening position for Program Director.

<J:\JOB DESCRIPTIONS\Program\Job Description - Program Director 2018 FINAL 4.2.18.pdf>

Colorado Chapter of AER (Trina Boyd Pratt)

Our state AER chapter continues to be quite busy! Here are the latest highlights:

Bylaw Revision: The CAER board is revising the bylaws for the organization. The plan is to have them ready to review via email and vote on prior to the annual meeting in May. For those with a CAER membership, look for a request from our Facebook! (We may be adding other social media as well.)

Take a step in to your professional organization by taking part in our fundraisers and/or trainings, sponsoring a training, calling in or coming in person to a board meeting, or JOIN THE CAER BOARD!

Annual Awards: We sent an email about submitting nominations for our state awards (Gary Schmidt, Ken Neve, and Community Connections). Nominations are due Wednesday April 18th. Our Annual Meeting and Banquet will be Friday May 4 at the Anchor Center. Cocktails will be at 5:30 and dinner buffet at 6:00 followed by the business meeting and award presentations. Someone will win an AER annual membership! All are welcome and you can pay at the door. If possible, let a board member know if you are planning to come so we have a general idea of numbers. Everyone is encouraged to come to the CAER Banquet! This is a time to honor the recipients of the annual awards and to celebrate our profession.

Feedback Requested: We would love feedback on what we are doing (newsletter, trainings, In Kind, etc.) and ideas for the future. Future training ideas include JAWS, use of a thermoform, cooking, etc. BOB Fundraiser was March 5th! Those who attended were busy bees and helped us earn money for our mini-grants!

National Accreditation Council (NAC): For more information, people can read articles from Braille Monitor. This may be of concern to some people. Brent will communicate this as chapter president. Post a Call to Action. HB 620-Individuals can call and write to express dissatisfaction.

Membership Highlights: Discussion continues on ensuring we are reaching our professional audience as an AER state chapter. Two areas of focus:

- ⇒ Panel of Professional Providers & Consumers- We are looking at having a panel to include professionals from the VA, DVR and school districts. We want to learn from each other and invite other professions such as social workers and psychologists to learn about the spectrum of services for the blind/visually impaired.
- ⇒ Bios of vets, adults and students with visual impairments Accessing Services to include in the CAER Newsletters- Board members can extend invitations to consumers and pass info on to Heather to use in the newsletters.

Colorado Chapter of Parents of Blind Children (Lori Mattick)

There is a new Parents of Blind Children group in Grand Junction, CO. Western Colorado has begun networking and getting together monthly. They have been busy with NFBCO Grand Valley Chapter Parents of Blind Children holding five meetings with a total of 5 families in attendance. Goals include awareness, networking planning of upcoming events. Rob Harris, a parent of a blind 5th grader, is leading the effort. Rob and his wife Susan have attended one of the Colorado Department of Education Parents Encouraging Parents Conference and IEP training, and recently visited Washington D.C. for the NFB Washington Seminar and Parent Leadership Program.

During their monthly meetings they have had guests in attendance from the local National Federation of the Blind chapter, NFBCO Grand Valley Chapter. President Margaret Williams is in great support with attendance to offer mentoring, support, and resources for the families in attendance. Margaret was a volunteer with 2017 NFB BELL Academy held in Grand Junction last June. A weekly braille class is being held with all levels in attendance and learning how braille is important for not only information but for leisure and recreation as well. The NFBCO Grand Valley Chapter is working on outreach assisting with blind community members live the lives they want. The group has been joined by student members of the Council of Exceptional Children at Colorado Mesa University being led by Dr. Ann Gillies. Colorado Discover Ability Board Member Dr. Jill Cordova, CMU, spoke at their last meeting about the many outdoor recreation activities they assist people with disabilities participate in. Our group will be working on a strong partnership with CDA in the future.

The parents' division is excited to begin the planning and coordination of the 2018 BELL Academy to be held in Grand Junction. Our stretch goal is to hold a two-week event with exciting events scheduled each day. They will hold a treasure hunt on beautiful downtown Grand Junction, a visit to the dinosaur museum in Fruita, outings with Grand Valley Transit and much more. 2017 BELL Academy enjoyed six attendees and we look forward to building on that number this year and continue to offer resources to blind children and families in Western Colorado.

