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By Tanni L. Anthony

KEEPING IN TOUCH!

A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers
 of Colorado Children Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired
 August—September 2019

I begin this school year with recycling and revising a title article that I wrote for our newsletter a few years back. The theme still resonates and it seems like a good way to begin our school year together. Wayne and I had the privilege of making a trip to South Africa on several occasions and twice where we experienced a visit to Robben Island, the location of the prison where Nelson Mandela was held for 18 of the 27 years he spent behind bars. After his release, the Robben Island Prison was closed, but continues to be a place where visitors can come to learn about that part of South Africa's history. Ours was a somber trip, but with some heartfelt and hopeful discoveries. One of the mantras of the political prisoners at that time, was "each one, teach one." As such, the prisoners set about to ensure that each person could read and write. People came away with an education at the hands of their imprisoned brethren. Some of these individuals went onto to be, and still are to this day, political leaders of their country. Education is a powerful tool and "each one, teach one" is a stunning lesson of how the human spirit and life conditions can be lifted with the empowerment of literacy, working together, and attention to the learning needs of each person.

While our conditions are hardly to be compared to such an extreme prison life, the manta made me think of our work here in Colorado; how hard we work to ensure that all children, should and must be educated with high expectations, with the full access to high quality and effective instruction, and with emphasis on each individual child's right to fully maximized results. Our literacy focus has expanded over recent years to include our children with additional disabilities and we are showing progress in our state accountability measures, and most importantly, with individual children who thrive when given meaningful opportunities to learn. The work to mandate that our READ Act is accessible to all learners is one example of ensuring all our students have opportunities for literacy instruction. As this new school year rolls out, I hope we embrace "Each One, Teach One" as daily and year long mantra to promote advocacy for and provision of successful literacy instruction for each child.

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**Colorado Definitions, Resources, Professional Learning, and Support Activities
Specific to Children and Youth who are Blind/Visually Impaired, Their Families and Service Providers
for School Year 2019-20**

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

Acronyms:

CCB	Colorado Center for the Blind
CDE ESSU	Colorado Department of Education Exceptional Student Services Unit
CIMC	Colorado Instructional Materials Center
CMAS	Colorado Measures of Academic Success
COMS	Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist
CSDB	Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind
O&M	Orientation and Mobility
TVI or TSVI	Teacher of students with visual impairments
USABA	United States Association of Blind Athletes

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

A Shared Vision: This 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is Colorado’s leading provider of early intervention vision services for children who are blind or visually impaired or have vision concerns. Their goal is to ensure that all families of children with visual impairments, from birth to age three, have access to and receive essential early intervention services specific to blindness, visual impairment or vision concerns from a community of highly skilled and collaborative professionals.

A Shared Vision’s services include: home-based services and specialty co-visits; hospital visits and consultation services for in-patient children; community visits, ophthalmology appointments, childcare and educational programs; community outreach programs; Family Assessments; Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP); Functional Vision Assessments (FVA), initial and annual reviews, including learning styles, learning media assessments, Teller Acuity testing; transition support from Part C to Part B; Community Centered Board transdisciplinary team meetings; professional development trainings and presentations in pediatric blindness and visual impairment; and internship opportunities for students in pursuit of degrees in early intervention or visual impairment services. For more information, contact Paula Landry at plandry@asharedvision.org.

Anchor Center for Blind Children: Headquartered in Denver for over 37 years, Anchor Center for Blind Children specializes in serving children with visual impairments or combined vision and hearing loss during their most formative years of development, birth – five years. Staffed by a transdisciplinary team of highly trained teachers of students with visual impairments, therapists and ophthalmologists, Anchor Center’s vision services are customized to meet each child’s unique needs and strengths. Families also receive support, guidance, practical knowledge, and connections to other important resources. Anchor Center’s primary programming includes: vision assessments and pediatric ophthalmology exams; infant (newborn – 18 months), toddler (18 months – 3 years), and preschool (3 – 5 years) programs; occupational, physical, and speech/language therapies; recreational, music, and horticultural therapies; summer camp and respite care; and family support, including programs for caregivers and siblings. Anchor Center charges a nominal tuition fee for toddler and preschool programs, but does not charge for infant services; no child is ever denied access to services based on the family’s inability to pay. In the 2018-19 school year, Anchor Center served over 220 children, caregivers and siblings in home and community based settings, and at their state-of-the-art facility in the Stapleton neighborhood, located at: 2550 Roslyn Street, Denver, CO 80238. For more information, please visit the Anchor Center website at www.anchorcenter.org or call (303) 377-9732.

Audio Information Network of Colorado: Audio Information Network of Colorado (AINC), a non-profit (501) (c) (3), is the only service in Colorado providing audio access to local newspapers, grocery discount ads, transit guides, nutrition tips, and health promotion materials. Audio public service announcements for local events, services, and resources link listeners to their communities. Live interviews with interesting people are popular in Spanish and English. History, science, nature, and technology programs stimulate and entertain. Audio content allows listeners to make informed civic, economic, and health decisions; connect to their communities; maintain independence; and have a higher quality of life. AINC was founded in 1990 by David Dawson, who is blind. Mr. Dawson served as Executive Director for nearly 30 years, retiring in late 2018. Kim Wardlow, previously AINC Marketing Director for 17 years, was chosen to be the new Executive Director.

AINC is working on expanding its programming that is of interest to middle school and high school students as well as young adults. Students at the Colorado School for the Blind participated in a survey to identify areas of interest. The top three were careers, gaming, and suicide prevention. Additional input from students and teachers is welcome. New programming will be available in podcast format for access on smartphones, tablets, and computers. Pilot projects with Amazon Echoes are underway. For more information, go to www.aincolorado.org or call (303)786-7777 or (877)-443-2001.

Braille and Large Print Format Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) Test Review: During previous assessment administrations, TVIs had the opportunity to meet with the CDE Unit of Student Assessment and the CMAS publisher to review braille CMAS tests. There will be continued work specific to these assessments and educators are always needed. If you are interested in signing up for the educator pool, please contact Mindy Roden, Special Education Assessment Specialist, at roden_m@cde.state.co.us or at (303) 866.6709.

Cane Quest: Cane Quest is a challenging orientation and mobility contest for students in grades 3-12. CSDB sponsors an annual Cane Quest event. This school year, it will be on May 1, 2020. For more information, contact Lisa VanDam at lvandam@csdb.org

Colorado Administrative Units: The term “administrative Unit” (AU) means a school district, board of cooperative services, or the State Charter School Institute, that is providing educational services to exceptional children and is responsible for the local administration of the Exceptional Children Education Act. For purposes of the education of school age (ages three through 21 years) children with visual impairment, including blindness, an administrative unit can be the family’s local school district, as well as the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. There are currently 78 administrative units in Colorado. The vast majority (over 90%) of school-age students with visual impairments, including blindness are served in their neighborhood school district with a locally hired TVI and/or Orientation and Mobility Specialist (s). Some administrative units may use contract services for their TVI(s) and Orientation and Mobility services. For questions about main contact personnel for students with visual impairments, including blindness or deaf-blindness in each administrative unit, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

CAER -- Colorado Chapter of AER: As professionals who serve the community of individuals who are blind/visually impaired, we have an active Colorado chapter of the national Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER for short!) professional organization. Within our specialized field, there are a number of ways to access continuing education, network with peers and learn to serve the needs of our clients and students more effectively. The current CAER board is comprised of members from school district administration units, the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, and the Colorado Center for the Blind. For more information about scheduled meetings and activities for member benefit, please contact Nancy Cozart at Cozart_N@cde.state.co.us or (303)-905-4074.

CAER Annual Awards Banquet and Business Meeting: This special event occurs in conjunction with the annual CDE O&M Seminar. The evening banquet is a time to celebrate colleagues and friends and to announce the recipients of the following awards: the Gary Schmidt Award, the Connections Award, the President’s Award, the Ken Neve Award, and the Lifetime Achievement Award. Information will be emailed in February 2020 to ask for nominations of awards and to provide more details about the date of the 2020 Awards Banquet and Annual Business Meeting.

CAER Mini Grants: CAER provides mini-grants to current AER members or those sponsored by an AER member. The maximum amount of the funds available will vary, but the allotted amount per grant must not exceed \$300. Recipients are only eligible to receive a mini-grant once every two years. Recipients need to fulfill their obligation to provide CAER with their product of how the mini-grant funds were used within 90 days of check issue. Applications are accepted throughout the year and are due November 1st for review. Mini-grants are awarded every year in November.

CAER Reimbursement for ACVREP Certification: Reimbursement for initial (\$100) and renewal (\$50) certification through ACVREP may be available to Colorado members. After receiving your initial and/or renewal, please submit a copy of the certification and letter requesting reimbursement to CAER at caerboard@gmail.com.> To apply, you must provide proof of AER membership.

Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Braille Competency Certification: Funds have been reserved for five braille proctors (Nancy Cozart, Christine Maynard, Brenda Shepard, Sarah Sonnier, and Julie Wetzstein) to provide opportunities to TVIs / Braillists to take the Colorado Braille Competency Test and/or the 15+ clock-hours of CDE established renewal modules. Jo Pinto is our braille proofreader. Care must be taken to spread out the completion of the modules over the five-year-renewal period so that competency can be truly demonstrated across a period of five years. For information about the State of Colorado braille competency testing and renewal requirements, please go to http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_guidedocs. For more information, please contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

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

CDE Braille Mentors: Our amazing CDE Braille Committee personnel (Nancy Cozart, Chris Maynard, Brenda Shepard, Sarah Sonnier, and Julie Wetzstein) are available to provide mentoring to TVIs who need support in preparing for a minimum of a second round of the Colorado Braille Competency Test. Please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681 for more information.

CDE Keeping in Touch (KIT) Newsletter: This newsletter started 25-plus years ago when personnel across the state talked about a lack of communication continuity. It has mostly been a labor of love internal to CDE, but there are some great folks who actively contribute to each edition or from time-to-time. Please consider being one of them – there is always room to boast about the accomplishments of a colleague, post an announcement, or to share an article. The newsletter is sent out to CO parents of children and youth who are blind/visually impaired, TVIs, COMS, braillists, and VI paraeducators. It is also posted on the CDE Blindness/ Low Vision website for others to download. The following editions are planned for this school year: August / September 2019, October 2019, November / December 2019, January / February 2020, March / April 2020, and May 2020. For more information, please contact Tanni at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681. Back copies of the most recent newsletters can be found at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_activities

CDE Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics: This is the 22nd anniversary of the inception of the Low Vision Evaluation Clinics! The Low Vision Evaluation Team is once again funded for five regional clinics. This is a collaborative partnership with CSDB. The clinic team consists of an optometrist specializing in low vision services (Dr. Tom Theune), a certified low vision therapists / TVI (Jim Olson and Wendy Stoltman), and a Clinic Coordinator (Debbie Haberkorn). The dates of the 2019-20 clinics will be posted in the *Keeping in Touch* newsletter, as are the local site coordinators for each clinic. The site coordinators make arrangements for the host site and help coordinate the needed paperwork for the participating students.

For more information, contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681. For access to the clinic paperwork, please go to: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_activities. For more information and/or to purchase devices prescribed at the clinic, contact Debbie Haberkorn, the Statewide Clinic Coordinator, at (719) 578-2197 or dhaberkorn@csdb.org

CDE Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Seminar: This training is co-sponsored by the CDE ESSU. The topics and dates for this training are under discussion for a national-level speaker(s). Please share your training ideas and needs with Tanni. The contact person is Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

CDE State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment: The focus of this year's state training will be the Unified Braille Code from a math perspective. Dates and location are currently being determined. The training may involve a webinar and/or face-to face training based on the identified needs of Colorado school-based TVIs and brailleists. The contact person is Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

CDE TVI COMS listserv: This listserv is exclusively for Colorado TVIs and O&M Specialists working in Colorado AUs. It is a venue for professionals to share information, ask questions, and secure information. Persons wishing to be added to the listserv should contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

CDE TVI / O&M Specialist Coaching Project: The goal is to provide instructional coaching assistance to students enrolled in the UNC Visual Impairment Program, as well as TVIs and/or O&M Specialists in Colorado administrative units. These individuals can request support on any topic of need. We are thrilled to offer the support services of veteran TVIs/ Orientation and Mobility Specialists with incredible teaching experience. Check out the bios of Wendy Stoltman and Shelley Moats in this first newsletter. For more information or to ask for instructional coaching assistance, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

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

CDE Web Pages Specific to Visual Impairment and Deaf-Blindness:

- ⇒ Deaf-Blindness – <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-db>
- ⇒ NIMAS / NIMC - <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/nimas>
- ⇒ Orientation and Mobility - <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/rs-om>
- ⇒ Visual Impairment, Including Blindness - <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision>

Colorado Center for the Blind (CCB) Youth Program: Throughout the school year and over the summer, the CCB offers learning, social, and recreation programs to students who are blind/visually impaired. There are a host of fabulous opportunities for students across Colorado. For more information, please contact Martin Becerra at mbecerra@cocenter.org or (303) 778-1130.

Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC): Housed on the campus of CSDB, the role of the CIMC is to provide braille and large print textbooks and serve as a repository for APH educational materials for all Colorado students ages birth through twelfth grade who are blind/visually impaired. The CIMC also houses a lending library of professional materials for access by TVIs. The CIMC receives substantial funding through an Interagency Agreement between CDE and the CSDB. Funding is provided by federal IDEA funds flowed to CSDB from CDE.

The CIMC hosts an email distribution list for all brailleists in Colorado, contact Debbie Haberkorn at dhaberkorn@csdb.org, to be added to the group. For CIMC questions or assistance, contact CIMC staff at (719) 579-2196 or Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org. CIMC webpage: www.csdb.org; click on "Programs and Services," "Outreach", then "CIMC."

Colorado Instructional Materials Center Brailleist Scholarships: The CIMC has a scholarship fund to assist brailleists from Colorado with their registration fees to attend the annual National Braille Association (NBA) Professional Development Conference. Scholarship recipients are asked to share the conference information with other Colorado brailleists. Conference information is posted at www.nationalbraille.org. For more information, contact Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org or (719) 578-2195.

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB): The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind is a state funded school within the Colorado Department of Education. The school was established for the purpose of providing comprehensive educational services for children, birth to age 21, who are blind/visually impaired and/or deaf/hard of hearing. Services are provided directly to students enrolled at the school, and outreach programs service students, staff, and families in communities throughout Colorado. There is no tuition charge for students to attend CSDB, which is located in Colorado Springs. CSDB is required to follow all state-education laws that apply to other public school programs. Parents may choose to enroll their child who has blindness or a visual impairment after conversation about placement with their school district Special Education Director or Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. For more information about CSDB, contact Kathy Emter, CSDB Special Education Director, at (719) 578-2177 or kemter@csdb.org

CSDB Internship Placements: CSDB offers an educational setting with a diverse student population for university students completing their graduate training in vision to obtain internship or student teaching credits. Contact: Tera Wilkins, CSDB Director of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction Coordinator, at twilkins@csdb.org or (719) 694-2003 video phone.

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

CSDB Psychological Assessments and Consultation: Psychological assessments (cognitive and social emotional) provided to school districts to assist school districts in developing appropriate educational services and supports for students with vision losses. There is a fee for this service. Contact Laura Douglas, Director of Outreach Programs and Services at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) at (719) 578-2110 or ldouglas@csdb.org for more information.

CSDB Role Model Videos: The CSDB Role Model Videos are designed to provide students who are blind or visually impaired, their parents and teachers the opportunity to understand life experiences of successful adult role models who are blind and visually impaired. The role models speak to their vision conditions, use of adaptive devices, independence as an adult, thoughts for parents, interpersonal skills, and why they feel they are successful adults. <http://tinyurl.com/yamlqmag>

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

Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project (also called the Colorado Deaf-Blind Project): As of October 1 of this year the project will be in the first year of a new five-year grant cycle! There are currently 142 children and youth, age birth through 21 years, who have combined vision and hearing loss (deaf-blindness) in Colorado. Free technical assistance is provided the families and service providers of children and youth with combined vision and hearing loss (deaf-blindness). The project hosts an annual Summer Institute, which focuses key assessment of and intervention / instructional strategies for children and youth who are deaf-blind and/or who have significant support needs. The project website has over 100 fact sheets (in English and Spanish) on information specific to deaf-blindness. The library is open to parents and professionals and is stocked with great resources, including about 100 items specific to visual impairment. The library's inventory is listed on the website, where there also is a downloadable book-loan order form. For more information about the CO Deafblind Project's free technical assistance services, contact Project Co-Directors Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681 or Gina Herrera at Herrera_g@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6605 and/or go the project's continually updated webpage: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-DB.asp>

Colorado Talking Book Library (CTBL): For people who cannot read standard print, CTBL provides free audio, Braille and large print books keeping you connected to reading, stories and adventure. Books and magazines go through the mail postage paid. Audio and braille books are available for download through the BARD mobile app for either iOS or Android. For more information, contact the library via email at ctbl.info@cde.state.co.us or by phone toll free at 1-800-685-2136.

Eligibility – Deaf-Blindness: The determination of whether a school-age (ages three to 21 years) child meets the eligibility criteria as a “child with deaf-blindness” is the responsibility of the local administrative unit’s Individual Education Program (IEP) team, which includes the child’s parents, and is based on state approved eligibility criteria. For children who are entering the public school district from an early intervention program (ages birth through two years) or a private early childhood program, eligibility for school-based special education services and supports cannot be predetermined by personnel associated with these early-years programs. The school-based IEP team will determine further the need for an intervener to work with the individual child. If there are questions about the school-age eligibility process, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

Eligibility – Visual Impairment, Including Blindness: The determination of whether a school-age (ages three to 21 years) child meets the eligibility criteria as a “child with visual impairment, including blindness” is the responsibility of the local administrative unit’s Individual Education Program (IEP) team, which includes the child’s parents, and is based on state approved eligibility criteria. For children who are entering the public school district from an early intervention program (ages birth through two years) or a private early childhood program, eligibility for school-based special education services and supports cannot be predetermined by personnel associated with these programs. If there are questions about the school-age eligibility process, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681. Please note that the eligibility criteria for VIB is under review for changes in this school year.

Foresight Ski Guides: Foresight Ski Guides served upwards of 50 students with visual disabilities from more than 5 Colorado school districts plus CSDB during the 2018-19 ski season in Vail and Beaver Creek. The season ended with the Randy Witte Champions Weekend and Race an event that showcases those students who have mastered basic skiing skills and are recommended by their TVI’s. Students came with school groups and their TVIs while others came with their parents and families. Every student new to skiing or snowboarding learned how to ski or snowboard with instruction from the Vail Adaptive Ski School instructors and how to be guided by the experienced Foresight guides. Some students returned with their skiing skills learned from prior years and experienced the joy and freedom of skiing as they put those skills to the test. During the students visit they will receive lift tickets, top end ski or snowboard equipment, and lodging at no cost. Foresight Ski Guides can partner with TVIs, districts and parents to address several important areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum for the Blind, as well as Colorado State Standards for Physical Education for your students.

Bring your students to Vail for the most fun they might ever experience, all while learning important life skills including a sport they can safely enjoy throughout their lifetime with family and friends. Coming this fall – How work with Foresight Ski Guides may qualify as a tool in your IEP Toolbox. Stay tuned or contact Christine Holmberg, Foresight Program Director, at (303) 506-3859 or email at foresightskiguides@gmail.com. You can also follow Foresight on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and visit their website at foresightskiguides.org.

National Braille Challenge: The Colorado regional contest will again be held at CSDB and CCB during the 2019-2020 school year. Students may also compete individually in their home school with their TVI administering the tests. Students compete in various categories such as spelling, reading comprehension, speed and accuracy, proofreading, and charts and graphs.

Mark your calendars for the Braille Challenge at CSDB, which will be held on January 16, 2020 and for the Braille Challenge at the Colorado Center for the Blind, which will be held on January 23, 2020. For more information about the CSDB-based Braille Challenge event, contact Jamie Lugo at jlugo@csdb.org. For more information about the Metro Braille Challenge at the Colorado Center for the Blind, contact Diane Taylor at dtaylor@csdb.org. Please visit www.brailleinstitute.org for additional information about the National Braille Challenge.

See the Future Fund: In 1997, Dr. Tom Theune had an idea to create significant, merit-based scholarships to inspire and support the pursuit of higher education for visually impaired and blind students in Colorado. The mission is to provide financial assistance to visually impaired and blind students who are residents of Colorado. This assistance is used to encourage and support the pursuit of higher education, which will enhance both career and personal success. Since the inception of the See the Future Fund, over \$550,000 has been awarded to 109 recipients embarking on numerous careers including accounting, business, teaching, computer engineering, massage therapy and many more. The application for this year's scholarships are due by March 1, 2020. For more information and to find the application, go to: <https://www.seethefuture.org/home.html>

Tools for Life: The mission of this project is to provide financial assistance to the families of students who are blind/visually impaired (Pre-K – transition) who are residents of Colorado. This assistance is to help purchase necessary adaptive equipment, which students may own and utilize in their home, school, and community. These tools will help support literacy and the pursuit of high education. Since 2007, \$230,000 has been awarded to over 120 families. The application deadline is October 15, 2019. For more information and to find the application, go to: <https://www.seethefuture.org/home.html>

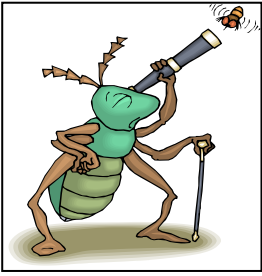
University of Northern Colorado VI Program: The UNC offers an Online Master of Arts Degree Program / Visual Impairment. This program will provide teacher candidates with the skills and knowledge to help students with visual impairments meet their potential in academic and social areas of their lives and prepares teachers-in-training to work with students from birth to age 21 with a special emphasis on the needs of early childhood and elementary-aged students. The program has been a bedrock for filling Colorado TVI and O&M Specialist positions. Dr. Paula Conroy is the Program Coordinator. Go to: <https://extended.unco.edu/programs/special-education-visual-impairment-masters/>

UNC Non-degree Licensure Orientation and Mobility Program: This UNC program provides an endorsement in orientation and mobility. Approved by the national accreditation body, the Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals (AVREP), the O&M endorsement program is for students who have a master's degree in visual impairment or who are in the process of obtaining a Master of Arts in visual impairment. The program has one on-campus requirement of four weeks during one summer. Dr. Paula Conroy is the Program Coordinator. For more information, contact: <https://extended.unco.edu/current/graduate/sped-om-end-ol-gre/>

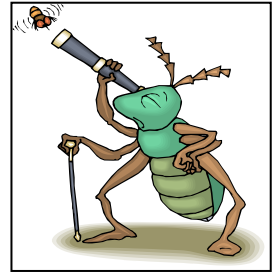
United States Association of Blind Athletes: USABA is a Colorado-based 501(c) (3) organization that provides life-enriching sports opportunities for every individual with a visual impairment. A member of the U.S. Olympic Committee, USABA provides athletic opportunities in various sports including, but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

Vision Coalition: The Vision Coalition is a statewide advisory committee on the educational activities for students who are blind/visually impaired, support activities for their parents, and professional development activities specific to their service providers. Members include: Deb Andrews (Southern Region), Tanni Anthony (CDE ESSU), Martin Becerra (Colorado Center for the Blind), Melinda Carter (Anchor Center for Blind Children), Paula Conroy (UNC), Nancy Cozart (Metro region and CAER), Jayme Cusimano (CSDB BVI Outreach), Julia Hutchison (Northern region), Julie King (Western region), Paula Landry, (A Shared Vision), Jamie Lugo (School for the Blind– CSDB), Jim Olson (CIMC), and Michelle Reed (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation). The VC meets three times a school year. For more information, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6681.

Western Region Early Intervention Conference: This rotating regional conference will be held in Broomfield, CO on September 11-13, 2019. Colorado hosts include A Shared Vision, Anchor Center for Blind Children, CSDB, CDE, Hands and Voices, and the Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project. The theme of the conference is *Aim High: Elevating our Early intervention Practices*. The conference will offer a full-day preconference session featuring Dr. Corinna Bauer who will address *Fundamentals in Vision and Brain Development for Cerebral / Cortical Visual Impairment*. Concurrent sessions on September 12 and 13th will have strands specific to blindness/visual impairment, deaf-blindness, and deafness/hard of hearing. To check out the conference details, go to www.wreic.org. Just over 65 TVIs are being sponsored by the Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss to attend the preconference session with Dr. Bauer.



LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



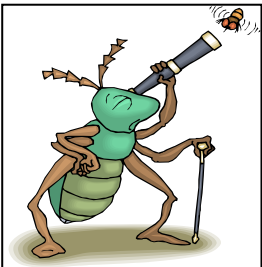
Low Vision Regional Evaluation Clinics for School Year 2019-2020

Region	Dates	Site Coordinator
Western Region	September 20-21, 2019 All paperwork due September 4, 2019	Angela Sims
Southern Region	September 27, 2019 All paperwork due September 10, 2019 Second clinic date to be determined.	Debbie Haberkorn
Northern Region	November 7 –8, 2019 All paperwork due October 24, 2019	Liz Weider
Metro Region	February 19-22, 2020 All paperwork due February 5, 2020	Nancy Knight

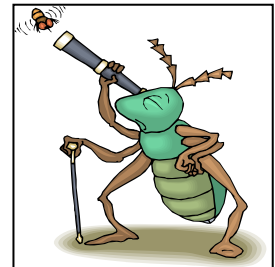
Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Rubric for Students

Please consider the use of the following type of rubric for your students attending Low Vision Evaluation Clinics this school year. The rubric provides the student with an opportunity to be more prepared for the clinic and its outcome. This is an important aspect of self-determination as an individual with an eye condition resulting in low vision.

	4	3	2	1
Prepare for Low Vision Clinic	Writes at least 5 questions for Dr. Theune, which discuss pros and cons of current devices, new devices to try, and questions about visual impairment and independently asks questions at the exam.	Writes at least 4-5 questions for Dr. Theune, which discuss pros and cons of current devices, new devices to try, and questions about visual impairment, but does not ask questions at exam.	Writes 0-3 questions for Dr. Theune, which discuss pros and cons of current devices, new devices to try, and questions about visual impairment.	Does not prepare for Low Vision Exam.



LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



MEET YOUR LOW VISION REGIONAL EVALUATION CLINIC TEAM!

Debbie Haberkorn - Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Coordinator: Debbie has been with the CDE Regional Low Vision Evaluation (LVE) Clinics since 2012. In this role, she coordinates the dates and procedures of the clinics with the local site coordinators and oversees the involved paperwork. Debbie is also the Southern Region LVE site coordinator. These roles are built into her CIMC responsibilities with CDE support for her overtime on the clinic work. Under Debbie's watch, her teammates are well prepared for each clinic and reports are disseminated on a timely basis at the conclusion of the clinics.

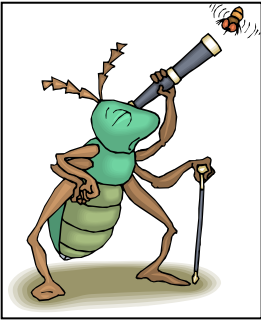
Jim Olson—Low Vision Therapist: Jim is a TVI, COMS, and Certified Low Vision Therapist. In his current role as the CIMC Program Coordinator, he understands how many Colorado learners with low vision can benefit from magnification tools. Jim works closely with the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) on materials and tools that benefit learners with low vision. Jim was a TVI / COMS with El Paso 11 District before his work at CSDB. Jim serves as a Low Vision Therapist for the southern region clinics and has been with the LVE Regional Clinics since the beginning of our history!

Wendy Stoltman—Low Vision Therapist: Wendy is a TVI, COMS, and a Certified Low Vision Therapist. Wendy shares that she has been lucky to be a member of the LVE Clinic team since 2012. Her college education was from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Northern Colorado. She has been working with students with disabilities since the early 1980s, and taught in both the Madison Metropolitan School District and in Brighton School District 27J. She notes, "The combined skills of our team make an awesome whole, and make me excited to come to work each day. The team (Dr. Theune, Jim and Debbie) provides me with unconditional support which allows me to continue to grow and to learn. We each - and this includes the TVIs, students and their families have different strengths and different perspectives. When we come together to work with a child, we can often make positive change and that is very rewarding."

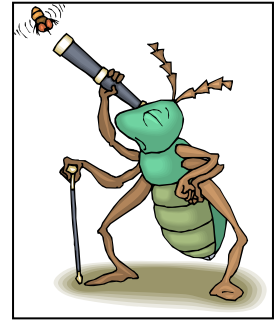
Thomas Theune - Low Vision Specialist – Optometrist: Tom shares that he has been honored to be a part of the Colorado LVE Clinic since its inception in 1998. His role is to provide insight into proper devices and strategies that can assist students with visual impairment to access and read print and support literacy. When Tom is not traveling to clinic sites, he is working in private practice as a low vision specialist in Colorado Springs. He is a 1985 graduate of Indiana University School of Optometry and he practiced primary care optometry in Colorado Springs for seven years. After being diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa and experiencing his own vision loss, Tom chose to specialize in the field of low vision. He uses low vision devices and adaptive technology on a daily basis. This provides a unique perspective in relating to students and adults who have low vision.

Tom notes that the Regional LVE Clinics have helped him to better understand the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach in providing vision rehabilitation care. He respects the roles family, doctors, and educators play in helping students with visual impairments reach their full potential. He further shares that the LVE Clinics have broadened his perspective and heightened his awareness of the amazing abilities of students who are visually impaired, and he is honored to play a small role in helping to encourage and support these abilities





LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



Who Should Have a Low Vision Evaluation?

By Wendy Stoltman

How do you know which of your students would benefit from a low vision clinic evaluation?

- * You order large print books for your student.
- * You order large print tests for your student.
- * You are enlarging every worksheet for your student.
- * You gave the student a magnifier without a prescription.
- * Your student has a whole drawer of unused low vision devices.
- * Your student has devices that were prescribed by a doctor, dispensed by you, but is not using them.
- * Your student with low vision is transitioning to a different educational program or location.
- * You are not certain which device should be used for which activity.
- * You want to be sure that your student has the best lighting options available.
- * The tablet or computer used at home or at school is not accessible to your student.
- * Your student can't see the board or street signs very well.

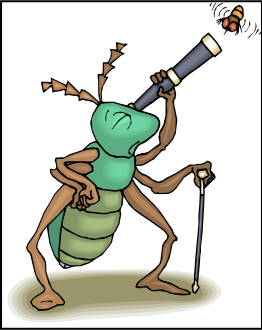
Please be aware that only Colorado public school students with a current Individualized Education Program (IEP) can participate in the Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics, which are funded with federal IDEA funds.



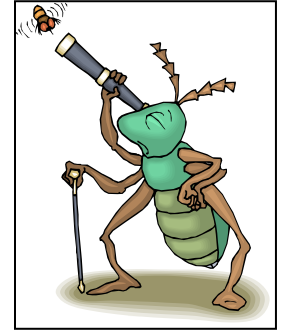
The primary goal of the Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics is to provide an examination that details whether your student / child will benefit from low vision devices that can be used in school, at home, and in the community. The student should be determined to have low vision ahead of the clinic based on a current eye care report. Another important consideration is that plans have been made ahead of the clinic to secure funding for prescribed devices.

First priority will be students who have not been evaluated in recent past years. With all of these considerations, we trust you are in good shape to determine if the student is definitely a candidate for a low vision evaluation during this school year!

If you have a question about whether a child is appropriate to participate in the clinic, please do not hesitate to talk to a member of the Regional Low Vision Evaluation Team. We want to make sure that we have a full docket of students scheduled per clinic—your help to ensure we have the students who will most benefit from a low vision evaluation at the clinic is most appreciated.



LOW VISION EVALUATION CLINIC NEWS



Paperwork Matters:

Because THIS Paperwork Does Matter

By Tanni Anthony

Picture our Low Vision Regional Evaluation Coordinator, Debbie Haberkorn, getting all of the paperwork organized per child in a timely manner ahead of the clinic. She is thrilled to have each folder ready to go for the team, knowing they will put the information to good use. She is pulling together massive information across a docket of students for each of the clinics and is forever grateful that she does not have to chase information when she has so many other tasks to complete to get ready for the clinic.

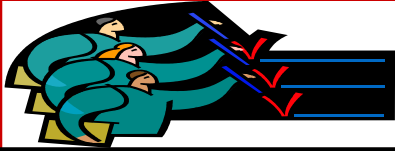
Now picture Dr. Tom Theune, our optometrist specializing in low vision examinations and devices, as he reads the completed Eye Doctor Form, that was submitted on a student who has been accepted in one of the Colorado Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics that will be held during this school year. He nods appreciatively, as he gleans important information that will help him understand and customize his evaluation of each student. He knows that he is not replacing the regular eye care specialist of the child, so this information is critical to his knowledge and understanding of the child's diagnosis, it's implications, the presence of refractive error, etc. Dr. Theune then checks the name of the TVI involved and thinks to himself, "Thank you, (insert maybe your name here!), for taking the time to provide me with this vital information."

Finally picture our low vision therapists, Jim Olson and Wendy Stoltman, reading the submitted Parent and TVI Pre-Evaluation Form content detailing the history, abilities, and functional needs of each student. This information guides the game plan further for the upcoming low vision evaluation - what will be done specifically to learn about the student and his or her needs for magnification.

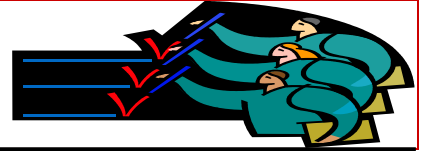
The LVE Clinic paperwork is a transfer of information from the people who know the child best to people who have a precious 90 minute session with the child. It takes a team to build a meaningful low vision evaluation. The paperwork for the clinic is the first step. Without it, the clinic appointment cannot happen for the student and the appointment will be need to cancelled. Due dates for the clinic paperwork to be in Debbie's hands are posted in each newsletter. Without paperwork being completed in a timely and quality manner, the low vision evaluation exam will be compromised.

Simply put, the clinic paperwork is about needed information and a courtesy to our LVE team who are dedicated to providing a thorough and meaningful evaluation of each child. If you plan on bringing a student to one of the regional clinics, please understand this expectation. Schedule time well ahead of the clinic to secure the needed information, including content on the form that requires both TVI and parent input. Be proactive, be timely, and be thorough.

Your efforts are expected, needed, and appreciated!



CHECK IT OUT!



SAVE the DATE

The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado

65th Annual State Convention

October 31—November 3, 2019

Fort Collins—Hilton Hotel

The weekend will include activities with exhibitors, informative presentations, seminars, and much more! Join the largest gathering of blind men and women in Colorado to make a difference in the lives of the blind across the state.

The 2019 National Federation of the Blind Convention will be held at the *Fort Collins Hilton*—425 West Prospect Road, Fort Collins, Colorado 80526. To reserve your room by phone call: (970) 482-2626 and mention that you are with the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado.

For more information, check out : www.nfbco.org



“Tools for Life”

for Colorado Residents

Application Deadline: October 15, 2019

Providing financial assistance to families of visually impaired and blind students (Pre K – Transition) who are residents of Colorado. This assistance is to help purchase necessary adaptive equipment which students may own and utilize in their home and community. These tools will help support literacy and the pursuit of higher education.

To Apply and for more information

[go to: www.seethefuture.org](http://www.seethefuture.org)

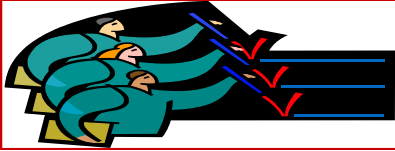


Click on the “Tools for Life Application” link on the Home page.
If you have questions, contact Tom Theune, OD – Chairperson of the

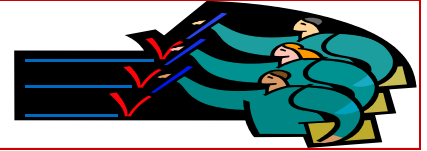
SEE THE FUTURE Fund

Phone: 719.471.3200

twtheune@comcast.net



CHECK IT OUT!



“Education for Life”

for Colorado Residents

Application Deadline: March 1, 2020



Scholarships Awarded for:

Certificate Programs (i.e.. Massage Therapy)
Associates (2 year) degrees
Bachelors (4 year) degrees
Masters Degrees
Doctorate Degrees

Up to **\$42,000** will be awarded to deserving recipients.

To Apply and for more information

[go to: www.seethefuture.org](http://www.seethefuture.org)

Click on the “Tools for Life Application” link on the Home page.

If you have questions, contact Tom Theune, OD – Chairperson of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund

Phone: 719.471.3200

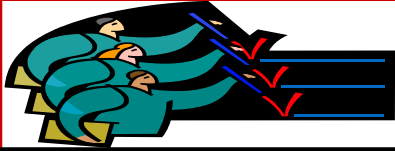


The National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program (NDBEDP), also known as *iCanConnect* (ICC) is a federal grant that provides free telecommunications equipment and training to those who qualify. There is no minimum or maximum age requirement, just that the person can benefit from this technology that allows for sending an email, texting, chatting on the phone, communicating through online tools, such as Facetime, Skype, Facebook, etc.

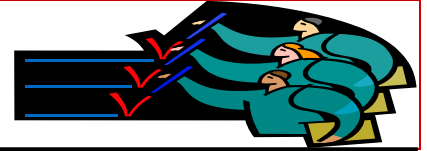
iCanConnect provides free equipment including smartphones, tablets, computers, screen readers, braille displays, and more to individuals who meet federal disability and income guidelines.

Each person receives an individual assessment to determine the best equipment solutions.

For more information or to receive an application, please contact JoAnne Hirsch, Communications Technology Program Manager, at (303) 866-2097 (voice), (720) 949-7457 (VP) or joanne.hirsch@state.co.us. Or go to the Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind's (CCDHHDB) web site at <https://ccdhhdb.com/index.php/ctprogram/>.



CHECK IT OUT!



SAVE the DATE

For a Game of Goalball!

WHO: Watch the CSDB Bulldogs compete against the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and the California School for the Blind teams!

WHAT: Goalball is the most popular team sport for the blind and visually impaired and is played competitively in 112 countries. Have you seen it played?

In goalball, two teams of three players each face each other across a basketball court. The object of the game is to roll a basketball size ball with bells inside, over the opponent's goal line. Opponents listen for the oncoming ball and attempt to block it with their bodies. Once they stop the ball and take control of it, they become the offensive team. The audience is silent during play.

The player's zone is marked at either end of the court by taping a heavy string down to the court for the players to feel with their hands or feet. The game consists of two 12-minute halves and takes about an hour to play a full game.

Players wear eyeshades to ensure they cannot see during the game. Most players wear knee, elbow and hip pads to help minimize the floor burns and bruising.

WHEN: Saturday, September 7, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m.

WHERE: Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB)
33 North Institute Street
Colorado Springs, CO



Tune into the CSDB YouTube channel—with audio description or contact Diane Taylor (dtaylor@CSDB.ORG) for details.

