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KEEPING IN TOUCH!

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

Opportunities and Practice: Creating Outliers

By Tanni L. Anthony

I am a fan of Malcolm Gladwell and his books. I like the way he puts ideas and events together that might not come together without his thinking. In the book *Outliers*, Mr. Gladwell talks about people with an exceptional talent or who are “outliers” in a particular aspect of their lives. In this book, now already a decade old, he tells the stories of real-life athletes, musicians, computer programmers, tailors, and other individuals representing a host of professions. The common denominator is that they are exceptionally good at what they do.


Gladwell presents a case that a combination of raw talent, opportunity, and practice is what propelled these individuals into their status of excellence. Sometimes the story was about the importance of timing—birthdays earlier in the calendar year that gave kids playing hockey more time on the ice rink than their younger peers. Or Bill Gates having a gigabyte of time to use a computer during teen years because of a then rare-air computer club at his school.

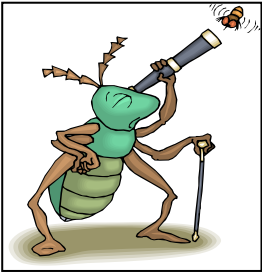
As a fan of early development, I know that the teamwork of nature and nurture help shape the outcomes of our lives. Gladwell takes this thinking to a new level. What we expose a child to makes a difference in the long run. When all children have real opportunities to practice a skill, they get better. Those who persist with practice, get even better. A raw talent will wilt without opportunity to practice and the seed of a talent can germinate with opportunity to practice. Pretty simple to ponder.

So, how does this turn into a summer message? Parents, look around and see what might be available to match and enhance your child’s interests and abilities. Want your child to be a swimmer – go for the Phelps’ gold and really spend time in the pool (throw in a few lessons to really get things off to a good start). Want your child to be a strong reader – books & reading time should be a serious theme for the summer docket. Want a computer whiz or a child who is more self capable with the long cane ... well, you get the picture! Summer can be a time for practice of so many things that help with academics, sports, friendships, etc.

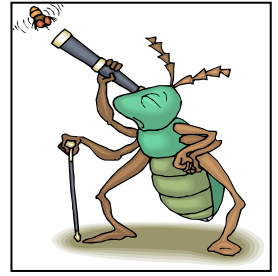
Best wishes for an outlier kind of summer! Check out all of the amazing summer programs listed in this newsletter that will provide opportunities for practice of fun, reading, self help, social skills, travel ENJOY!

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LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



Thank You for Two Wonderful 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!



Summer Fun in Colorado!



Anchor Center for Blind Children

Anchor Center for Blind Children will offer two programs over the summer to their students.

July 9th, 16th, 23rd, and 30th from 9:30-12:30. Summer Sprouts (ages 0-3). These events are scheduled for four Mondays in July. The infants and toddlers can come to Summer Sprouts to continue receiving the educational and therapeutic benefits of Anchor Center programming in a slightly more free flowing, summery atmosphere

which includes a lot of outdoor activities and water play. Parents stay with their children and move at their own pace through different center options, including music, motor play, sensory play, gardening, and water play.

July 10th- 13th and July 17th-20th; 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Anchor's Away Preschool Summer Camp (ages 3-5). The preschoolers and their siblings have the option of a two week Anchor's Away summer camp where children are dropped off by their parents for 3 hours of fun with our Anchor Center therapists and teachers as well as some volunteers. The preschoolers rotate through different centers including music and dance, blocks and books, sensory play, and water play.

For more information, contact Anchor Center at (303) 377-9732.

Colorado Center for the Blind

June 11-15 and June 15—18 (day camp times from 9 a.m. to 3:00 p.,) Confidence Camp for Kids Elementary Program. This is an interactive, two-week program for blind and visually impaired children ages 5-11 years. The highly qualified staff, including two certified teachers of students with visual impairments, will work with students in a variety of age appropriate areas such as cane skills, daily living skills, braille and beginning technology. Students will prepare lunch each day and focus on household activities like making beds, vacuuming, washing dishes, sweeping, etc. Several experienced and energetic blind role models will be paired with students. Not only with the students work on building their skills, but, even more importantly, they will gain confidence in themselves by participating in a wide range of activities. Some of these activities will include a science fair, riding the light rail to parks and recreation centers, swimming, eating lunch at a restaurant, and many more. There is a \$100 cost for the program. For more information, contact Brent Batron at bbatron@cocenter.org or go to <http://cocenter.org/come-join-us-for-our-elementary-summer-program-2018-confidence-camp-for-kids/>

Check out the Calendar of Events for other CCB offerings over the summer months!

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB)

June 2: Sensory Safari. A special day at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo for everyone who has visual impairments. Attendees are welcome to touch, hear, and smell the exhibits. Visit the interpretive stations and talk with the zoo and wildlife staff. For more information, reach out to Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org

June 24-28: iAdvocate 2: Guided Practice with the Expanded Core Curriculum. This CSDB offering will focus on daily living skills, orientation and mobility, recreation and leisure, social skills, and technology on the campus of CSDB in Colorado Springs. For more information, reach out to Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org

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.

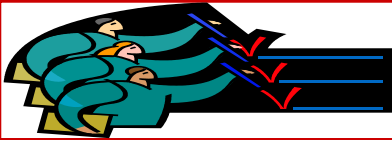
Connecting to the outdoors through a variety of activities will be a large aspect of the camp. In addition, campers will also focus on a variety of invaluable life skills throughout the week. Our youth will shop for groceries, prepare their own meals, and interact in a team setting. Campers will also 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.