They will have members race in the NFBCO 6 Dot Dash 5K in late June at the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton, CO. They are reaching out to our community and Western Colorado promoting the training for this raise as we bring awareness to how important braille is to blind students. Grand Junction enjoys many miles of paved riverfront trails and our families will be seen on many of the trails and parks throughout our town as we train.

We have met with Paula Landry and her team with A Shared Vision and hope to continue developing a collaborative effort to aid in access to resources, mentors, and collaboration with the school district and A Shared Vision. The Grand Valley Chapter of the NFBCO is currently requesting to have a table and ice water at the Junior Special Olympics hosted at Stoker Stadium in May.

Their goals include reaching out to the community to bring awareness to matters of the blind and visually impaired student and children. They are planning collaborative outreach with a large pediatric healthcare provider, as well as our regional medical center. As we have discovered in our journey over the years, many healthcare providers do not have the information needed to interact with a blind or visually impaired patient.

Colorado Center for the Blind Youth Programs (Dan Burke)

The Colorado Center for the Blind has continued with its FAST Friday activities since the first of the year. In January it was Circuits and Sounds, put on by UC-Boulder's Better Book Project, a project of the National Science Foundation. Students assembled circuits that produced various sounds, turned a fan, etc. from a number of elements, including switches. In February Arapahoe Community College Biology Professor Terry Harrison presided over our annual shark dissection, and again we are left with the burning question – "Just what do those students do with the shark eyeball after they take it home?" In March, we watched the documentary "Do You Dream in Color?" about four blind teenagers and their efforts to follow their dreams. In April, we'll be having a Star Party with Arapahoe Community College Astronomy Professor Jennifer Jones, who has amassed a collection of 88 tactile graphics of constellations and 3D printings of telescopes.

Summer program applications are coming in flurries, like any Colorado spring snow storm. Dates and application are available at <http://www.cocenter.org/>. If you have a student who is interested they need to apply ASAP! Confidence Camp is tentatively scheduled for June 11 to June 22 and applications will be available soon.

Colorado Instructional Material Center (Jim Olson)

Statewide Count Specific to Monday, January 1, 2018:

- Statewide Total: 1,259
 - ◊ Early Intervention (EI/VI) (ages birth to 3rd birthday): (146)
 - ◊ Age 3-21: (1,113)
 - Anchor Center
 - A Shared Vision
 - CSDB Early Intervention
 - Developmental Pathways
 - Dual Enrolled (in more than one program)
 - Independent Contractor(s)

Federal Quota Census:

Phase 1 (January 1, 2018 through March 15, 2018). New students can be entered during Phase 1 but not after Phase 1 closes.

Preliminary Numbers: 978 – Phase 1 statewide number of students who appear to meet or function at the definition of blindness but may be missing the required eye health exam info on file in their districts and/or the new requirement of a signed parent consent form. We are missing info on 415 students as of March 15th.

Our Microsoft Access database report shows 563 students who have eye report info on file in their districts; and we are currently missing eye reports on 415 students. We do not know how many signed parent consent forms we are missing.

We can input updated info in Phase 2. Preliminary numbers as of the close of Phase 1 (these will change in Phase 2 as students are marked for deletion):

- ◇ 978 (all three accounts combined) appear to be legally blind but not all have been verified as legally blind
 - 125 (birth – age 2)
 - 853 (3-21)

Phase 2 (closes April 15th) Data can be updated on students already entered into the student registration database, no new students can be added. All students who do not have eye reports on file in their district of attendance AND a signed parent consent form will need to be “marked for deletion” and removed from the count.

- ⇒ CSDB School for the Blind account (updated number: ___)
- ⇒ CDE public school account (updated number: ___)
- ⇒ CDE pnp account (updated number: ___)

Phase 3 (looks for duplicates between accounts)

- ⇒ Kids move out of Colorado into another state who has added the student to their 2018 count
- ⇒ Kids who move into Colorado from another state, Colorado adds them to their account, the other state did not ‘mark for deletion’
- ⇒ The EOTs of the two accounts communicate to determine where the student was enrolled on count day (First Monday in January annually)

Phase 4 (last year the January 2017 quota was concluded in August 2017)

FQ Final numbers for 2017 Federal Quota count day:

CSDB Account 20 = 73

CDE Account 22 = 719

CDE Account 23 = 112

Combined total of CDE accounts: 831

Statewide total of all 3 accounts = 904 counted for January 2017

APH Products:

- We would like to forecast for the Orbit Reader 20 devices for when they will be available for purchase summer of 2018 before the start of the school year.
- MATT Connect: equitable distribution procedures. For now, 1 per AU who can use one for a quota eligible student. Order one at a time and disseminate, there will obviously be a waiting list.

