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KEEPING IN TOUCH!

A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers
of Colorado Children with Visual Impairment, Including Blindness
January—February 2022

All the Way to the River

By Elizabeth Gilbert

Editor's Note: I love this tale of a wisdom, humanity, and the power of reaching out to inspire a better place. Parents and staff, Hang in there, we have March, April, and May to travel together. Let's all go all the way to the river with one another, one bright act of grace at a time.

"Some years ago, I was stuck on a crosstown bus in New York City during rush hour. Traffic was barely moving. The bus was filled with cold, tired people who were deeply irritated with one another, with the world itself. Two men barked at each other about a shove that might or might not have been intentional. A pregnant woman got on, and nobody offered her a seat. Rage was in the air; no mercy would be found here.

But as the bus approached Seventh Avenue, the driver got on the intercom. "Folks," he said, "I know you have had a rough day and you are frustrated. I can't do anything about the weather or traffic, but here is what I can do. As each one of you gets off the bus, I will reach out my hand to you. As you walk by, drop your troubles into the palm of my hand, okay? Don't take your problems home to your families tonight, just leave them with me. My route goes right by the Hudson River, and when I drive by there later, I will open the window and throw your troubles in the water."

It was as if a spell had lifted. Everyone burst out laughing. Faces gleamed with surprised delight. People who had been pretending for the past hour not to notice each other's existence were suddenly grinning at each other like, is this guy serious? Oh, he was serious. At the next stop, just as promised, the driver reached out his hand, palm up, and waited. One by one, all the exiting commuters placed their hand just above his and mimed the gesture of dropping something into his palm. Some people laughed as they did this, some teared up but everyone did it. The driver repeated the same lovely ritual at the next stop, too. And the next. All the way to the river.

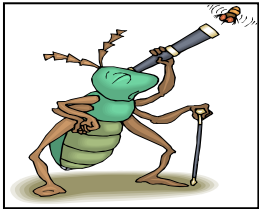
We live in a hard world, my friends. Sometimes it is extra difficult to be a human being. Sometimes you have a bad day. Sometimes you have a bad day that lasts for several years. You struggle and fail. You lose jobs, money, friends, faith, and love. You witness horrible events unfolding in the news, and you become fearful and withdrawn. There are times when everything seems cloaked in darkness. You long for the light but don't know where to find it. But what if you are the light? What if you are the very agent of illumination that a dark situation begs for? That's what this bus driver taught me, that anyone can be the light, at any moment. This guy wasn't some big power player. He wasn't a spiritual leader. He wasn't some media-savvy influencer. He was a bus driver, one of society's most invisible workers. But he possessed real power, and he used it beautifully for our benefit.

When life feels especially grim, or when I feel particularly powerless in the face of the world's troubles, I think of this man and ask myself, What can I do, right now, to be the light? Of course, I can't personally end all wars, or solve global warming, or transform vexing people into entirely different creatures. I definitely can't control traffic. But I do have some influence on everyone I brush up against, even if we never speak or learn each other's name.

"No matter who you are, or where you are, or how mundane or tough your situation may seem, I believe you can illuminate your world. In fact, I believe this is the only way the world will ever be illuminated, one bright act of grace at a time, all the way to the river."

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LOW VISION EVALUATION



Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics for School Year 2021-2022

Region	Dates	Paperwork Due	Site Coordinator
Metro	May 5, 6, and 7	March 1	Karin Hensel
Southern	To be Determined	To Be Determined	Debbie Haberkorn

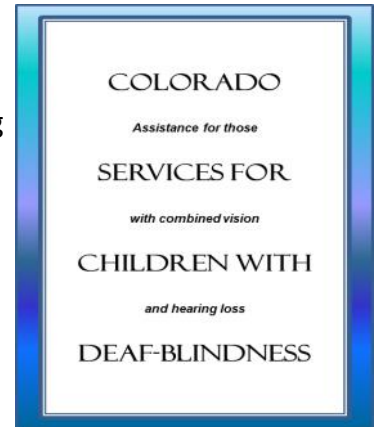
Clinic News for the Rest of the School Year

We are half-way there! Two regional clinics happened during the first part of our 2021-22 School Year. We have postponed the Metro Region and Southern Region Clinics due to the pandemic. The good news is that the Metro Region Clinic has been rescheduled. Stay tune for news about the dates of the Southern Region Clinic. Student participation in these clinics will be contingent on accurate and timely submission of the required paperwork. Please be proactive with full completion of the forms to help our clinic team maximize the clinic experience and outcome for each student. Thank you for your support of our regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics!

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

Thank you to all who have already returned in your forms for our annual Deafblind December 1 Child Count. We are almost at the other side of this data collection! Our thanks to **Deb Andrews, Jennifer Caster, Meghan Crosby, Kathy Emter, Jessica Meisel, Beth Myers, Ashley Renfrow,**

If you have not been able to turn in the Child Count paperwork, but do so as soon as possible. We will roll up our count within the next few weeks for our national submission.

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!

Educational Practices for Children Who Are Deaf-Blind

The National Center on Deaf-Blindness website has an extensive section on [Educational Practices](#) that is updated on an ongoing basis. It consists of a series of "Info Topics" containing information and resources developed over many years by practitioners and researchers in the field of deaf-blindness. Topic categories include Foundations of Learning, Assessment, Educational Services, and Communication and Concept Development.

Colorado Deaf-Blind Project News

Colorado Community Intervener Project Stories

By Megan Bowser

The Community Intervener Pilot is up and running with children now receiving intervener services within their homes and communities. Twelve children are signed up for the pilot representing ages 16 months to 13 years old with 7 interveners working among them. We also have recruited 9 new intervener candidates who are beginning the intervener training through the Deaf Blind Project.



My enthusiasm about this program comes from watching the power of having an intervener with my son Wesley. This last December we, like many families, were flooded with Christmas events to attend. We often don't attend these events as Wesley gets frustrated and isn't able to participate with the activities. This year, however, we decided to attend a Christmas party with Wesley's intervener. While there, instead of Wesley yelling, I watched him and his intervener go between groups of people. His intervener was coaching him to use his communication device to say hello, ask questions, and talk about himself to other kids. She was advocating for him to the other kids explaining how he communicates and how they could tell he was paying attention. She was explaining to Wesley what the decorations looked like and what the people around him were doing. My heart was overwhelmed watching him actually participate in a Christmas party with his peers. Having a community intervener is opening up the world for Wesley to be able to participate in his own unique and meaningful ways.

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.

January 11, 2022

Classic Literacy Lessons: Story Boxes, Experience Books, and Authentic Choice-making with Susan Bruce

February 8, 2022

Systematic Instruction for Students with Severe Disabilities (Part 2): Constant Time Delay with MaryAnn Demchak and Chevonne Sutter

March 8, 2022

Supporting the Use of Consistent Interventions: A Framework for Collaborating with Educational Teams Serving Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss with Tracy Evans Luiselli

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

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

Wreaths Across America 2021

Saturday, December 18, 2021 was a glorious day! CAER participated in the Wreaths Across American National Event for the 7th year in a row! With a group size of over 25, we were able to place over 60 wreaths! Thank you to all the participants (listed below) for your time, support and dedication to the veterans who have served our country over the years.

