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KEEPING IN TOUCH!

A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers
of Colorado Children with Visual Impairment, Including Blindness
October 2021

Inclusion – A Real-Life Example

By Tanni Anthony and Jo Pinto

We are talking a lot about Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion these days. That is a good thing. I have benefited greatly from authentic discussions occurring in my own work place. Such conversations often begin with term definitions. For example, the definition of inclusion is, “The action or state of including or of being included within group of structure.” One of my hopes is to go beyond just defining words, but really exemplifying them with real-life stories that bring clarity to the term. Jo Pinto, our CDE braille proofreader, shared a post on her Facebook page and I asked if I could share it. It is a true example of inclusion. Here is her beautiful example.

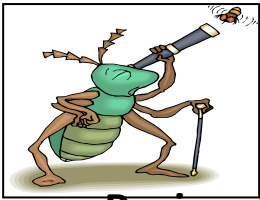
I'd like to talk about inclusion for a second. Real inclusion. Not the kind that's mandated by law or guilt or some tired sense of obligation. I mean fun, enthusiastic, "Of course, why wouldn't we?" inclusion. Because it happened to me yesterday, and honestly, now that it did happen, I'm not really sure I've ever experienced it before. Not for real, not completely. Maybe I've come close, but not that way.

Some good friends had me over for lunch. They fixed tacos, first of all. When we sat at the table, one of the people told me every single item available to put on the tacos, then listed the items again one by one so I could say yes or no to each item. Usually, I get a general "There are the typical taco choices. What would you like?" Or "I'll fix you a plate. Anything I should avoid?" Which is okay; don't get me wrong. But I felt really special and accommodated. Then later, my friends had gotten some playing cards and procured a slate and stylus, which is a tool for creating braille. They asked me how I wanted the playing cards brailled. They didn't create their own system. They ask questions and followed directions. They took turns brailleing a deck, and we played a game of spades. We laughed a lot and shared strategy. My friends are moving out of state soon. I'll miss them immensely and tremendously. People, this is what inclusion looks like. Just saying. It's not trying to find just the right word to say or to not say. It's not putting on a show. It's making people feel welcome, accepted, and comfortable.

Wow—so perfect! We “get it” with this example. I hope to gather other examples to share with one another. Please take time to talk your students or others who may have great EDI examples across the school year. These examples will be gathered to illuminate expectations and hopes, and to celebrate and teach others. Please share, with permission, any examples that you collect. We will dedicate a BVI Office Hours to this discussion in the days ahead. My thanks to Jo Pinto for this first example.

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LOW VISION EVALUATION



Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics for School Year 2021-2022

Region	Dates	Paperwork Due	Site Coordinator
Northern	October 21-22, 2021	October 7, 2021	Liz Wieder
Southern	November 17, 2021	November 3, 2021	Debbie Haberkorn
Metro	February 17-19, 2022	January 31, 2022	Karin Hensel
Southern	March 10, 2022	February 24, 2022	Debbie Haberkorn

Western Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Summary

**We are so happy to share we have had our first in-person
Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinic of the school year!**

By Debbie Haberkorn

The Western Slope Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic was held September 24th and 25th at the Hawthorne Building in Grand Junction. Seven students from five administrative units (Colorado River BOCES, Eagle County School District, Mesa County District 51, Pitkin County District 1, and San Juan BOCES) received evaluations. Six parents and five TVIs attended the evaluation with their students.

The LVE Clinic team would like to thank Regional Coordinator Angela Sims for doing such a phenomenal job of preparing for this clinic. The team felt a little rusty after taking a year off due to COVID-19, but Angela Sims and Erin Noe really went above and beyond to make things easy for us. A big thank you to Angela and Erin and all of the TVIs and families who brought students.

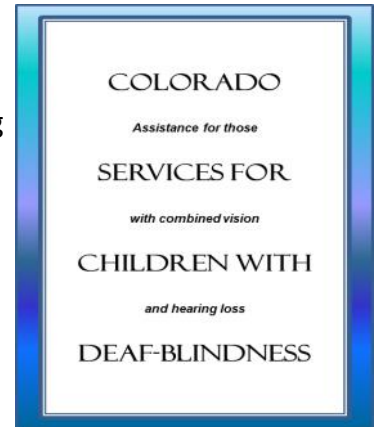


Our first clinic, a success! As this newsletter goes out the door, we are having clinic number two with then Northern region! So glad to see us back in person!

Colorado Deaf-Blind Project News

Project Purpose and Staff

The Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project (aka the Colorado Deaf-Blind Grant) is in the fourth year of its federally-funded five-year grant cycle. We started the new grant award on October 15, 2018, and it will be completed on October 14, 2023. The grant project has been housed within the Colorado Department of Education's Exceptional Student Services Unit for over 30 years. The purpose of the project, awarded to every state and US territory, is to identify children and youth with deaf-blindness and provide free technical assistance (TA) to the identified children, their families, and service providers.



Key project activities are to maintain an annual Child Count process, host professional learning events, and provide universal and customized technical assistance. The current project has three broad goals: (1) identification, (2) family networking, training, and TA support, and (3) professional training and TA support. Key events have been the annual Summer Institute and Parent Workshop. New projects have recently included a formal intervener training and coaching model, an inventory of online early childhood training modules now posted on the project's website, and an annual webinar series. The project has an active website, lending library, and Deaf-Blind Advisory Task Force. We have five CDE employees (**Tanni Anthony, Gina Herrera, Roberta Curtis, Jessica Meisel, and Wendy Stoltman**) and one specialized contractor (**Cindy Colwell**) on board with the project.

Check out our website at: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-db>

Child Find Count of Colorado Children and Youth with Deaf-Blindness

Thanks to everyone who participated in the December 2020 Count. A total of 164 children and youth were identified. There are 79 girls and 85 boys on the count. We are concerned that we only identified 7 new infants and toddlers, which is down from last year's number of 17. There are 119 children ages 3 to 15, and 38 youth from 16-21 years. We will soon we will be sending out the paperwork for the December 2021 Count!

We are gearing up for our December 1, 2021 Count. Agency and district contacts, get ready for a packet of information that will be mailed to you by early to mid-November! The forms will be due back to CDE by January 14, 2022.

Children on the Child Count are eligible for free technical assistance from the project. As you identify new learners with deaf-blindness, please reach out to Tanni Anthony (anthony_t@cde.state.co.us) or Gina Herrera (herrera_g@cde.state.co.us) to complete the Child Count Form at any time of the calendar year. We count on you!



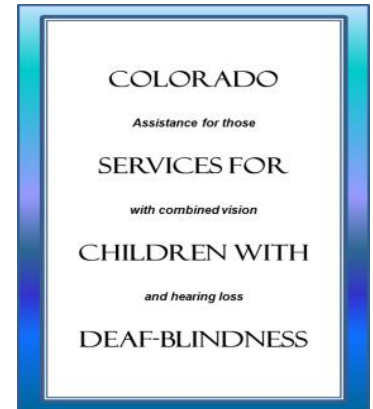
Colorado Deaf-Blind Project News

Texas Deaf-Blind Project Resources

There are so many great resources on this webpage - be sure to check it out!

<https://txdeafblindproject.org/>

You can find newsletters, publications, handouts, videos, and podcasts are a myriad of topics that include behavioral supports, orientation and mobility, deaf-blind interaction, communication, and teachers of the deaf-blind.



Colorado Community Intervener Project



You can find newsletters, publications, handouts, videos, and podcasts are a myriad of topics that include behavioral supports, orientation and mobility, deaf-blind interaction, communication, and teachers of the deaf-blind.

We are happy to announce the beginning of a new program to assist children and youth who are DeafBlind (ages 0-21) to meaningfully participate in activities outside of school such as going to story time at the library, socializing with friends, a museum, community events, family interactions, and more. The intervener's role is to provide all the incidental information a typical child would get through vision and hearing and assist them with both receptive and expressive communication with their friends, family, peers, and professionals.

Interveners work one-to-one with an individual to learn their unique communication and access needs to help them benefit from all aspects of life. This looks different for each individual but might be explaining what the dinosaur bones at the museum look like to a child, helping a child ask peers at a playground to play, explaining the music and movement happening at the Nutcracker, or sitting with a child at family dinner and helping them participate in conversation about their day.

The Intervener Community Pilot, hosted by Family Voices CO, will provide intervener services for 10 hours a month for 10 children/youth to work on increasing both community integration and communication skills.

For more information about the program, please contact Elli Streifer at elli.streifer@gmail.com.





COLORADO
Department of Education

2021-2022 DEAF-BLINDNESS WEBINAR SERIES

The Colorado Deaf-Blind Project is pleased to announce a series of webinars that will be offered once a month throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

Time for all webinars: 3:30 -5:30 p.m.

October 12, 2021

Systematic Instruction for Students with Severe Disabilities (Part 1): System of Least Prompts with MaryAnn Demchak and Chevonne Sutter

November 9, 2021

Calendars for Students with Multiple Impairments, Including Deafblindness with Robbie Blaha

December 14, 2021

Putting Together the Pieces: A Team Approach to Creating Experience Books with Katie Sacra, Clair Turbeville and Emily Scheffler

Topics for 2022 will be announced at a later date.

Participants: Colorado parents of and professionals working with children birth through 21 years with significant supports needs, including deaf-blindness. The focus is on learners who are not yet proficient in verbal and/or sign language.

Training Expectations: Full attendance of any session is a requirement. Please do not sign up for any of these training events if you cannot commit to the full hour.

[Deaf-Blind Webinar series registration link](#)

*When registering please indicate if you require any accommodation(s). All accommodations must be requested no later than two weeks prior to the event. Requests made after this time cannot be guaranteed.

For questions regarding registration, please reach out to Roberta Curtis, curtis_r@cde.state.co.us.

Colorado Department of Education
Exceptional Student Services Unit | 1560 Broadway, #1100, Denver, CO 80202



- October 12, 2021
- November 9, 2021
- December 14, 2021
- January 11, 2022
- February 8, 2022
- March 8, 2022
- April 12, 2022
- May 10, 2022

For any other questions, please reach out to Tanni Anthony, Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or Gina Herrera, Herrera_g@cde.state.co.us.



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

Colorado Association of Education And Rehabilitation Building Bridges Together

**CAER Offers Financial Assistance to Colorado Clients, Students, Families,
and Professionals Through Mini-Grants.**

Mini-Grant funds are available to defray the costs of:

- Conference Attendance
- Student Activities
- Programming Needs
- Professional Development Projects
- Other Ideas Are Welcome

Mini-grant Rules:

1. Applicant must be a current CAER member or be sponsored by an CAER member.
2. The maximum amount of funds available will vary; the allotted amount per grant will not exceed \$300.
3. Recipients are only eligible to receive a mini-grant once every **two** years.
4. Recipients need to provide CAER with a presentation of how the mini-grant money was used **within 30 days** of use of funds. This will be shared with members at the annual CAER banquet.
5. Board members applying for a mini-grant will recuse themselves from voting in that mini-grant cycle.
6. Mini-grant applications are accepted throughout the year, but due by November 1st. The grants are awarded once per year in November.
7. If funds are not used for the intended purpose, the mini-grant funds need to be returned to the CAER board by the recipient.

Funding decisions are made by your elected CAER Board of Directors and must be approved by a 2/3rds of voting members.



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

Mini-Grant Application Form

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Work:

Email:

AER membership #:

Recommending AER Member name:

For what purpose are you applying for a mini-grant? (Attach page, as necessary)

How much financial assistance are you requesting? (Max \$300)

List/itemize your expenses:

Have you contacted other sources for assistance? If so, please list the name(s) of the organizations, the amount requested and the amount pledged.

If awarded a Mini Grant, you are required to submit a presentation (in some form) to the CAER board within 30 days of using the funds.

If funds are not used for the intended purpose or presentation isn't submitted in a timely fashion, I agree to refund the funds to CAER

Signature of Applicant

Email completed application form to: caerboard@gmail.com



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

2022 AER Biennial International Conference Session Proposals

AER is excited to announce that the session proposal submission website for the 2022 AER Biennial International Conference is now live! They are now accepting proposals for sixty-minute breakout sessions, ninety-minute breakout sessions, and posters. This site streamlines the process for your submission.

The following items are required in the Conference Session Proposal to complete your submission:

- Presenter Biography and Headshot
- Session Title, Description and Knowledge Level
- Topic and Type
- Presentation Summary
- Three Learning Objectives

Potential presenters have until **Monday, November 15, 2021** to submit their proposals.

Submit a session proposal at https://s5.goeshow.com/aerbvi/bic/2022/abstract_submission.cfm.

Watch this helpful video to learn how to submit a session proposal and what will be required.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-5WUk624m0U>

Please send any questions about your proposal to conference@aerbvi.org. We look forward to receiving your proposal!

Colorado, TVIs, please consider sharing your wealth of knowledge by submitting a proposal! We have so much to share with the field!



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

Professional LEARNING



CAER Presentation on Wearables

CAER is Sponsoring a presentation “Wearables – AKA Electronic Optical Enhancement Devices” Course. This training will be held on October 28, 2021 from 5:45 p.m. – 6:45 p.m. Zoom Call entry at 5:30 and in-service starts at 5:45. There will be a one hour ACVREP clock hour for attendees.

Here are the details: CAER is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: CAER Workshop

Time: **October 28, 2021** 5:30 p.m. Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://unco.zoom.us/j/95077881543>

Meeting ID: 950 7788 1543

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,95077881543# US (Tacoma)

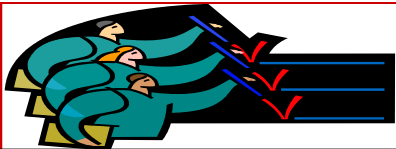
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Learning Objectives:

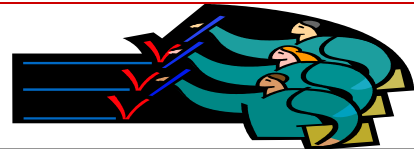
- Audience will receive brief information about what is a wearable.
- Audience will learn basic differences between wearables.
- Audience will learn about likenesses between wearables.
- Audience will learn basic accessibility features available.

Michelle Robinson, CVRT, COMS, BROS, is the presenter. Michelle works for Rocky Mountain Regional Veterans Administration Hospital in the Visual Impairment Program. She is the Blind Rehabilitation Outpatient Specialist, which requires going into the Veteran’s homes to provide training. Michelle is also a member of the CAER Board. There is no cost for this presentation!