- ◇ 75 AUs x \$3,000.00 = \$225,000.00
- ◇ \$225,000 divided by 3 years = \$75,000 per year

Inventory: The CIMC has started doing the annual inventory, required by CDE. According to our database, the CIMC inventory houses 2,343 titles and 9,400 volumes.

Book Orders for Next Year (2018-2019): A HUGE thank you to everybody for submitting your book orders before the April 1 deadline. As in years past, we generally receive about 1/3 of the total number of book orders we fill in a school year. This year we have received close to the same number as our book order deadline of the past two years. Our question for you is how do we increase this percentage?

- We can only pay for books physically received by the last day of the fiscal year, June 30th.
- It can easily take CIMC a month to source books for availability, write purchase orders for new reprints, write purchase orders for new transcription work. The most time consuming part is finding a vendor willing to accept work, get the price quote (after submitting an ink print to them to formulate their bid), etc.
- If your district is finished using your braille textbook now then please return it now – do not wait until June 1 along with the rest of the state. Send them back early if you are done with them.

Book Orders For 2019-2020: 1 order received so far (and we own the book so that is good news).

- Remember, it is okay to submit your book orders NOW for 2019-2020.

Embossing Services: The CIMC owns a newer ViewPlus Max embosser (replacing the older Tiger embosser) that is capable of embossing digital graphics files designed with CorelDRAW or the Tiger Software Suite. If you need files embossed, please contact us.

Before the End of this 2017-18 School Year:

- Before you leave for your summer break, please submit exit forms for any students who will be graduating or aging out. Yes, it is okay to exit them early if you include a graduation date.
- Make sure your students are registered. Remember to get your parent consent form signed for every new student registration (and an eye report that verifies legal blindness).
- Notify us of summer shipping info: can we ship to your school over the summer? Is your summer shipping address different? Give us special directions... we may make a FORM.
- Remember to tell parents that if they take their child to the eye doctor over the summer to get a copy of the eye report and IF it does not say MDB or FDB, or legal blindness, then give them an MDB/FDB form to take to their appointment.
- Remember to CANCEL your book orders if you hear your student is moving. And, as always, call Debbie Haberkorn at (719) 578-2197 if you want to discuss anything related to book orders.
- Update us on staffing changes within your district.
- Notify us if your district designated CIMC contact person changes.

Before School Starts or at the Start of Year: If you get a new braille reader, call us immediately

Next Steps: We are working on revising CIMC procedures with a focus on equitable distribution of products. We are looking into designing new website pages specific to early intervention (registrations, exits, etc.)

Calendar of Events:

- September 12, 2018: 1st Southern Region TVI/DVR meeting of the 2018-2019 school year. CSDB, Jones Hall 3rd floor conference room. Contact: Jim Olson, jolson@csdb.org
- October 4-6, 2018 APH Annual Meeting (Louisville, KY)

Discussion: There is a question about the recommended format for math textbooks – is there a recommendation for UEB technical format versus UEB with embedded Nemeth format? Jim shared that the CIMC has received requests for Math textbooks formatted three ways: (1) EBAE with Nemeth format, (2) UEB with Nemeth embedded format, and (3) UEB Technical format. One series of 5 books was even ordered in UEB with embedded Nemeth format for a teacher in the North, and ordered in UEB Technical for a teacher in the South. Some of the largest prison braille vendors in the U.S. have reported to the CIMC that the lack of transcriber training materials, guidance documents, certification programs (for both transcribers and proofreaders) has prevented them from accepting contracts for UEB Technical format.