White Cane Awareness Day — October 15th!



We celebrate White Cane Awareness Day every year on October 15. For people who are blind/visually impaired, the white cane is an essential tool that gives the ability to achieve a full and independent life. It allows its users to move freely and safely from place to place—whether it's at work, at school, or around their neighborhoods.

"White Cane Awareness Day is our way of emphasizing the critical role that this tool plays in living the lives we want and informing the public about its true significance." — NFB President Mark A. Riccobono



We hope that the Orientation and Mobility Specialists across the state have plans to celebrate this important day with their students.

Raise a little (or big!) cane!

MEET YOUR CDE BVI INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES!

We can all agree that the work of a school-based TVI and/or Orientation and Mobility Specialist is intense. Caseloads span preschool across 12th grade and sometimes into Transition-age Programs, across a multitude of subject areas, and with students who are highly unique in their needs for specially designed instruction that include the nuances of the general education and Expanded Core Curriculums. Sound complex? Yes, that is the intricate, demanding, and rewarding work of personnel trained in blindness/visual impairment and deaf-blindness. With that said, many of our TVIs and O&M Specialists have fewer than five years of experience into the field and even the best trained and experienced professional can benefit from the wisdom of another seasoned colleague.

Now in our second year, we are offering opportunities for school-based TVI and O&M Specialists to work with an instructional coach. This statewide service is open to new and veteran professionals. The mentor / coach will be available to discuss, guide, coach, and mentor on key topics for the requesting professional. Topics include a gamut of how to provide itinerant services, complete Functional Vision / Learning Media Assessments, work with students with additional disabilities, provide braille instruction, teach the Expanded Core Curriculum, address a student's technology needs, etc.

We are thrilled to have Shelley Moats and Wendy Stoltman back on board to provide technical assistance to TVIs and O&M Specialists working in Colorado school districts. The bios below will introduce you to our two coaches and provide a sense of their expertise. If you would like to work with an instructional coach over the course of this school year, please be in touch with Tanni with an email request of your needs.

- ◆ **Shelley Moats** graduated from Brigham Young University with a Bachelors Degree in Elementary Education/Special Education with an emphasis in Vision. She has a Masters Degree from UNC in Special Education/Severe Needs/Vision and also certified in Orientation & Mobility. Shelley has worked teaching children who are blind/visually impaired for over 25 years, and has specialized in a variety of areas within the field. Along with being certified in O&M, she has also received her Colorado UEB braille certification. She has extensive knowledge of the IEP. She is an expert in functional vision assessments, working with students with Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) and teaching technology to students with visual impairments. Shelley has spent most of her teaching career (22 years) with Douglas County School District, and was the team lead for 7 of those years. She enjoys working with teachers of the visually impaired and collaborating with classroom teachers and school personnel to provide the best instruction for her students. Shelley and her husband Bill have 5 children and 10 grandchildren. She loves the outdoors, biking, running, and most of all spending time with her family and friends.
- ◆ **Wendy Stoltman** may be retired on paper, but is a continuously learning and growing teacher for children who are blind/visually impaired or deaf-blind. She is a TVI, a COMS, and a Certified Low Vision Specialist. She was a TVI / O&M Specialist in Brighton School District for many years. Prior to teaching children with visual impairment/blindness, Wendy taught students with emotional/behavior disabilities. She is a member of the CDE Low Vision Evaluation Team and a TA Specialist with the Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project. Her passion is for kids with multiple disabilities and the creativity it takes to enable them to participate fully in their schools and communities. Wendy also has strengths in assessing visual functioning communicating the results to team members, and planning and implementing teaching strategies and accommodations in the classroom. She has skills in training on the use of low vision devices. Wendy is originally from Madison, Wisconsin and is a true Badger and Green Bay Packer fan inside and out. In her spare time, Wendy enjoys gardening, hiking, biking and working out.

20 Tips for New Itinerant TVIs & COMS

By Charlotte Cushman of *Paths to Literacy for Students Who are Blind or Visually Impaired*

<http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/blog/20-tips-new-itinerant-tvis-coms>

with slight modification for Colorado personnel

The start of a new school year brings a wide range of emotions: excitement about new beginnings, happiness in reconnecting with students and colleagues, and wistfulness at saying goodbye to the summer break. For new Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs) and Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS), there is also a layer of anxiety and uncertainty. You've completed your training, you've found a job, but now what? Getting organized and knowing how to get started is always a helpful first step to start out the new school year on a high note.

Getting Organized

- 1. Go to each school a few days before the teachers come back to introduce yourself to administrators and people in the front office.**
 - Introducing yourself ahead of time is a great way to get the lay of the land before you start seeing students. It's also very helpful to get to know some of the key people (secretary, IT, maintenance) before they are too busy with the demands of the new school year. Fostering those relationships can be extremely helpful!
- 2. Create a system to keep track of all of the school calendars, school bell schedules, student schedules, and the names of teachers.**
 - Many people use Google Drive or Evernote to keep track of all of this. You can also print it all out and keep in a binder.
 - Some itinerants recommend setting notifications to remind you where you need to be each day. No one wants to waste time by showing up at a school at the wrong time or on the wrong day!
 - You may wish to begin by scheduling students who will receive direct services from you, and then build the rest of your schedule around those times.
 - Academic high school students may only have one period each day when they can be pulled for services, so it can be helpful to schedule them first. Be aware of how to provide push-in services in the classroom. This may be the preferred method to keep the student in the classroom with his or her peers while you provide instructional support.
 - For elementary age students, check to be sure you know when recess and lunch are.
 - Keep a list of related service providers (e.g. Occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech language therapy, etc.).
- 3. Introduce yourself to the teachers you'll be working with and discuss expectations for the year.**
 - Many classroom teachers may be unclear about your role as a TVI or COMS, so it's helpful to establish your role and many functions at the beginning of the school year. Discuss what type of direct instruction you plan to do (such as braille), what type of consultation or training you can do, and your role in helping to make the content accessible to the student (rather than teaching the actual content).
 - Establish guidelines for how much time you or a brailist or paraprofessional will need to prepare materials.

4. **Keep a list of all of the equipment and materials you distribute with the date and location.**
 - It can be hard to keep track of all of this, so it's important to have a system. What belongs to you? To the Colorado Instructional Materials Center in your state or district? To the administrative unit where you are employed?
 - Keep track of what needs repair, and what you have tried with whom.
5. **Introduce yourself to the families.**
 - Discuss what their goals, expectations, and possible concerns they have for their child. Further discuss family priorities and learn their insights about their child. Let them know that you are interested in knowing how things are going at home for the child.
 - Figure out a way to stay in touch on a regular basis. Some families may be comfortable in the digital world, and have no difficulty texting or emailing, while others may prefer some kind of a notebook or a phone call.
 -

Getting Your Students Registered for Special Services and Materials

6. **Educate yourself about what resources are available to students with visual impairments.** We have highlighted some of these below.
7. **Be sure that each of your students is registered for Federal Quota through APH (American Printing House for the Blind).** The Federal Act to Promote the Education of the Blind was enacted by Congress in 1879. This Act set up a system to provide free textbooks and other hands-on instructional materials for students across the United States who are blind. Work with Jim Olson and crew at the CIMC to learn more about the process. His email is jolson@cldb.org
8. **Register your students with NIMAC or the National Instructional Materials Center,** which is a federally funded, online file repository of source files in the NIMAS format. Here, authorized users can access more than 52,000 K-12 NIMAS files for use in the production of accessible formats for students with disabilities. Go to: <https://www.nimac.us/>
9. **Register your students with Bookshare.** Go to: <https://www.bookshare.org/cms/>

Traveling

10. **Become familiar with the areas you will be going to.** Since most itinerant teachers cover a lot of ground on a tight schedule, it's helpful to know where you're going, where to park, and how to find the classrooms or homes where you'll be working.
11. **Create a system for keeping track of your mileage and follow whatever documentation process your school district uses.**
12. **Be sure that your vehicle is in good shape,** as you'll be doing a lot of driving! Check your tires, oil, and perform regular maintenance, as recommended by the dealer. If you do not drive, be sure that all transportation arrangements are in order.



Taking Care of Yourself

13. Pack a lunch and healthy snacks, as well as a refillable water bottle.

- Be sure to have healthy snacks available in your car, as you will most likely be caught hungry and rushing to the next school on a regular basis. Some schools have refrigerators and/or micro-waves that you may be able to use, and it's helpful to make a note of this as you're familiarizing yourself with new schools. A refillable water bottle is good for you and good for the environment!

14. Get a collapsible cart to load all of your materials into.

- Your car is your office, so you'll need to devise systems of bags, boxes or containers to stay organized. It can be especially helpful to find a way to be able to transport your materials into a school, so that you don't strain your back.

15. Identify people who can provide support to you in different kinds of ways.

- Being an itinerant teacher or an orientation and mobility specialist can be a difficult job! You may be working in relative isolation, and it can be a challenge to get the information or the help you need. In addition to getting personal emotional support, try to find people who can provide information on various topics, such as early childhood, cortical / cerebral visual impairment (CVI), Unified English Braille Code (UEB), deaf-blindness, additional disabilities, assistive technology, transition, etc. It is impossible to be an expert in everything, and even more of a challenge when you're just starting out. Don't be afraid to ask questions!

Documentation

17. After a busy day of teaching, it can be hard to think about paperwork, so set up systems for yourself to make notes after each session with a student. Make a note of what you worked on, and any notes about performance or special concerns.

18. It's important to have a way to stay on top of evaluations and documentation. Set up a list of when the most recent Functional Vision Assessment, Learning Media Assessment, Regional Low Vision Clinic Evaluation, Triennial Review, etc. has happened and when they should next be done.

19. Set up a system for tracking progress on IEP goals for each student. TVI Liz Eagan has some great ideas for this:

- *Check, Please? Guidelines for Documentation of Student Work* can be found at: <http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/resources/check-please-guidelines-documentation-student-work>
- *Data Sheets for Tracking IEP Goals* can be found at <http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/resources/data-sheets-tracking-iep-goals>

20. Enjoy your students! They will bring you great joy and a lifetime of reward.

Like this article? It is one of so many brilliant and helpful resources that you can find on the Paths to Literacy website. Check out a plethora of information at: <http://www.pathstoliteracy.org/>



Resources and Materials

Literacy Resources and Research to Use

The National Center on Improving Literacy released an Ask & Answer on Phonics. The video answers questions like :

- What is phonics?
- Why is it important?
- How should it be taught?

Check this resource and many others out at: <https://improvingliteracy.org/>

APH Light Box Discontinued: New One Coming Soon!

In an effort to comply with the U.S. government's initiative to phase out fluorescent tube lightbulbs, the current version of APH's Light Box (1-08669-00) has been discontinued, effective June 2019.

Don't worry – there's "light" at the end of the tunnel! APH will sell an updated Light Box with an LED bulb, which is known to last longer and use less energy. APH eagerly awaits the arrival of the LED bulbs and anticipates being able to sell the updated Light Box before the end of this year. We know that the Light Box is one of the most popular products, and we will continue to update you and our other customers as we work to make the updated Light Box available as quickly as possible.

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Olson at the CIMC @ jolson@cldb.org

Literacy for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Website

Project Purpose: Development of the *All Children Can Read* site began in 2006 as part of the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB) Literacy Practice Partnership. The goal of this site is to provide information and resources for teaching and working with children who have complex learning challenges. Specifically, the site is designed for individual state deaf-blind projects, teachers, family members and related services providers interested in beginning or enhancing literacy instruction for children who have combined vision and hearing loss. Contributors reviewed literacy development literature, as well as literature related to literacy learning for:

- Children who are blind or visually impaired
- Children who are deaf or hearing impaired
- Children with multiple disabilities
- Children with deaf-blindness

Project Background: For many years, State Deaf-Blind Projects have provided technical assistance to schools, teachers and families. These instructional techniques have helped children with vision and hearing impairments to learn and increase their literacy skills. They built this website on a framework that incorporates the stages of literacy development and key components of reading into instructional strategies for children with dual sensory challenges. The content is organized around evidence-based strategies identified as being effective in building emergent literacy skills and moving children along a continuum toward independent reading.

Check out this informative webpage at: <http://literacy.nationaldb.org/index.php/about-site/>



READ Act, Senate Bill 19-199.

The original READ Act (Reading to Ensure Academic Development) legislation in 2012 has been updated. Among other aspects, the new bill refocuses on how reading is taught in the early grades, requiring districts provide “evidence-based” services that focus on teaching phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, reading fluency and comprehension. By the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, districts must ensure that every early grade teacher successfully completes evidence-based training in how to teach reading. The CDE will provide more information about the training options as they are developed.

To ensure we are all on the same page, here are the basic tenets of the READ Act.