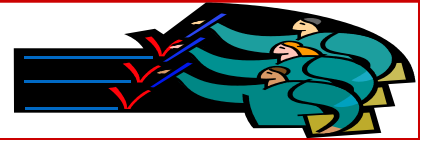
Applications and more information were sent out in an email to Colorado TVIs just recently. If you need additional information, please contact Brandon Mapes at brandon.mapes@summitk12.org

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!



DIVISION of
VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION
State of Colorado

SAVE THE DATE

Vision Resource Expo—Sponsored by DVR

When: Thursday, October 4, 2018
9:30 am - 1 pm OPEN HOUSE
Vendor set up – 9:00 a.m.

Where: Library 21C-Pikes Peak Library District
1175 Chapel Hills Drive
Colorado Springs, CO 80920
Accessible from Bus Route 39**

What: Resources for individuals with vision loss.
Vendors ranging from Assistive Technology,
Rehabilitation Services, Guide Dogs, Daily Living Skills, and more!



Have questions?

Call Colorado Springs DVR at 719-635-3585 ask for Liz Robertson or Megann Karch

OR call Pueblo DVR at 719-544-1406 ask for Muck

Need an Interpreter? Request by 9/1/2018

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.



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



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

CAER Board Members

The new slate of CAER Board members are as follows:

President: Nancy Cozart
Past President: Brent Batron
Treasurer: Heather Solberg



The secretary, Vice President, and President Elect positions will be determined in the near future.

Members at Large: Sally Burch, Paula Conroy, Ann Cunningham, Barb Galgano, Jeannie Lei, Tim Richard, and Michelle Robinson.

A big thank you to Amber Rundle Kahn and Trina Boyd Pratt for their time on the board. Amber just completed her two year term and Trina has been on the board and in the position of treasure for over the past ten years.

For membership information to join the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AERBVI), please go to: <https://aerbvi.org/> Your new or continued membership makes us Colorado AER Strong.

Thanks to you all for sustaining a strong Colorado AER Chapter!



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

CAER Awards

Congratulations to the CAER Board and its members on hosting a beautiful CAER Banquet on May 5th.

The following awards were given to a five very special people.

President's Award: This award recognizes outstanding leadership in service to people with visual disabilities. The current board president will select and present this award. This year's award went to **Diane McGeorge**, the founder of the Colorado Center for the Blind and a constant advocate for people who are blind.

Gary Schmidt Award: This award honors an AER member who works directly with student/clients. Nomination criteria include: ethical standards, sense of humor, degree of excellence in job performance, and professionalism. The CAER Board and Janice Schmidt review the nominations. The award was given to **Garrett Mumma**, who works at the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

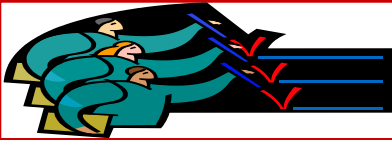
Connections Award: This award recognizes cooperative efforts that cross organizational lines, perhaps even groups working collaboratively to benefit our field. The CAER Board considers the nominations. The award was given to **the Broomfield Lions Club** for their support of several projects benefiting services for children with blindness/visual impairments.

Ken Neve Award: This award honors a man who was an amazing teacher, co-worker and role model in the world of O&M. Ken brought humor and warmth to all situations. He worked at the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation for 29 years. Nomination criteria include: (a) a CAER member who is in the field as a practicing Orientation & Mobility Specialist; (b) dedication to life-long learning; and (c) a role-model for others in the field. This award was given to **Pat Lewis**, an Orientation and Mobility Specialist who has served Colorado for many years with great skill and compassion.

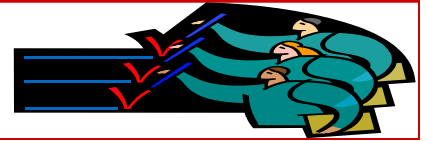
Lifetime Achievement Award: This award is presented to professionals who have given of themselves to clients/students throughout their career and are preparing for retirement. This award was given to TVI/COMS/ECSE **Janet Anderson** for her generous heart, deep expertise, and amazing commitment and service to students with visual impairments and their families.

A true hero isn't measured by the size of his strength, but by the strength of his heart.

Hercules



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: Do not delay on applying—applications are due now!

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:

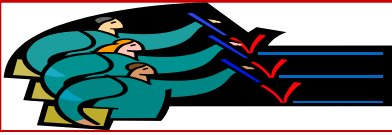
STEM@nfb.org

(410) 659-9314, extension 2418

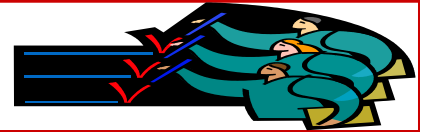
National Federation of the Blind

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? If so, 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.

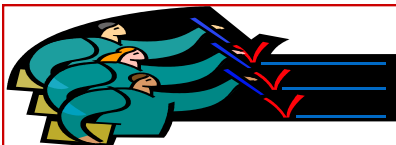
This video briefly describes:

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

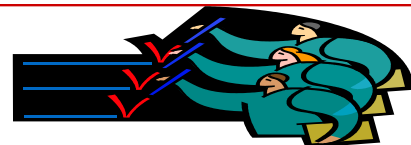
To watch this Adobe Connect recorded presentation please select this link:

<https://usdcd.adobeconnect.com/pp0sy5ycc472/>. This video includes a PowerPoint and close captions.

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



CHECK IT OUT!