If you have further questions, please contact: Heather Solberg caerboard@gmail.com



CHECK IT OUT!



APH Webinars

Access Academy is the education professional's one-stop resource for the training webinars you need to get the most out of APH products and services. The majority of Access Academy webinars also provide [Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals](#) (ACVREP) credit. APH Partner Showcase is part of Access Academy, but does not offer ACVREP credits. The Showcase is strictly informational/promotional, and highlights some of APH's partner vendors in field, and their product(s).

Spooktacular Apps: Apps for all ages from APH

October 27, 2021, 3:00 – 4:00 PM EST

Trick-or-Treat yourself to this webinar exploring the many iOS and Android apps created by APH for use in classrooms, at home, and on-the-go! Through an in-depth look at FlipOver Faces, Visual Brailier, BrailleBuzz, and Math Robot, participants will be introduced to the free and low-cost apps available from APH.

[Register Here for Spooktacular Apps: Apps for all ages from APH](#)

Blast Off to More Braille with PageBlaster

November 3, 2021, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m. EST

Blast off to more braille with PageBlaster, one of the first embossers available on quota. Along with partners from HumanWare, APH will present on how to use the PageBlaster to print high-quality, interpoint braille. We'll explore ways to create tactile graphics and produce math with BrailleBlaster.

[Register Here for Blast Off to More Braille with PageBlaster](#)



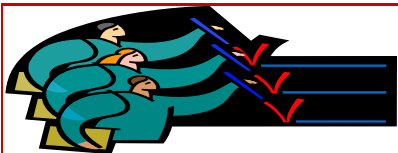
Be My Eyes App

Be My Eyes is a free mobile app with one main goal: to make the world more accessible for blind and low-vision people. The app connects blind and low-vision individuals with sighted volunteers and companies from all over the world through a live video call.

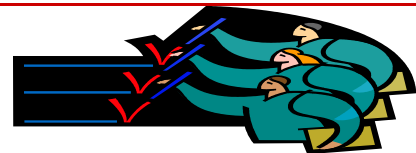
Since they launched in January 2015, more than 4,000,000 volunteers have signed up to assist blind and low-vision users. Be My Eyes users can request assistance in over 180 languages making the app the biggest online community for blind and low-vision people as well as one of the largest micro-volunteering platforms in the world! Every day, volunteers sign onto Be My Eyes to lend their sight to blind and low-vision individuals to tackle challenges and solve problems together.

The Be My Eyes story started in Denmark in 2012 with Hans Jørgen Wiberg, a Danish furniture craftsman, who is visually impaired himself. Through his work at 'The Danish Association of the Blind', he recognized that blind or low-vision people often needed a little assistance to solve everyday tasks. However, it wasn't until a blind friend told him that he used video calls to connect with family and friends, who could help him with these tasks, that Hans Jørgen got the idea for Be My Eyes. He believed that the technology of video calls could be used to visually assist blind or low-vision individuals, without them having to rely on friends and family, but using a network of volunteers.

To join the Be My Eyes community, download the Be My Eyes app from App Store or Google Play and sign up as a blind/low-vision user or as a sighted volunteer. For more information, go to: <https://www.bemyeyes.com/about>.



CHECK IT OUT!



SISEP Center Launches Video Series and Podcast



The State Implementation and Scaling-Up of Evidence-Based Practices (SISEP) Center at the UNC Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute has been hard at work creating new multimedia resources for educators and implementation practitioners. One of these new resources is the “Voices from the Field” [video series](#), hosted on the SISEP Center’s YouTube channel. These videos share the perspectives of active implementers in the field.

The SISEP Center has also launched a new podcast that shares tips for educators every week. The podcast is called “[Implementation Science for Educators](#)” and can be found on multiple streaming platforms. The podcast aims to provide educators with five-minute episodes that they can easily listen to during a break in their busy schedules.

Updated NIMAS Policy Document

A [newly revised question and answer document](#) is now available on the Department of Education’s website as a resource to support SEAs, LEAs, and other stakeholders in the provision of accessible textbooks and related materials using the NIMAS file format, in coordination with the [National Instructional Materials Access Center](#) (NIMAC).

This updated document addresses recent changes to eligibility requirements following the Marrakesh Treaty Implementation Act and also discusses the NIMAC’s expanded role in accepting and disseminating qualifying digital educational materials to eligible users (following the Department’s 2020 [Notice of Interpretation](#) clarifying the definition of “print instructional materials”).



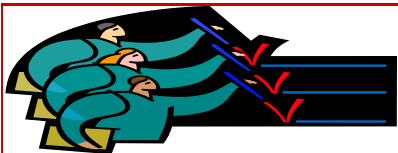
Tactile Art Club

This group is going strong thanks to the organizational efforts by Rishika Kartik. Check out her [blogpost of our December TAC meeting](#) as well as her [2020 Year in Review blog](#) with her favorite highlights of 2020 and how current events have shifted her perspective about accessibility, tactile art, and inclusivity.

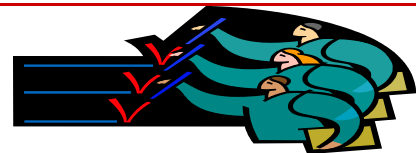


The Tactile Art Club meetings for 2021 will continue on the **3rd Tuesday of each month at 5 p.m. MST**. Please mark the dates on your calendar and stay tuned for more details about the remaining TAC meetings on November 16 and December 21, 2021.

For more information, please reach out to Rishika Kartik at rishikakartik@gmail.com.



CHECK IT OUT!



National Registry for Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments Launches

Success Beyond Sight, (SBS), a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization, has created a FREE National Registry for TSVIs/TVIs (NRTSVI) to empower a national voice for TSVIs/TVIs and to provide a means to reach, on a national level, TSVIs/TVIs with free resources and important professional information.

Success Beyond Sight recognizes the crucial role that Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TSVIs/TVIs) play in the long-term success of their students. Strong instruction and mentorship by TSVIs/TVIs are common denominators for many highly accomplished adults who were born without vision or who lost their vision as children.

Because TSVIs/TVIs are licensed/credentialed/certified/endorsed in their state of practice, there has not been a Registry recognizing them as a nationally important profession demonstrating the power of their numbers. SBS formed an Advisory Board to help guide the development of the NRTSVI. Advisory Board members are Dr. Laura Bozeman, Dr. Rona Pogrud, Dr. Amy Parker, Dr. Cheryl Kamei-Hannan, Jill Brown and Dr. Nicole Johnson.

SBS is providing FREE access to the *Journal of Vision Impairment & Blindness (JVIB)* for all registrants. *JVIB* is the resource for peer-reviewed research and articles for professionals serving individuals who are blind or have low vision.

TSVIs/TVIs will be able to be directly engaged with, and have a voice in, national discussions regarding:

- The funding needed to train current and future professionals and to secure the survival of this very important profession.
- Efforts to ensure sufficient funding for all students who require specialized services from a TSVI/TVI.
- The sharing of important information and opportunities to be included in relevant surveys and research to benefit the profession.
- Appropriate caseloads.
- Legislative advocacy.

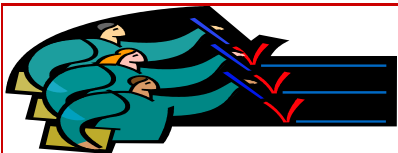
SBS recognizes that there are important professional membership organizations that provide TSVIs/TVIs a voice among other professional voices, but the Registry will provide the forum for TSVIs/TVIs to be highly visible and have their own unique voice on the national stage.

If you are a TSVI/TVI or teacher licensed, credentialed, certified, or endorsed in at least one state to teach children who have visual impairments, go to the [National Registry for TSVIs](#) to learn more and to register.

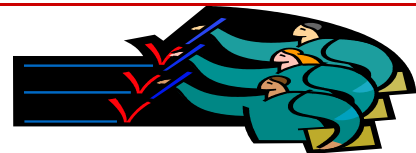
Participating in this Registry is voluntary. For questions or additional information, please email:

NRTSVI@successbeyondsight.org.





CHECK IT OUT!



Virtual Paraeducator Conference 2021 Western States Regional Event

- October 27-28; 6:30-9:40 p.m. MST
- Conference designed for regular and special education paraeducators, teachers, and instructional leaders.

Please [view the flyer](#) for more information!

Center for Applied Specialized Technology (CAST)

The Center for Applied Specialized Technology offers a variety of institutes and workshops for educators at all levels—and their organizations—to build their understanding and practice of UDL, accessibility, and professional development. These virtual professional learning gatherings are interactive and experiential opportunities to develop action plans for the exploration, integration, and implementation of UDL:

- [UDL Implementation Academy](#)
Thursday, October 28 – Friday, October 29, 2021
- [UDL Beyond the Basics](#)
Thursday, November 4 – Friday, November 5, 2021



Well-Being Support Line Available for Educators

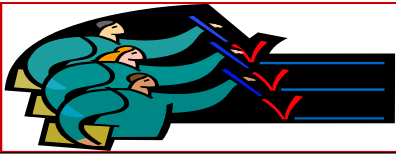
More than 200 educators from 30 different school districts across Colorado accessed the Well-Being Support Line last school year – a resource being offered again this year for any educator.

The free service offered through the University of Colorado's Department of Psychology and the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment's Colorado Spirit Crisis Counseling program is available to any educator across the state, including teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, health care teams and support staff.

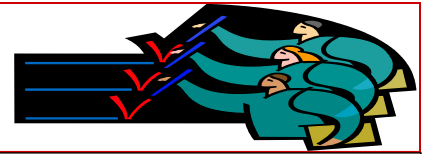
Educators and school employees seeking support can talk to a trained crisis counselor volunteer from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week via telephone or text message. When educators call, they will be asked to leave a phone number, and a staffer will call or text back. Trained volunteers will listen, offer ideas for problem solving, self-care, or community resources. If an educator needs more support or ongoing mental health care, the staff will help connect callers with more support or ongoing mental health care. Call or text 303-724-2500 or [visit this link for more information](#).

[Visit the Colorado Educator Support webpage](#) for more information regarding resources, including an online support program to learn more about skills and strategies for educators to learn how to support themselves and their students with strategies and skills and to learn more about stress, trauma, depression and wellness.





CHECK IT OUT!



OSEP-Funded TA Centers

OSERS' technical assistance centers are ready to address your questions regarding the IDEA and best practices and alternate models for providing special education and related services, including through distance instruction. The National Center for Systemic Improvement is the primary source for technical assistance resources during the COVID-19 national emergency for IDEA Part B programs. The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center is the primary source for IDEA Part C programs. For questions pertaining to Part C of IDEA, States should contact their [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center State Contact](#). For Part B of IDEA, states should contact the [National Center for Systemic Improvement](#).

** Early Childhood



The [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center](#) is providing State Part C and Part B, Section 619 programs with the [latest information](#) on funding and guidance.

** NCSI

The [National Center for Systemic Improvement's](#) website has a wealth of information to support educators and outcomes for children with disabilities.



** Proficient Communicators Who Are Deaf-Blind

The [National Center on Deaf-Blindness](#) has compiled and organized [Resources for Providing Technical Assistance During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). It covers OSEP guidance, distance TA, resources for families and service providers, and online learning for proficient communicators who are deaf-blind. The page is being regularly updated with input from state deaf-blind projects and national partners.



** Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities

[TIES Center](#) has launched a distance-learning series that provides a framework for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to get through these new transitions, engage fully in academics online, and interact with their teachers and peers, a critical component of well-being. TIES Center is regularly adding resources to the distance learning series that offer the following recommendations to support the inclusion and engagement of students with significant cognitive disabilities. Current resources include:

- [TIES Distance Learning #1: Morning Meetings](#)
- [TIES Distance Learning #2: A Collaborative Start to Behavioral Supports](#)
- [TIES Distance Learning #3: Effective Specially Designed Instruction \(SDI\) Within the Distance Learning Environment: What in the World Does That Look Like?](#)



** Accessible Materials and Technologies

The [National AEM Center at CAST](#) has developed resources to support students who need accessible materials and technologies while learning remotely during the COVID-19 crisis.



** eBooks

[Book share](#) provides accessible eBooks for eligible individuals with barriers to reading. The resources linked here will help students with dyslexia, blindness/ visual impairment, cerebral palsy, and other print reading barriers to continue learning during school closures.



Resources and Materials

COVID-19 FAQs Information and Resources including Compensatory Services

Information about Compensatory Services and other topics can be found on the [Office of Special Education's webpage](#) or the [Special Education Director's Corner webpage](#). Information and resources for schools can be found on CDE's [COVID-19 Resources for Schools webpage](#).

COVID-19 Learning Impacts Toolkit

CDE created a COVID-19 Learning Impacts Toolkit to help district and school leaders plan and implement strategies to address the impacts of lost instructional time on the learning and well-being of students over the past school year. The toolkit provides a variety of new and existing strategies to help school and district leaders address the impacts of the pandemic on the learning and well-being of students and staff. The key themes of the toolkit are Reflect, Reset, Reimagine. CDE will continue to add resources to the toolkit over the next year to help district and school leaders address the evolving needs of students. [COVID-19 Learning Impacts Toolkit](#)

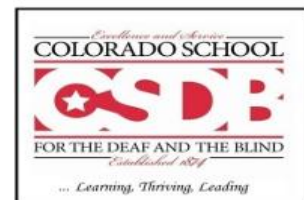
ED Releases New Resource on Supporting Child and Student Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Mental Health during COVID-19 Era

The U.S. Department of Education released a new resource: [Supporting Child and Student Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Mental Health](#) to provide information and resources to enhance the promotion of mental health and the social and emotional well-being among children and students. This resource highlights seven key challenges to providing school- or program-based mental health support across early childhood, K–12 schools, and higher education settings, and presents seven corresponding recommendations. This resource includes many [real-world examples](#) of how the recommendations are being put into action by schools, communities, and states across the country.

CSDB Resources

CSDB YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/csdbchannel/videos>

CSDB Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/CSDBBulldogs>



Eye Am Kids

Eye Am Kids started out as a way to support children who have visual impairments. A mom with two children who have ocular albinism, she wanted to support other children and their families. All of their boxes offer a book with braille, sensory bin activities, a tactile craft activity, and ways to support the family all surrounded by a monthly theme. Their JR boxes are for younger children, with a board book and more support needed for the activities. The CVI boxes are designed to support CVI characteristics needed to help these children visually access the activities. The Eye Am boxes are for older children with the book completely in braille and less support needed to complete the activities. More information about Eye Am Kids [products](#) and past boxes (www.eyeamkids.com).