- ◆ All children in kindergarten through third grade are screened each school year with a CDE State Board approved interim assessment. There are approved English and Spanish tools. The leadership of each administrative unit will select their interim screening tools. TVIs should be aware of the selected tools in their administrative unit(s) and what accommodations are allowed for the involved tool(s).
- ◆ Kindergarten students must be screened within the first 90 calendar days of school. Grades 1-3 students must be screened within the first 30 days of enrollment. Students with disabilities are not exempted from the READ Act.
- ◆ The goal of the screening is to determine whether or not the child has a significant reading deficiency (SRD). It is important to note that a SRD indicates that a child is in the bottom third percentile of reading expectations for that given grade. For those learners who are found to have a SRD, a CDE State Board approved diagnostic assessment must be administered within 60 days to learn more in depth to identify the student’s specific skill deficiencies.
- ◆ A READ Plan is developed for all students who have a SRD. For students who have a past READ Plan and who still have a SRD, the READ Plan must be updated for the new school year with more rigorous strategies to address the child’s reading needs. Each READ Plan must be tailored to meet the identified needs of the child, involve parent input, and include evidence-based instruction and intervention. Progress monitoring should occur using an appropriate assessment.
- ◆ When a student has a primary eligibility label of visual impairment, including blindness, deaf-blindness, or is eligible for special education services based on another eligibility category that includes blindness/visual impairment, it is critical that a TVI is involved with the (a) administration and (b) interpretation of the screening results. The former is important to ensure that the interim assessment tool is accessible. The latter is important to determine whether a child may have a false positive for a SRD based on timed tests, for example. Typically we do not expect children who are blind/visually impaired to have a SRD, unless the child has another condition that affects early reading skill development or has not had a strong foundation of oral language / emergent literacy skill development.
- ◆ Braille versions of DiBels are available through the CIMC and/or the TVI or brailist can prepare the reading content of the paper-based tests into braille format.
- ◆ A question for the BVI field is whether or not we know how to teach reading and not just the braille code. For our youngest learners, we want to ensure we know the impacts of vision loss on reading. Training becomes even more critical when a child has additional disabilities. Our work is to provide access and to support the reading strategies needed by our children and to understand how best to support meaningful emergent and conventional literacy. If this is an area of need for your professional learning next steps, let Tanni know.



For more information about the updates, go to:

<https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/co/2019/03/19/colorado-legislation-read-act-revisited/>

Resources and Materials

CVI Documentary

The BBC has produced a documentary entitled CVI Documentary: “Not in Plain Sight.” This half hour documentary looks at CVI in different people, including an affected adult, a profoundly affected young child and young people where their condition went unknown and undiagnosed in their early childhood, explaining the considerable challenges they face. In addition to people affected by CVI are interviews with:

- Dr. Gordon Dutton, a CVI expert
- Dr Cathy Williams who runs the CVI Project
- Dr Isobel Hay, a Pediatrician with expert understanding of CVI.

This short documentary shows CVI:

- across different ages and abilities
- in those affected from birth or where CVI was acquired
- in those who lived with CVI where it was unknown or not understood, or where the difficulties were attributed to a different condition.

Watch the documentary at: https://cviscotland.org/mem_portal.php?article=157

Paths to Literacy

Paths to Literacy is an interactive Community of Practice where educators and families can find and share activities, resources, and other ideas related to all aspects of literacy for children who are blind or visually impaired, including those with deafblindness or multiple disabilities.

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

Terminology Update:

What Do We Mean by Evidence-based?

The term evidence-based is defined by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). According to ESEA, evidence-based programs are supported by strong, moderate, or promising research evidence of their effectiveness; or they demonstrate a rationale that they can improve a targeted outcome.



The Colorado Chapter for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired

CAER Board Members

President:	Nancy Cozart	Cozart_N@cde.state.co.us
Past President:	Brent Batron	bbatron@cocenter.org
Treasurer:	Heather Solberg	hwparsons@hotmail.com
Secretary:	Michelle Robinson	blindsign@yahoo.com
Members at Large:	Paula Conroy	paula.conroy@unco.edu
	Stephanie Crosen	Stephanie.crosen@summitk12.org
	Barb Galgano	bgalgano@cherrycreekschools.org
	Jeannie Lei	jlei@cherrycreekschools.org

Thanks to each of these good people for leading us to sustain a strong Colorado AER Chapter!

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.

Ongoing Activities for Members:

Monthly Newsletter- includes professional resources, calendar of board meetings, upcoming trainings & fundraisers, etc.

Check out the opportunity for a mini-grant— Grants are for upcoming conferences, student equipment, etc. Submissions can also be submitted for reimbursement of professional activities. Applications are accepted throughout the year but are due by November 1st each year for the board to review.

Reduced rates for ACVREP accredited trainings

The first meeting of the CAER board for the 2019-2020 session was on Thursday August 15th from 5:45-7:15 p.m. at the Colorado Center for the Blind (CCB) in Littleton. The board meetings are open and can be attended through Zoom if attendees are unable to join in person.

*** Be in touch with the CAER Board on ideas for trainings, other professional support and fund raising activities. You can contact an CAER board member at caerboard@gmail.com



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 Colorado Department of Education. ✓ 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

Check out the 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>



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 O&M 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.

Braille Competency Testing Requirements

All licensed teachers endorsed in the area of visual impairment, including those individuals employed on a temporary status (Temporary Educator Eligibility-TEE) who are completing their university program in visual impairment), must have a valid CDE Certificate of Braille Competency or a CDE Renewal Certificate of Braille Competency on file with their current administrative unit of employment.

The CDE Certificate of Braille Competency must be earned no later than the end of the first instructional year, but no later than May 31st of the first instructional year, with a Colorado administrative unit as a teacher of students who are blind/visually impaired. If a TVI moves from one Colorado administrative unit to another, the expectation of first-year braille competency demonstration does not “reactivate” from year-to-year. The testing clock begins with the first day of Colorado employment as a TVI.

For more information about Colorado's braille competency requirements, please go to:

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

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 restricted significantly 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



Data Tools

The CDE Accountability & Data Analysis Office has released two data tools.

Performance Snapshot

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/code/accountability-performancesnapshot>

The purpose is to present a high-level summary of performance and improvement efforts for each individual school and district across the state. Alongside a summary of student demographic information, this report combines key elements of the District or School Performance Framework results and Unified Improvement Plans and makes both easier to access online. It is our hope that the additional contextual information in this report will enable a deeper understanding of performance and greater engagement in improvement planning efforts statewide.

State Accountability Data Explorer Tool

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/code/accountability-dataexplorertool>

The purpose is to provide graphs and data tables that present the performance outcome measures used to evaluate schools and districts on the state performance frameworks. This tool enables users to make various filter selections and export their own spreadsheets from a statewide dataset that includes achievement and growth measures for various student groups across multiple years. It is our hope that this tool will support improvement planning efforts as well as enable comparisons and deeper analyses of student performance.

With these tools, you can answer a question like, “Which schools show high CMAS ELA scores among students with disabilities despite their high free/reduced lunch rates?”

You can find both of these tools and more on their data tools and reports page:

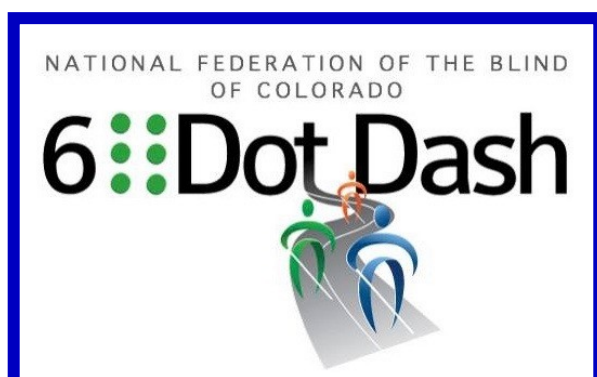
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/schoolviewdataandresults>

Updated Educator Effectiveness Video Library

The Educator Effectiveness Office has updated its Educator Effectiveness (EE) Video Library of Colorado educators teaching. This library is intended to provide educators and evaluators with a way to view Colorado teachers and spark conversations to develop a deeper understanding of quality instructional practices. Go to <https://www.cde.state.co.us/apps/eevideos/login> for more information.

To access the EE Video Library system, contact your district's LAM to add the EE Videos role to your account in IdM. For those without an account, LAMs will first need to create a profile for you and then add the EE Video role to your account. LAMs will provide you with a username/password. Please note that if you use the Colorado Performance Management System, or RANDA, it will be the same username and password.

Running for Fun / Running for Good



The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado and the Colorado Center for the Blind partnered again for their 2nd 6 Dot Dash 5k, which was held on June 29! It is designed to raise awareness and funds for Braille Literacy and blindness skills training. The “6 Dot” refers to the six dots that make up each Braille cell. It is also the combination of these dots that make the letters of the alphabet and punctuation that blind people read by touch.

We take braille very seriously here in Colorado and it is wonderful to have an opportunity to run for such an important cause.

Hail to all of the people who participated in the 6 Dot Run, including some very wonderful TVIs.

They included left to right in the photo: Elsa D’Angelo, Jasmine Gomez, Will Reynolds, Jeannie Lei, Roberta Wiedemeyer, Wendy Unwin-Watson, Barb Galgano, and Janet Anderson.

Thanks to each of you for representing the great TVIs of Colorado!



Orientation & Mobility



SAVE THE DATES
June 22—25, 2020

Challenges for an Inclusive Society

Gothenburg, Sweden 2020

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The International Mobility Conference presents the “Challenges for an Inclusive Society” to focus on identifying the worldwide needs in regard to orientation and mobility in order to achieve an inclusive society, based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The conference will build on interdisciplinary professional and academic work. Here we want to bring together researchers, practitioners and people with visual impairment and blindness in order to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and collaboration across different perspectives on orientation and mobility (O&M).

Topics to include:

- ***Learning, activity and participation***—The conference will highlight individuals of all ages that have to learn to lead a new life due to visual impairment or blindness, and put focus on the meaning of orientation and mobility skills for successful learning, where psychological, perceptual, existential and social aspects will be emphasized. A special focus will also be on children, youths, their families and schools in the process of participation; thereby focusing on the learning individual, the surroundings or the individual’s lifeworld, as well as on the content to be learned.
- ***The relation between the human being and the environment***—Orientation and mobility will be highlighted in their relational aspects, focusing on both the human being and the environment. This interconnection will involve physical, as well as social aspects of the environment. Subtopics to be included will be the public transport system, architecture, inclusive design as well as societal attitudes and participation in various areas of life.
- ***VISION 2020***—“The Right to Sight” is the global initiative for the elimination of avoidable blindness, which is a joint programme of the World Health Organization [WHO] and the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness [IAPB]. The general themes of the IMC17 are in agreement with the VISION 2020 “A world in which nobody is needlessly visually impaired, where those with unavoidable vision loss can achieve their full potential” (WHO). The aim is to enlighten everyday problems due to visual impairment and blindness and to uncover new and potential solutions for living a healthy life.
- ***Theory and development of orientation and mobility***— Learning and education are involved in both O&M rehabilitation practice and theory. We want to expand this knowledge further and will invite scholars and practitioners to contribute to an enhanced theoretical knowledge in the field of O&M relevant for various ages and groups. There is also a need for developed evidence-based methods that can meet the needs and life-situations for children, youths, adults and elderly people with visual impairment and blindness all over the world. Education initiatives to intertwine theory and practice can also be focused within this theme.

For more information, go to: <https://ips.gu.se/english/cooperation/conferences/imc17>



Orientation & Mobility

White Cane Day!

October 15th of each year marks White Cane Day across the country. There may well be celebrations across the state in a variety of school districts. Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) will host a celebration at Acacia Park Band Shell in Colorado Springs from 12:00 to 2:00 pm. There will be featured keynote speaker, the music of the CSDB Bulldog Band, student presentations, information booths and merchandise.

For more information, contact Jamie Lugo at (719) 494-7669 or jlugo@csdb.org

Adoption of New Endorsement Standards

At its April 2019 meeting, the State Board of Education adopted new rules for the Principal and Special Services Providers (SSP) Quality Standards and the Administrator Endorsement Standards. **The later includes the new rules for School Orientation and Mobility Specialists.** These updated rules are part of the Rules for Administration of the Colorado Educator Licensing Act of 1991, currently pending the final step of approval by the Colorado Secretary of State.

Educator preparation programs, including higher education institutions and designated agencies, must begin to align current programming to these new standards for all related endorsement programs during the 2019-20 academic school year. All upcoming educator preparation program reauthorizations will be aligned to these new standards.

Updated standards can be found in the matrices available for download on the Educator Preparation Standards Matrices webpage, which can be found at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatortalent/>

Ambutech Dakota Disk

Check out the merits of the disk tip with early cane users and persons with additional physical and/or intellectual disabilities. It takes just a minute to switch it out with their student's regular, everyday tip when they want to go to the park, the beach, or walk on a gravel road. Check out this video for an example of how it can be used.