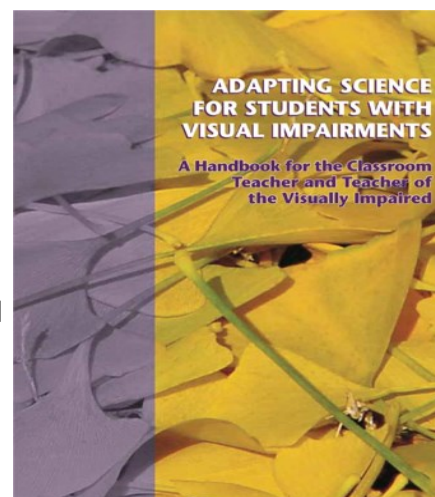


APH is updating the 2006 publication

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.

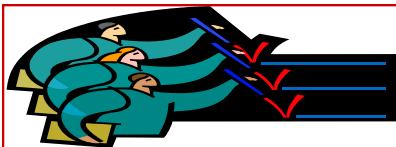
Information can be found on this product at: <http://www.nbba.org/beep-baseball-book/>

[*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.

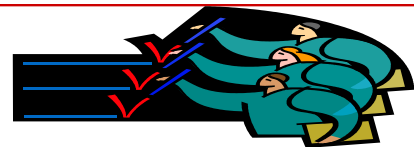
Check it out a <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyuqMgThBG0&feature=youtu.be>

Autism Prevalence Rates

The CDC released the new autism prevalence rate last week – about 1 in 59 children is estimated as having an autism spectrum disorder. Here is a link to the CDC site for you to read about how the data are collected and what those numbers mean: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/data.html>



CHECK IT OUT!



Sibling Tree: Sibling Tree was established in 2013 and is the Colorado Chapter of the National Sibling Leadership Network. The primary goal of the Sibling Tree is to provide supportive information and tools for siblings to learn to advocate with their brother or sister with disabilities. The site has a resource/activity for siblings called “Artism” created by “BrainSong” in partnership with Luvin Arms Farmed Animal Sanctuary in Erie, Colorado. Siblings come together with similar peers “who get it” because they also have a brother or sister with a disability and they create art together. They have opportunities to connect with animals, make friends and have dinner and dance at the end of the day. Check it out at: <http://www.siblingtree.org/>

Praying Hands Ranch, Parker, Colorado: Praying Hands Ranches, Inc. is member of PATH International, Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International. PHR is committed to meeting the needs of children, youth, and veterans with disabilities in a ranch environment therapeutic center. Using physical therapists (PTs), occupational therapists (OTs), speech therapists, and PATH International certified riding instructors, Praying Hands Ranch strives to achieve rehabilitation for all clients. The primary goal is giving all clients an opportunity to grow mentally, physically and emotionally strong, gain self-esteem, become independent, learn to care for others, be courageous enough to overcome some fears and achieve a better quality of life overall. Under the programs button, website investigators can learn more about equine therapy. There is a quote in this section: “life looks a great deal brighter on horseback.” The warmth of horses helps clients have higher self-esteem while they strengthen core muscles. Hippotherapy is defined as “treatment with the help of a horse” and used by many specialists such as PTs and OTs to address disabilities especially neuromuscular skeletal dysfunction. Functional goals are developed for Hippotherapy clients.

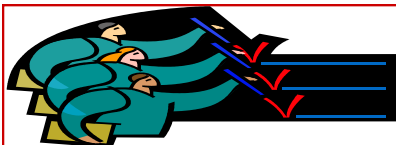
For more information: <http://www.prayinghandsranch.org/>

Paths to Literacy Newsletter: Read past issues of the weekly digest from *Paths to Literacy*. Each one includes teaching ideas, news, and upcoming events for children who are blind or visually impaired, including those with multiple disabilities or deafblindness. Topics range from braille literacy to Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI), Learning Media Assessment (LMA) to making math accessible.

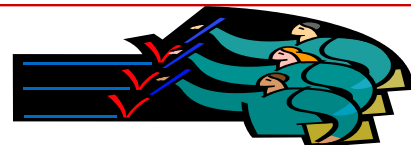
Check them out at: <http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/newsletter/paths-literacy-newsletter>

Internet Archive: The American Printing House for the Blind uses Internet Archive to digitize both the Barr and Migel collections. Recently, Internet Archive started a new pilot project to improve access to eBooks for readers who are low vision. If you are interested in participating in this beta testing or have additional questions, contact Justin Gardner at jgardner@aph.org

APH Videos and Webcasts: To view APH videos and webcasts, go to: <http://www.aph.org/videos/>
Topics are listed in alphabetical order. There is a lot of great information to check out - all the way from Abacus to Word PlayHouse!



CHECK IT OUT!



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 at for users of the IDEA website to provide comments. The blog can be found at: https://sites.ed.gov/osers/2017/03/departement-of-education-seeks-comments-on-new-idea-website/?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=

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.

Heather's Camp

Heather's Camp honors the memory of Heather Suzaane Francis Muller. Her love of children and her desire to help those with special needs. The camp provides an opportunity for children with visual impairments to experience the joy of a camp program where they can acquire skills, gain confidence, find support and encouragement, and have fun.

The camp is for children who are blind/visually impaired and is open to youth ages 7-18. Although if there are kids ages 4-6 who would like to attend, they can come for the day on Saturday only (no overnights) as long as their parents will stay with them. It will be held in Estes Park on June 1-3.

The cost of camp is \$125; however, there is financial assistance available to those who may not be able to afford it. No child will be turned away if they cannot pay.

The website is www.heatherscamp.org for more information.