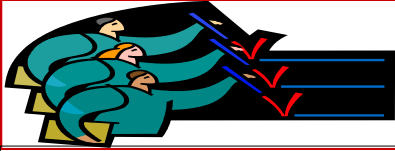
December 2021 Wreaths Across America Participants at Fairmont Cemetery, Denver, Colorado:

- Cadence Flores & Family
- Barb Galgano
- Vincent Galgano
- Jessie & Luke Hazen
- Kathleen Hazen
- Dr. Bob King
- Pat Lewis
- Trina Boyd Pratt
- Jamus Pritchard & Family
- Hilary Schell & Family
- Heather Solberg & Family/Friends

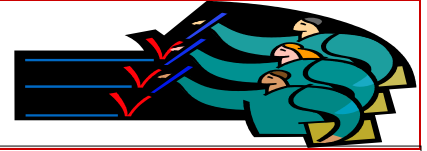


We look forward to having you join us next year for Wreaths Across America 2022!





CHECK IT OUT!



The American Council of the Blind's Audio Description Project Announces Its Nineteenth

AUDIO DESCRIPTION INSTITUTE

March 21-25, 2022 (Monday through Friday)
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm Eastern each day

LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE

REGISTER NOW AT: <http://weblink.donorperfect.com/2022ADI>

(Note: You'll be asked to create a login for the ACB database and continue to register for the Institute.)

Audio Description (AD) makes visual images accessible for people who are blind or have low vision. Using words that are succinct, vivid, and imaginative, media describers convey the visual image from television and film that is not fully accessible to a significant segment of the population (more than 32 million Americans experience significant vision loss).

The implementation of the 21st Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act has spawned a virtual cottage industry for the development of description for broadcast television.

Who Should Attend

Anyone interested in:

- ◆ working as freelance description writers for broadcast television
- ◆ working as a describer in a local performing arts program
- ◆ working as a describer for visual art exhibitions
- ◆ experienced audio describers desiring an updated refresher course.



NOTE: freelance writers for broadcast television projects can often be based anywhere in the world--computer equipment capable of accommodating high-speed downloads is a must.

Topics Include:

- 1) audio description history and theory
- 2) the "Four Fundamentals of Audio Description" ©
- 3) active seeing/visual literacy-developing skills in concentration and observation
- 4) the art of "editing" what you see
- 5) vivid language: "The Visual Made Verbal"™

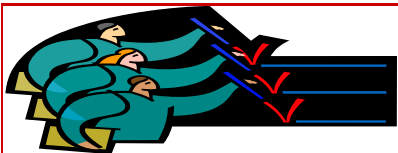
Participation is strictly limited. The Institute will issue ACB-sponsored certificates to all successful participants confirming completion of this professional description training program.

Registration will close on March 11, 2022 and the invitation to attend the institute will be emailed on March 16, 2022. Your invitation to attend the institute will be sent to the email address provided on the form.

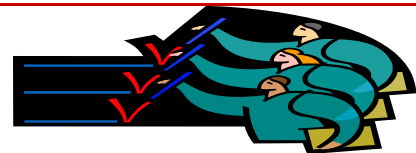
NOTE: Two full scholarships are available; priority will be given to people with disabilities. To be considered for a scholarship, please send an email outlining how and why you are a strong candidate and include your reason for needing financial assistance at this time.

Scholarships are courtesy of Michele Spitz-Woman of Her Word
(www.womanofherword.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.

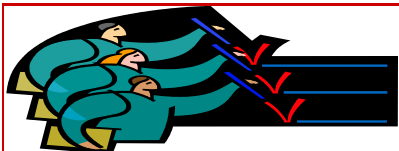
SBS recognizes that there are important professional membership organizations that provide TSVIs/TVIs a voice among other professional voices, but the Registry will provide the forum for TSVIs/TVIs to be highly visible and have their own unique voice on the national stage.

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.

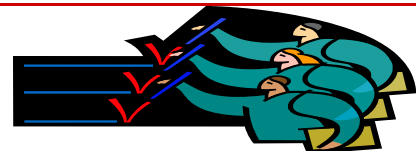
Participating in this Registry is voluntary.

For questions or additional information, please email: NRTSVI@successbeyondsight.org.





CHECK IT OUT!



Setting the Standard Webinar: Making the Most of Mathematics Materials

In this mathematics webinar, Raymond Johnson, CDE's mathematics specialist, will take a closer look at the role curriculum materials play in the modern math classroom and highlight how teachers can select and use materials to make teaching more effective.

Register for the webinar to be held at 3:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 2.

*For More Information, Contact: Jamie Hurley, Ph.D.—Office of Standards and Instructional Support
Phone: 303-866-6453 Email: hurley_j@cde.state.co.us*

2022 Shark Dissection With Arapahoe Community College Professor of Biology, Terry Harrison.

It's an annual thing, having Professor Harrison over to the center's gym with several coolers full of frozen dog sharks. He will lead blind and low vision youth in the tactile art and science of dissection. It's something that too often blind students have been asked to "observe," instead of taking part. So, this is a hand into the belly of that beast, meaning really getting to explore tactilely, the way blind people do successfully, and get real science at your student's (gloved) fingertips! Oh, yeah ... and we'll have pizza afterwards!

When: Monday, March 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Where: Colorado Center for the Blind—2233 W. Shepperd Ave., Littleton, CO 80120

Registration closes Thursday, March 3, or when our limited space is full.

REGISTER NOW!!



For more information, contact Anahit LaBarre at 303-778-1130, x223, or alabarre@cocenter.org.

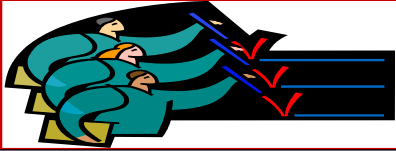
Well-Being Support Line Available for Educators

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.

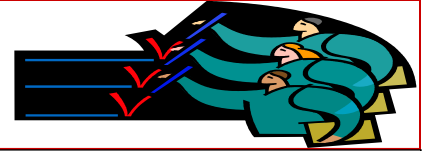
The free service offered through the University of Colorado's Department of Psychology and the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment's Colorado Spirit Crisis Counseling program is available to any educator across the state, including teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, health care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

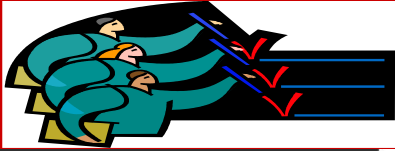
The [National AEM Center at CAST](#) has developed resources to support students who need accessible materials and technologies while learning remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.