Find them on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) @eyeamkids and email directly to Melisa.Matthews@eyeamkids.com.

Resources and Materials



University of Colorado **Anschutz Medical Campus**

You do so much to support your students and the community - how can we help support you?

www.coloradoeducatorsupport.com

Teacher/Educator Mental Health and Support Services



This past year was hard - social distancing, masks, remote learning. We don't know what this coming year will look like, but maybe we can help you through it.

Group Sessions and Workshops
Individual Support Sessions
Online Self-Paced Program
Well-Being Support Line (303-724-2500 call/text)

The Educator Support Program is a free service for all Colorado educators and school employees.
Professional Development and Graduate Credits Available

Visit www.coloradoeducatorsupport.com or call 303-724-2500 for more information

In collaboration with the University of Colorado Department of Psychiatry, Partners in Children's Mental Health, Colorado Education Association, Office of Behavioral Health and CDPHE Colorado Spirit.



CDE Happenings

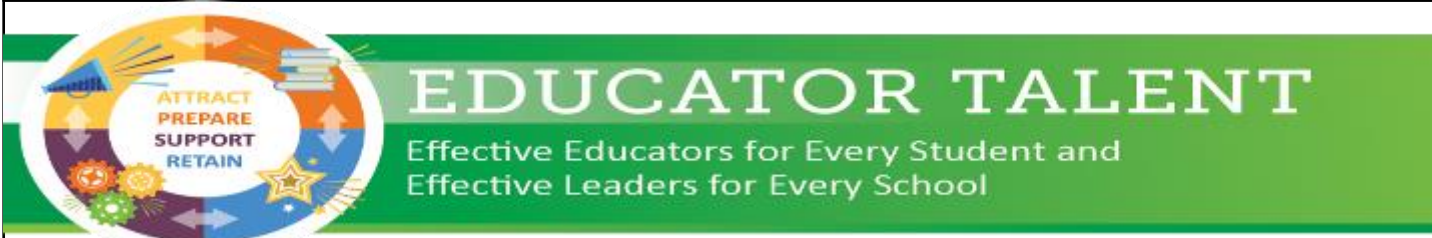
Licensure and Endorsement Specific to Special Education Specialist: VI

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 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 Orientation and Mobility Specialists 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>.

CDE Licensure Requirement for O&M Specialists

If you are working in a Colorado administrative unit as a School Orientation and Mobility Specialist, 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&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.

Initial CDE Braille Competency Testing Requirements

Initial CDE Braille Competency Certificate: 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 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.

The initial CDE Braille Competency Certificate expires five years from its date of issue.

Renewal CDE Braille Competency Certificate

There is a one time expectation to renew the initial CDE certificate five years after its initial issue. This is accomplished by completing 15 renewal modules across the five year renewal period. These modules must be taken with one of the CDE Braille Proctors.

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

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



You can do it !



Provide Feedback on Rules for Educator Licensure and the Educator Recruitment and Retention Program

The State Board of Education on Sept. 30 issued a notice of rulemaking for the Educator Recruitment and Retention program (1 CCR 301-113) and the Rules for the Administration of the Educator Licensing Act of 1991 (1 CCR 301-37).

The ERR program was created by Senate Bill 21-185 to provide support to members of the armed forces, nonmilitary-affiliated educator candidates and local education providers to recruit, select, train and retain highly qualified educators across the state. Under this program, qualified program applicants can apply for up to \$10,000 in financial assistance toward their educator preparation program costs if they commit to teaching in a rural district for three years. Revisions to 1 CCR 301-37 include the incorporation of professional development requirements established during the 2020 legislative session, expansion of areas in which an adjunct authorization may be issued, and changing the valid duration of professional teacher, SSP, principal and administrator licenses from five to seven years. The revised rules also include alternative principal preparation programs.

[For additional information, including draft rules and an online feedback form, visit the feedback page here.](#) Feedback on the draft rules will be accepted through Friday, Nov. 5.

Setting the Standard Webinar Series – Nov. 3

Join the next Setting the Standard webinar, "Trauma-Informed Practices," presented by Tom Hierck at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, November 3. This session will show educators how to better serve students by deepening their understanding of trauma and embrace the best of what we knew pre-pandemic, while incorporating the best of what we have learned during the pandemic.

[Register for the Trauma Informed Practices webinar.](#)

To learn about the upcoming topics and access past webinars, [visit the Setting the Standard webinar page.](#) The one-hour webinars are held the first Wednesday of each month at 3:30 p.m. [Click Here for Additional Information](#)

For More Information, Contact: Jamie Hurley, Office of Standards and Instructional Support, phone: 303-866-6453, email: hurley_j@cde.state.co.us.

Memo: Rights of Students with Disabilities Attending Charter Schools

CDE has posted the 2016 guidance from OCR and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services that addresses the rights of students with disabilities in charter schools under Section 504 and the IDEA. [This guidance can be found online under the "Memos to AU and Special Education Directors" section.](#)



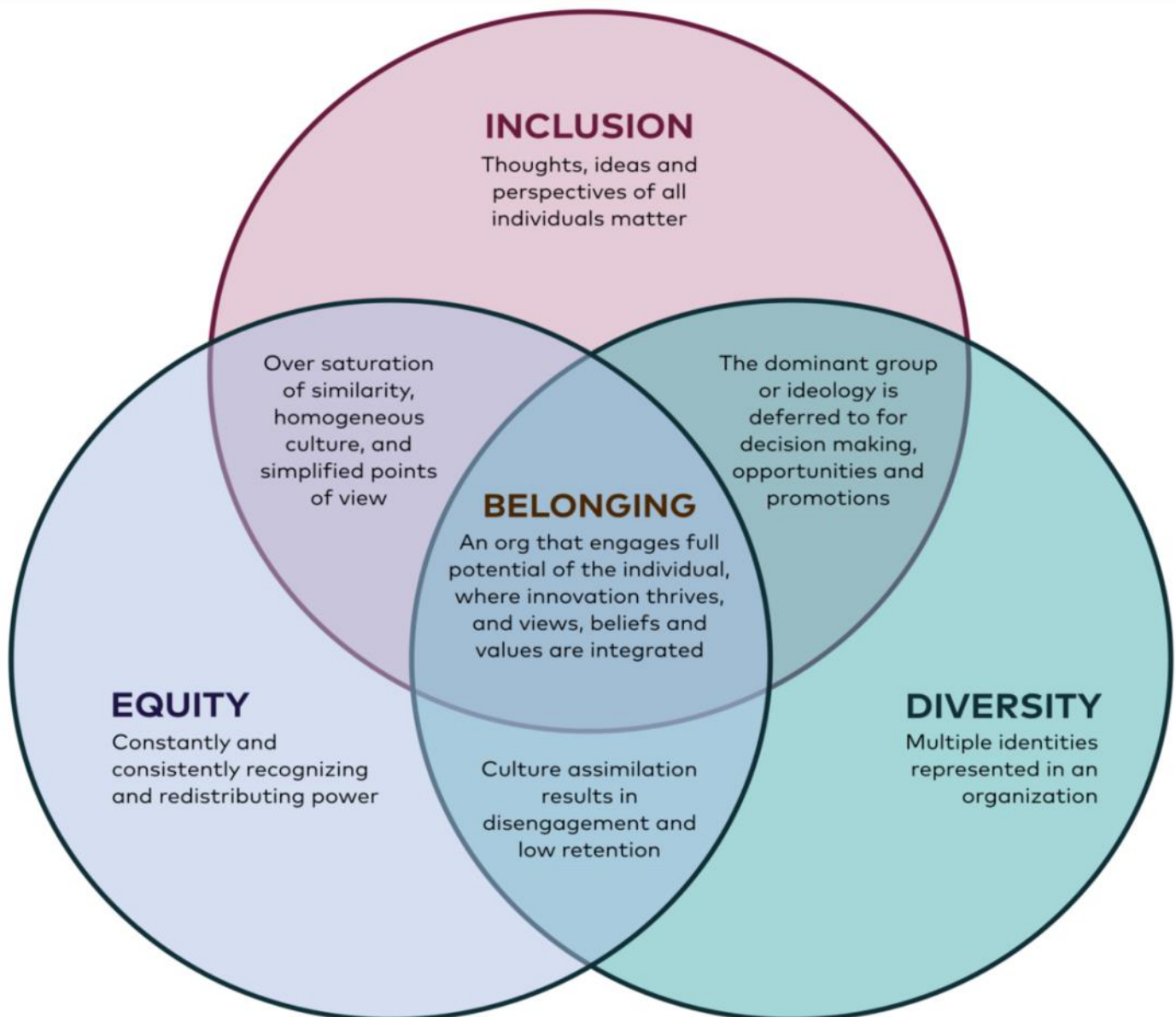
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)



Until Every Barrier Falls

Please take a few moments to listen to this beautiful poem by LeDerick Horne. He is a spoken-word poet and an advocate for all People with Disabilities. He has also been called a bridge-builder between learners and leaders across the U.S. and around the world who serves as a role model for all races, genders, and generation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reANI6Qzg3Y>






Calendar of Events

2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021	2021
October 27	APH Webinar: Spooktacular Apps , 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m., Zoom Registration: https://aph.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nmFZksSGRQQtNeEezKN8A												
October 28-31	NFB-CO 67th Annual State Convention —in person/Lone Tree, CO Contact: Scott LaBarre at slabarre@labarrelaw.com												
October 28	CAER Training on Wearables – Zoom Contact: Heather Solberg at caerboard@gmail.com												
October 30	Follow the IEP Road! – 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., in person/Zoom Registration: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F48A8AC2CA5FECE9-travelling												
November 3	APH Webinar: Blast Off to More Braille with PageBlaster , 11:00 a.m.. - 12:00 p.m., Zoom Registration: https://aph.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FtFxrNJ6S4ullm1J8gYFIQ												
November 3	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347												
November 3	Parent Connect Support Group – 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Registration: https://aph.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0rcOyhrzgrHNKlCmIlgqoSgQtAOxsHjbKX3												
November 9	Deaf-Blind Webinar Series –Calendars for Students with DB / BVI/MD - 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e2bc2329b5c040f79bceede5d68e85a3												
November 10	Metro TVI Meeting – 3:30pm Contact: Jeanne Lei at jlei@cherrycreekschools.org												
November 12	Second Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00am and 2:30-3:30pm Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org												
November 14	Learning Box for Kids — Learning about the Number Line from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Contact: Michelle Chacon at blindedcolo@gmail.com												
November 16	BVI Office Hours —Topic: Calendar Systems—3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347												
November 16	Tactile Art Club —5:00 p.m. Contact: Rishika Kartik at rishikakartik@gmail.com												
November 17	Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic —CSDB in Colorado Springs Contact: Debbie Haberkorn at dhaberkorn@csdb.org												
November 19	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting – 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., in person/CSDB campus Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org												




Calendar of Events

2021 2021 2021 2021 2021 2021 2021 2021 2021 2021 2021 2021 2021

December 1	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
December 3	First Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00am AND 2:30-3:30pm Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
December 12	Learning Box for Kids — Weather around the World from 2:00—3:00 p.m. Contact: Michelle Chacon at blindedcolo@gmail.com
December 14	Deaf-Blind Webinar Series — Experience Books – Registration (3:30 to 5:30 p.m.) Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e2bc2329b5c040f79bceede5d68e85a3
December 15	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
December 17	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting – 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Zoom Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
December 21	Tactile Art Club —5:00 p.m. Contact: Rishika Kartik at rishikakartik@gmail.com

2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022

January 5, 2022	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
January 7	First Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00 a.m. and 2:30—3:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
January 11	Deaf-Blind Webinar Series – Classic Literacy Lessons from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e2bc2329b5c040f79bceede5d68e85a3
January 19	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
January 19-21	CDE State Conference on BVI —back up virtual plan if in person must be cancelled Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
January 20-21	CDE State Conference on BVI —in person plan at Lowry Conference Center in Denver Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
January 26-28	Orientation and Mobility Online Symposium For more information: https://orientationandmobilitysymposium.com/
January 28	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting – 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., in person/CSDB campus Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org




Calendar of Events

2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022

- January 31** **End Date of READ Act Teacher Training Requirement**
 For training options, go to: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/teacher-training>
- February 2** **BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.**
 Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347>
- February 4** **First Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00 a.m. and 2:30—3:30 p.m.**
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- February 8** **Deaf-Blind Webinar Series—Systematic Instruction Part 2 from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.**
 Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e2bc2329b5c040f79bceede5d68e85a3>
- February 16** **BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.**
 Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347>
- February 17-19** **Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic—Anchor Center for Blind Children in Denver**
 Contact: Karin Hensel at khensel@dcsdk12.org
- February 18** **Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting – 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Zoom**
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- March 2** **BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.**
 Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347>
- March 4** **First Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00 a.m. and 2:30—3:30 p.m.**
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- March 8** **Deaf-Blind Webinar Series – (3:30 to 5:30 p.m.)**
 Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- March 10** **Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic—CSDB in Colorado Springs**
 Contact: Debbie Haberkorn at dhaberkorn@csdb.org
- March 15** **See the Future Fund Scholarship Applications Due**
 Please go to: <https://www.seethefuture.org/learn-more-tools-for-life.html>
- March 16** **BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.**
 Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347>
- March 18** **Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting – 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., in person/CSDB campus**
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org




Calendar of Events

2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022 2022

April 1	First Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00am AND 2:30-3:30pm Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
April 6	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
April 15	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting – 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Zoom Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
April 12	Deaf-Blind Webinar Series – Registration (3:30 to 5:30 p.m.) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
April 20	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
May 4	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
May 6	First Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00am AND 2:30-3:30pm Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
May 10	Deaf-Blind Webinar Series – Registration (3:30 to 5:30 p.m.) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
May 18	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
May 20	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting – 2:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m., in person/CSDB campus Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
June 3	First Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00am AND 2:30-3:30pm Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
June 17	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting – 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Zoom Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
July 22 - 24	AER International Conference 2022 – in person/St. Louis, MO <u>Registration information coming soon.</u>



ESSU Virtual Office Hours

During this time of remote instruction, the Office of Special Education has been fielding many phone and email questions regarding how best to support the accessibility, behavior, learning, social-emotional, and transition needs of learners with disabilities. In response to requests from the field, the following office hours will continue throughout the summer, with all others resuming in the fall. Go to this webpage to check out the dates and time for regular Office Hours specific to: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/node/54207>

- Alternate Dispute Resolution
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Brain Injury and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
- School-Based Mental Health and Special Education
- Secondary Transition
- Significant Support Needs
- Social/Emotional/Behavior

All of the above are in addition to the BVI Office Hours posted on our Calendar of Events.