Response: The decision of UEB Technical format versus UEB with embedded Nemeth format is an IEP team decision. Tanni shared that it is frustrating that we continue not to have a UEB (Math) Transcriber course. Jim shared the frustration of finding vendors and the lack of certification of transcribers and proofreaders. Everyone acknowledged the ambiguity of the UEB code for math (many times the rule books leave items to ‘transcriber discretion’- which is why the CIMC tries to use the same vendor when one series has multiple titles so that the students book are formatted at least similarly). Some members expressed their appreciation for UEB as a math code, others expressed the majority of the country is using UEB with embedded Nemeth formatting. Paula Conroy shared that the UNC students in training find value in the UEB code for both literary and math. There continues to be concerns about how UEB and Nemeth are used together as the switch indicators are not always used by teachers and braillists doing ‘quick and dirty’ math transcription. All books obtained by the CIMC from vendors formatted in UEB with embedded Nemeth are produced according to textbook formatting rules which means they all should contain switch code indicators. CIMC purchase order contracts with vendors requires proofreading as part of the production process. The tables below show the book orders for this current 2017-18 school year and next 2018-19 school year. The CIMC will make every attempt to acquire math books in the formats ordered but would like to emphasize that this year’s book orders in UEB Technical material have taken more than 14 months to produce and some are still in production so there is a likelihood that teachers/ braillists will need to braille portions of their book to stay on track with students’ classroom needs.

Math Book Orders for the 2017-2018 school year

Format	# of books ordered	Administrative Unit	Students
UEB with embedded Nemeth	25	5	10
EBAE with embedded Nemeth	31	9	27
UEB Technical	15	3	5

Math Book Orders for the 2018-2019 received by the April 1, 2018 ordering deadline

Format	# of books ordered	Administrative Unit	Students
UEB with Nemeth	8	4	4
EBAE with Nemeth	12	4	5
UEB Technical	11	4	6

CSDB – School for the Blind (Jamie Lugo)

Student Activities: High school and middle school students attended ski trips to Crested Butte and Vail. Thank you to Foresight Ski Guides and the Adaptive Sports Center for providing these opportunities to our students. One of our high school students made the All State Choir. 2,000 audition, 350 make the choir. Students participated in an interactive orchestra field trip to the Pikes Peak Center. Students memorized and practiced their recorder parts diligently to be able to play along with the professional orchestra during the performance. A high school student participated in the Zone Speech Contest in Pueblo after taking 1st place at the regional contest.

Campus Activities: Our annual Braille Challenge took place on January 18th with activities for all students. 25 students competed at various levels. Parents completed their final session of Parent Braille classes on March 20th. Their children wrote them letters in braille to decode during their last class. We hosted our annual Beeping Egg Hunt on campus March 22nd. Parent Goalball and Board Game night took place on March 21st. Parents experienced the game of goalball and also learned more about adapting board games and simple cards games at home to include their children who are blind or visually impaired. The Kindness Club volunteered during Friday Workshop at an organization called “Special Kids Special Families.” This organization provides care to adults with disabilities during daytime hours. Day staff hosted a breakfast in the dark for dorm staff to experience a little bit of what our students go through on a daily basis in the cafeteria.

Important Dates to Hold:

- Cane Quest 3rd-6th Graders May 18th, 2018 CSDB
- 2018 White Cane Day October 15, 2018 Acacia Park, Colorado Springs
- Braille Challenge January 17, 2019 CSDB

CSDB Outreach Services (Sara Noel)

There are two upcoming activities for CSDB Outreach and one in the next school year.

Sensory Safari will take place at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo on June 2, 2018 from 9:00-11:30. It is a family event for children birth to 8 who are blind or visually impaired. The child with a vision loss is admitted free. Accompanying adults and siblings are \$8 per adult and \$4 per child. For more information contact Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org

iAdvocate will be held from June 24-28 on the campus of CSDB. This is a summer enrichment opportunity focusing on the Expanded Core Curriculum for middle and high school students who are blind or visually impaired. There will be hiking, goalball, bus travel, team building, eating out at restaurants, preparing simple meals and more! For more information contact Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org

Braille Challenge 2018-2019

- ◇ Denver Metro location - Diane Covington – January 24, 2019

Discussion: There is a need for learners with visual impairments and additional disabilities to have summer options. Some of the summer offerings across a variety of entities are not inclusive of this population. This might be an area to address. There are challenges with available space, personnel, and funds.

University of Northern Colorado – VI Program (Paula Conroy)

We have five students graduating this spring. Three of these students are from Colorado. Congratulations to Natalie Palmer, Jill Bookwalter and Brenna Moser! Natalie and Jill currently work for Denver Public Schools and Brenna is working for Douglas County. DeEtte Snyder is graduating with her doctorate and will continue her work with the coordination of early childhood services and VI in the state of Washington.

We have accepted our first cohort for the new grant and they will begin their studies in May. We are excited to offer the emphasis on behavior interventions.