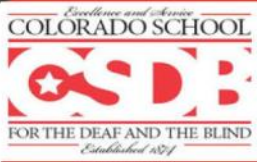
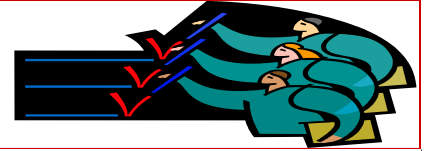
** eBooks

[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.





CHECK IT OUT!



COLORADO PARENTS!

...who have children who are Blind or Visually Impaired

Join other parents, caregivers and educators for a series of free workshops on the important topics of mental health.

These workshops will be led by Cara Johnson, School Psychologist, CSDB-School for the Blind.



Thursday March 3, 2022 - 5:00-6:00p.m.
Zones of Regulation-emotional regulation and how to use it at home

Tuesday, March 8, 2022 - 5:00-6:00 p.m.
Child Sexual Abuse Prevention

Thursday, March 10, 2022 6:00-7:00p.m.
Executive Functioning and Routines

Cara Johnson
cjohnson@csdb.org

Accommodations
available upon
request

Please RSVP using the QR code or this address:
<https://forms.gle/yZ911mTNkQ1mDsTa8>
After you RSVP, a Zoom link will be sent to you using the email address you provide.



33 North Institute Street ~ Colorado Springs, CO 80903 ~ www.csdb.org ~ 719-578-2100

Resources and Materials

COVID-19 FAQ's 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](#).

CDE Professional Development: Real-Time and Archived

Professional Development opportunities

[Click here for more information about CDE Professional Development offerings, including Library on On-Demand Resources and Upcoming Opportunities](#)



Come meet Rishika Kartik, a “creative activist” committed to accessibility, diversity, and inclusion. Rishika is President of the Colorado Tactile Art Club (TAC) where she works to create opportunities for blind/visual impaired students to express themselves and find Community. The TAC meets the third Tuesday of each month.

Upcoming TAC dates:

- Mar 15
- April 19
- May 17
- June 21
- July 19
- August 16
- Sep 20
- Oct 18
- Nov 21
-

Please check out [Rishika's monthly blog](#) for all the fun art projects students have worked on the last two years.

Check out her studio [website](#) with all the details and experience the community that is coming together and creating.

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.



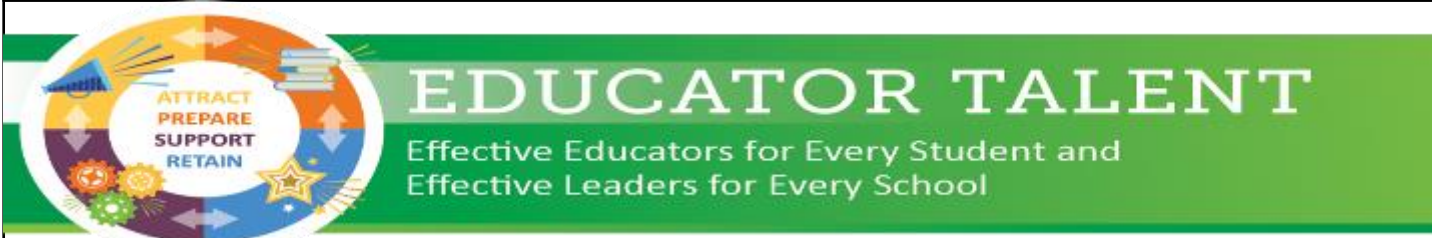
Licensure and Endorsement Specific to Special Education Specialist: VI

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>.

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 as a teacher of students with visual impairments, with a Colorado administrative unit. 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

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You can do it !



K-3 Teacher Evidence-Based Reading Training Requirements

All kindergarten through third-grade teachers in Colorado must submit evidence of their compliance with the K-3 evidence-based reading training requirements by August 1, 2022. [Teachers will submit documentation through the Colorado Online Licensing system.](#) The goal is for all TVIs in public schools to complete this training to be in the know of the Science of Reading, a must for all learners with blindness/visual impairment.

[Learn about the hour, content and assessment requirements to complete this training and the various training options that are available for K-3 teachers.](#)

TLCC Survey Launches January 19—Due March 4, 2022

The Teaching and Learning Conditions in Colorado survey launches Wednesday, January 19, 2022. Packets with individualized, single-use survey codes will be mailed and emailed to schools the week of January 10, 2022.

The survey will be available on the TLCC website and can be taken in under 15 minutes from any computer or mobile device. Schools and districts will need at least 50% staff response and a minimum of five respondents to access results when they become available this spring. With the new addition of Education Support Professionals to the survey, ensure time is made available for all school staff to participate before the survey closes Friday, March 4, 2022.

[For more information, visit the TLCC survey website.](#)

READ Act Office Hours

The Literacy Team in the Preschool Through 3rd Grade office will be scheduling live monthly office hours to share updates on the READ Act Teacher training. Topics may include:

- Information about the READ Act teacher training requirement
- Important dates for teachers and districts to be aware of
- Information on pathway options to meet the READ Act teacher training requirement
- Information on teacher reporting to the Colorado Online Licensing system (COOL)
- Information on district reporting

***Please send all questions to: readacttraining@cde.state.co.us

Register for 2022 Educator Workforce Communities of Practice

A strong educator pipeline that can prepare, recruit, and retain high-quality and diverse educators is essential for improving student success. However, many Colorado districts are experiencing teacher shortages and high turnover. To address this challenge, CDE and the Region 12 Comprehensive Center are launching an online community of practice initiative in 2022 for K-20 peer teams to engage in collaborative analysis, discussion, planning, and action to improve educator preparation, recruitment, hiring, diversity and retention.

We're seeking participation from leaders, key staff, and stakeholders from a variety of organizations, including:

- School districts & charter schools
- Traditional & alternative teacher prep programs
- BOCES
- State offices (CDE, CDHE, CDLE, etc.)
- Advocates (CEA, TEACH Colorado, etc.)

[Learn more and sign up here.](#)





2022 Bullying Prevention Model Policy now available

The 2022 Colorado Bullying Prevention and Education Best Practices and Model Policy document is available on CDE's [website](#). This updated model policy was crafted with input from a stakeholder committee including families of students who have experienced bullying, public education students, community members and educational leaders. The package also includes sample bullying reporting and investigation forms as well as a flowchart to support leaders in their investigations. [Visit the Colorado Model Bullying Prevention and Education Policy webpage](#) for additional information.

For More Information, Contact: Adam Collins—Teaching and Learning

Phone: 303-866-6622 Email: collins_a@cde.state.co.us

Partners Needed to Ensure Colorado's Learners have Access to Food this Summer

DENVER – With nearly half of Colorado families with children struggling to put food on the table, the Colorado Department of Education is partnering with Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger and Hunger Free Colorado to increase access to the Summer Meals Program.

In a survey conducted by Hunger Free Colorado in April 2021, almost half of households with kids and teens (44%) are struggling to have regular access to nutritious food. Additionally, 1 in 6 (16%) are not getting adequate nutrition because there is not enough money for food.