TSBVI Outreach Coffee Hours

These sessions happen on Mondays at 3:00 PM (CDT) starting on August 2nd, 2021. Captioning will be provided. If you need anything else, please email Kaycee Bennett at bennettk@tsbvi.edu. Some logistics will be different this time around, but you can expect the same commitment to providing information, discussion, and collaboration on topics important to students who are blind, visually impaired, or deafblind, including CVI, Active Learning, distance strategies, and family engagement.

1. Coffee Hour sessions happen every week on Mondays at 3:00 pm (CDT) starting on August 2nd, 2021.
2. Registration is required for each session. This means that CEUs are available! Registration links can be found in the schedule on this page. (You must have an account in their ESC-Works system to register for the Coffee Hour sessions. If you do not have an account, you can [set one up here.](#))
3. Zoom links will be provided for each session. So again, please make sure you register!

Check out the series at: <https://www.tsbvi.edu/coffeehour>.

CONVENTION BULLETIN
THE BLIND OF COLORADO LIVING THE LIVES WE WANT!

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
OF COLORADO

67th ANNUAL STATE CONVENTION
October 28 through October 31, 2021

The 67th Annual State Convention will kick off Thursday, October 28, in Denver, Colorado, with a variety of seminars and initial socializing. The programming will continue all weekend long with exhibitors, informative and inspiring presentations during general sessions, additional breakout seminars including meetings of our several special interest divisions, interactive and exciting social events, and much more! Join the largest gathering of blind people in Colorado to make a difference in the lives of the blind across the state! We will be holding a hybrid convention starting Thursday, October 28. The main sessions for exhibitors will be on Friday, October 29, with other opportunities sprinkled throughout the weekend. Please note that the Convention is still being planned and not all sessions are finalized. Stay tuned for a full Convention Agenda slated to be released in early October. We will also be sending updates throughout the summer.

THE NFBCO CONVENTION HOTEL: Our 2021 convention will be held at the Marriott Denver South at Park Meadows, located at 10345 Park Meadows Dr., Lone Tree, CO 80124.

HOTEL ROOM RATES: The NFBCO room rate is \$104 a night. There is no limit on room occupancy. Reservations MUST be made by Friday, October 8.

To reserve your room, call the hotel at 303-925-0004. You will need to press 1 for reservations, which will take you to the Marriott 1-800 number call center. You must mention that you are with the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado. If they cannot find our block under our full name, try asking for NFB. If this still doesn't work please contact Lisa Bonderson, at 303-504-5979.

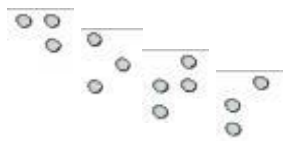
Stay tuned to your email and check our web site at www.nfbco.org for more information about convention registration. Or Contact Lisa Bonderson at lkb@labarrelaw.com.

FOR MORE CONVENTION INFORMATION CONTACT:

Scott C. LaBarre, President

Phone: (303) 504-5979 slabarre@labarrelaw.com





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.

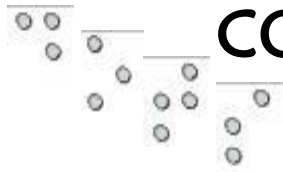
The Practice Test items have been posted on the braille competency webpage—that information and other resources can be found at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_guidedocs.

For summer assistance, please be in touch with Tanni first to secure an available proctor / mentor.

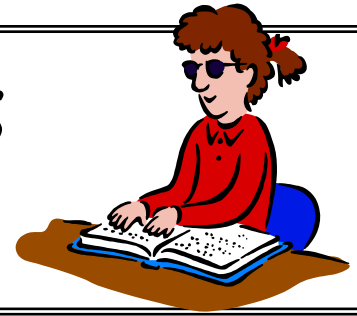
Braillewriter Repair

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





CONNECTING THE DOTS



CMAS Braille Format Orders

Please be working with your District Assessment Coordinator to order braille format CMAS Tests for the 2021-22 Administration.

The CMAS Order Window is January 10-January 29, 2022.

A Successful Race – Running for 6 Dots

The 4th annual NFBCO 6 Dot Dash was a success! More than 250 people gathered on the beautiful grounds of our Colorado Center for the Blind for family fun, exhibits, a Puerto Rican food truck, inflatable slide, Guiding Eyes puppy kissing booth, and more. A total of 173 participants ran, wheeled, rode, or walked the course, beginning from CCB's campus over the Centennial Links Trail.

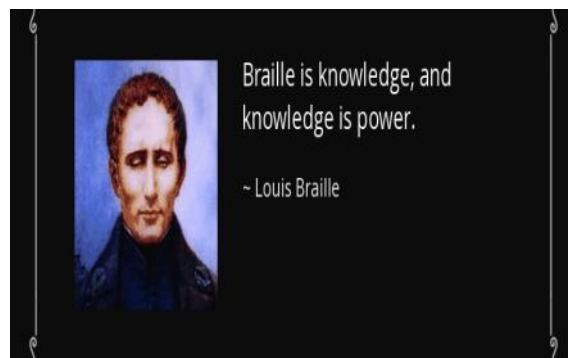
Participants in the Dash ranged from world-class runners to families out for a stroll. The Dash raised close to \$20,000 for CCB's braille literacy and other education programs. Thank you to the title sponsor Arise Beyond Barriers, which is a Colorado Springs non-profit operated by people with disabilities to create greater opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy everything from athletics and recreation to arts and entertainment.

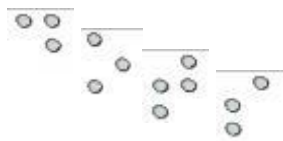
Louise Braille Tee Shirts – CAER Style

By Heather Solberg

In the past, CAER Board has put together a competition for designs regarding White Cane Day T-shirts to sell for a fundraiser. The Board decided to mix it up this year and are asking for designs commemorating Louis Braille's Birthday January 4th. So, everyone have your students participate, you participate, ask friends to participate! We are asking for design ideas to go on a Beanie, the link is below to check it out. There is not much space on the hat, so it will be a little different than a t-shirt design, but we have faith you all will come up with some wonderful ideas!

Please have submissions to CAER by November 1st so we can vote and then submit to printers. Also, the winner will get a free Beanie on CAER Board. Send your submissions to caerboard@gmail.com.





CONNECTING THE DOTS



New APH UEB Products

Many of popular products of the American Printing House for Blind have been translated into UEB format. Read their blog, [Beloved APH Products Get UEB Update](#), to find a list of new and coming soon UEB products for you and your students.



Braille Reading Rate Resources

Thanks to Karin Hensel for sharing a resource by Diane Brauner, [Perkins School for the Blind eLearning Reading Rates](#).



National Braille Association

Since their founding in 1945, the National Braille Association has been led by a team who is dedicated to ensuring that braille readers receive the best materials possible. Teachers of the visually impaired and braille transcribers in North America receive education from leading experts through these services.

Check out their webpage at <https://www.nationalbraille.org/> for information about:

- ◆ Membership
- ◆ Conferences
- ◆ Training
- ◆ Ask an Expert
- ◆ Publications
- ◆ Training Bureau
- ◆ Web-Based Learning



UEB Technical Versus Nemeth Braille Codes

The Colorado Department of Education does not dictate a math code for students with blindness/visual impairments. Two math codes are approved by the Braille Authority of North America. The decision about the math code is an individual student-by-student or IEP decision.

Both codes are viable for instruction and state testing. For more information, contact Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us.



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

Assistive Technology and Transition FAQ Resources

A new resource/FAQ has been created in partnership with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and the University of Colorado Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering/SWAAAC around assistive technology access in secondary and postsecondary settings for students, family and educators.

- Assessment of Assistive Technology needs
- Purchasing devices and loan bank
- Working with Assistive Technology specialists
- Responsibilities of staff
- Transition services and transferring equipment
- Resources

Please visit: <https://swaaac.squarespace.com/swaaac-foundations/#transition>

Also located on our CDE Transition Resource page under Assistive Technology Resources:
http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/transition_resources



View the [full proclamation](#) from Governor Jared Polis, declaring October Disability Employment Awareness Month in Colorado.



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

“Education for Life”

for Colorado Residents

Application Deadline: March 1, 2022



**Encouraging all students with blindness/visual impairment to apply
who have a direction and passion to build an
education foundation for the rest of their lives.**

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

[Go To: www.seethefuture.org](http://www.seethefuture.org)

and click on the “Education for Life Application” link on the Home page. If you have questions, contact Tom Theune, OD – Chairperson of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund at (719) 471-3200, twtheune@comcast.net.



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

Graduation Guidelines: Supports for School Districts

Graduation guidelines is the focus of a virtual town hall and a Google practitioners group that has been created. The Postsecondary & Workforce Town Hall will discuss the updates to the Menu of Options and implementation strategies at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 26. [Register here for the town hall.](#)

A [Graduation Guidelines Practitioners Google Group](#) has been set up for asking questions and getting information about Graduation Guidelines promising practices.

[Click Here for Additional Information](#)

For More Information, Contact: Robin Russel, Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness, Phone: 303-866-2908, Robin_r@cde.state.co.us

Sequencing of Services for Transition Before and After High School

Colorado's state agencies, education partners, family members and service providers have collaborated to develop a shared vision and shared student outcomes for students with disabilities during their transition before and after high school.

The [Sequencing of Services Framework](#) demonstrates what programming and services, across a continuum of ages, are available to students and how different entities can all work together. This tool can be used for local and individual discussions to help guide students and their families toward postschool success.

just for PARENTS

Back-to-School Resources from the IRIS Center

The IRIS module [Parents: Supporting Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) has a new page about the return to in-person learning. Some of the topics covered include: worries about health and safety; possible behavior issues; separation anxiety; and nervousness about social situations.



just for PARENTS

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). [Check out the NFADB website.](#)

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.



NATIONAL FAMILY
ASSOCIATION
FOR DEAF-BLIND
Empowering Families with
Individuals who are Deaf-Blind



First Wednesday of the Month ParentConnect Family Support Group - [ParentConnect: A family support Group offered in partnership with the Virtual Parent Support Group Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind](#)

APH FamilyConnect and the Chicago Lighthouse are pleased to offer this virtual support group for parents and families of children who are blind or visually impaired. These monthly sessions are for families to connect with and learn from each other about the joys, challenges, and adventures of raising children with visual impairments and blindness. These sessions are open to families. No ACVREP or professional development credits will be available.

- Nov 3, 2021 07:30 PM • Dec 1, 2021 07:30 PM • Jan 5, 2022 07:30 PM • Feb 2, 2022 07:30 PM

APH Change Makers – Parent Podcast on Advocating for Your Child

On this episode of the [American Printing House for the Blind Change Makers Series](https://www.aph.org/change-makers-podcast/) (<https://www.aph.org/change-makers-podcast/>) the presenters are talking about how to advocate as a parent or guardian. The focus of the APH experts is how you can help children get the resources they deserve and how to choose the best educational devices to fit their needs.

Podcast Guests (In Order of Appearance)

- Sara Brown, APH Public Relations Manager
- Olaya Landa-Vialard, APH ConnectCenter Director
- Leanne Grillott, APH National Director of Outreach Services



National Organization of Parents of Blind Children

Founded in 1983, the National Organization of Parents of Blind Children (NOPBC) is a membership organization of parents, educators, and friends of blind children reaching out to give each other vital support, encouragement, and information. They have thousands of members in all fifty states plus Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico.

The NOPBC offers hope, encouragement, information, and resources for parents of blind or low-vision children. NOPBC provides emotional support and a network for families. They also provide information, training, and resources to empower families to take an active role in guiding their child's development and education.

Their status as a division of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), an important organization of blind people in the world, provides many benefits. NFB provides its members information about the societal, legislative, and technological issues that affect blind people. One of their most exciting activities is their annual conference. Every year since it was established, the NOPBC has conducted an annual conference for parents and teachers of blind children as part of the national convention of the NFB. The program has grown to include five exciting days of workshops, training sessions, activities for all family members, including sighted siblings, and countless opportunities to meet blind adults and other families and children from around the country.

Most states have an NOPBC affiliate chapter. Colorado has one!



just for PARENTS

FOLLOW THE IEP ROAD! Are you ready?

When: October 30th, 2:30 to 4:30 PM

Where: Denver Marriott South at Park Meadows and everywhere

10345 Park Meadows Drive, Lone Tree, CO 80124

Dear Families and TVIs,

Please join us for a discussion about the journeys you are taking with your children. This event will take place during the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado State Convention. We are excited to host a panel of professionals discussing the items to be considered on the journey, beginning with birth and continuing through adulthood.

Panelists:

Tanni Anthony, Ph.D. Director, Access, Learning and Literacy, CDE Consultant on Blindness/Visual Impairment, Exceptional Student Services, Colorado Department of Education

Carlton Anne Cook Walker, Attorney at Law; Educational Consultant and Advocate, Blindness Education and Advocacy Resources (BEAR), Teacher of Students with Blindness/Low Vision; President, National Organization of Parents of Blind Children (NOPBC)

Michele Reed, MS, COMS Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist, Blind and Low Vision Unit, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment

Michelle Chacon, Certified Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist

Amira Lucas, Parent of a blind child

Moderator:

Anahit LaBarre, Certified Teacher of Visually Impaired, Director of Youth Services at the Colorado Center for the Blind

Please join us in person or virtually, as our panelists discuss the following topics:

- Early childhood and transitioning from pre-school into a public school setting.
- Accommodations versus modifications; specially-designed instruction.
- IEP goals and what should they look like.
- Transitioning into middle and high school.
- Post-secondary planning and outcomes.
- Parent input and parent roles.
- What happens if the IEP team does not agree as to what the child needs on his/her IEP?
- What is WIOA, and what does it mean for my teenager?

We hope to see you in person although virtual option is also available. Please register for the free Follow the IEP Road! panel at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F48A8AC2CA5FECE9-travelling>. If you indicate that you prefer to attend virtually, we will email a link to you the day before the seminar.