Go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=itNV3nQVNGU&feature=youtu.be>

New National O&M Association

There is a new Orientation and Mobility Specialists Association (OMSA). Check out the summary of their founding and some FAQs at www.usomsa.org



Calendar of Events



2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019

August 28	Vision Coalition—Colorado Talking Library Contact: Tanni Anthony @ Anthony_T@cde.state.co.us
September 7	Goalball Game—CSDB Gymnasium Contact: Diane Taylor at dtaylor@CSDB.ORG or 719-578-2225
September 12	CSDB Board of Trustees’ Meeting - CSDB campus Contact: Jackie Skinner - jskinner@csdb.org
September 11-13	Western Region Early Intervention Conference—Omni Hotel in Broomfield Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
September 26	Metro Region TVI/COMS meeting—Cherry Creek Contact: Jeannie Lei at jlei@cherrycreekschools.org
September 29 - October 3	Space Camp for Visually Impaired Students (SCIVIS) Contact: Dan Oates scivis@atlanticbb.net ; http://www.scivis.org ; 304-851-5680
October 9	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting - CSDB campus Contact: Jim Olson - jolson@csdb.org
October 10	CSDB Board of Trustees’ Meeting - CSDB campus Contact: Jackie Skinner - jskinner@csdb.org
October 10-12	Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conference—Fort Collins, CO Contact: Joyce Thiessen-Barret at Barrett_J@cde.state.co.us
October 15	White Cane Awareness Day!
October 15	Tools for Life Applications Due To apply go to: https://www.seethefuture.org/tfl-app-info.html
October 31 - November 3	65th Annual State Convention NFB of Colorado—Fort Collins Hilton Contact: www.nfbco.org
November 1	CAER Mini-Grants Due Contact: Heather Solberg Heather.Solberg@va.gov





Calendar of Events



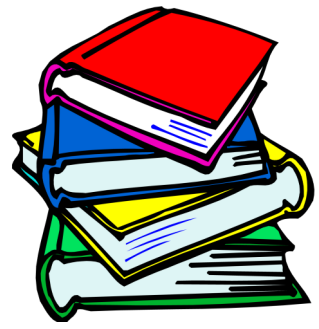
2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019 2019

- November 7** Metro Region TVI/COMS meeting—Littleton
Contact: Jeannie Lei at jlei@cherrycreekschools.org
- November 14** CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB campus
Contact: Jackie Skinner - jskinner@csdb.org
- November 13** Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting - CSDB campus
Contact: Jim Olson - jolson@csdb.org
- December 12** Vision Coalition—Anchor Center for Blind Children
Contact: Tanni Anthony @ Anthony_T@cde.state.co.us



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

- January 9** CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB campus
Contact: Jackie Skinner - jskinner@csdb.org
- January 15** Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting - CSDB campus
Contact: Jim Olson - jolson@csdb.org
- January 16** Braille Challenge—CSDB
Contact: Diane Taylor at dtaylor@csdb.org
- January 23** Braille Challenge—CSDB
Contact: Jamie Lugo at jlugo@csdb.org
- January 23-25** Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conference—Colorado Springs, CO
Contact: Joyce Thiessen-Barret at Barrett_J@cde.state.co.us
- February 10** Washington DC Seminar Great Gathering—Washington D.C.
Contact: www.nfb.org
- February 13** CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB campus
Contact: Jackie Skinner - jskinner@csdb.org





Calendar of Events



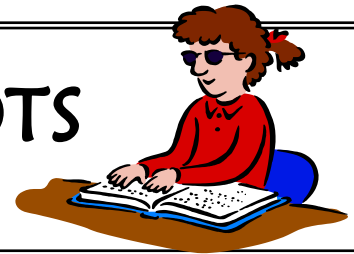
2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020 2020

March 1	See the Future Scholarship Applications Due For more information: www.seethefuture.org
March 11	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting - CSDB campus Contact: Jim Olson - jolson@csdb.org
March 12	CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB campus Contact: Jackie Skinner - jskinner@csdb.org
April 2-4	Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conference —Grand Junction, CO Contact: Joyce Thiessen-Barret at Barrett_J@cde.state.co.us
April 9	CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB campus Contact: Jackie Skinner - jskinner@csdb.org
April 23	Vision Coalition —Colorado Talking Library Contact: Tanni Anthony @ Anthony_T@cde.state.co.us
May 1	Cane Quest — CSDB Contact: Lisa VanDam at lvandam@csdb.org
May 13	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting - CSDB campus Contact: Jim Olson - jolson@csdb.org
May 14	CSDB Board of Trustees' Meeting - CSDB campus Contact: Jackie Skinner - jskinner@csdb.org
June 22-25	International Mobility Conference (IMC) 17 – Gothenburg, Sweden For more information: http://ips.gu.se/english/cooperation/conferences/imc17
June 30 - July 5	National NFB Convention —Houston, Texas Contact: www.nfbco.org





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's 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	Cozart_N@cde.state.co.us
Christine Maynard	(719) 229-4981	Maynard_C@cde.state.co.us
Brenda Shepard	(303) 995-7913	Shepard_B@cde.state.co.us
Sarah Sonnier	(970) 245-5228	Sonnier_S@cde.state.co.us
Julie Wetzstein	(303) 819-7887	Wetzstein_J@cde.state.co.us

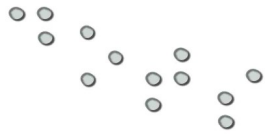
As far as regional representation for initial testing and renewal modules, Christine Maynard is our southern region proctor / mentor and Sarah Sonnier is the western region proctor/mentor. Nancy Cozart, Brenda Shepard, and Julie Wetzstein are metro proctors for the renewal modules. Brenda Shepard is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

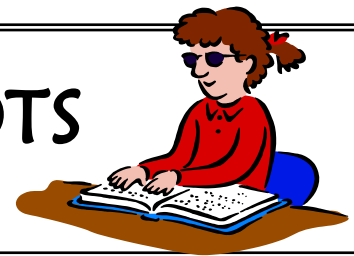
Braillewriter Repair

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





CONNECTING THE DOTS



Outreach Nemeth Online Tutorial Available!

A *FREE* Nemeth online resource is now available for Pre-K through 8th grade levels on the TSBVI Online Learning webpage. It can be found at: <https://www.tsbvi.edu/courses/course-listing#nemethdescription> It is designed to provide easy access to support learning or reinforcing Nemeth braille code skills for families, teachers or paraeducators working with students who are braille readers.. These modules are a companion to the TSBVI publication, *Nemeth at a Glance*. Dr. Derrick Smith, professor at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, was the creator of this series, with sections by Janet Bean, Lead Teacher in the TSBVI Curriculum Department. Although presented in the grade level order that symbols are typically introduced to students in school, you can dip in at any level to find specific symbols and examples.

Modules include an explanation of the symbol, relevant rules, and examples of how to use the symbol in math examples. There are multiple samples of using Nemeth within UEB contexts. Short, ungraded quizzes following each module will help document mastery of the material and provide useful feedback. Completing these optional quizzes will lead to a certification of completion.

Modules for Pre-K - 1st grade, 2nd - 3rd grade, and 4th - 6th and 7/8 grade are already available and can be found at: <https://www.tsbvi.edu/courses/course-listing#nemethdescription>

Upper level math grades will be posted in the Fall of 2019.



Braille Authority of North America

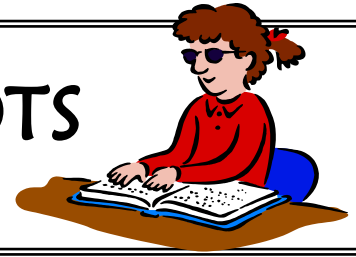
BANA Launches Podcast Series

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) is introducing a new Podcast series called BANA Braille Bits. The podcasts are designed to keep the braille reading and writing public informed regarding the activities of the Braille Authority of North America including updates to codes and guidelines.

The debut episode provides background that explains what BANA is and how the organization operates. It is available immediately and can be accessed at <http://Brailleauthority.libsyn.com> or by searching for BANA Braille Bits with your favorite podcatcher. New episodes will be released and announced periodically.



CONNECTING THE DOTS



Meet Your CDE Braille Committee!

Tanni Anthony assumed leadership of the CDE Braille Committee many years ago. The current committee still has two founding members (Brenda and Sarah). We owe a debt of gratitude to former first members Jan Barron and Lucia Hasty. Two state tests have been created (with periodic updates) under the guidance of this committee. The first testing materials were specific to English Braille American Edition. A major update occurred in 2016-17 to convert all testing materials to the Unified English Braille Code. Braille is what got Tanni into our profession. She took the Braille course at her undergraduate university just thinking that she should know braille as a well-prepared elementary and special educator. She had no idea there was even a program on that campus to train TVIs! She went on to complete the program ... and the rest, as they say, is history! It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve Colorado on our statewide braille work.

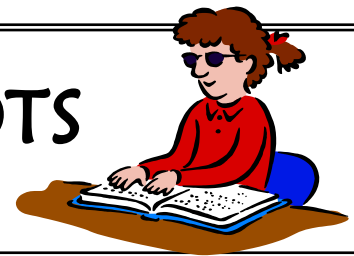
Nancy Cozart has been a teacher for students with visual impairment and a certified O&M specialist for 32 years. Nancy shares, "There are many aspects in my professional role that I treasure, but one at the top has to be my love for braille instruction. We have to continue to advocate for quality instruction and services for children to acquire literacy skills as their peers do! I have been fortunate to have at least one braille student each year. The format changes, but I have offered Braille Clubs for my student's peers to learn about braille. Sometimes, it is an informal "lunch bunch" and other times it has been an after school extra-curricular activity. The students get to be involved in implementing the activities and the clubs have had a positive impact in the schools." Nancy has been a presenter at local, regional, state and national trainings on topics including daily living skills, pre/braille skills, braille assessments and advocacy. She joined the CDE Braille Committee in 2016.

Christine Maynard began learning braille with her son, along with his teacher Anna Swenson in Northern Virginia in 1991. In 2004 she joined Academy District 20 School District as a Vision Para and became Colorado Braille Certified. Since that time Christine earned her Library of Congress Braille Certification in UEB. In 2016 with the change in braille code, Chris joined the CDE Braille Committee. She has contributed in creating and proofreading many of teaching and testing materials. Chris has mentored and proctored in the Southern Region and presented at CSDB for refresher updates.

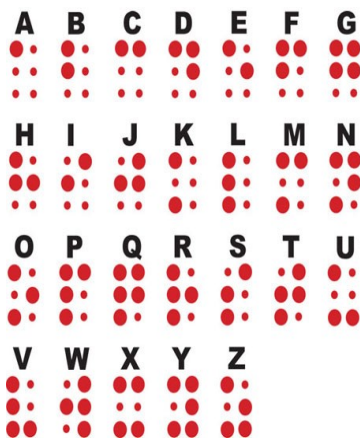
Jo Elizabeth Pinto has been blind since birth. She learned to read braille by touch as a public school student. She got her certification as a literary proofreader in the mid-nineties and started working for the state of Colorado in 1997. In 2005, she began proofreading textbooks full-time from home for clients across the country. Jo is our proofreader of the Colorado Braille Competency Test braille samples. In addition to literary braille, Jo Elizabeth can read both Nemeth and Spanish, which keeps her services in high demand. In addition to her work, Jo Elizabeth enjoys baking, reading, and gardening with her preteen daughter, and creative writing. She published her first novel, *The Bright Side of Darkness*, in 2015. Now she has a second one! To see more about her award-winning novels, available in paperback, Kindle, and audio formats, please click <http://www.amazon.com/author/jepinto>



CONNECTING THE DOTS



Meet Your CDE Braille Committee!

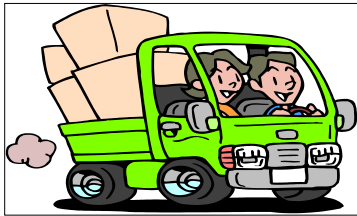


Brenda Shepard began on the CDE Braille Committee when the first braille competency test was developed following enactment of the Colorado Braille Bill. Brenda worked as a TVI/ COMS for 20 years and then moved into administration, which included supervision of Program for Students Who are Visually Impaired for another 12 years. Brenda taught braille instruction in public school, as well as two semesters at UNC in 1981. Following her retirement in 2012, she worked to develop and teach the Refresher Braille coursework to train teachers in UEB code, development. She has contributed greatly to the refinement of the 15 Braille Renewal Modules / Braille Competency Test materials, and mentoring TVIs to develop Braille knowledge and skills.

Sarah Sonnier has been on the braille committee since its inception. She helped to write the original Braille Competency Test for the State of Colorado, updated the test when Colorado switched to UEB, wrote Braille Renewal Modules, and served as a mentor for TVIs in braille. Sarah also served on the CDE committee to give advice to the former national test publishers of Colorado's State English Language Arts and Math assessments regarding the adaptations needed to make the tests accessible to braille readers. Sarah serves primarily braille test candidates on the Western Slope. She was a TVI for 40 years in Mesa Valley School District in Grand Junction and taught braille to many students during her career. Sarah is now retired and continues to administer competency tests, modules, and offers mentoring for teachers, and consultation services for CDE.

Julie Wetzstein has been working as a TVI /COMS for 27 years, and has taught braille to students all but one of those years. She also worked as a Braillist for Boulder Valley Schools, and provided contract braille transcription for the CIMC and Wyoming Schools, concurrent with teaching. Julie has also taught braille to a number of paraprofessionals during her teaching tenure. As a member of the CDE Braille Committee for 17 years, Julie has mentored new teachers, proctored State Braille Competency Testing and renewal modules, and helped develop braille testing materials. Julie shares that she thoroughly enjoys teaching and producing braille, and especially enjoys transcribing math materials into Nemeth with accompanying tactile diagrams. Over the years, Julie has attended numerous conferences and workshops on all aspects of braille production, and is currently pursuing her Library of Congress certification for the UEB Code.