Save the Date!!!

National Autism Conference in Denver Colorado

Featuring: Sarah Ward, M.S., CCC-SLP & Leah Kuypers, M.A. Ed, OTR/L

December 5-6, 2018

Radisson Hotel Denver Southwest

3155 South Vaughn Way

Aurora, Colorado 8000147

Registration starts at 145—one day / 195-two days

More Details and Registration Information will be on our website: aepconnections.com by May 12, 2018

Resources and Materials

Self-Regulation Snapshot Series: Free for Downloading

**Self-Regulation Snap Shot #3:
A Focus on Elementary-Aged Children**

Support of self-regulation is critical at each stage of development from birth through young adulthood.

Self-regulation is the act of managing thoughts and feelings to enable goal-directed actions.

Self-regulation develops through interaction with caregivers and the broader environment over an extended period from birth through young adulthood (and beyond).

Caregivers support self-regulation development by using three strategies in a process called "co-regulation." Caregivers include parents, teachers, after-school care providers, extended family members, and others.

Self-regulation includes cognitive, emotional, and behavioral skills and processes that support children in coping with strong feelings, controlling impulses, learning, and getting along with others.

Self-regulation is important because it supports well-being across the lifespan, including physical, emotional, social and economic health and educational achievement.

Self-Regulation Skills Developing in Elementary-Aged Children:

- Use of self-talk to control behavior
- Cognitive flexibility/problem-solving
- Attentional control/sustained focus
- Increased delay of gratification
- Managing emotion "in the moment"
- Goals and behavior guided by empathy and concern for others
- Organization of behavior to achieve goals
- Completion of larger and more complex tasks

Self-regulation is influenced by stress and adversity in the environment, as well as caregiving supports and children's own biology, skills, and motivation.

Build Warm, Responsive Relationships

- consistent positive regard
- comfort in times of distress
- quick and sensitive response to needs

Coach Self-Regulation Skills

- problem-solving
- self-calming
- organization
- planning

Structure the Environment

- space to calm down
- task-structuring
- clear expectations
- consistent consequences

Three components of co-regulation for elementary-aged children

Check out six *Self-Regulation Snapshots* from a focus (1) a focus on infants and toddlers; (b) preschool aged children; (3) elementary-aged children; (4) middle-school aged youth, (5) high-school aged youth, and (6) young adults. Each snapshot provides a review of key concepts; a listing of the skills developing in that phase; an image of how co-regulation looks in that phase; a review of lessons learned about interventions to promote self-regulation; key considerations for promoting self-regulation in that phase, and more.

Each of the six Self-Regulation Snapshots can be found free at: <http://fpg.unc.edu/resources/self-regulation-snapshots>

APH Migel Library's Blind Musicians Collection

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) is pleased to announce the creation of a Spotify playlist representing the APH Migel Library's Blind Musicians Collection. Thought to be the only one of its kind, the collection was developed in 2015 with a grant from the H.W. Wilson Foundation. It encompasses works by and about more than 100 musicians who are visually impaired. From the works of Japan's Biwa Hoshi of the 12th Century to KSB alumnus Michael Cleveland, music has played a significant historical role in the lives, education, and livelihoods of people who are visually impaired.

To log in to listen for free, go to: https://open.spotify.com/user/migellibraryblindmusicians/playlist/7uyO8qhZzWVPKWtvZWOzfJ?si=-ikB_DeKRfGa-d_Hnybzdg





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 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 State Talent Pool Recommendations

CDE maintains a pool of talented classroom leaders who are considered distinguished teachers and principals in their communities. These educators may be candidates for advisory boards, task forces and special recognition programs.

The department seeks confidential recommendations for individuals to add to its talent pool. Candidates must have at least five years of educational experience. The deadline is Thursday, May 24. Read more information and access the recommendation form via Survey Monkey at the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2018TalentPool>



Sign up for this monthly e-newsletter to receive up-to-date information and resources on state-level issues, events and actions involving teachers. Sign up for this monthly e-newsletter to receive up-to-date information and resources on state-level issues, events and actions involving teachers.

For back copies of the SPARK newsletter and/or to sign up to receive this monthly newsletters. Please go to:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/thespark>

The CDE Vision:

All Students graduate ready for college and careers, and are prepared to be productive citizens of Colorado.

The CDE Mission:

The mission of the Colorado Department of Education is to ensure equity and opportunity for every student, every step of the way.






Calendar of Events

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

- June 1-3** **Heather's Camp** - Estes Park
 Visit: www.heatherscamp.org
- June 2** **Sensory Safari—Cheyenne Mountain Zoo—Colorado Springs, CO**
 To register contact:: Donna Keale at dkeale@cldb.org
- June 8- August 3** **Earn and Learn High School—CCB (residential)**
 Contact: Martin Becerra at mbecerra@cocenter.org
- June 8- August 3** **Summer for Success College Prep—CCB (8 week residential)**
 Contact: Martin Becerra at mbecerra@cocenter.org
- June 11-12** **Initiation to Independence Middle School—CCB (3 week residential)**
 Contact: Martin Becerra at mbecerra@cocenter.org
- June 11-22** **Confidence Camp —CCB 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
- August 3-4** **Get Ready—Get Set: Read, Write, Ready, Communicate—Go! - Westminster**
 Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us






Calendar of Events

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

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

- September 13** **Metro TVI / COMS Meeting** in Littleton
 Contact: Jeannie Lei - jlei@cherrycreekschools.org