We welcome you to attend events of the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado State Convention, by preregistering here <https://www.nfbco.org/nfbco-state-convention-review> by October 19th.

just for PARENTS

Learning Box Activities: November—December 2021



The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado, the Colorado Center for the Blind, and the American Action Fund for Blind Children and Adults are proud to bring these fun learning box activities to your home. Once you register your child, Learning Boxes containing all the necessary materials will be shipped to your home in time for the virtual activity. We are hoping to have one in-person learning box activity in October at the Colorado Center for the Blind. We look forward to working with you and your students!

List of Learning Box activities:

- **November 14, 2021 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.**

Learning About the Number Line. Students will have fun learning about positive and negative numbers on a number line.

- **December 12, 2021 from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.**

Weather Around the World. Students will learn about where continents are located on a globe, and how their seasons vary throughout the year.

Flyers will be coming soon with links for families to register their students. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Michelle Chacon
blindedcolo@gmail.com

Amira Lucas
coloradoparentsofblindchildren@gmail.com



You're invited

Fall 2021
Online PEP Academy

Friday, November 5
Saturday, November 6
Saturday, November 13

Live Sessions:

- Opening Session
- Parenting a Child with a Disability and Rebuilding Dreams
- Living with a Disability
- Positive Behavior Supports
- Panel for Questions and Answers
- Three Facilitated Small Group Discussions

Self-Paced Content Sessions:

- The Law and the Education of Children with Disabilities
- Early Childhood Supports and Services
- Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Transition IEP
- Facilitated IEPs
- Significant Support Needs
- Executive Function Skills
- Advocating with Your Child/Teen
- Mental Health



COLORADO
Department of Education

2021 Fall PEP Academy

Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP) Conferences is offering an Online PEP Academy in 2021. PEP brings families and professionals together by sharing ideas, discussing concerns, celebrating successes and obtaining information related to parenting, educating and partnering to support student learning. PEP is a non-specific disability conference that focuses on commonalities.

Who is encouraged to participate

- Colorado families who have a child with a disability birth-21
- Directors of special education, principals, special education teachers, general education teachers, related service providers
- Health care and Colorado professionals interested in the family and school partnership and who work with children or youth with disabilities

What to expect

Live and self-paced sessions that help promote family and school partnerships which are essential in supporting students with disabilities. Participants will have **four** weeks to complete the online PEP Academy program. Of no cost to attendees.

When

The PEP Academy opens on a Friday evening and continues for four to five hours live on two Saturday mornings. Live and self-paced sessions will be available to confirmed participants.

Where

Confirmed participants will be sent directions with links to access PEP Academy online from a desktop computer, laptop or other mobile device.

Apply Now!

www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/pep

Or contact Joyce Thiessen-Barrett at 303-866-6757.

Sign language and other language interpretations are available. If you need an accommodation, please request it on your application.

Colorado Department of Education
1560 Broadway, Suite 1100, Denver, CO 80202 • 303-866-6943 • ramer_d@cde.state.co.us



COLORADO
Department of Education

Está invitado

Academia PEP en línea de otoño 2021

Viernes, 5 de noviembre
Sábado, 6 de noviembre
Sábado, 13 de noviembre

Sesiones en vivo:

- Sesión de apertura
- Cómo educar a un niño con una discapacidad y reconstruir los sueños
- Viviendo con una discapacidad
- Apoyos a la conducta positiva
- Panel de preguntas y respuestas
- Tres debates facilitados en pequeños grupos

Sesiones de contenido a ritmo propio:

- La ley y la educación para niños con discapacidades
- Apoyos y servicios para la primera infancia
- Programa de Educación Individualizada (IEP)
- IEP de transición
- IEP facilitados
- Necesidades de apoyo significativas
- Habilidades de la función ejecutiva
- Abogar con su hijo/adolescente
- Salud mental

Academia PEP de otoño de 2021

Las Conferencias de Padres Alentando a Padres (PEP) está ofreciendo una Academia PEP en línea en 2021. PEP reúne a las familias y a los profesionales compartiendo ideas, discutiendo preocupaciones, celebrando los éxitos y obteniendo información relacionada con la crianza, la educación y la asociación para apoyar el aprendizaje de los estudiantes. PEP es una conferencia sobre discapacidad no específica que se centra en los puntos comunes.

A quién se anima a participar

- Las familias de Colorado que tienen un niño con una discapacidad desde el nacimiento hasta los 21 años
- Directores de educación especial, directores, maestros de educación especial, maestros de educación general, proveedores de servicios relacionados
- Profesionales del cuidado de la salud y de Colorado interesados en la asociación entre la familia y la escuela y que trabajan con niños o jóvenes con discapacidades

Qué debe esperar

Sesiones en vivo y a su ritmo propio que ayudan a promover las asociaciones familiares y escolares que son esenciales para apoyar a los estudiantes con discapacidades. Los participantes tendrán cuatro semanas para completar el programa de la Academia PEP en línea. Sin costo alguno para los asistentes.

Cuándo

La Academia PEP abre un viernes por la noche y continúa de cuatro a cinco horas en vivo los dos sábados por la mañana. Se ofrecerán sesiones en vivo y a ritmo propio a los participantes confirmados.

Dónde

A los participantes confirmados se les enviarán direcciones con enlaces para acceder a la Academia PEP en línea desde una computadora de escritorio, portátil u otro dispositivo móvil.

¡Aplique ahora!

www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/pep

O contacte Joyce Thiessen-Barrett: (303) 866-6757

Se dispone de interpretaciones en lenguaje de señas y otros idiomas. Si necesita un alojamiento, por favor solicítelo en su aplicación.

Colorado Department of Education
1560 Broadway, Suite 1100, Denver, CO 80202 • 303-866-6943 • ramer_d@cde.state.co.us

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 O&M Specialist = orientation and mobility specialist.

Metro

- ◆ **1 FTE Assistive Technology Specialist**—Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). This position will be operating within the Personal Adjustment Training Program exists to train individuals who have severe visual and/or other disabilities. For more information, please check out the [State of Colorado—DVR job posting](#).

Southern Region

- ◆ **1 FTE TVI / O&M Specialist** - Academy 20 School District. Please contact Belinda Lujan-Lindsey at Belinda.lujan@asd20.org or (719) 234-1328.
- ◆ **1 FTE TVI and O&M Specialist** — Falcon 49 School District. Please contact Jean Rice at jlrice@d49.org.

Eastern Region

- ◆ **O&M Specialist Contract Work**—Contact Beverly Bragg at (719) 740-0544 or bevb@ecbores.org.

TVIs and O&M Specialists—If you are getting ready to retire, please do not let your CDE teaching and/or 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 Specialists come back to contribute as subs for maternity leave, do contract work, and/or work at A Shared Vision. If you are interested in working with A Shared Vision on a part time basis, please reach out to Steve Lindauer at slindauer@asharedvision.org. You can work at your pace and needs! Magic!

If you want to be added to CDE's contract list, please be in touch with Tanni at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us.



VISION COALITION MEETING MINUTES

September 22, 2021

Persons in Attendance: Tanni Anthony, Melinda Carter, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, Melissa French, Julie King, Anahit LaBarre, Paula Landry, Jamie Lugo, Sara Noel, Jim Olson, Michele Reed, and Chloann Woolley

MISSION OF THE VISION COALITION: The purpose of the Vision Coalition is to bring the collective resources of the group together to address state priorities improving services to students who are blind/visually impaired. (April 1998)

ACRONYM LEGEND

ASV	A Shared Vision
BVI	Blind / Visually Impaired
CAER	CO Chapter of the Association of the Education/Rehabilitation of the Blind/Visually Impaired
CCB	Colorado Center for the Blind
CDE	Colorado Department of Education
CIMC	Colorado Instructional Materials Center
COMS	certified orientation and mobility specialist
CSDB	Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind
DVR	Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
ESSU	Exceptional Student Services Unit
O&M	Orientation and Mobility
TVI/TSVI	Teacher of students with blindness/visual impairments

MEMBERS OF VISION COALITION FOR THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR

- A Shared Vision – Paula Landry
- Anchor Center for Blind Children – Melinda Carter
- Colorado AER Chapter – Nancy Cozart
- Colorado Center for the Blind Youth Program – Anahit LaBarre
- Colorado Department of Education – Tanni Anthony
- Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – Michele Reed
- Colorado Instructional Materials Center – Jim Olson
- Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind – Jamie Lugo
- Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind Outreach – Sara Noel
- Metro TVI / COMS– Nancy Cozart
- Northern TVI / COMS – Melissa French
- Southern TVI / COMS – Chloann Woolley
- University of Northern Colorado – Paula Conroy
- Western TVI / COMS - Julie King



Norms of the Vision Coalition: Stay present. Verbally identify yourself before you speak. If we get into a serious discussion, please wait for your turn (we will assign someone to take stock of who is next in the discussion). Vision Coalition meetings are a confidential environment. We are here for the common good of students, families, and our profession. In the spirit of improvement, we will bring important issues to the table.

Decision Protocol: In instances where a vote may be taken to decide of the Vision Coalition membership, a fist of 5, 3, or 1 will be used. 5 = agreement / can live with the decision; 3 = need more information to decide; and 1 = cannot approve the decision. A majority vote of 5 will indicate that the decision will move forward.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We say farewell and thank you to Deb Andrews, Martin Becerra-Miranda, and Jayme Cusimano for their past time with us on the Vision Coalition. We welcome Chloann Woolley as our new southern representative, Anahit LaBarre as our new Colorado Center for the Blind Youth Program representative, and Sara Noel back as the CSDB Outreach Program representative.

PROGRAM UPDATES

Metro Region (Nancy Cozart)

Bryan Moles is a new TVI / O&M Specialist with Jefferson County School District. Jennifer Napier will soon be joining Cherry Creek School District as a TVI. The first meeting will be on September 29th and it will be virtual. Brian Smith from Magnisight of the Rockies will join the meeting. In addition, Jim Olson will provide an update from CIMC, and Nancy Cozart will lead discussion on discussion items from Vision Coalition. Future 2021-22 meeting dates will be determined.

Discussion items:

- ***There are personnel who are certified both as TVIs and Orientation and Mobility Specialists who are questioning district level compensation for carrying two professional roles. Can personnel be recognized for national level certification status?*** Discussion: Paula Conroy shared that Colorado is not unique in their quest to hire dual certified personnel. It was suggested that this be a topic with the individuals' professional union. CAER may investigate how to address this issue. In the past, some remember a contract for 1.5 FTE was allowed that extended the school day for O&M services. It was suggested that the professional work closely with their administrators to do a workload analysis of TVI responsibilities and O&M responsibilities from an FTE perspective. We have three O&M Specialists hired by districts full time and only as O&M Specialists. It was a question as to whether there could be a regional O&M specialist(s) for this work. This employee(s) might be coordinated through CSDB Outreach or a willing BOCES / AU. It is encouraged that regional meeting hosts discuss this as a topic. The HR Office may consider hiring someone at a 1.2 FTE. This should be a discussion between a TVI / O&M Specialist and their local HR Director / Special Education Director.
- ***Doctor Communications about Students: There is a concern that (a) there are educational recommendations being made and (b) lack of clarity about the severity of the visual impairment diagnosis / need for services. The last concern is about eye care professionals who are not referring a family onto an AU's Child Find process.***

Discussion on first Issue: Regional meeting sites may want to invite their local / state eye care specialists to a meeting to discuss the distinction between medical recommendations and educational recommendations. The latter includes both eligibility and service needs. We want to be appreciative of our teamwork with eye doctors as they contribute information about the extent of the ocular/ CVI condition. We can also be concrete with a definition of the roles of the TVI, O&M Specialist, and the eye care specialist with families and the medical community. As comfortable, these conversations can be between the educational and medical community personnel. This may also be a topic for a BVI Office Hours.

Discussion on Issue Two: A Shared Vision has met with a doctor at Children’s Hospital and learned that they do not always know where to refer school-age learners. A Shared Vision has created cards that detail early intervention information and provide ASV contact information. This information is given to parents. Also, Children’s Hospital will also make a direct contact with ASV. Our goal is to protect confidentiality of the family and give the medical community and family a tool for next steps. CCB and CSDB offered their assistance. The CIMC has also been a source of information from some doctors. It was suggested to craft a generic document that each region can customize. It may be helpful to include broad state resources, such as CSDB, CDE, CCB, DVR, etc.). **Assignment:** Jim, Nancy, Tanni, and Anahit will craft a template for the regions to review and use. This is also a good time to provide some general information about TVIs, O&M specialists, etc. with the eye care specialist community.

Northern Region (Melissa French)

Ellen Wallis is a new TVI on board with Weld RE-4 School District! Linda Spaulding is also providing O&M contract services in Poudre School District.

Discussion Items:

O&M services for students who are non-ambulatory/limited motor function, non-verbal, and have cognitive delays. Are there students with VI who don't need/qualify for O&M instruction? What does that look like? What factors are involved? Orientation and mobility services are related services. The child must qualify as a child with a disability who needs special education services and supports to qualify for any related services. It is a good practice for all learners who are blind/visually impaired to be evaluated for orientation and mobility needs. This is a consideration for initial evaluation, based on the needs of the student. The only professional that can evaluate the need for O&M services is an Orientation and Mobility Specialist. TVIs are trained in general O&M considerations such as spatial awareness, human guide, etc. It is important to work, as indicated with occupational and/or physical therapist to discern what are co-treatment considerations specific to mobility needs. The TVI / O&M Specialist will be a team member to address the impact of blindness/visual impairment upon motor / mobility needs. A team approach is important and valuable. There will also be needed consideration for the child’s orientation needs.

Book boxes - What are the best books you have made that can be paired with objects? Discussion: Jamie has a list from Paths to Literacy that she has amended. The CSDB YouTube Channel has storybooks. SWAAAC has activity boxes that are very hands on materials – some materials may not be fully adapted for learners with blindness/visual impairments. Jamie shared that CSDB has the following wonderful resource - CSDB YouTube Channel Story Boxes:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRpuAKCG0_w

"Vision Para" - What does their day look like? Are they expected to be able to demonstrate a more specific/advanced skillset than the other paras? Do they get higher pay? Who manages them? How does the service delivery look on the IEP? (For example: a para under TVI supervision is 1-on-1 with a student all day that is essentially 6.5 hours of direct TVI service per day).