In October 2021, more than 11 million free meals were served to kids and teens, which is a 60% increase from October 2020. Sponsors, sites and state partners are needed to ensure children can continue to receive healthy meals during the summer when school is out of session.

The Summer Meals Program, federally funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered by CDE's School Nutrition Unit, ensures that youth have access to healthy meals during the summer, which is critical for their health and well-being.

CDE's School Nutrition Unit, the Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger and Hunger Free Colorado are working together to expand the number of youth who are served by the Summer Meals Program by increasing awareness of the program and providing resources and training to existing and new program sponsors.

"Summer can be a challenging time for youth who have lost access to school breakfast and lunch," said Marc Jacobson, CEO of Hunger Free Colorado. "Keeping children fueled through the summer months with no-cost, healthy meals ensures they return to school ready to learn and is part of a strong foundation to help them grow and thrive."

To help ensure summer meals are available in your community, become a program sponsor, site or state partner for the Summer Meals Program. To learn more, [visit the Summer Food Service Program webpage](#) or contact Megan Johnson at johnson_m@cde.state.co.us or 303-653-6138.

To learn more about the Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger, visit EndHungerCO.org.

To learn more about Hunger Free Colorado, visit HungerFreeColorado.org.

About the Summer Meals Programs:

- Meals are FREE to youth 18 years and younger.
- Parents do not need to apply to the program for their children to get free summer meals.
- Organizations that can administer the Summer Meals Program include schools, non-profit organizations, government entities, camps, universities, and community and faith-based organizations.
- Parents and youth can find summer meal sites by texting FOOD or COMIDA to 304-304 or visit www.kidsfoodfinder.org

- Meals served follow USDA nutrition guidelines.

***This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Se necesitan socios para garantizar que los jóvenes de Colorado tengan acceso a las comidas este verano

DENVER - Casi la mitad de las familias de Colorado están luchando por poner comida en la mesa, el Departamento de Educación de Colorado se está asociando con Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger y Hunger Free Colorado para aumentar el acceso al Programa de Comidas de Verano.

Según una [encuesta reciente](#) de Hunger Free Colorado, más del 44% de las familias están luchando actualmente por poner comida en la mesa. Además, 1 de cada 6 (16%) no recibe una nutrición adecuada porque no hay suficiente dinero para comprar alimentos.

En Octubre de 2021, se sirvieron más de 11 millones de comidas gratis a niños y adolescentes, lo que representa un aumento del 60% con respecto a Octubre de 2020. Se necesitan patrocinadores, sitios y socios estatales para garantizar que los niños puedan continuar recibiendo comidas saludables durante el verano cuando termina la escuela. El Programa de Comidas de Verano, financiado con fondos federales por el Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos y administrado por el estado por la Unidad de Nutrición Escolar del CDE, garantiza que los jóvenes tengan acceso a comidas saludables durante el verano, lo cual es fundamental para su salud y bienestar.

La Unidad de Nutrición Escolar de CDE, Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger y Hunger Free Colorado están trabajando juntos para ampliar la cantidad de jóvenes que reciben servicios del Programa de Comidas de Verano aumentando la conciencia sobre el programa y brindando recursos y capacitación a los patrocinadores nuevos y existentes del programa.

“El verano puede ser un momento difícil para los jóvenes que han perdido el acceso al desayuno y almuerzo escolar”, dijo Marc Jacobson, director ejecutivo de Hunger Free Colorado. “Mantener a los niños alimentados durante los meses de verano con comidas saludables y sin costo asegura que regresen a la escuela listos para aprender y es parte de una base sólida para ayudarlos a crecer y prosperar”.

Para ayudar a garantizar que las comidas de verano estén disponibles en su comunidad, conviértase en patrocinador del programa, sitio o socio estatal del Programa de Comidas de verano.

Para obtener más información, visite: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/summerfoodserviceprogram> o comuníquese con Megan Johnson en johnson_m@cde.state.co.us o 303-653-6138.

Para obtener más información sobre el Plan de Colorado para acabar con el hambre, visite <https://www.endhungerco.org/>.

Para obtener más información sobre Hunger Free Colorado, visite HungerFreeColorado.org.

Acerca del programa de Comidas de Verano:

- Las comidas son GRATIS para los jóvenes de 18 años o menos.
- Las familias no necesitan aplicar por el programa para que sus hijos o hijas reciban comidas gratuitas durante el verano.
- Las organizaciones que pueden administrar el Programa de Comidas de Verano incluyen escuelas, organizaciones sin fines de lucro, entidades gubernamentales, campamentos, universidades y organizaciones comunitarias y religiosas.
- Las familias y los jóvenes pueden encontrar sitios de comidas de verano enviando un mensaje de texto con la palabra COMIDA al 877-877 o visitando www.kidsfoodfinder.org.

Las comidas que se sirven siguen las pautas de nutrición del Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos.

***Esta institución es un proveedor de igualdad de oportunidades.



Equity, Diversity, and



**Save the Date—American Foundation for the Blind Leadership Conference
May 1-3, 2022**

at Hyatt Regency Arlington, VA

Join us for the [American Foundation for the Blind's Leadership Conference \(AFBLC\)](#) and Helen Keller Achievement Awards (HKAA). We aim to increase leadership capacity in order to create a world of no limits for people who are blind. We are committed to **putting inclusion to work**, which will be a major emphasis of our 2022 AFBLC. The Helen Keller Achievement Awards Dinner, which takes place during the conference, recognizes the notable achievements of individuals and organizations that are leaders in improving the lives of people with disabilities. Past awardees include Amazon, Apple, Google, and JPMorgan Chase, as well as giants from the performing arts, including Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, and Patty Duke.

AFBLC provides a forum in which leaders from a variety of fields—including research, technology, education, corporations, health, and government organizations—have the opportunity to expand their knowledge of best practices, refine leadership skills, identify inclusion practices that work, and share concerns and strategies.

We look forward to gathering with you again to explore the conference themes of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. Save the date for **May 1-3, 2022** and check the AFB website for registration details.

American Psychological Association:

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: Inclusive Language Guidelines

The APA has published a free document that details inclusive language practices. Maysa Akbar, PhD, ABPP Chief Diversity Officer offers this narrative about the guidelines, “As we strive to further infuse principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) into the fabric of society, those committed to effecting change must acknowledge language as a powerful tool that can draw us closer together or drive us further apart. Simply put, words matter. The words we use are key to creating psychologically safe, inclusive, respectful, and welcoming environments. These guidelines aim to raise awareness, guide learning, and support the use of culturally sensitive terms and phrases that center the voices and perspectives of those who are often marginalized or stereotyped. They also explain the origins for problematic terms and phrases and offer suitable alternatives or more contemporary replacements. This document will be flexible and iterative in nature, continuing to evolve as new terminology emerges or current language becomes obsolete. By embracing inclusive language and encouraging others to do the same, we firmly believe that we will not only communicate effectively with more people, but also better adapt to a diversifying society and globe.”