- October 4** **Vision Resource Expo**—Pikes Peak Library—Colorado Springs, CO
 Contact: Liz at 719-635-3585 Colorado Springs DVR or Muck at 719-544-1406 Pueblo DVR

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

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

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

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

- November 15** **Metro TVI / COMS Meeting** in Cherry Creek
 Contact: Jeannie Lei - jlei@cherrycreekschools.org

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

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 at jlugo@csdb.org

- January 24** **Braille Challenge Metro Location** – Colorado Center for the Blind
 Contact: Diane Covington at dcovington@csdb.org





Calendar of Events



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

- February 7** Metro TVI / COMS Meeting in Denver
Contact: Jeannie Lei - jlei@cherrycreekschools.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
- April 25** Metro TVI / COMS Meeting - location to be determined
Contact: Jeannie Lei - jlei@cherrycreekschools.org
- May 8** Southern Region TVI/DVR & COMS Meeting—CSDB
Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org



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

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

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

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

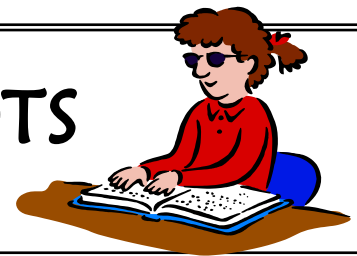
TVIs and COMSs: If you have any changes in program contact information, please Tanni these changes.

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

Send changes to: anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or to Tanni Anthony, CDE ESSU, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1100, Denver, CO 80202. Or you can leave a voice message for Tanni at (303) 866-6681. Thank you so much!



CONNECTING THE DOTS



Colorado Braille Competency Committee

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

The committee consists currently of the following individuals:

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

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

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

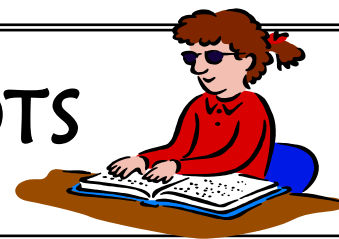
Braillewriter Repair

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





CONNECTING THE DOTS



[Provisional Guidance for Chemistry Notation Using Nemeth in UEB Contexts](#)

The BANA Chemistry Committee developed this provisional guidance for transcribing chemistry using Nemeth in UEB contexts. BANA welcomes feedback from users of this publication.

Please go to: <http://www.brailleauthority.org/mathscience/math-science.html>

You can download, print, or braille this document. Once you check it out, you can click on a link on this page to give feedback to the BANA Chemistry Committee.

New on the CDE Website!

Thanks for Brenda Shepard taking a lead role with the support of our other members of the CDE Braille Competency Committee, we once again have practice test documents on the CDE website specific to Visual Impairment, Including Blindness. Currently the following information is posted on this webpage:

http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_guidedocs

Colorado Braille Competency Practice Test Documents

The Colorado Braille Competency Practice Test Documents are only for approved candidates for the Colorado Braille Competency Test. Approved candidates include licensed teachers of students with visual impairments or braillists employed in a Colorado public school district. If a copy of the Practice Test documents is needed in braille format, please [email Tanni Anthony](mailto:Tanni Anthony) or call her at (303) 866-6681.

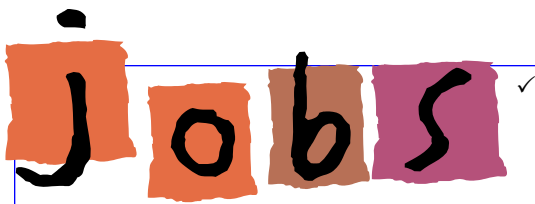
- ◆ [Colorado Braille Practice Test - Example Multiple Choice Questions \(PDF\)](#)
- ◆ [Colorado Braille Practice Test - Answers to Example Multiple Choice Questions \(PDF\)](#)

Over the next few weeks, we will also post several practice braille samples. This work is designed to support new test takers or others who may want to go in and “test the waters” of their UEB knowledge and skills.

Another excellent resource for learning /testing your UEB braille skills is the *Literary Braille Transcribing Course*, which is online and free. Under a contract with the National Library Service for the Blind and the Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress (NLS), the NFB Jernigan Institute offers this course in literary braille transcribing to teach students to transcribe print materials into braille.

Check it out at: <https://nfb.org/braille-transcribing>

Thanks for all you do in our state to ensure that we offer our students high quality braille instruction and braille instructional materials. Braille distinguishes the TVI and braillist from all other professions. It is what we do! It is literally what we do.



IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with current vacancies for the upcoming school year. 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** (1 FTE) opening in Adams 12 Schools. For more information, please contact Shari Minter at shari.l.minter@adams12.org

Southern Region – Jobs

- ✓ **CSDB** - Please be in touch with Chelle Lutz for CSDB Openings in the School for the Blind. She can be reached at (719) 578-2100 or clutz@csdb.org
- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (1 FTE) There is a new opening in District 49. The contact person is Nancy Lemmon at nlemmond@d49.org

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/or support new

Survey Says! Results from our Parent Survey!

A Family Partnership and Engagement Survey was disseminated across the state in February—March. Thank you, thank you to all who participated! Your voice has been heard! 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 96 hard copy surveys that were then entered into the database. In total (and to date), we had 174 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 parents with children enrolled in 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 the topics of advocacy for their child, cooking and cleaning at home, O&M, and low vision devices.