Discussion: Role descriptions and pay are addressed at a local level. Training is very important for this role and that can occur on a district level at varying levels of student-customization. This level of training is different than the state-level training provided for interveners, but the latter may provide a model for training. Whether a paraprofessional is assigned to a student is a district decision, as what is noted in the IEP. It was suggested that the regional meetings review *A Paraprofessionals Handbook for Working with Students Who are Visually Impaired* (Miller & Levack, 1997) to see if this is still a good resource. This book was donated to AUs several years back. We also may want to add paraprofessional-specific resources to the CDE website. There are some paraprofessional unions. May also want to discuss the title of these providers. Program based versus itinerant based – may not be a match for the information detailed in a para union. Many of these providers may also serve in a brailist role. Unions may also guide practice.



Southern Region (Chloann Woolley)

The Southern Region TVI-DVR meeting met virtually on August 27th to determine meeting dates/times, and topics. We decided as a region to meet once a month and continue to alternate between one-hour morning zoom meetings (7:30-8:30 a.m.); and two hour afternoon in-person meetings (2:30-4:30 p.m.) hopefully with a Zoom option for those that cannot travel).

Our second meeting was held in person on Friday September 17th, at CSDB, with a focus on getting 100% attendance of service providers in the region to meet each other, especially new staff. Since every Southern region district has students enrolled in CSDB, Principal Jamie Lugo provided a tour of the CSDB's preschool program, the School for the Blind, and the Employability Center (Transition program). We reviewed the fact that CSDB should always be discussed as a placement option at all IEP meetings and invited Kathy Emter, Director of Special Education, to attend who answered TVI questions about programming and placement options.

Next month's meeting will be virtual, using the Zoom platform. Future meeting topics include question and answer sessions with local eye doctors; introduction of Dr. Puzateri - the new owner of Low Vision Services of Southern Colorado, PC (bought Dr. Theune's business); make-and-take projects; assistive technology supports; switches for access to independent activities for SSN; ...

As a Southern Region we all wanted to give a BIG shout out to Jim Olson. He continues to step up and support our Southern Vision/DVR meetings with planning, notetaking, and all around 'guy' in charge! He and his team at CIMC are such a support for students. Words can't express how we feel about the great work they do for our state: providing answers, getting equipment, braille, ordering, and sending the materials our students need. Thanks Jim, Deb, and Teresa for all you do for the state and especially for our local Southern group. Couldn't do without you!

The Southern Region has several new teachers and is still hoping for more. Micah Scott is new to the Colorado Springs 11 School District. There are still open positions both for teachers and para educators. Districts and agencies continue to advertise for more hands on deck. Positions are open in Falcon 49 and Academy 20 School Districts.

The pandemic is still impacting many schools but one benefit that has been noticed is the overwhelming opportunities for training and resources that are virtually available. Many teachers in the Southern Region have attended a variety of Coffee Hours, Conferences and Workshops since the beginning of school and throughout the summer. We wanted to share a few resources that stood out.

Robbin Clark presented at the TSBVI Coffee Hour. She shared the new Expanded Core High School Readiness Checklist and the new ECC website. To receive a copy of the ECC HS Readiness Checklist for your school/teachers/future teachers to use, please request it individually. She is using the data to help inform her about the checklist use. The checklist does have an entire section for students with severe multiple impairments. The checklist is now available! Go to the new ECC website to request it: <https://sites.google.com/usdb.org/usb-expanded-core-curriculum/home?authuser=0>

World Blindness Summit: CVI Scotland has updated their website. It is very easy to navigate and has SO much information. Check it out <https://cviscotland.org/>

Lori Wilson, D49 brailist, was the recipient of a scholarship to attend the National Braille Association conference in Austin, TX. Airline tickets and hotel room had been booked only to find out the conference was cancelled due to COVID. We are hoping Lori will be able to use the scholarship next year to attend an in person conference! Other news from Falcon 49 School Districts is that their Special Education Director Jean Rice has announced her retirement as of January 1, 2022. Lori Mattick shares that this will be a great loss for our special education students in D49. Jean has been an excellent Director to work with as the Vision Department was given the opportunity to grow and develop. Jean always possessed a keen interest and a sincere desire to learn about our vision students who are blind/visually impaired.

Discussion Items:

- ***Is Nemeth the preferred method over UEB math?*** Discussion: The Braille Authority of North America has approved two math codes: UEB Technical and Nemeth. The determination of which code(s) is taught to a student is an IEP decision. It is recommended that families and students are aware of both codes. There is a limitation of UEB Technical transcribers. There is currently not a formal UEB Technical Transcriber certification. CMAS state assessments are available in both UEB Technical and UEB with Nemeth. College Board is also offering their tests in both codes.
- ***What or where can we give/take old CCTVs/ video Magnifiers?*** Discussion: if they are in good shape, they can be offered to families for use at home. Michelle Robinson is the CAER coordinator of equipment to pass on to other in need. Michelle's contact information is michelle.robinson5@va.gov.
- ***What to do with an older student who chooses not to use braille, how best to report their needs on the Learning Media Plan? What about the student who refuses services?*** Discussion: It is important to objectively document need and describe the accessibility options for the student. The LMA should reflect the student's needs. The use of role models may be helpful for the student and the family. CSDB does have role model videos on their website. Sometimes students need to struggle through it to realize they need more assistance. It may be helpful to present information as accommodations tie to employability. The *Blind Institute of Technology has a mentor program for students called Pathways to Professionalism* - <https://blindinstituteoftechnology.org/little-bit/pathways-faq/>

Western Region (Julie King)

We welcome Mike Plansker to San Juan BOCES and welcome back Beth Meyer to Delta School District! Brooke Miller is now serving students in Aspen, Roaring Fork and Colorado River BOCES. Stephanie Crosen is back on board after maternity leave. We're excited to have such a great group of people here on the western slope.

The Western Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic is scheduled for September 24th and 25th. There will be several teachers and students attending this year. Thanks to Angela Sims and the Low Vision Evaluation Clinic team for all their work. We are hoping for nice dry fall weather to keep I-70 open through Glenwood Canyon!

COVID continues to require flexibility from students and staff as we return to school. We will be continuing our virtual meetings for the team starting in October. Stay tuned for dates.

Discussion Item:

- ***Is it a requirement for the TVI to attend the Low Vision Evaluation Clinic with his or her student/ family?*** Discussion: The answer is YES, please. The TVI is the liaison with the student and family ahead, during, and after the clinic. This individual is key to the success of training and implementation of the device, as well as post-clinic conversations with the student and family about clinic findings and recommendations. Also, the TVI is key to discussions and pre-post clinic planning for the purchase of prescribed devices.

A Shared Vision (Paula Landry)

A Shared Vision is celebrating its fifth anniversary this October! This 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is Colorado's leading provider of early intervention vision services for children who are blind, deaf-blind, or have vision concerns. Our goal is that all families of children with visual impairments have access to and receive essential early intervention services from a community of highly skilled and collaborative professionals.

Due to the success of the statewide vision screening training program during the pandemic – a collaboration between EI Colorado and A Shared Vision – more and more young children in Colorado are being identified and supported with vision services. (Side note, nearly 800 Colorado professionals were trained to use the updated protocol, including EI providers, Child Find team members, and medical community.) To meet the growing demand for vision services, A Shared Vision is hiring new EI-TVIs to our team. While we say goodbye to veteran Kerry Auld who retired on August 31, we welcome Leonor Rosser from Boulder and Stephanie Crosen, who lives in Summit County. If you are a teacher of children who are visually impaired and interested in supporting babies and toddlers, email us at HR@asharedvision.org.

A Shared Vision supports Colorado's families with children who are blind or visually impaired with three programs. Through the Early Intervention Vision Services Program, our team of 17 EI-TVIs provides direct early intervention vision services to families and young children, birth to age three, throughout metro Denver as well as in 48 rural counties – a total of 55 counties in Colorado representing 83% of the state's population. The services are defined by the families' Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) developed in conjunction with A Shared Vision, CCB service coordinators, and other early intervention providers. This program supports the key principles and research-based best practices of early intervention in Colorado by providing education and empowerment to families with very young children who are blind or visually impaired in their homes and in community settings.

Through the Family Support Program, A Shared Vision provides education, community connections and support for families of children with visual impairments through group activities, the newsletter, website, and social media. The Education Program builds the community of highly skilled and collaborative professionals who serve very young children with blindness and visual impairments.

Anchor Center for Blind Children (Melinda Carter)

Programming is back in person for Infants/Toddlers on Mondays and Wednesdays and Preschool on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Home Visits are slowly going back into the home following EI Colorado's guidelines.

In Preschool we have 5 classrooms with 27 students. We are piloting a couple of Inclusive classrooms with 2 "sighted peers" in each. We have a staff of ECSEs, TAs, TVIs, PTs, OTs, SLPs, a Music Therapist and a Horticultural Therapist. New TVI staff include Tommi Sue Celli and Covi Rodriguez.

Our basement build-out will house two more lanes for eye appointments as well as a new Assessment Room. Eye appointments in the new Eye Clinic will start October 6th with a completion date for the rest of the center scheduled for mid-October.

The NAVeG (Neonatal Assessment Visual European Grid) project started a couple of years ago with the help of Dr. King, continues in Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children and is almost ready to go in Children's Hospital. Two of Anchor's TVIs and well as Dr. Cathy Smyth also assist with these assessments which are done on premature infants (30 weeks gestation or less) to try and flag those children who may show early signs of possible CVI.

Cathy Smyth and the TVIs have been doing some trainings around the country including all the EI TVIs in the state of Utah, the EI Coordinator and Program Director of the Children's Center for the Visually Impaired in Kansas City, MO., and in October there will be an in-person training for the EI TVIs in New Mexico.

Continuing this year is our "Lending Library" where parents can check out pieces of equipment, books, etc. to try out in the home. Started during COVID, parents asked to have this service become a permanent fixture.

Colorado AER Chapter (Nancy Cozart)

The Colorado AER Chapter meetings are on the follow dates and the meeting room is open at 5:30 and the meeting begins at 5:45 p.m.: September 9, 2021; October 14, 2021; November 11, 2021; December 9, 2021; January 13, 2022; February 10, 2022; March 10, 2021; and April 14, 2022

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.
Monthly: <https://unco.zoom.us/meeting/tJErc-2gqzliHtXBACOSmykHN2J2YzPK0GS1/ics?icsToken=98tyKuCtqD8uEtGcuB2GRowMBI-gLPzwmFhHgrdlvj7GLBNeewjeGLBoYItIIPOA>

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://unco.zoom.us/j/95644859841>

The monthly meetings during the standard school calendar year are the 2nd Thursday at 5:45-7:15 pm except for the annual meeting/banquet that is usually scheduled in conjunction with the Colorado Orientation & Mobility Conference in late April or early May

2021-2022 CAER Board:

Officers

Heather Solberg – President; Nancy Cozart - Treasurer; and Michelle Robinson-Secretary

At Large: Paula Conroy; Barb Galgano; Rebecca Gardom; Jeannie Lei; and Chloann Woolley

National News

- AER Biennial International Conference – St. Louis, Missouri for conference July 21-25, 2022!
- Private contractors for O&M survey – they are going to send out an email for everyone to take it. Please spread the word as not enough surveys were completed.
- AER Publications Discussion- (Journal of Visual Impairment / The New Review) – Want to establish a journal that goes hand in hand with JVIB. Not a replacement of JVIB
- This journal is being worked on and should be available for 2022. (Think what Review had been.) Practice should feed research and theory and research should prove value in promising practices. Product reviews, editorials, subjective information would be included.

Colorado News

1. Trainings for ACVREP Credit

Change: Date TBD 2021: Head borne/wearables – Michelle Robinson

Meeting @ 5:30pm-6:00 and presentation from 6pm-7pm
Fall 2021- Maps

Winter 2021 – TaiChi and O&M – Rebecca Gardom

Podcast/YouTube Information- Heather Solberg & Nancy Cozart

2. Adaptive Aid Equipment

Merlin flat screen CCTV, Eschenbach 10x handheld magnifier,
7xhandheld magnifier, basic math
talking calculator

3. Mini-Grant Applications Due November 1, 2021- Hope to \$300 grants for professional trainings, student/parent activities, etc.

4. Fundraiser: In honor of Louis Braille Month, this year we are requesting ideas for designs to use on an item such as a beanie or bag to purchase. (Final choice on item to be determined soon.)

The set up will be like last year's white cane day T-shirt sales. Look for more information in October.



Colorado DVR (Michele Reed)

Please note that DVR and the Blind Low Vision Services Unit are open and continue to accept referrals, complete intakes, and provide Personal Adjustment Training. If you have a student that needs to complete a DVR referral to participate in our Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), please contact Audrey Wille at audrey.wille@state.co.us. If you have any questions regarding the referral process for Pre-ETS, please contact Michele Reed at michele.reed@state.co.us.

Staff Updates: Our current vacancies include a Field Instructor (O&M/VRT) in the Colorado Springs office and an Assistive Technology Instructor in the Denver Metro office. Macy Marshall is our new Rehabilitation Counselor in both the Golden and Northglenn offices. Karen Klein has left DVR for a new opportunity for the State of Colorado, and Elizabeth Robertson has been promoted to Rehabilitation Supervisor I.

The Personal Adjustment Training Unit continues to provide training in the community. We continue to discuss and examine ways to provide comprehensive services to the people we serve that include remote training, in-person training when essential, outdoor O&M training, and Zoom groups (Reflections, Enrichment Hour, Women's Group, and a Braille Group). We are also going to begin discussions on how to reopen and offer in person training opportunities at the Denver Metro Regional Office.

In May, the Blind and Low Vision Services Unit at the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation completed a "pilot" job seeker skills training for students 15-21 called *Putting Your Best Foot Forward*.

Through discussions, group activities, and individual activities, students learned the ins and outs of finding a job, that includes what employers are looking for in employees, how to present his or her skills well, and the best sources for information about jobs.

Three students attended the program. We learned a lot from this experience. The curriculum was too long, repetitive, and had dated information. Access and use of assistive technology were barriers to progress with this curriculum as well.

During the fall, we will create a 10 week/1 hour job seeker skills training for youth that will include aspects of the PYBFF curriculum, APH Job Seekers Toolkit, and Employment Matters 101 (a 10 week curriculum developed by Becky Porter, PAT instructor for adults). We hope to launch this training course in January.

During the summer of 2021, the PAT unit's Pre-Employment Transition specialists offered weekly online workshops for Pre-Employment Transition students. These workshops included discussion, activities, and guest speakers from the Colorado community. Topics included: adaptive recreation, the guide dog lifestyle, pathways to professionalism with Blind Institute of Technology, self-advocacy, and job seeking resources on the internet.