Check out the [APH Inclusive Language Guidelines document](#).



Equity, Diversity, and



Keeping the Promise

The U.S. Department of Education has launched a [Keeping the Promise](#) website to serve as a repository of resources for individuals, schools, and communities supporting Afghan newcomers and their educational goals. As part of Operation Allies Welcome, we recognize that there is an immediate and urgent need for providing high-quality, culturally responsive education to our Afghan guests — inclusive of primary, secondary, postsecondary, and adult education and English language learning.



This website contains educational materials, student and family engagement resources, fact sheets to ensure civil rights to education, policy documents, and general cultural and linguistic facts to help guide teachers, State Education Agencies (SEAs), Local Education Agencies (LEAs), Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), and other community-based education providers. Educators have a unique chance to make a major impact on the Afghan students and families' lives, and we hope that these resources will support you in welcoming our allies into your school community.

New submissions are welcome at KeepingthePromise@ed.gov.

Our Afghan allies and their families protected our troops, supported our diplomatic community, and served our country, we will now serve them with equitable, excellent education as we welcome them to our country.

We Want Your Feedback on CEC's New White Paper on Equitable Research Practices for Diverse Exceptional Learners

CEC issues white papers that provide an overview of a complex problem confronting the field. Recent events have confirmed for many and revealed to others how systemic racism differentially impacts students and families from culturally/linguistically and economically diverse backgrounds. For this reason, the CEC Project 20/20 Committee drafted a new white paper, "Responding Responsibly to Diverse Exceptional Learners in Research and Federally Funded Projects."



Please review the draft and submit your comments by Friday, March 4.

I Matter program for Youth Garners National Attention, Spanish-Language Webpage Launches

The U.S. Surgeon General issued an advisory this month calling attention to the youth mental health crisis in our country. Colorado's I Matter program, which provides youth with three free mental health sessions, was touted as an innovative use of telehealth to meet young people where they are.

This week the state's Office of Behavioral Health launched YoImportoColorado.org, I Matter's Spanish-language site to make this free service accessible to even more Coloradans. Youth may opt to schedule with a Spanish-speaking counselor if they prefer. We ask you to spread the word by sharing the social media graphics in our [digital toolkit](#) and by sending pictures of the colorful I Matter banners hanging in your community to Laura.Gabbay@state.co.us.

MARCH IS BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH!



Did you know...

- Brain injury is a leading cause of death and disability in the US.
- Based on prevalence rates, Colorado is only identifying about 30% of students who have long lasting educational needs caused by brain injuries. We can do better!
- Concussion Management and BrainSTEPS Teams assist in the identification of and support for students who have sustained a brain injury.

ALMOST *half* A MILLION KIDS

are treated in an emergency department each year for traumatic brain injury*, including concussion.

* alone or along with other injuries or conditions.

THAT'S MORE THAN 5,000 OF THE NATION'S LARGEST SCHOOL BUSES FILLED TO CAPACITY.

For more information & to access free resources & training:

www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-tbi

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

www.cde.state.co.us/healthandwellness/braininjury



COLORADO
Department of Education



BrainSTEPS CO



Brain Injury Alliance
COLORADO




Calendar of Events

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

- March** **Brain Injury Awareness Month**
- March 3** **TSBVI Outreach— Teaching a Child’s First Teacher (10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.)**
Contact: Kaycee Bennett at bennettk@tsbvi.edu
- March 3** **CSDB Parent Workshop– Zones of Regulation (5:00-6:00 p.m.)**
Contact: Cara Johnson at cjohnson@csdb.org
- 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 7** **Colorado Center for the Blind— 2022 Shark Dissection (10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.)**
Contact: Anahit LaBarre at 303-778-1130, x223, or alabarre@cocenter.org
- March 7** **TSBVI Outreach— Negotiation Skills for the Educational Professional (2:00 p.m.)**
Contact: Kaycee Bennett at bennettk@tsbvi.edu
- March 8** **Deaf-Blind Webinar Series – Supporting Consistent Interventions (3:30 to 5:30 p.m.)**
Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- March 8** **CSDB Parent Workshop– Child Sexual Abuse Prevention (5:00-6:00 p.m.)**
Contact: Cara Johnson at cjohnson@csdb.org
- March 9** **CSDB Board of Trustee Meeting - check CSDB website to determine Zoom or in-person**
Contact: www.csdb.org
- March 9** **Tri-State Autism Collaborative—2:30—3:30 p.m.**
Registration: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_X7Hr88ObTwK7pSQKToilZA
- March 10** **Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic—CSDB in Colorado Springs**
Contact: Debbie Haberkorn at dhaberkorn@csdb.org
- March 10** **CSDB Parent Workshop– Executive Functioning and Routines (5:00-6:00 p.m.)**
Contact: Cara Johnson at cjohnson@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
- March 21** **TSBVI Outreach— Getting the Lay of the Land: Transition from ECI to IDEA-Part B (2:00 p.m.)**
Contact: Kaycee Bennett at bennettk@tsbvi.edu
- March 28** **TSBVI Outreach— CHARGE Syndrome**
Contact: Kaycee Bennett at bennettk@tsbvi.edu
- April 1** **First Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00am AND 2:30-3:30pm**
Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org




Calendar of Events

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

April 6	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. <u>Registration:</u> https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
April 6	Vision Coalition - Virtual <u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
April 15	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting – 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Zoom <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
April 12	Deaf-Blind Webinar Series – <u>Registration</u> (3:30 to 5:30 p.m.) <u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
April 13	CSDB Board of Trustee Meeting - check CSDB website to determine Zoom or in-person <u>Contact:</u> www.csdb.org
April 20	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.—with Tom Theune, Wendy Stoltman, and Jim Olson <u>Registration:</u> https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
April 21	CDE O&M Seminar —virtual <u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony— Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
May 4	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. <u>Registration:</u> https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/e0248345af7c457fa5b6a7a668c5e347
May 6	First Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00am AND 2:30-3:30pm <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
May 10	Deaf-Blind Webinar Series – <u>Registration</u> (3:30 to 5:30 p.m.) <u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
May 11	CSDB Board of Trustee Meeting - check CSDB website to determine Zoom or in-person <u>Contact:</u> www.csdb.org
May 18	BVI Office Hours – 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. <u>Registration:</u> 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 <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
June 3	First Friday CIMC – 9:00-10:00am AND 2:30-3:30pm <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
June 17	Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting – 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m., Zoom <u>Contact:</u> Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
July 22 - 24	AER International Conference 2022 – in person/St. Louis, MO
August 30	End Date of READ Act Teacher Training Requirement <u>For training options, go to:</u> http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/teacher-training <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>.