As a beginning step, we have decided to offer key themed opportunities for families across the school year. As a state, we will create informational content / activities that can be offered regionally and/or at a district or agency level. These themes will also be supported with content in the *Keeping in Touch* newsletters. Themes and months identified for this next school year 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

This is a first start and a good one! Thanks again to all who participated in the survey. Stay tuned about our next steps and the above noted topics that will be rolled out over the course of school year 2018-19!

just for PARENTS



About the THRIVE Center

The THRIVE Center exists to provide parents with information and training about disabilities; parent and children's rights under the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and other relevant laws; and resources in the Denver Metro area.

THRIVE Center staff:

- Provide information and skills by educating parents through advising calls, trainings, workshops, collaborating with other agencies, a comprehensive offering of resources through our website and bi-monthly e-blasts.
- Mentor parents to become independent advocates and increase their participation in school activities.
- Offer outreach to under-served groups to identify families that have children with disabilities that need information, support and services.

They also provide a variety of services: (a) parent advisement; (b) workshops; (c) IEP Volunteer Program, (d) leadership program, and (e) community and policy outreach.

For more information about the THRIVE Center and their services, please go to:

National Family Association for Deaf-Blind

NFADB is the largest nonprofit organization serving families of individuals who are deaf-blind (combined vision and hearing loss). Their website can be found at: <https://nfadb.org/>

The organization provides information on deaf-blindness, hosts webinars on a variety of topics, and is very involved in national conferences to support families of children with deaf-blindness.

Special Education Guide

This website has many resources for families who are looking to learn more about special education. There is a special education dictionary that defines many relevant terms in parent-friendly language. Additionally there are resources on early intervention, career path options, and informative disability profiles.

The weblink is: <https://www.specialeducationguide.com>

just for PARENTS



Center for
Parent Information
& Resources

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/>

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/>

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>



TRANSITION INFORMATION

Transition for Students who are Blind/Visually Impaired

Check out a great resource with many transition tips and articles. The Perkins Scout website has amazing articles on a variety of topics such as:

- ◆ Paths to Transition
- ◆ Talking from the Heart—Lie after 12th Grade
- ◆ Transition to College and Careers for Youth with Disabilities
- ◆ Age Appropriate Transition Assessment Toolkit
- ◆ Designing IEP Transition Plans
- ◆ Legal and Financial Aspects of Transition
- ◆ Career Exploration and Planning
- ◆ Self Determination
- ◆ Research on Transition

Check it out at the following website:

<http://www.perkinselearning.org/scout/transition-youth-visual-impairments>

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.

With Gratitude, We Say Farewell

Our deep gratitude to **Elaine Brown**, a TVI in Douglas County School District, who will be retiring at the end of this school year. Elaine shares... “About 24 years ago, Ruth Chizum, a TSVI with Douglas County Schools approached me with an opportunity to become a brailist. With my acceptance, she handed me a *Braille Transcriber’s Manual* and a Perkins braille and said, “Here, learn this. Let me know if you need any help.” Thus, began Elaine’s journey with the Vision Department. Elaine notes, that it has been a remarkable journey filled with learning, her favorite thing! For years, Elaine’s colleagues urged her to complete her Bachelor’s degree and enter the program to become a TSVI. With their amazing support, she was able to complete her program in December of 2011. Elaine shared that she has loved being a TSVI: the students, my colleagues, the conferences, the learning. She will miss it all, but looks forward to her new journey of giving piano lessons, learning about woodworking and other crafts, and just being “Grandma. We thank Elaine for all her contributions since those long ago days when she entered our field: first, as a brailist and then later with her continued dedication in the role of as a teacher of students with visual impairments.



◆ **Janet Anderson** will be retiring at the end of this school year. Janet has worked in Aurora Public Schools (APS) as an itinerant teacher of students with blindness / visual impairment and an Orientation & Mobility Specialist for 27 years. She also spent four years as an Early Childhood Special Education Teacher in APS, as well. Janet has dedicated a lifetime of service to students in the field of blindness and visual impairments. She has willingly taken on many additional responsibilities, organized countless activities, mentored student teachers, practiced a high degree of integrity, and engaged in hundreds of professional development trainings.

Janet is someone who believes in all of her students, from those that are little preschoolers to those ready to graduate and transition to adulthood, regardless of their innate ability. Janet desires to challenge each and every one of them and encourages them to be as independent as possible. Janet sets her goals high and challenges those around her to rise to those high standards as well. She is a leader in sharing knowledge and making a positive difference. Janet is one of the

kindest and most thoughtful people that you could ever know. She works tirelessly in advocating for her students to get them what they need in order to be successful.

Janet has gone above and beyond the call of duty to serve the larger needs of our field. She has always done a little extra, which has set her apart. Throughout her career, Janet has developed numerous relationships with students, parents, teachers, other providers and outside agencies. While engaging in these relationships, she has built trust while spreading joy and happiness along the way. Janet has been instrumental in many of our careers and we know her legacy will continue.

It is a great loss for Aurora Public Schools and the field of Visual Impairment and Blindness as Janet prepares to retire. We wish for only good things to follow this amazing girl from North Dakota for the rest of her life. This is merely the end of one chapter. More great things are still to come! In her retirement, she is looking forward to having the ability to travel more frequently. Up next on the agenda are trips to Sturgis and Ireland. Thank you to Janet and all that is ahead! And congratulations once again on receiving the CAER Lifetime Achievement Award!