Thank you to our CDE Braille Committee for So Many Hours of Expertise and Support to Colorado TVIs!



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

Congratulations to our SEE THE FUTURE FUND 2019 “Education for Life” Recipients (\$64,000)

Randy (RJ) Sampson

Award: \$12,000 four-year scholarship

High School: Conifer

City: Bailey

Attending: CU-Boulder

Probable Major: Computer Science

Hannah Bachus

Award: \$10,000 four-year scholarship

High School: Legacy

City: Broomfield

Attending: CU-Boulder

Probable Major: English / Creative Writing

Lasya Andaloori

Award: \$8,000 four-year scholarship

High School: Cherry Creek

City: Centennial

Attending: CU-Boulder

Probable Major: Business / Accounting

Ian Lee

Award: \$8,000 four-year scholarship

High School: Aurora West

City: Aurora

Attending: Denver University

Probable Major: Pre-Law

Quincie Mattick

Award: \$10,000 four-year scholarship;

\$1,000 Ashley Fritz Award

High School: CO School for the Deaf and the Blind

City: Colorado Springs

Attending: Idaho State University

Probable Major: Health Sciences – PT / PTA

Temesghen Atsgebo

Award: \$4,000 two-year scholarship

High School: Eaglecrest

City: Centennial

Attending: Metropolitan State - Denver

Probable Major: Psychology

Casey Tucker

Award: \$4,000 two-year scholarship

High School: Gunnison

City: Gunnison

Attending: Colorado State University

Probable Major: Forestry

Cierra Vialpando

Award: \$4,000 two-year scholarship

High School: Primero

City: Trinidad

Attending: CSU - Pueblo

Probable Major: Elementary Education

Anahit LaBarre

Award: \$3,000 two-year scholarship

City: Centennial

Attending: University of Northern Colorado

Probable Major: Masters in Special Education -
Teacher of the Visually Impaired

Rebecca Pease

Award: \$3,000 two-year scholarship

City: Fort Collins

Attending: University of Northern Colorado

Probable Major: Special Education



just for PARENTS

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>

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.

Center for Parent Information and Resources

Produce under U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs No. 328R130014, the Center for Parent Information and Resources website has information, resources and Parent Technical Assistance Centers

(<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/visualimpairment/>)

- [Off to a Good Start! Back to School Checklist \(https://www.wrightslaw.com/info/back.to.school.chklist.htm\)](https://www.wrightslaw.com/info/back.to.school.chklist.htm)

From Wrightslaw, this checklist includes action items organized by: things to do, smart IEPs, your child's evaluation, and more. There are 2 columns for each item where parents can mark their own progress in preparing ("not yet" and "done"), as well as room for comments and notes.

- [What to Do the First Day, Week and Month Back to School When Your Kid Has an IEP \(https://themighty.com/2018/08/what-to-do-back-to-school-iep/\)](https://themighty.com/2018/08/what-to-do-back-to-school-iep/)

From the Mighty, for families.

- [Using Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\) to Attend IEP Meetings \(https://www.dol.gov/whd/opinion/FMLA/2019/2019_08_08_2A_FMLA.pdf\)](https://www.dol.gov/whd/opinion/FMLA/2019/2019_08_08_2A_FMLA.pdf)

This August 2019 letter from the U.S. Department of Labor discusses the general legal principles of the FMLA, the specifics of the inquiry to which US Labor is responding (care of children with special health care needs), relevant precedents, and Labor's opinion based on those facts. This is not a tool that fits all family circumstances, but it's a very good approach to keep in mind.

- [Need to Share Info on Early Childhood Development in Other Languages?](https://developingchild.harvard.edu/translation/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=august_2019)

(https://developingchild.harvard.edu/translation/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=august_2019)

It doesn't matter what language you speak, the science of early childhood development—of brain architecture, serve and return, and toxic stress—is universal. The Center on the Developing Child offers a library of videos and materials translated into several languages, including Spanish, Portuguese, Mandarin, Urdu, Bulgarian, Arabic, and now (new!) Japanese.





2019- 2020 Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conferences

WHO: Colorado families who have a child with a disability. Both parents in a two-parent family are encouraged to attend. Single parents are encouraged to bring a support person who will also participate in the conference. (A support person is someone who is directly involved in the regular care of the child or youth with a disability.)

Directors of special education, principals, special education teachers, general education teachers, related service providers, health care and other Colorado professionals interested in the family and school partnership who work with children or youth with disabilities.

WHAT: 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 bring together families and professionals and are designed to promote partnerships that are essential in supporting students with disabilities and their families in schools and the community. PEP is a non-specific disability conference that focuses on commonalities.

WHEN: PEP is held from 5:00 PM Thursday through 3:00 PM Saturday. The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) pays for registration and meals, and pays for lodging **if a participant lives more than 35 miles from the hotel conference center.**

WHERE: In order to enable more families and professionals to participate, PEP Conferences are scheduled throughout Colorado.

Sessions

Parenting a Child with a Disability and Rebuilding Dreams
The Law and the Education of Children with Disabilities
Living with a Disability
Individualized Education Program (IEP)
Early Childhood Supports and Services
Transition IEP and more!

2019-2020 PEP Conferences

October 10-12, 2019
Fort Collins, CO

January 23-25, 2020
Colorado Springs, CO

April 2-4, 2020
Grand Junction, CO

Apply Now!

For more information and to apply online go to:
[The PEP Website](#)

Or contact:

CDE-ESSU-PEP
PEP Hotline: (303) 866-6846

jobs

IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with current vacancies for the current 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 para-educator, a brailist, and/or a colleague already in the teaching profession.

Please work with Dr. Paula Conroy to learn more about the UNC distance education / graduate program to prepare TVIs and O&M Specialists in Colorado! TVI = teacher of students with visual impairments and COMS = certified orientation and mobility specialist.

Northern Region Jobs:

- ✓ **TVI/ COMS** (1 FTE) for Greeley Schools. For more information, please contact Nyla Buffington at nbuffington@greeleyschools.org
- ✓ **TVI/ COMS** (1 FTE) for Thompson School District in Loveland. For more information, please contact Charlie Carter at charlie.carter@thompsonschoos.org

Southern Region – Jobs

- ✓ **CSDB** - Please be in touch with Chelle Lutz for possible CSDB Openings in the School for the Blind. She can be reached at (719) 578-2100 or clutz@csdb.org

Metro Region—Jobs

- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (2 FTE) opening in Denver Public Schools. For more information, please contact Julie Hemphill at (720) 595-6126 or julie_hemphill@dpsk12.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! We are seeing many retired TVIs and O&M Specialist come back to contribute as subs for maternity leave, do contact work, and work at a Shared Vision. Magic!



“Let no child be demeaned nor have his wonder diminished because of our ignorance or inactivity. Let no child be deprived of discovery because we lack the resources to discover his problem. Let no child ever doubt himself or his mind because we are unsure of our commitment.” – *T.L. Lewis*



Hope to See You There!!

WESTERN REGION EARLY INTERVENTION CONFERENCE 2019

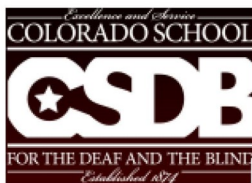
September 11-13, 2019

AIM HIGH: ELEVATING OUR EARLY INTERVENTION PRACTICES

The Western Regional Early Intervention Conference (WREIC) is designed to support professionals working with, and families of, children birth to five years old who are deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired, or deafblind. WREIC has been in place for over 30 years, making it one of the longest ongoing early intervention conferences in the country.

DENVER, COLORADO

Hosted By:



For More Information:

Contact Roberta Curtis at

Curtis_R@cde.state.co.us



New Faces and New Places

NEW FACES!

We welcome new TVIs and Orientation and Mobility Specialists to Colorado positions! It is exciting to see new people entering / graduating from UNC or other university training programs, as well as veteran professionals moving into our state. Welcome, welcome, welcome! We have a lot of happy news to share about the many new faces in our community of professionals across the State of Colorado.

- **Nancy Barron**, who will teach assistive technology at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB), has more than 25 years of varied experience teaching both adults and children with visual impairment in the Pittsburgh area. She has spent summers in Colorado Springs since 2013 and shares, "I have been attracted to the chance to teach in CSDB's academically oriented environment." When not working, Nancy enjoys hiking in Red Rock Canyon or on the Intemann trail as well as other local favorites. Of her three grown children, one is a Colorado College graduate and epilepsy surgery survivor whose 2012 Olympic uniform is on display in the college's athletic building.
- **Dr. Nancy Benham**, who is the new superintendent of the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. She is originally from Texas and has moved most recently from upstate New York where she was the Assistant Superintendent of the New York State School for the Deaf. Dr. Benham began teaching Deaf students in a self-contained class in the public school. After 16 years of teaching at the college level and having adopted their first child, who happened to be Deaf, she wanted to return to working in the school system. Dr. Benham was given the opportunity to become the Early Intervention Coordinator at the Western Pennsylvania School for the Deaf. Since that time, she has served in a variety of administrative positions at various schools for the Deaf prior to becoming the Superintendent of CSDB.

Dr. Benham shares, "While my formal training and professional experience has focused on the education of the Deaf, I am committed to learning as much as I can about our students who are Blind or have Low Vision and to ensure that we are providing a quality education to prepare these students to become successful contributing members of society." We are happy to have Dr. Benham in Colorado and at the CSDB!

- **Chris Holmes** is a new TVI in St. Vrain School District. Chris grew up in England and has lived most of his adult life in beautiful Colorado. He is a graduate from CU Boulder and then Stanford with communication degrees. His first real work was with young students with learning disabilities, and though he has worn different work hats since then, he shares that it seems now inevitable that he would be drawn back to working with this special population one day. Having worked previously as a paraeducator with students with visual impairments, Chris is thrilled to be now in the role of teacher of students who are blind/visually impaired. Chris will be starting the O&M licensure training this year, which he hopes will be complemented by his long-term involvement in teaching movement and his internal martial arts practice.



New Faces and New Places

NEW FACES!

- **Aryn McNicol** is a new TVI and O&M Specialist in St. Vrain School District. She grew up in Boulder, Colorado and was always interested in education. After graduating from high school she moved to California, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Community Studies with an emphasis on economic and educational justice in the University of California Santa Cruz. As part of her degree, Aryn volunteered full-time with an organization called Barrios Unidos and wrote a 100-page thesis on the organization's philosophy in mentoring gang-affiliated-youth and community agency. Later she earned a Master's degree in Special Education Orientation and Mobility at San Francisco State. After earning her degrees, she moved to New York where she spent five years teaching as a TVI and COMS at Lavelle School for the Blind and the New York City Department of Education, Educational Vision Services. Aryn is happy to continue her career in serving and teaching students with visual impairments at the St. Vrain Valley School District in Longmont and is looking forward to building new professional relationships and experiences here in Colorado, her beloved home state.
- **Autumn Odette** will be working as a TVI and O&M Specialist at CSDB in the Adams School for the Blind. Autumn graduated from Stephen F. Austin University in Nacogdoches, Texas in 1991 and has been working as a teacher of students with visual impairments and a certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist for the last 28 years. Autumn has worked in Waco, Texas for 20 years and then moved back to her home state of Michigan for the last eight years. She shares that she has been an itinerant all 28 years and is really happy to get to work for CSDB now. She is looking forward to hiking, camping and enjoying the beautiful weather and scenery here in Colorado!
- **Patti Shannon** is providing contract services in several Colorado administrative units. She is new to Colorado. Patti is originally from Illinois and completed her Masters at Northern Illinois University. The majority of her experience has been as an itinerant TVI/O&M across multiple school districts in the Madison, WI area. She also has O&M experience with adults through an internship at Hines VA. Outside of teaching, Patti and her fiancé spend much of our time hiking and exploring the beautiful state of Colorado. Patti shares that they "are so happy to be able to call this our new home!"
- **Jennifer Taylor** is a new TVI with the Anchor Center for Blind Children. She grew up in a small town in East Texas and went to college at Stephen F Austin State University. Jennifer's undergraduate studies were in special education EC-12 and her M.Ed. is in special education visual impairment. Before joining Anchor Jennifer was an itinerant certified teacher for the visually impaired in Tyler TX for three years working with children in the public school 3-21. In her spare time Jennifer enjoys spending time outdoors with her two dogs, and cuddling with her cat. Jennifer is currently residing in Denver with her boyfriend, and shares that she "love everything that is Colorado."



New Faces and New Places

NEW FACES!