Building Authentic and Meaningful Communication Strategies

Presenter: Rachael Langley, MA, CCC-SLP, AAC Specialist

March 9, 2022 from 3:30 – 4:30 pm CT/2:30 – 3:30 pm MT
with Q&A to follow

Description:

We know that learners with communication challenges have thoughts, opinions, and ideas of their own. How do we give them the tools to tell us what they're thinking? This session will talk about tools and strategies to support early communication skills, including how to begin using AAC (augmentative/alternative communication).

During this hour, we will address the following questions:

1. What is the role of the communication partner in early AAC use?
2. How can a parent/teacher/therapist coach someone to use AAC while still letting the AAC user's thoughts and opinions shine through?
3. How does prompting fit into learning AAC? Are there other strategies besides prompting that we could use?

Through answering these questions, we will focus on supporting authentic and meaningful communication that is relevant to our learners. Resources for continued learning will also be provided.

Who should attend:

Administrators, general education teachers, specialist teachers, family members, special education professionals, and related service providers.

Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_X7Hr88ObTwk7pSQKToiZA

Presenter Information:

Rachael Langley is a speech-language pathologist working as an Augmentative/Alternative Communication (AAC) Consultant in Michigan. Her 19-year career has focused primarily on supporting students with complex communication needs. A two-time graduate of Michigan State University, Rachael is one of the founders and organizers of the #TalkingAAC Conference, a conference focused specifically on AAC learning. Rachael has presented at local, state, and national conferences. She enjoys creating graphics and other materials related to AAC implementation.



This material was developed under a grant from the Colorado Department of Education. The content does not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

The content of this material was developed under an agreement from the Federal Department of Education to the Kansas Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Kansas Department of Education or the Federal Government. TASN Autism and Tertiary Behavior Supports does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age in its programs and activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Deputy Director, Keystone Learning Services, 500 E. Sunflower, Ozawie, KS 66070, [785-876-2214](tel:785-876-2214).

The contents of this material were developed under a grant from the Nebraska Department of Education, IDEA parts B and C from the U.S. Department of Education. However, this content does not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.



Orientation & Mobility

Current and Potential Tele-Visual Rehabilitation & Visual Functions' Assessment

We have been asked to disseminate the survey. It is an optional survey for you to complete. The survey looks at the professionals' experience with providing remote "Low Vision Assessment" & "Tele-Visual Rehabilitation".

If you are an Orientation and Mobility Specialist, please select the category of "Other" when identifying your profession and enter that you are an O&M.



Cortical & Cerebral Visual Impairment

Perkin's School for the Blind CVI Now

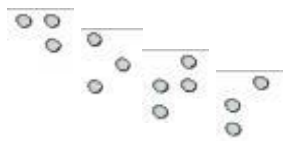
CVI Now is a go-to source for trusted answers and resources about CVI. Developed by Perkins School for the Blind, CVI Now fosters community and shared connection, and empowers families with the CVI knowledge, guidance, and tools you and your child need to succeed.

The CVI Center at Perkins is developing a new, comprehensive CVI assessment system that reflects the most cutting-edge research and a whole-child focused approach, providing the best possible data and support for all children with CVI.

The Perkins CVI Protocol will be a digital assessment system and educational roadmap for the whole child. The CVI Protocol fills an important need in the field—it is a tool that supports every child, regardless of their manifestation of CVI, and teaches every professional, regardless of their prior knowledge of CVI.

This digital tool offers more than just a functional vision assessment—it will create a series of reports to help parents, TVIs, school systems, and medical professionals understand and meet the unique needs of each individual child with CVI.

The Perkins CVI Protocol is in development. Stay tuned for information about the release of the various elements



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

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

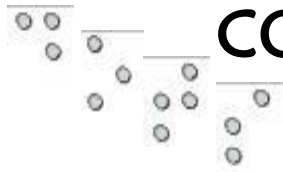
The Practice Test items have been posted on the braille competency webpage—that information and other resources can be found at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_guidedocs.

For summer 2022 assistance, please be in touch with Tanni first to secure an available proctor / mentor.

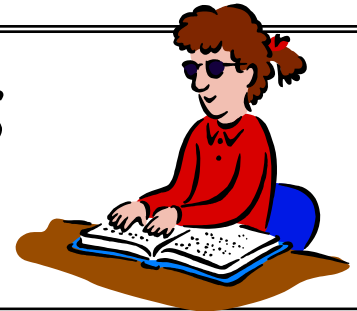
Braillewriter Repair

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





CONNECTING THE DOTS



Tactile Graphics Instruction Survey

The American Printing House for the Blind is asking for TVIs to complete a survey on the topic of Tactile Graphics Instruction. If you have a moment to share your expertise, it would be most appreciated. The goals of the project are to:

- A. gather input from the blindness field about tactile graphics literacy;
- B. increase instructors' comfort with tactile graphics with the expectation that this will improve student tactile graphics literacy, and
- C. create and share instructional resources of some type, for instructors and/or students.

Go to: [Tactile Graphics Instruction Survey](#)

UEB Technical Versus Nemeth Braille Codes

The Colorado Department of Education does not dictate a math code for students with visual impairment, including blindness. 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.



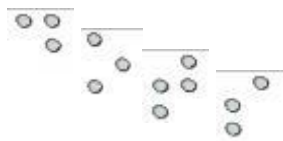
Braille Readers are Leaders

The American Action Fund for blind children and adults has launched this year's braille readers are leaders contest. The contest is open with categories for children and adults. Sign up today and try your hands. Put your fingers to work. [Braille Readers are Leaders details and signup](#).

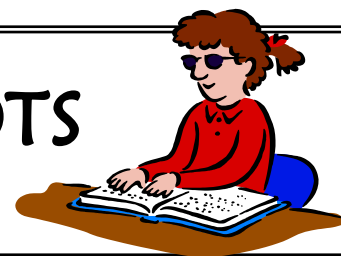
Braille Readers in the News

Meet Laura Wolk, a Face of Braille. Wolk has been a braille reader since the age of 3 and is the first blind woman to clerk for the Supreme Court. Read more about her braille story and how you can support braille literacy for blind children and adults.

[#MyBrailleStory](#) [#FacesOfBraille](#) [#Braille](#) [#BrailleIsLiteracy](#)



CONNECTING THE DOTS



Attend 2022 NFB BELL® Academy In-Home Edition: Applications Now Open!

Enhance Braille and Nonvisual Skills

The National Federation of the Blind is offering one three-week virtual program of the NFB BELL Academy In-Home Edition this summer to prepare blind and low-vision children to grow into confident and independent blind people by enhancing their education. Options are available for beginner, intermediate, and advanced students July 18 through August 5, 2022.

Additionally, in-person NFB BELL Academies will also be offered in a city near you!

Receive Braille and other fun materials for lessons. Connect with experienced teachers. Build relationships with other blind students and mentors.

About NFB BELL

NFB BELL Academy, an annual summer program, is appropriate for blind and low-vision children, ages 4-12, who:

- Do not receive enough Braille and nonvisual skills instruction in school
- Could benefit from more Braille exposure over the summer
- Would enjoy connecting with blind role models



In person locations coming soon!