With Gratitude, We Say Farewell



Saying Goodbye to Her Little Office at West High School

◆ As of June 2018, **Cheryl Leidich** will retire from Denver Public Schools after 40 years of teaching students with special needs. Cheryl began this journey when she was in graduate school in San Diego, pursuing a master's degree in psychology. For a class project, she volunteered at the SDSU Lab School for students with special needs, in a class for students with sensory impairments (vision and/or hearing). One month in and she was hooked! She then transferred to SFSU (San Francisco) and re-started her master's with a new focus: teaching students with visual and auditory impairments. It was a great program and Cheryl shares she was lucky to have several professors who were leaders in the field, including Drs. Phil Hatlen, Sally Mangold, Georgie Lee Abel, Barbara Franklin and Pete Wurtzburger.

On completion of her MA degree, Cheryl took a job working for San Mateo County Public Schools in a classroom for students who had vision and hearing loss due to rubella. After 3 years, she left the Bay Area to move to a small town in Utah where her husband, Mike, was working on setting up an oil shale project. She got a job with Uintah County Schools teaching in an elementary school resource room where there were several students with hearing impairments. Living and working in a small town in Utah was quite an adventure and full of great opportunities for snow and water skiing, river rafting, camping, sailing etc., but after 3 years, they were ready to move on and landed in Golden, CO!

Golden is where Cheryl's husband had gone to college and where his great grandparents had settled in the 1800s. Cheryl had two small children and was not really looking for a job, when she received a call from the coordinator of the DPS vision and hearing programs. She had heard that Cheryl was a dually certified teacher and offered her a job over the phone! When school started in September, Cheryl was working for Denver Public Schools as an Itinerant TVI and O&M Specialist.

Cheryl shared that, "My 34 years with DPS have zoomed by, but I have always loved my job and can never remember a day that I was bored at work. I feel lucky to have known great co-workers, professionals from around Colorado, and people of all ages who are visually impaired. Working with students who are visually impaired has been a continual learning experience for me, my four children, my husband, and all those friends and relatives who have volunteered to help with projects and outings over the years." We thank Cheryl for such an impactful (and wonderfully long) tenure in DPS—she has made so many contributions to our state and profession. Safe travels to you ahead, Cheryl!!

◆ **Erin Keller** will be leaving Adams 12 School District, where she has served as a TVI and COMS for the past few years. Erin and her family will be moving to Corvallis, Oregon. Erin will be greatly missed by her school district colleagues and all who had the chance to know her during her time in Colorado. Enjoy that wonderful Oregon coast, Erin! Thank you for your time with us!

◆ It is time to say goodbye to **Tesia Nasehi** who has been teaching elementary, middle, and high school social studies, as well as recreation and leisure, at CSDB for two years. She will be moving back to Florida to work for Lighthouse Central Florida as an itinerant (center and home-based) TVI. Tesia's mother has been the CEO of Lighthouse Central Florida for quite some time, and Tesia shares that she is dedicating [her](#) homecoming to her mom and her brother, who is blind and has severe additional disabilities, and is in need of several intensive services at the moment. All the best to you, Tesia! Family is always the most important part of life. We hope there is a time when it works for you to come back to Colorado!

With Gratitude, We Say Farewell

◆ **Janis Mountford** is retiring from Greeley School District. Her career began as a Teacher of Students with Blindness/Visual Impairments in Toronto, Ontario, Canada and she subsequently came to the United States to further her education at the University of Northern Colorado. After earning a Master's degree in 1992, Janis returned to Canada to continue teaching in the field of blindness and visual impairment. She married her husband, David Kappan in 1993 and relocated, once again, to Greeley. After teaching at the Anchor Center for Blind Children for a period of 2 years, Janis accepted a position with Weld County School District Six, where she has taught for the past 23 years. These are the mileposts of her professional journey, but the path she traveled was, more importantly, marked by the students, parents, and colleagues that she has been privileged to know.

Janis notes that special colleagues, students, and staff have been present throughout her tenure with District Six. She has had good fortune and the honor of learning from and being supported by numerous co-workers, administrators, and from the students themselves. Janis shares, "I am grateful for the opportunities to learn as well as teach, and I could not have succeeded without their help. My sincere gratitude goes out to those who were there for me as I served the District. It is my intent to stay involved in the field in some capacity in the upcoming years, and I look forward to watching the services we provide continue to enrich the lives of our students. My warmest regards go out to all of you who have made my journey memorable." We thank Janis for all she has given to our field and to Colorado students.



◆ **Brandon Mapes** will be leaving his current positions in the outback part of our state at the end of this school year. Brandon worked as a vision paraprofessional in Jefferson County for two years while attending Northern Colorado's TVI/COMS masters program. He then worked as a TVI in Michigan for a year before returning to Colorado where he has worked as a TVI and COMS for Mountain BOCES and Summit County for the last seven years. Inspired by his colleagues and students, Brandon has been involved with recreation-based summer and winter programming for youth who are blind/visually impaired in Colorado and Wyoming for the last several years. In order to be closer to family, he is moving to the mountains of northern Vermont with his wife, Abby. Brandon is excited for the move, but also plans on visiting Colorado often in the future!

◆ We say farewell to **Karissa Johnson**, who has been with CSDB for two years at the end of this school year. Karissa taught elementary social studies, Middle/High School Sciences, and Assistive Technology in this role. This last school year, she had the opportunity to collaborate with public school teachers to ensure the success of students. Additionally, she was one of two Student Body Government sponsors for the School for the Blind. Karissa will be moving to Orlando, Florida where she has accepted a TVI position with Lighthouse Central Florida. She will be working mainly with secondary students within the community and in the home with a focus on Assistive Technology and Daily Living skills. Karissa shares that she is thankful for the colleagues that she has had the opportunity to learn from in Colorado, her principal Jamie Lugo, and all of her students whom remind her every day why she became a teacher. All the best to you, Karissa!