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, 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 data is currently being tallied. Thanks to everyone who participated in this data collection project. Currently we have 143 children ages birth through 21 with combined vision and hearing loss. Thank you to everyone who registered their student(s) in December—January!

Please note that 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. This can be child-specific consultation and customized staff training.

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

Summer Institute: The 2018 Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness and Significant Support Needs will be held on June 26-27, 2018. Mark Campano will be presenting for the two-day training on *How We All Learn: The Brain, the Body, and Communication*. Mr. Campano is currently the Statewide Coordinator of the Delaware Program for Children with Deaf-Blindness. The registration details and link was sent out to TVIs (and others across the state) on March 26. The training will be capped at 100 participants.

Get Ready to Write, Read, and Up Your Game! We will also be hosting an August 3-4, 2018 training with two national-level trainers in the areas of significant support needs, literacy, and assistive technology. Dr. Gretchen Hanser and Dr. Caroline Musselwhite will be our presenters. This training is capped to 100 participants across the state. Priority will be given to personnel working with school-age learners with deaf-blindness and significant support need, as well as true geographical representation across the state.

Annual Report and a New Grant: We are currently completed our annual report for the most recent reporting period. We are anticipating the Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new grant cycle of the federally-funded state deaf-blind grants. We are thinking it will arrive at any time. Please be ready to submit a letter of support! Also be in touch with Tanni or Gina, if you have ideas for the new grant cycle.

Annual CDE O&M Seminar: The 2018 CDE O&M Seminar will be held on May 4-5, 2018 in the Denver area. The focus is on *Being Mindful, Working on Balance, and Addressing Needs of Learners with Additional Disabilities*. Susan Chandler will train on balance / body work on Friday, May 4th. Dr. Wendy Sapp will train on O&M for learners with deaf-blindness and other disabilities on Saturday, May 5th. The training will be held at the Double Tree Hotel Street in Denver. Registration is now closed with 65 participants.

CDE Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics: Four clinics have happened thus far in the school year with very favorable results. They have been held in the Western, Northern, Metro, and Southern regions. The most recent clinics have been done in the metro and southern regions. We thank Nancy Knight for her fine work as the Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Coordinator and Debbie Haberkorn as the Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Coordinator. We thank our Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Team of Dr. Tom Theune, Wendy Stoltman, Jim Olson, and Debbie Haberkorn.

Recruitment and Retention: We have filled a 1 FTE opening in Thompson School District! High praise to Teresa O'Brien who recruited Jeanine Holmes as a practicum student. Tanni has also been contacted by one instate person looking for a job and two out of state people looking for Colorado employment! CDE has an active job posting for Colorado TVI / COMS jobs with AERBVI and specific to COMS jobs with ACVREP. It is critical that administrative units stay in touch with Tanni on new vacancies.

We continue have work to do to be proactive with existing and anticipated openings across the state. We will have several openings due to retirements in our field, as well as personnel who will be leaving Colorado for personal reasons. We have a full time opening in the CSDB School for the Blind, two full time TVI/COMS openings in Greeley, a full time opening in Cherry Creek, two full time openings in Denver, a full time opening in Poudre School District, and openings in Mountain BOCES and Summit School District (that may be a combined FTE or separate positions). Durango may also have an opening.

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 226 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. The work of this committee is expected to conclude over the summer months.

Braille Competency: Tanni is working with a number of new and veteran TVIs to demonstrate initial braille competency. All TVIs who are new to the field are expected to demonstrate braille competency in their first year of employment in this role. If a TVI extends this date, the administrative unit of employment is at risk for a citation of noncompliance. A Practice Test will soon be posted on the Visual Impairment, Including Blindness website. This will include practice multiple choice items and braille samples. Tanni also recently notified TVIs who are in need of renewal of their braille certification. There is a one-time renewal requirement five years after earning the initial CDE Certificate of Braille Competency.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Budget for 2018-19

Tanni defended the budget specific to blindness/visual impairment on March 17th to the ESSU Leadership Team. The budget has been tentatively approved for its content and proposed costs. The final approval will be contingent on the IDEA set aside funding allocation to the Colorado Department of Education. The Leadership Team was very impressed with the follow-up efficacy data generated by the CVI trainings/ activities over the course of this past school year. Pro-

- Braille Competency Testing / Mentor Support
- CIMC (to be included in an Interagency Agreement with CSDB)
- CDE Orientation and Mobility Seminar
- CDE State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment / Follow-Up Office Hours Support
- *Keeping in Touch* Newsletter
- Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics (partial funding to be included in an Interagency Agreement with CSDB)
- TVI / COMS Mentoring (this is expansion of mentoring funds!)
- Vision Coalition

Discussion: Tanni asked for topics of interest for the Fall 2018 CDE Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment. People noted they wanted training on sensory regulation and behavior. Tanni will follow-up with Paula Conroy on behavior topics / presentations, as well as do a national canvas on this topic. She will also do some national field work specific to sensory regulation (within the purview of a TVI).