Apply Today

Take advantage of this opportunity for your child to connect with blind role models.

Limited space is available. Learn more and apply now! <https://nfb.org/programs-services/nfb-bell-academy>

Help NBP Get Braille Across America This Spring!

Join our Braille Across America team! Starting on NBP's 95th birthday, take on the Braille Across America Challenge and help us carry our braille baton and show and share with everyone why braille is so important! This virtual challenge begins on March 17th and ends on April 18th. You can walk, run, bike, roll the distance of a marathon or two, or three, over the course of 33 days while raising a minimum of \$262 so we can produce more braille books! You can set your own goal! Walk, run bike, or roll with your child, mother or father, as a family, with work colleagues, friends, and form a team! You can also use a treadmill or stationary bike. [Join the team here!](#)

Last year's team logged more than 10,300 miles, traversing the country from Boston to California four times! Help us double that distance! Participation will include a Braille Across America Team shirt, a medal, fitness tips and personal and team fundraising web pages as well as virtual gatherings, play lists for the challenge, private face book page and lots of fun!

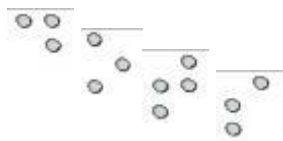
Last year, we had 32 states represented, as well as Japan. Let's get all 50 states participating this year, Canada and beyond! Help us make as many people aware of braille and the power of reading!

[Watch this video to see what last year's participants have to say about the challenge!](#) (Braille readers, once you click on the video, select "More Options" and then "Play.") [Then, head over to register \(or make a donation\) here!](#)

Thank you!

Nicole Kosar, Annual Giving & Event Coordinator





CONNECTING THE DOTS



A Study on Investigating the Community Experiences of Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments in Creating Math and Science Tactile Graphics

Hello Professionals,

My name is Jinseok Park, a doctoral student from the Department of Psychoeducational and Disability Studies at the University of Arizona. Dr. Sunggye Hong, my academic advisor, and I are recruiting 10 certified Teachers of students with Visual Impairments (TVIs) for my dissertation study to investigate the teacher community experiences in creating math and science tactile graphics.

There will be no monetary or direct compensation for your participation. However, as an appreciation for the time and effort to participate in the study, you will receive a \$100 merchant gift card if you complete all the activities in this study.

Eligible teachers must:

- 1) be math/science teachers in schools for the blind or itinerant teachers working with students with VI
- 2) have a middle and high school student with VI who uses the sense of touch as a primary learning media and needs tactile graphics for math and science learning
- 3) be able to participate in this study fully online using emails, virtual meetings, and discussion groups.

If you participate in this study, you will join these activities as follows:

1. 5 Online meetings via Zoom to brainstorm ideas and share resources for tactile graphics
2. Creation of up to two sets of math and science tactile graphics
3. Self- and peer-evaluation of your graphics quality using a rubric
4. Revisions of your creations based on the evaluation results
5. 2 online interviews via Zoom to share your experiences
6. Online archiving of your tactile graphics

Age, gender, and ethnicity data may be collected as documenting demographics; however, this study will not use these characteristics as variables.

If you want to participate, please sign up for this online [CONSENT FORM](#). [RECRUITMENT LETTER](#)

If you need more information on this study, please contact Jinseok Park at jinseokpark@email.arizona.edu to talk more.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The University of Arizona reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

Best wishes,

Jinseok Park

Doctoral Candidate
Department of Disability and Psychoeducational Studies
College of Education—University of Arizona
1430 E 2nd St, Tucson, AZ 85721
(520) 328-7649



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!

Early Graduate Innovation Program Pilot to Launch in January

The Colorado Department of Higher Education announced the launch of the Early High School Graduate Innovation Pilot Program, which will provide funding to low-income high school students who graduate early to pay for post-secondary education and training programs, including college and workplace learning programs like internships or apprenticeships. Participating schools will receive 25% of the average state per-pupil revenue for each participating student and are encouraged to apply these funds to counseling and support activities for potential and participating early graduates.

Five schools, districts or groups of schools will be selected from the applicant pool by the Commission on Higher Education. The application period will open in early January and close in mid-February. CDHE is also partnering with Colorado Succeeds on the Path4Ward initiative, which will provide application and implementation support to interested schools and districts. [Check the website for additional information, including an upcoming applicant webinar and staff availability for questions and application feedback.](#)

For More Information, Contact: Jack Wolfink, Colorado Department of Higher Education Email: jack.wolfink@dhe.state.co.us

Employment Matters for Youth and Young Adults New Starting Date!!!

Please note this important update on the 5-week job seeker skills training "Employment Matter for Youth and Young Adults" pilot program. We have decided to push the start date back to February 1, 2022 to March 1, 2022. Here is the information regarding the pilot training program and a link to register. Please feel free to contact Michele Reed if you have any questions about the training program or how to participate in DVR Pre-Employment Transition Services.

Employment Matters for Youth and Young Adults: BLVS/Pre-Employment Transition Services will be collaborating with ObjectiveED to pilot "Employment Matters for Youth and Young Adults". This is a 5-week job seeker skills training course for students 15-21. This curriculum will include 5 in-person/online (hybrid model) sessions which will include lively discussions, activities, and homework to discover skills to develop a work-readiness profile and search for that desired employment opportunity. ObjectiveEd has provided a gamified "Choose your own Adventure" for students to reinforce work-readiness skills, soft skills, and decision-making skills that are presented during the in person/online sessions. We are very excited about this pilot project. Students interested in participating in this project must have a youth program case or a DVR case open in Colorado. The training course will start on March 1, 2022 4-5:00 p.m. and end on April 1, 2022 4-5:00 p.m.

If interested or need more information, please contact Michele Reed at michele.reed@state.us.co or call 303-866-3512. To learn more and [register for the pilot program.](#)

Second Annual Colorado Collaborative Youth Summit

The Second Annual Colorado Collaborative Youth Summit is scheduled for Friday, April 22 to Saturday, April 23. The summit will bring together young people from across Colorado for a two-day virtual conference with the goal of connecting and inspiring all youth to embrace leadership roles in their communities by providing an open and inclusive space to further expand their knowledge and skills.

All Colorado youths, ages 13-26, are invited to apply to present at the summit. Submissions will be accepted on a rolling basis, with priority given to submissions received before Monday, March 7. Proposals for presentations by youth-only teams, as well as youth-adult teams will be accepted. No adult-only proposals will be accepted.

[See the Collaborative Youth Summit flyer for more information on applying to be a presenter. \(PDF\)](#)

For More Information, Contact: Alyson Howe Phone: 303-724-4585 Email: allyson.howe@cuanschutz.edu

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.

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

Life Lessons at the Turkey Trot

By Jo Elizabeth Pinto

My eight-year-old daughter Sarah inspired my socks off yesterday. Actually, I was wearing fur-lined snow boots, but she inspired me just the same. I went to watch her participate in her school's annual Turkey Trot with the rest of her third-grade class.