◆ Thank you and farewell to **Andrea Simkins**, who has worked a TVI / Preschool -Early Education Specialist for CSDB for the past five years. Andrea's husband is in the military and they will be traveling the world for the next many years! Wow! We wish Andrea and her family all the best in the adventures ahead!



colorado connections

- ◆ Congratulations to **Dana McMullen** on her new position as a TVI/COMS with Douglas County School District, which will start this August. Dana attended Florida State University for both her undergraduate and graduate programs in TVI/O&M. Dana moved to Colorado in 2014 to complete her Orientation and Mobility internship at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and has been teaching O&M to adults with visual impairments at DVR since this time. Dana shares that she has fully embraced the active lifestyle that Coloradans lead. Her favorite hobbies include hiking, camping and snowboarding. Dana and her boyfriend own a home in the southwest Denver area and have two dogs named Leo and Suri. Dana shared that she is really looking forward to this new path and the opportunity to work with such an amazing group of professionals here in Colorado!
- ◆ **Kimala Rein** is now on board with A Shared Vision! Kimala has been working in the field of vision impairment since she graduated from UNC in 2008. She earned her undergraduate degree from Fort Lewis College in Durango. Kamala is also a certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist. She has worked with older blind population, with school-age population, but mostly she has worked with infants and toddlers. This is where her passions lies! She has worn two hats, one as a developmental specialist and one as a teacher of children with vision impairment. Kamala worked in Alaska's Early Intervention Program for vision impairment for 7 years. She also worked as a COMS for New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Preschool for one year. Currently she splits her time between contracting for Alaska's 0 to 3 programs and working with A Shared Vision on the Western Slope. She spits her home time with her family in both Grand Junction and Alaska. Kamila shares that she is thrilled to be working in Colorado. The similarities between western Colorado and Alaska are amazing. She notes that both places are full of great early intervention teams, great families, and the great outdoors.
- ◆ We will have a new face in Cherry Creek this fall. **Colleen Lydon** will join the TVI / COMS team. She is a new graduate from Illinois State University as a TVI. Once she is on board, we will properly introduce Colleen, but know she is coming our way!
- ◆ One of our own students in Colorado made the National Braille Challenge finals! **Ty Gillespie**, student of **Jeannie Lei**, scored in the top ten of the Sophomore level. Congratulations to Ty and Jeanie! This is such exciting news!
- ◆ Hats off to **Natalie Palmer** of Denver Public School District for earning her CDE Certificate of Braille Competency! A number of people have been busy earning braille renewal hours: **Danielle Burden**, **Donice Fennimore**, **Ashley Ives**, and **Will Reynolds**. Thanks to proctors **Brenda Shepard**, **Chris Maynard**, and **Julie Wetzstein**.
- ◆ Congratulations to Centennial BOCES' **Abby Horner and her husband Shaun** who welcomed baby Owen on April 13th at 10:57 a.m. He was 7 pounds and 8 ounces and 20 1/2 inches long. We are so happy for your family with this new bundle of joy! So fun to watch the growth of a young life!





colorado connections

- ◆ Colorado was well represented at the April 15-19 Deafblind International Conference, which was held in Hyannis, MA. There were over 400 attendees and 20 counties represented! In attendance were: **Gena Francouer Anderson, Tanni Anthony, Sandy Bowen, Gina Herrera, Cassie Kooyers, and Silvia Correa-Torres.** Gena, Tanni, Sandy, Gina, and Silvia provided presentations at the conference
- ◆ A big thank you to our two presenters at the May 4-5, 2018 CDE Orientation and Mobility Seminar. **Dr. Wendy Sapp** provided the full day Friday session on the topic of understanding the impact of deaf-blindness on developing and using O&M concepts and skills. I am grateful to Wendy for being a strong advocate of O&M assessment and services for all children with visual impairment, including blindness and deaf-blindness. Also a huge thank you to **Susan Chandler** who provided the Saturday session on mindfulness, postural stability, and movement control. I think all involved were impressed with simple techniques to improve balance and spatial perception.
- ◆ Thank you also to so many Colorado COMS who attended the CDE O&M Seminar; we had about a 99% turn out! We had an impressive range of providers who serve infants and toddlers exclusively up to our vocational rehabilitation-based O&M Specialists all the way to most of our providers serving our school-age population. I am always impressed with our statewide O&M talent!
- ◆ Hats off to **Jessica Hanks** and **Elise Darrow** of the Anchor Center for Blind Children for their upcoming presentation at the SWAAAC Conference that will be held in June. They be presenting a session on "Experience Books for Children with Visual Impairments."
- ◆ Thanks to two really amazing women who provide the administrative support to all of the CDE funded / sponsored activities specific to blindness/visual impairment and the activities funded through the state Deaf-Blind Grant Project. **Debora Toliver** has done the entry of ALL of the articles for the *Keeping in Touch* newsletters, scheduled people coming into CDE for braille competency testing, did the many needed arrangements and paperwork for Vision Coalition and BVI-specific trainings, and provided continual support for the many tasks that come her way. As we went to press on this newsletter, I learned the news that Debora will be leaving CDE for another position. A sincere thank you to Debora for all of her support over the past many years! **Janet Zimmermann** maintains our DB lending library, the census database, and makes all the needed arrangements for the DB Advisory and Summer Institutes. Thank you so much to Janet for all that she does to support our student, families, and services providers connected with the Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project.



Thank you for another amazing school year!
Wishing each of you a restful and

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25-43E-3401

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