BLVS will be offering *Creating Connections*, information sessions regarding Pre-Employment Transition Services available to students 15-21 quarterly during the 2021-2022 school year. Our first session this school year is on September 30, 2021, 5:00-6:00 p.m. Check it out at:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tuDMzkZAHy3X6siiCUlx_GbI5Y4WW2m0lxZmAMXG3h4/edit

Attendees will learn about the following:

- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
- Pre-Employment Transition Services Provided by DVR
- When to Make a Referral to DVR?
- Youth Programs (Pre-ETS Services) vs. Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- When to Contact a Counselor?
- What can DVR offer to you and your student?
- Upcoming Pre-Employment Transition activities

During these sessions, BLVS will announce activities and workshops that will be available to students at DVR and our community partners. To attend, please contact Michele Reed at michele.reed@state.co.us.

Discussion item:

- **What are Ideas for DVR Involvement in our regions / AUs?** The southern region has really opened the doors for DVR staff to attend their monthly meetings. Jim shared that they start the southern with agenda items pertinent to their DVR attendees and this lets them leave the meeting early when more school-age content is discussed later in the meeting. Regions are highly encouraged to invite their DVR personnel to their meetings to build relationships, discuss needs, and celebrate successes.

Colorado Center for The Blind Youth Programs (Anahit LaBarre)

Staff news: Martin Becerra-Miranda returned to teaching cane travel at the Colorado Center for the Blind. Martin will continue to work with the youth program to ensure smooth transition. He will also remain on the Board of Trustees for CSDB for the duration of his term. Anahit LaBarre will run the Youth Programs and is looking forward to collaborating with families, professionals, and students themselves, to help each blind and low vision student achieve their maximum potential and become a productive and successful blind adult.

CCB/CSDB Mentoring Program: The Colorado Center for the Blind and the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind will be discussing the best way to proceed during this school year, given unfortunate rise in the COVID-19 cases. We are hoping to return to in-person programming soon. In the meantime, we might continue remote sessions, as quite a few of them were successful. In April, 12 students participated in a yoga session, where the focus was on mindfulness and body awareness. In May, we had a very successful session of Cultural Trivia. Eight to ten students had a blast learning about the cultures of different regions of the world, presented by CCB graduates. The students truly enjoyed playing the game. We are looking forward to reconnecting with the students at CSDB, as we discover what will work best in current circumstances.

FAST Program (Fun Activities and Skills Training): Our FAST program is also undergoing some changes as we determine what mode might work best for most families. We intend to return to in-person programming soon, of course, following current CDC health guidelines.

2021 Summer Programs:

No Limits to Learning: The Colorado Center for the Blind offered a two week-long day program to students in the Denver Metro Area between ages 13 - 21. This year we had eight students participate. In this program, students received instruction in our four core subject areas of Braille, Technology, Home Management, & Cane Travel with a 2-to-1 student/staff ratio. On the first day of classes, students received a slate, stylus, Braille instructional book, long white cane, and a pair of sleep shades. We know that using non-visual skills is the most effective and efficient way for a blind person to live a successful and independent life. Therefore, our blind staff fully implement the Structured Discovery teaching method, which allows our students to learn through their own experiences and problem-solving techniques. In addition to the classes mentioned above, we held a daily philosophy class in which staff and students discuss a variety of topics that focus on developing a positive attitude on blindness. Students also had the opportunity to participate in art classes.

Confidence Camps took place at the Colorado Center for the Blind from June 21st to the 25th. Eight students between the ages of five and thirteen took part in this program, including one junior counselor. The students practice braille and cane travel skills, played games, went grocery shopping, prepared lunches, completed a craft project with the use of hammers and other hand tools, participated in fitness activities, such as body drumming and swimming, baked cookies and had lots of fun while doing it. The students had many interactions with blind role models and gained a lot of confidence as they took part in various activities during the week.

For information on any of our Youth Programs, please contact Anahit LaBarre at alabarre@cocenter.org or (303) 778-1130 Extension 223.

Discussion item:

- **What might be training opportunities that CCB can offer to professionals?** Discussion: One area that CCB is interested in is providing training on is technology and other topics of interest. Please be in touch with Anahit about training needs that CCB can offer. It was also mentioned how important it is for parents to have more information about the daily living skills, independence expectations, advocacy, etc. for their children. The Learning Box program is up and running for families and students. CCB is also looking at opportunity for peer group discussions and opportunities, this may be both in-person and virtual formats. Anahit will be sharing information and dates about upcoming student-based events.

Colorado Instructional Material Center (Jim Olson)

American Printing House for the Blind: APH's 2021 Annual Meeting will be held online this year. Registration is now open at www.aph.org. To check for upcoming and archived webinars, go to www.aph.org. From the ribbon across the top of the page select "Educational Resources", then from the drop down menu select "Training". The first two options are for students, the "Virtual ExCEL Academy" and "Virtual ExCEL Camp". School staff should regularly check the "Access Academy" for a listing of upcoming webinar trainings regarding APH products and services. Click on "Learn More About Access Academy" to see the list of upcoming webinars. Scroll to the bottom of the page to find two links for "Watch Access Academy Webinars" which takes you to APH's YouTube page of 125+ archived webinars; and "Download Access Academy Handouts" which opens a new page categorized by months. Click on a month to expand the page and see downloadable handouts which correspond to that month's webinars.

The APH Hive, www.aphhive.org, offers a variety of free online courses for vision professionals, educators, parents, students, and consumers. Currently, the course catalog is divided into five categories: Foundations; Assessment; Early Childhood; Core Curriculum; and the Expanded Core Curriculum.

Your AU's Registration Database Report: The CIMC can run a current database report for your administrative unit (AU) at any time, simply email your request to cimcregistrations@csdb.org. Your report will be sent as an attachment to an email, using the Barracuda encryption service, to your AUs designated CIMC contact person. Please update your statewide registration database report monthly; do not wait until the January 3, 2022, count. Send in Parent Consent Forms with Parts I & II first; followed by Registration Forms for new students as soon as possible. Exit Forms should be submitted when a student withdraws from your district. The CIMC will continue to send out monthly reminders.

All AUs are required to have a signed Parent Consent Form (with a Part I & Part II) on file in their district with a copy on file in the CIMC. This is a one-time requirement. If you have the older 2018 version of the Form, you are required to update it to the 2020 revision (with the Part I & II). Please submit the Parent Consent Forms before you submit any other Form that contains personally identifiable student information. It is highly recommended that AUs have parents sign a physical paper copy of the Parent Consent Form; however, some AUs have notified the CIMC that they are continuing to meet with parents only using video conferencing software and are asking if district staff can sign the forms on a parent's behalf, as they did last year. Yes, AUs can continue to sign the forms but it is recommended that you attach an email from the parent(s) that states the parent(s) have read and understand the Parent Consent Form and give you, the identified AU staff, permission to sign the form on their behalf. Make sure the email from the parent(s) shows the date, the parents name(s), and their email address. Keep the original copies of the emails and signed Parent Consent Forms on file in your AU and send copies of both to the CIMC. For permissions to sign the Parent Consent Forms that are obtained over the phone, it is recommended that you have two (2) AU employees participate in the phone call, identify yourselves, and have both employees sign the form as witnesses to the telephone conversation with the staff members names, the date and time of call documented on the Form.

Discussion Item:

- ***Does the CIMC remove students with missing parent consent forms from the CDE Count and database?*** If so, what date is the cut-off date? To clarify, the current Parent Consent Form has a Part I (for the CDE count) and a Part II (for the APH count). Part I is required for every student to be included in the statewide registration database. Part II is only required for those students an AU wants included in the annual federal quota census (the first Monday in January). It is recommended to ask parents to sign both Parts I & II, just because it may be easier in the long run, in case the student becomes eligible in the future and because kids bounce on and off the census all the time as well. The CIMC has parent consent for all those in the APH Quota Account. It was discussed that the CIMC will reach out to the TVIs with information about the requirement of parent consent and the benefits of being included in the CIMC State Count with a hard deadline. If parents decline, the child's existing data will be removed from the database and the child will not be eligible for CIMC materials. The APH Quota deadline is the first Monday in January. The paperwork is typically due by the end of January. January 31, 2022 will be our deadline.

CIMC Zoom meetings with your BVI team: The CIMC staff is happy to meet with individuals, or entire vision teams, to discuss any questions you may have or to review CIMC procedures and services with you. For teachers new to their district this year, we have reviewed their registration database reports one student at a time and discussed each entry individually. -Vision teams have found this extremely helpful. Let us know how we can assist you.

First Friday Zoom Meetings: At the request of teachers in the field, we are continuing to host two Zoom meetings First Friday of each month. Every service provider in the state was emailed a meeting invitation in early September. Meeting dates: October 1, November 12, December 3, January 7, February 4, March 4, April 1, May 6, and June 3.

Book Orders: Remember to notify the CIMC immediately if anything changes with your textbook order. If you have a textbook that is in the process of being transcribed into braille and something changes with the class and the entire book is no longer needed, the CIMC may be able to work with the vendor to alter the transcription production from an entire book to a partial book. If you have a student move, and you no longer need the braille book, we can stop production entirely, potentially saving us thousands of dollars per contract.

CSDB – School for The Blind (Jamie Lugo)

Key Updates

- Beginning of the year assessments started Monday, August 30th. Assessments include NWEA (MAP), StarMath, and PALS. Assessments for reading, math, ILS, assistive technology have already begun,
- The grand opening of the Children's Village took place on Monday, August 30th at 9:00 a.m. Students and staff from both School for the Blind and School for the Deaf preschool and elementary programs were in attendance. Students were able to check out each of the buildings and were very excited with the learning opportunities that await them.
- Department Bulldog Huddles occur weekly where the principals recognize students and staff PRIDE efforts, share updates, review expectations, and spread joy. The CSDB PRIDE store opened on August 27th.
- Staff and students in the Bridges to Life program did a phenomenal job getting the store ready. Students and staff were very pleased and motivated with what they can earn.
- Principals, teachers, and support services will be using a new on-line evaluation system this year called RAN-DA. This system is sponsored by CDE, and staff will be trained in the next couple of weeks.
- Zones of Regulation instruction is happening every Friday.
- The new math curriculum is being used by teachers in both the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind. Training occurred last spring for the curriculum.
- We have continued to welcome several new, and returning, students to all programs.
- Assistive technology and low vision devices are distributed to students.
- Students are working hard to learn new routes with their O&M instructors.
- The School for the Blind is having rich discussions around a vision for our library.

- Students and staff are working to create a safety patrol team again. This is a group of older students who volunteer to help in the morning with escorting students from the buses to their classrooms.
- The Accessible Playground group is back and ready to dig back into the hard work it's going to take to make their dream a reality.
- We have an intern from Kansas on our campus. She is getting her undergrad degree in math, and she will be going to grad school next year to become a TVI.
- The School for the Blind has completed a video on A Day in the Life of a Brailist. Tanni will put more information in the next newsletter about where to find this treasure!

Upcoming Events:

- Soundball Adaptive Tennis begins on September 23^d
- Campus wide Audism Training on October 1st
- COSB Awards Ceremony on October 6th. *Jim Olson Outstanding Provider of Outreach Services and James Bristol Outstanding Paraprofessional will both be recognized! This is so exciting!
- 5 a Side Soccer Clinic on October 7th
- White Cane Day on October 15th

Discussion Item:

- **Math Interventions – what is being used and recommended that are in braille?** Discussion: Nemeth in a box had some great games. Unique learnings through Dynamic Learning Maps curriculum materials – this is for learners with significant cognitive impairments. APH's Math Builders was also recommended. Some districts use a computer based program to supplement the math skills for students: ALEKS; MobyMax; and IXL. Chloann shared the following math resources:

The Inspire Website is now offering STEM and math support for the 6th-12 grade age group.

<https://www.uscupstate.edu/project-inspire>

Sara Larkin from the Iowa School for the blind has some great resources.

<https://www.iowa-braille.k12.ia.us/vnews/display.v/SEC/Math>

She had this great calculator app list.

CSDB Outreach Services (Sara Noel)

A horizontal interview team recently interviewed candidates for the Outreach Director position.

CSDB Outreach Programs is contracting with 11 school districts/ BOCES to provide vision and orientation and mobility services for 53 students. These school-age students are enrolled in five of the eight CDE regions. The TVIs/COMS also provide services for 31 infants, newborn up to age 3, and their families through two Community Centered Boards (CCB) located within two CDE regions.

Jim Olson won a national award for Outstanding Provider of Outreach Services, awarded by the Council of Schools and Services for the Blind.

Sara Noel is once again a member of the International Orientation and Mobility Online Symposium to be held this year from January 26-28, 2022. For more information, please visit the Symposium website at:

<https://orientationandmobilitysymposium.com/>.

UNC VI Program (Paula Conroy)

There have been a lot of changes in the university system. They have a new university president, a current interim provost, and a new Dean. The Extended Campus also has a new director. The numbers enrolled in the special education program are high. The doctoral program has the highest number of students in the country in special education. They have expanded their adjunct faculty in recent years to assist the faculty with their course loads and focus on doctoral level. The program has been doing a lot of outreach projects in O&M. UNC trained 12 O&M Specialists in Utah in the past year. They have also been partnering in the State of Washington. Currently there are 12 practicum students. There are 10-15 Colorado students out of 65 students across the country. If an AU needs a TVI / O&M specialist, you need to be willing to a practicum site. The conversation needs to start early with recruiting someone to an area of the state. It is also important to understand the new staff will have minimal competency in the beginning of their work career and will benefit from supports – it is important to have a realistic expectation of a new graduate.

Discussion Item:

- **How best to support new TVIs?** Discussion: Would it be helpful to have a New TVI group, instructional coaches, or documents that help people manage IEP paperwork? Each AU will have their resources / induction programs. It would be nice to bridge these resources as a part of having a student teacher. Could we work to develop a checklist?

Colorado Department of Education (Tanni Anthony)

Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project: We are in the fourth year of our five-year grant cycle. The project's mission is free technical assistance to parents and service providers of children and youth, ages birth through 21, who are deaf-blind or who have both a vision and a hearing loss. The project has a lending library and a website with a multitude of electronic resources that are available to families and educational personnel.