- **Jared Walker** was recently hired by Pikes Peak BOCES as a TVI. Upon graduating from UNC with a BA in Special Education, he has been working hard toward obtaining his degree and censure in Visual Impairments and Orientation and Mobility. He shares it has been an exciting adventure to have come this far and finally be able to work among this unique population and all of the supporting staff. He currently resides in Manitou Springs and anticipate many hikes and outdoor exploring in the near future. If Jared is not outdoors, you may find him cooking up some nutritious food, scouring the web for new music, or cramming his nose into a stack of textbooks. Jared is thrilled to have at last achieved one of his life's greatest goals and looks forward to meeting everyone.
- **Erin Warden** knew she wanted to make a difference in children's lives after coaching sports in her teen years. She graduated with her Bachelors of Education and went onto teach English in Korea and then Special Education for three school years as an SLD and SSN teacher in Georgia. Erin wanted to see more of the world so she joined the US military and served for seven years with opportunity to spend 3 and half years in Hawaii. After a successful career as a 1LT in the military, she moved to Colorado Springs, and worked as a teacher for students with specific learning disability in D49 for two more school years. Fast forward to early 2019; she expressed interest in the current TVI position, received amazing mentorship from the previous TVI (the amazing Diane Fitzkee, who retired last year) and began to meet the students. Erin notes that she knew right then that she would make the leap to go back to school while working with students who are blind/visually impaired in the district!

NEW PLACES

WE HAVE A FEW FAMILIAR FACES IN NEW PLACES!

- ◆ **Vicki Chinski** is working in Weld County School District. She was formerly in Poudre School District.
- ◆ **Jeanine Holmes** is working in Poudre School District. She was formerly in Thompson School District.
- ◆ **Jennifer Parker** is back in Colorado and now working at the Anchor Center for Blind Children.
- ◆ **Edie Smith** is working part-time with A Shared Vision. Edie retired last year from Douglas County School District.
- ◆ **Wendy Stoltman** is working part-time with A Shared Vision. Wendy is continuing her work as a part-time employee with the Colorado Department of Education, working on our Low Vision Evaluation team, as a Deaf-Blind Technical Assistant Specialist, and a TVI / O&M Mentor / Coach.
- ◆ **Brooke Thomas** is back as a contractor in Denver Public Schools!
- ◆ **Maggie Tutt** is back as a TVI and COMS after taking some time to be an administrator. She formerly worked in Adams 12 School District. She is working part-time in Douglas County School District and A Shared Vision.
- ◆ **Michael Wright** is back in Colorado and working for Johnstown-Milliken, Fort Lupton, and Keenesburg School Districts.



colorado connections

- Congratulations to **Will Reynold** who married **Ben Wood** on May 26th at the Golden Hotel. Ben shared, "We had some rain, some sun, a beautiful rainbow in-between, and excellent cake. We celebrated with family, relatives, and a few close math teacher friends who work alongside Ben at Castle View High School."
- Another happy day occurred this summer with the nuptials of **Diane (Covington)** and **Aaron Taylor** over the summer. We wish both couples all the very best!
- Wow – we had a great two days together at the 2019 Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness and Significant Support Needs. We had just over 100 people in attendance with the following impressive representation of our TVIs and/or O&M Specialists: **Mickey Abercrombie, Tanni Anthony, Peg Collins, Nancy Cozart, Elsa D'Angelo, Erin Noe, Jim Olson, Trina Boyd Pratt, Angela Sims, Wendy Stoltman, and Chloann Woolley**. A huge thank you to our magnificent presenter and teacher **Jo Mascorro**, who kept us both entertained and well informed on the topic of *Responding to Challenging Behavior: Developing Meaningful & Functional Instructional Strategies*. She is a master teacher with deep, deep content that earned rave reviews and, will undoubtedly, help to change practice with our colleagues and our students.
- Congratulations to **Christina Cortes** (CSDB) and **Rachel Sullivan** (Cherry Creek School District), who both earned their CDE Certificates of Braille Competency over the summer months! Hats off to **Stephanie Crosen** for earning braille renewal hours over the summer. Thanks to proctors **Chris Maynard** and **Nancy Cozart** for their summer work!
- ***We have had a bumper crop of babies!*** Check out the good news across our state with the birth of four new little ones. We are so happy for each family!
 - Congratulations to **Kari** and **Drew Finholt** on the birth of their son Colin Daniel! He was born on March 28th at 5:56 a.m., weighing in at 6 pounds and 11 ounces and at 20 1/14 inches.
 - Congratulations to **Kaitlin Lombardi** and **Jon Lunceford** on the birth of their baby boy. Callum Lunceford was born on July 7th, weighing in at 6 pounds and one 1 ounce and 20 inches. Kaitlin shared he was two weeks early "per his mother's request for more time with him before school starts and that he is pretty great."
 - Congratulations to **Melinda** and **Chris Russell** and on the birth of their daughter Remi, She made her appearance Thursday, July 18th at 6 lbs. 8 ounces.
 - Congratulation to **Jasmine** and **Daniel Gomez** on the birth of their daughter Lily Sloan was born on July 24, 2019. Such happy news!



colorado connections

- The 2019 National Federation of the Blind Dr. Jacob Bolotin Awards, announced July 12, 2019, recognize individuals and organizations that are a positive force in the lives of blind people and whose work is advancing the ultimate goal of transforming our dreams into reality. Colorado Springs based, USABA, received a Bolotin Grant for the second time in three years. **Kevin Brousard**, Programs and Finance Manager at the USABA, was at the national convention in Las Vegas to receive the recognition. The award was given to recognize USABA's work on their National Fitness Challenge in partnership with the Anthem Foundation. Hats off to USABA – we are so proud of all you do!!!
- We say, “Thanks and farewell “ to Teresa O’Brien, who have been a wonderful colleague and friend to so many of us over the past many years. Teresa shares: “It is with great excitement and a little bit of sadness that I share the news that I am leaving Colorado to continue my career in West Palm Beach, FL. It doesn’t seem like 23 years have passed since I was driving from Chicago to Glenwood Springs, in the middle of a winter storm, going over Vail Pass to go to my first job as a Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist at Mountain BOCES. I was, and still am, in awe of those beautiful mountains! After completing my second Master’s Degree at UNC that led to a certification as a TVI, I found my place at the Thompson School District in Loveland, CO for 20 years! I have enjoyed working in this district and was fortunate to have had supportive supervisors during these years. I have learned so much during this time by serving so many different kinds of students. It has allowed me to continue to grow as a teacher. I am also grateful to Tanni Anthony, our CDE support, as she provided us all with strong leadership and encouragement during these years as well! My wonderful husband, Tim, and I will seek new adventures as I begin a new position as a TVI/O&M Specialist at The School District of Palm Beach County in West Palm Beach, Florida. I will be working within a team of 10 TVIs! My sister, Karen, (in the above picture with Teresa) was ecstatic to hear that I am FINALLY coming to live near her! I have missed my sister tremendously! Tim and I plan on spending half of our time in Florida and RVing during breaks and in the summer to explore the beautiful USA as well as visiting our other treasured and well-missed family members who live in Illinois. I wish you all the best and may peace, health, and happiness always be with you! Sincerely, Teresa O’Brien”



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!



Who Ya Gonna Call?

School Year 2019-20



This is a quick list of contacts across a variety of possible need areas over the course of this next school year.

A Shared Vision: Partners in Pediatric Blindness and Visual Impairment at www.ASharedVision.org

- For referrals - referrals@ASharedVision.org (general mailbox)

Anchor Center for Blind Children at <https://anchorcenter.org/>

- For referrals or information contact (303) 337-9732

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

- Southern TVI/COMS Region Representative at Vision Coalition Meetings



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

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



Who Ya Gonna Call?

School Year 2019-20



Martin Becerra at (303) 778-1130 x222 or mbecerra@cocenter.org

- Colorado Center for the Blind Youth Programs
- Colorado Center for the Blind Representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Nancy Benham at (719) 578-2102 or nbehnam@cldb.org

- CSDB Superintendent

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

- CSDB Distance Learning Coordinator

Kevin Brouard at (719) 866-3019 or kbrouard@usaba.org

- USABA Membership and Outreach Coordinator

Melinda Carter at (303)-377-9732 or mcarter@anchorcenter.org

- Anchor Center for Blind Children Representative at Vision Coalition meetings

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

- CIMC webpage: www.cldb.org; click on “Programs and Services,” then “CIMC”
- CIMC Email Accounts:
- cimregistrations@cldb.org: student “Registration” and “Exit” forms
- cimceyereports@cldb.org: eye health records on file in school district for eligibility verification
- cimcaphorders@cldb.org: “APH order form” submissions & questions
- cimcbookorders@cldb.org: braille & large print book sourcing inquiries, questions & orders
- cimcbrailers@cldb.org: “braille request” & “braille repair” form submissions & questions
- (719) 578-2195, Jim Olson (Coordinator) jolson@cldb.org
- (719) 578-2196, pilot phone number (rings all computer-based Skype for Business #s simultaneously, but you cannot leave a voicemail at this number)
- (719) 578-2197, Debbie Haberkorn, dhaberkorn@cldb.org (braille transcriber, textbook status)
- (719) 578-2198, Teresa Kilbury, tkilbury@cldb.org (shipping/receiving related ?, APH orders)
- (719) 578-2199, Lori Wilson, lwilson@cldb.org (student registrations/exits; Federal Quota Census)
- Address faxes to “CIMC staff” and send to CSDB Admin Office; FAX number: (719) 578-2239.
- Mailing Address: CIMC, 1015 East High Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80903-3559



Who Ya Gonna Call?

School Year 2019-20



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

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

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

- Colorado AER Chapter President
- Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor
- Metro TVI/COMS representative at Vision Coalition meetings
- Metro TVI / COMS Regional Meetings

Jayne Cusimano at (719) 640-4869 or jcusimano@csdb.org

- CSDB BVI Outreach representative at Vision Coalition meetings

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

- Colorado Center for the Blind

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

- Director of CSDB Outreach (BVI / DHH) Program and Services
- Specialized Independent Education Evaluations (IEE)

Kathy Emter at (719) 578-2177 or kemter@csdb.org

- CSDB Director of Special Education
- CSDB and Enrollment Questions

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

- Site Coordinator for Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinics
- Statewide Low Vision Clinic Coordinator

Christine Holmberg at (303) 506-3859 or email at foresightskiguides@gmail.com.

- Foresight Ski Guides

Gina Herrera at (303) 866-6605 or herrera_g@cde.state.co.us

- Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project
- Free Technical Assistance for Learners with Deaf-Blindness, Their Families, and Service Providers

Julia Hutchinson at 386-562-6594 or hutchinson_julia@svvsd.org

- Northern Region TVI/COMS Representative at Vision Coalition meetings
- Northern Region TVI / COMS meetings



Who Ya Gonna Call?

School Year 2019-20



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

- CSDB Summer Enrichment Program

Julie King at 970-389-5929 or julie.king@eagleschools.net

- Western Slope TVI/COMS Representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Nancy Knight at (303) 909-3291 or nknight@lps.k12.co.us

- Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Site Coordinator

Paula Landry at (303)-335-6554 or plandry@ASharedVision.org

- A Shared Vision Representative at Vision Coalition meetings

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

- Metro TVI / COMS Regional Meetings

Jamie Lugo at (719) 578-2108 or jlugo@csdb.org

- Braille Challenge – CSDB
- CSDB School for the Blind Principal
- CSDB School for the Blind representative at Vision Coalition Meetings

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

- Colorado Talking Book Library

Christine Maynard at (719) 229-4981 or christine.maynard@asd20.org

- Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Shelley Moats at (720)272-8308-or [spmoads@gmail.com](mailto:spmoats@gmail.com)

- CDE TVI / COMS proctor

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

- Learning Ally – authorized CO NIMAS file user

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

- CIMC year-round registration of Colorado students who are blind/visually impaired
- Federal Quota Census registration (first Monday in January annually)
- Ex Officio Trustee for the Colorado Department of Education Federal Quota Accounts
- CIMC braille & large print book orders and APH loan materials
- Authorized NIMAS file user for CO
- CIMC National Braille Association Conference stipend Scholarships for Brailleists
- CIMC Professional Lending Library
- CIMC representative at Vision Coalition meetings



Who Ya Gonna Call?

School Year 2019-20



Michelle Reed at (720) 883-7154 or michele.reed@state.co.us

- DVR representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Cara Reimann at (719) 327-4076 or creimann@cldb.org

- CSDB Media Center for the Blind/Visually Impaired

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

- Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

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

- Site Coordinator for Western Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

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

- Executive Assistant to the CSDB Superintendent and the CSDB Board of Trustees

Sarah Sonnier at (970)-245-5228 or Sonnier.Sarah5@gmail.com

- Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Wendy Stoltman at (303) 885-3030 or wastoltman@aol.com

- CDE TVIs / COMS Mentor
- TA Specialist for CO Services to Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project

Diane Taylor at (719) 578-2225 or dtaylor@cldb.org

- CSDB School and Community Liaison
- Braille Challenge – Denver Site

Kim Wardlow at (303) 786-7777 x 101 or ainc@aincolorao.org

- Audio Information Network of Colorado

Liz Wieder at (303)-502-4308 or wieder_elizabeth@svvsd.org

- Site Coordinator for Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic
- Northern Region TVI / COMS meetings

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

- Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Tera Wilkins at video phone number (719) 694-2003 or twilkins@cldb.org

- Internship/Student teacher placements

MAIL TO:

25-43E-3401

Katy Anthes
Commissioner of Education



COLORADO
Department of Education

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Exceptional Student Services
1560 Broadway, Suite 1100
Denver, CO 80202

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