Parent Need Survey

Survey Results: A Family Partnership and Engagement Survey was disseminated across the state in February—March. We know through the CIMC that we have over 1,200 identified children in Colorado with visual impairment. CDE has a data base of 224 families who have signed up for the *Keeping in Touch* newsletter. This means that a huge percentage of families are not identified through the CDE database. As such, the dissemination of these surveys were dependent on TVIs in early intervention agencies and administrative units. A hard copy survey in both English and Spanish was either mailed, emailed, or given directly to parents of children 0-21 via CDE or TVIs in the field.

The online version of the English survey was used by over 81 families. We received 93 hard copy surveys that were then entered into the database. In total (and to date), we had 171 English respondents and 3 Spanish respondents. The age range of children represented included: Infants and toddlers = 24 responses or 13%; preschoolers = 33 respondents or 19%; kindergarteners - 5th graders = 52 respondents or 29%; 6-8 graders = 33 respondents or 19%; 9-12th graders = 26 respondents or 26%; transition program age (18-21 years) = 9 respondents or 5%.

The leading causes of visual impairment identified by the responding parents were: Cortical Visual Impairment (19%); Optic Nerve Hypoplasia / Septo Optic Dysplasia (16%); and albinism (6%). Nine percent of the respondents did not share their child's eye condition and 24% noted their child had another condition not listed in the survey. In review of the "other" conditions noted by the respondents, it was felt that there were indeed some unique conditions, as well as what might be a misunderstanding of primary cause of the child's visual condition based on the information given.

Not all of the respondents identified their Part C / Specialized early intervention agency or school district (SD) where their child receives either early intervention or school-based education services. Of those who did, we heard back from Academy 20 SD, Adams 12 SD, Adams 14 SD, Anchor Center for Blind Children, Aurora SD, Boulder Valley SD, Brighton SD, Cherry Creek SD, Cheyenne Mountain SD, Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, Denver Public SD, Developmental Pathways, Douglas County SD, Falcon Fort Carson SD, Fort Morgan SD, El Paso 11 SD, Greeley School District, Harrison SD, Jefferson County SD, Littleton SD, Mesa Valley School District, Moffat County SD, Montrose SD, Poudre SD, Thompson SD, and NW BOCES.

Key areas identified as (relative) high need by families for more information included: Orientation and Mobility (O&M), low vision, creating IEPs, friendships with other children daily care / independent living skills, career planning, secondary transition, and scholarships. The respondents also indicated a need to have opportunities for their child to have social interactions with other children with visual impairment, including blindness. Another area of moderate to strong interest for training events for families via face-to-face meetings or the use of distance technology included advocacy for their child, cooking and cleaning at home, O&M, and low vision devices.

Limitations: This is a small sample size, so we cannot generalize the findings. We also do not have a way to truly tease out the demographics of the families who responded. As such, they may not be representational to the full population of Colorado parents. We know that our Spanish speaking family representation is critically low. We also do not know whether the children represented by their parents in the survey have additional disabilities beyond a few specific comments or the association of CVI with concomitant conditions affecting motor, health, and/or cognition. With that said, the survey is a start to identify priorities for the families who did respond. We felt very fortunate to have their voices in this survey effort.

Discussion: Next steps for the survey included: (a) sharing with Parents of Blind Children and the families who receive the *Keeping in Touch (KIT)* Newsletter; (b) sharing with the TVIs / COMSs via the CDE listserv and KIT newsletter; (c) following up with families who self-identified they would like to be more involved in parent activities; and (d) identifying good next steps across districts, regions, the state, and with the Parents of Blind Children.