Project Goals: Goal One: To collaborate with State, Local Education, Agencies, and Local Agencies to implement a statewide system to identify Colorado children and youth, 0-21 years of age, who are deaf-blind, and to heighten awareness of deaf-blindness. Goal Two: To ensure family members of children who are deaf-blind have the training and information needed to maintain and improve productive partnerships with service providers and contribute to the academic and functioning outcomes of their children. Goal Three: To increase awareness, knowledge, and skills of EIS providers, general / special educators, and related service providers regarding evidence-based practices that will promote academic achievement and improve results for children and youth with deaf-blindness.

Project Staff: Tanni Anthony and Gina Herrera are Co-Directors on the grant project. Wendy Stoltman and Jessica Meisel are our Technical Assistance (TA) Specialist for the project. Jessica is new as an official part-time employee and will be working three days a week with the project. Both Wendy and Jessica provide onsite consultation and customized training to the educational teams of the children with deaf-blindness. Cindy Colwell is our Family Specialist.

To request FREE technical assistance, please contact Gina Herrera at (303) 866-6681 or Herrera_g@cde.state.co.us.

Annual Deaf-Blind Count: The Child Count Data forms for December 1, 2021, will be sent out to agency and administrative unit contact personnel in late October.

Please note that a child can be registered at any time in the school year. If you work with a learner with both vision and hearing loss, please be sure to work with Tanni to register the child. All learners identified as having combined vision and hearing loss are eligible for free technical assistance. This can be child-specific consultation and customized staff training.

Project Trainings: We have booked our 2021-22 Deaf-Blind Webinar Series with a host of national talent. Tanni will be sending out the flyer with registration details shortly.

BVI State Funded Activities: The CDE has a strong commitment to services and supports to our students and the staff who serve them. We pleased to offer training and TA supports to the field serving children who are blind/visually impaired.

BVI Office Hours: Tanni is offering CDE BVI Office Hours every other Wednesday from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. via Zoom. The purpose is to have a dedicated time for people to share how it is going in this time of remote instruction. There will also be sessions with colleagues on key topics. Attendance is optional. All participants must register ahead of each BVI Office Hours.

CDE/CSDB Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics: We have booked out our regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics. The first will be in late September on the Western Slope and we have seven students attending! Our LVE Clinic team will be wearing masks and adhere to each host site's health and safety practices. We will ask that all attendees wear masks unless there is a medical reason not to do so. The clinic team also asks that TVIs are proactive with working with families not to send children who have colds to the clinic. The Purchase Policy, Welcome Letter, and Parent / TVI form have been translated into Spanish are now on the CDE website.

CDE State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment: Dr. FM D'Andrea will be our featured speaker on January 20-21 on the topic of the Science of Reading for Students who are BVI. We are scheduled right now for an in-person training.

CDE O&M Seminar: If you have topic / presenter ideas, please reach out to Tanni. We will see if we are ready for an in-person training next spring. If not, we will arrange a virtual training.

Recruitment and Retention: We have very few TVI / O&M Specialist openings: 1 FTE in Academy 20. School District and a 1. FTE in Falcon 49 School District. Please keep Tanni in the loop on anticipated and real vacancies. If you want to be on the CDE list of contractors, please reach out to Tanni.

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

Parent Database: We currently have about 226 parents registered on the CDE Parent Database. This is out of over 1,200 families across the state. The database is used to mail out the *Keeping in Touch* newsletter and, on rare occasion, other mailings. It is important to keep it maintained with accurate names and addresses of families of children with visual impairment, including blindness who are currently enrolled in our Colorado early intervention or public-school programs. As children graduate or families move out of state, we need to ensure that we remove those families. As new families come into the system, please help Tanni to be proactive with getting families registered on the database. This is a voluntary process – so families need to complete and sign their registration forms.

Braille Competency: We are doing so well with addressing braille competency across Colorado! Tanni is working with veteran and new TVIs to demonstrate initial braille competency. All TVIs who are new to the field are expected to demonstrate braille competency in their first year of employment in this role. If a TVI extends this date, the administrative unit of employment is at risk for a citation of noncompliance. A Practice Test is posted on the Visual Impairment, Including Blindness website. It includes practice multiple choice items and braille samples. Please be aware that all TVIs in public schools must renew their braille certificate one time after the first five years of initial certification.

BVI Coach/Mentor Project: We have one (right now!) amazing veteran TVIs/O&M Specialist who can provide free technical assistance to school-based TVIs/Orientation and Mobility Specialists. Wendy Stoltman is on board as a coach / mentor. If you have time to contribute as a BVI Coach / Mentor, reach out to Tanni. We have had three requests already this school year. To request a coach / mentor, contact Tanni at (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us.

Keeping in Touch Newsletter: The August – September Keeping in Touch Newsletter was mailed out with some delivery complications. We are already hard at work for the October 2021 edition.

Discussion Item:

- **What is better – to mail or just post the newsletter on the website?** It was suggested that the newsletter only be disseminated with its online posting. It usually cannot be sent as an attachment as it is too large. Please be aware that we have very few Family Consent Forms with their email addresses. This is one of the reasons that the last newsletter was sent by mail – so that it was sent directly to parents. Currently, the newsletter is not available in Spanish due to the turn around time to get it out the door with date-specific items.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

CDE BVI Budget for 2021-22

The following activities have been approved for the new school year ahead!

- | | |
|---|--|
| ⇒ Braille Competency Testing / Mentor Support | ⇒ BVI Coach / Mentor Project |
| ⇒ CIMC (Interagency Agreement with CSDB) | ⇒ CDE O&M Seminar |
| ⇒ Vision Coalition | ⇒ UEB Math Training – on hold until face to face |
| ⇒ Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics | ⇒ Keeping <i>in Touch</i> Newsletter |

READ Act Requirement for the 45 Hours of Science of Reading

Colorado school districts are required to ensure all kindergarten- 3rd grade teachers complete evidence-based training in teaching reading as a result of changes to the Colorado READ Act in [SB 19-199 \(PDF\)](#). Following a six-month extension approved by the State Board of Education, all K - 3 teachers must complete the teacher training by January 31, 2022. Districts, BOCES, and charters that do not meet the requirements will be ineligible for READ Act funds for the 2022-23 school year. In subsequent years, districts will need to ensure that teachers new to teaching K – 3rd grade also meet this requirement.

TVIs should be consulted for access to the right technology for learners with low vision. TVIs can braille screening content, as appropriate. The screening materials can be customized to the contractions known by the students. TVIs can and should be involved with the READ Act process by: (a) working closely with the general education teacher to see what screening tool(s) are used by the district, (b) determining accessibility needs, which may include selected another screening tool; (c) implementing accessible needs during the screening / diagnostic tool administration; and (d) assisting with the interpretation of results. The latter is very important for screening tools that involve time testing items. It may be appropriate for the child to need more time for a task, but this may not be an allowable accommodation. When this occurs, it will be important to decipher if the results are due to a reading challenge or the fact that the child simply needed more time to demonstrate knowledge and skills of the item being tested. Think through what needs a READING intervention and what may need more time to be proficient with the braille code, effects of visual fatigue, etc. The results should be defensive to avoid a false negative.

Learn more about this requirement and the seven options to meet this requirement at, <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/teacher-training>.

Heads up: Districts have now been notified of their funding amounts. These funding amounts were based on the number of students identified with a significant reading deficiency from the district's submission in the 2020-21 READ data collection. The per pupil funding amount was calculated to be \$496.31.

CDE Websites

Tanni shared the following websites and asked for feedback to add new content.

- Orientation and Mobility
<https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/rs-om>
- Visual Impairment, including Blindness
<https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision>

Assignment: Tanni asked the VC members and others in the field to discuss the need for new content/ added photos at the regional meetings, back at their school districts and agencies. We want the websites to have helpful content to parents, special education directors, and the BVI field. All suggestions are welcome. Also please consider working with Tanni to embed photos of our students on these pages, with written consent paperwork from the families.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Tanni highlighted three areas of possible focus for the Vision Coalition.

- Tanni shared an example of inclusion practices that was written from one blind adult. She is asking whether the Vision Coalition may want to collect other personal statements to truly define what EDI looks like across the Blind Community and for our students.
- In addition, Tanni will be working with our TVIs who are blind/visually impaired during this school year to learn and share their experiences with the field. Their perspective is critical to our employability efforts with our students, as well as enhancing new knowledge and skills for the field.
- Recruitment efforts to enhance the diversity of our field.

Assignment: Tanni and Anahit will have more discussions to bring back to our next meeting. Also, there may be opportunities ahead of this time for BVI Office Hour topics.

Next Meeting Dates for School Year 2021-22 with both meetings currently scheduled via Zoom:

- December 8, 2021, 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- April 6, 2022, 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.





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Braille Competency News

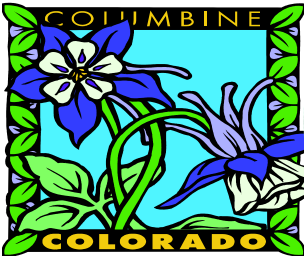
- ◆ Hats off to **Christopher Kinney** for earning his CDE Certificate of Braille Competency! Also hats off to the following individuals who have earned CDE renewal braille module clock hours: **Nicole Andersen, Danielle Burden, Jeff Hadala, Julie King, Brenna Moser, Dana McMullen, and Maggie Tutt.**
- ◆ Thanks to the CDE braille proctors **Nancy Cozart, Brenda Shepard and Julie Wetzstein.**

Professional Development Contributions

- ◆ Thanks to **Paula Landry** of A Shared Vision for her contributions as a panelist on a discussion on the impact of the pandemic on early intervention / early childhood services. The panel was part of the final webinar presentation sponsored by the Western Region Early Intervention Conference planning committee and hosted by the Texas School for the Blind Coffee Hours. It was refreshing to learn of the resiliency of EI / EC programs in the western states who met the many challenges of the pandemic to identify young learners with sensory disabilities, serve and empower families, and find ways to build professional connections during a virtual service delivery model. **Tanni Anthony** facilitated this panel, which included EI / EC experts from CO, AZ, NM, and UT.
- ◆ Thanks to **Dr. MaryAnn Demchak** and **Chavonne Sutter**, from the Nevada Dual Sensory Impairment Project, who provided training on *Systematic Instruction: Part 1* at the first of our Colorado Deaf-Blind Grant Webinar Series. This training was held on October 12th and had great attendance. Be sure to check out the flyer with the registration link for the remaining DB Webinar Series topics for this school year. Thanks to the TVIs who attended this first one—look forward to seeing more of you at the next ones coming up in the series!
- ◆ A shout out to **Karin Hensel** and **Chloann Woolley** who are participating in the SSN Book Club with Gina Herrera and the CDE SSN Coaches on the book *Comprehensive Literacy for Students with Disabilities*. So glad to see two TVIs take advantage of this rich opportunity to learn more about literacy for students with significant support needs.

Personnel Updates

- ◆ Thank you to **Julie King** for her past work in Eagle School District and for her role with the Vision Coalition. Amazing contributions in our field with hopes of more to come!
- ◆ Thanks to **Tommie Sue Celli** for her time with Anchor Center for Blind Children!
- ◆ Woo hoo—we are so pleased to have **Jessica Meisel** on board as a .6 FTE staff person on the Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project. Jessica was a contractor last year and we gathered great information about her role impact with training and supporting interveners. Jessica will continue to provide intervener support and will also be our second TA Specialist in the field, joining, **Wendy Stoltman** in this role.
- ◆ Welcome to **Erin Noe**, who will represent the Western Region on the remaining two Vision Coalition meetings yet this school year.



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CSDB Celebrates White Cane Day!

By Diane Taylor, School/Community Liaison

This year, students and staff from the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind invited the general public to Acacia Park, in downtown Colorado Springs, for a White Cane Day celebration and rally. During this event, the CSDB Bulldog Band performed songs, including original music honoring the white cane. Celebrating the achievements and contributions of those who are blind or visually impaired, students and keynote speaker, Marty Rahn, delivered motivational speeches to the crowd.



White Cane Day is a highly anticipated event, at CSDB, because of the opportunity it represents to interact with the public and explain the importance of the white cane. Every year, more people come to Acacia Park to eat their lunches and listen to the Bulldog Band. Congrats to CSDB for their successful hosting of this important event!





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In memoriam, we say farewell and thanks to **Doris Willoughby**, a Colorado TVI and a true advocate for the blind, who died on September 8, 2021. Doris Mellott Koerner Willoughby was born on June 29, 1936, in Easton, PA. She moved to Boulder, CO, with her family when she was 11 and graduated from Boulder High School as class valedictorian in 1953.

Doris earned a bachelor's degree in education from Grinnell College in Grinnell, IA, in 1957 and taught second grade in Cedar Rapids for 11 years. She met her husband D. Curtis Willoughby in 1966 and they were married on June 24, 1967. From the time they met, Doris became a driver and reader assistant for Curtis. Since he was an electrical engineer, perhaps the first blind electrical engineer in the country, and most of the material he wanted to read was technical, Doris's assistance was extremely valuable. During the school year 1966/7, Judy Young, a young blind woman, was seeking a degree in elementary education from the State University of Iowa, but the University had difficulty finding a place for her to do her student teaching. Doris volunteered to be the supervising teacher and the opportunity to work with Judy. Together they found techniques to make Judy an excellent teacher. Doris received her certification in the teaching of blind children in 1969 after studying during the summers and evenings and then began teaching blind children. The Willoughbys moved to Des Moines in 1972, and Doris taught blind children there until 1993. She earned her master's degree from the University of Northern Colorado soon after that. Doris taught blind children in the Adams 12 School District near Denver. She later taught blind adults at the Colorado Training Center for the Blind, where she helped students prepare for citizenship and the GED test, among other things. Doris was a pioneer and leader in the education of blind children for at least 4 decades and wrote or co-authored 4 books on that subject. At its 50th anniversary convention, the National Federation of the Blind honored Doris with its highest award in education: the Distinguished Teacher of Blind Children Award. Doris was soft-spoken, kind, generous, creative, and hardworking. Memorial donations may be made to the National Federation of the Blind or the Wheat Ridge United Methodist Church.

Personal Thanks

I would thank so many people who reached out with emails, texts, and cards to celebrate the life of my mother, Wanda Anthony, and to offer support to me.

My deepest appreciation for words of comfort, confirmation of impressions or stories of Wanda, well wishes, and patience and grace for my delays in emails, cancelation of BVI Office Hours, etc.

You are deeply appreciated!

Tanni





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