As a beginning step, we are floating the following idea based on what is happening at the School for the Blind. Jamie shared that they school offers key themed opportunities for families across the school year. We discussed setting a roster of themes across key months of the 2018-19 school year. As a state, we can create informational content / activities that can be offered regionally and/or at a district or agency level. These themes can also be developed in the *Keeping in Touch* newsletters. Themes and months identified for such an effort include:

Theme trainings / Networking Opportunities

September	Orientation and Mobility
November	Dinner in the Dark, meal prep, meal skills, manners
January	Individualized Education Program / Individual Family Services Plan / Eye Conditions
March	Social Emotional / Friendships /
May	Recreation and Leisure

Assignments: Lori will share the information with Parents of Blind Children for their thoughts and next steps. Lori will also work to have the survey sent to families involved in the CSDB Bridges to Life Program. Tanni will split out the data specific to 0-2 and share with our EIVIs.

Eye Report Form

Tanni has finalized the Eye Doctor Eye Report since the last Vision Coalition meeting. It was brought to the Vision Coalition for one last review. There were a few more tweaks and the group felt it could be finalized with these amendments. It will then be disseminated to CO TVIs via email and will be posted on the Visual Impairment, Including Blindness website as an example form. *Assignment:* Paula Landry will edit specific to the 0-2 populations and then we will solicit feedback from A Shared Vision, Anchor Center for Blind Children, Developmental Pathways, and CSDB Infant/Toddler Program.

Eligibility for Visual impairment, Including Blindness

The group worked to draft a proposal for updated eligibility criteria for Visual Impairment, including blindness. The main focus was to remove any language that is “restrictive” and expanded the criteria to include the IDEA specific language. Tanni will meet with her CDE peers to review the proposed changes and determine next steps to gain more stakeholder feedback.

Resource Allocation Document

The most recent version of the RAD was shared with the Vision Coalition. Slight tweaks were given to Tanni and Paula Conroy. Tanni will send her information to Amber Rundle Kahn directly. The next step is for UNC to work on the metrics of the document. We are getting closer!!

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 Colorado administrative unit personnel 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 blindness/visual impairment 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.

VC Membership for 2018-19

We thank Trina Boyd Pratt for her representation of CAER this past year. A new person will be the VC representative for CAER in the next year. Any other changes should be shared with Tanni no later than May 15th.

Next Meeting Date:

To be decided once the VC membership slate has been finalized for the next school year.



colorado connections

- ◆ Hats off to **Kyle Berns, Abby Horner, Erin Kerr, and Jordan Robinson** for earning renewal hours for braille competency. Congrats to **Kyle Berns** for earning his CDE Renewal Certificate of Braille Competency. A huge thank you to proctors **Chris Maynard** and **Brenda Shepard**. Thank you to **Brenda Shepard** for taking a lead role in developing a UEB Braille Practice Test. Thanks to **Nancy Cozart** and **Chris Maynard** for assisting Brenda.
- ◆ **Jeanine Holmes** is on board with Thompson School District! She has worked in Wyoming as an Early Childhood Special Education teacher for 12 years and then decided to go back to school. Jeanine is finishing up her master's degree from Texas Tech and will graduate in May. She shared that she has learned so much during her internship at Thompson School District and is excited to start her career as a TVI. Jeanine enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband and daughter in her free time. A big Colorado Welcome to Jeanine!
- ◆ Congrats to the following Colorado TVIs who will graduate this spring from our UNC VI Program. Congratulations to **Natalie Palmer, Jill Bookwalter** and **Brenna Moser!** Natalie and Jill currently work for Denver Public Schools and Brenna is working for Douglas County. So proud of each of you!
- ◆ A heartfelt thank you to the members of this year's Vision Coalition members. Thank you for your service during the 2017-18 school year: **Deb Andrews, Tanni Anthony, Dan Burke, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, Julie Hutchinson, Julie King, Paula Landry, Jamie Lugo, Lori Mattick, Dana McMullen, Sara Noel, Jim Olson, Callie Robinson,** and **Trina Boyd Pratt.**
- ◆ Thank you so much to the Colorado Deaf-Blind Advisory Meeting members who provided their time over the course of the 2017-18 school year: **Janet Anderson, Gena Francoeur Anderson, Tanni Anthony, Brent Batron, Dinah Beams, Laura Benge, Sandy Bowen, Shannon Cannizzaro, Gina Herrera, JoAnne Hirsch, Shauna Moden, Tara Brown-Olgivie, Callie Robinson, Wendy Stoltman, Silvia Correa Torres, Jon Vigne, and Kelly Welch.** We thank Janet Anderson and Jon Vigne for their service over the past many years.



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