Fortunately, the storm from the day before had subsided. It was still nippy out, and the ground was slippery with slightly melting snow, but the sun shone brightly.

"I won't win, Mom," Sarah had predicted glumly that morning. "I'm the slowest girl in the third grade."

"Just have fun and try your best," I had encouraged her as she left for school.

The race started, and my daughter was soon well behind the pack. She had left the winter jacket she usually wore at a friend's house. The one she had on was a hand-me-down from an older cousin. It was too big for her, and the hood wouldn't quit flopping over her eyes. She had also forgotten to put on gloves that morning. I had let her borrow mine before the race. They were too large for her hands, so she kept pushing the hood out of her face with these hopelessly floppy leather gloves that fit her like swim flippers.

I stood at the finish line as the runners came in. Soon, my daughter was left on the race course--alone. My heart sank as the seconds ticked by, lengthening into a minute, then two. A teacher went out to walk the last of the course with Sarah. I could have hugged that woman. At least my baby wouldn't have to cross the finish line all by herself under the stares of her classmates.

Finally the dean said, "We have one more friend to cheer on."

The entire third grade began to chant in unison, "Sarah! Sarah! Sarah! Sarah!"

I held out my arms, and my little girl rushed into them, burying her face in my purple coat to hide her humiliation.

"They're all cheering for you!" I told her.

"Because I came in last," she whispered.

"No!" I turned her around to face the other students. "They're cheering for you because you kept on walking. You could have given up. You could have quit, but you didn't. You kept right on walking. That means a lot."

I gave my little girl one more bear hug, and sent her off with the rest of her class to finish the school day. No more fuss. She inspired the socks off me. But at the same time, I hope she learned some valuable lessons about perseverance, about tenacity, about acting with dignity when victory doesn't come her way. Because to tell the truth, life will hand her more opportunities to practice perseverance than to take victory laps. She'll need to remember how to keep on walking when she's the only one left on the course, when the ground is slippery and her hood is falling in her eyes, when the way is long and lonely. As her blind mom, I know a thing or two about that. But blindness doesn't give me a corner on that market. Tenacity and fortitude are life skills any mom should be more than ready to pass along to her daughter when the chance arises.

This story appears in Jo's mothering memoir, "Daddy Won't Let Mom Drive the Car: True Tales of Parenting in the Dark." The book, full of similar lighthearted vignettes and a few more serious ones, is designed to show that while blindness might alter a few everyday logistics of parenthood, it doesn't change what it means to be a family. It's available in audio, Kindle, and paperback formats on Amazon or by visiting Jo's Website at <https://www.brightsideauthor.com>.



just for PARENTS

Participate in a University of Colorado Research Study: Interview and Diary Study with Visually Impaired Children and their Families

The University of Colorado Boulder is conducting a research study to understand what literacy practices look like in bilingual families who have visually impaired children.

For this study, the researchers are recruiting the following groups:

- Families with at least one child (grades K-8) who is blind OR low vision OR reads Braille OR uses a screen reader OR reads large print
- We are recruiting any members of the family who live in the home with the child
- At least one parent (age 18 or above) must participate alongside their child

The study has three parts. The first part is an interview that will take place at your home. If you prefer, we can conduct the interview over Zoom. You can install the free Zoom software on most computers, tablets, and mobile phones. Instructions for installing Zoom are available here: <https://zoom.us/download>.

The interview will take approximately 2 hours. During the study, the researchers will ask you questions about language and literacy practices at home. We will also ask you to show books and technology they have at home. The study will be video, and audio recorded, and the researchers will take notes.

In the second part, we will give you a journaling tool to fill out with index cards and sticky notes. The journal will have prompts relating to different activities. For 2 weeks, we will ask that your family fills out the journal to reflect on different activities you completed that week. We will send you reminders via text twice a day to remind you to fill out the journal. We only expect you to spend about 10-15 minutes each day writing and discussing the prompts with your family. We anticipate this activity to be simple and not too intensive.

Finally, in the third part, we will conduct a final interview. We will ask you questions about your responses to the journal. This will take approximately 2 hours.

Your family will receive \$150 as compensation for this study after the third part (1 person in the family will be given a gift card). If you choose to leave the study during part 2, we will still provide you half compensation (\$75). If you fail to fill out the journal at least once a day, we will provide you half compensation. However, we will offer the option of extending the journaling for 2 more weeks, and if consistent, you will receive the full \$150.

If you have questions about participating in this research or would like to participate in this study, please contact Vinitha Gadiraju, Ph. D. student (email or text is preferable).

Email: vinitha.gadiraju@colorado.edu

Cell Phone: [\(503\)-467-1599](tel:503-467-1599)

Thank you!

just for PARENTS

Participa en un estudio de investigación de la Universidad de Colorado Entrevista y Estudio Diario con Niños con Discapacidad Visual y Sus Familias

¡Hola! La Universidad de Colorado Boulder está realizando un estudio de investigación para comprender cómo son las prácticas de alfabetización en familias bilingües que tienen niños con discapacidad visual.

Para este estudio, los investigadores están reclutando los siguientes grupos:

- Familias con al menos un niño (grados K-8) que es ciego o tiene baja visión o lee Braille o utiliza un lector de pantalla o lee letra grande.
- Estamos reclutando a cualquier miembro de la familia que viva en el hogar con el niño.
- Al menos uno de los padres (de 18 años o más) debe participar junto a su hijo.

El estudio consta de tres partes. La primera parte es una entrevista que tendrá lugar en su domicilio. Si lo prefiere, podemos realizar la entrevista por Zoom. Puede instalar el software Zoom de forma gratuita en la mayoría de las computadoras, tabletas y teléfonos móviles. Las instrucciones para instalar Zoom están disponibles aquí: <https://zoom.us/download>.

La entrevista durará aproximadamente 2 horas. Durante el estudio, los investigadores le harán preguntas sobre las prácticas lingüísticas y de alfabetización en el hogar. También le pediremos que muestre los libros y la tecnología que tienen en casa. El estudio será grabado en video y audio y los investigadores tomarán notas.

En la segunda parte, les daremos un diario para que lo llenen con fichas y notas adhesivas. El diario tendrá indicaciones relacionadas con diferentes actividades. Durante dos semanas, le pediremos a su familia que llene el diario con notas adhesivas reflexionando sobre las diferentes actividades realizadas en la semana. Le enviaremos recordatorios por mensaje de texto dos veces al día para recordarle que complete el diario. Solo esperamos que dedique entre 10 y 15 minutos cada día a escribir y analizar las instrucciones con su familia. Anticipamos que esta actividad sea simple y no demasiado intensiva.

Por último, en la tercera parte, realizaremos una entrevista final. Le haremos preguntas sobre sus respuestas en el diario. La entrevista durará aproximadamente 2 horas.

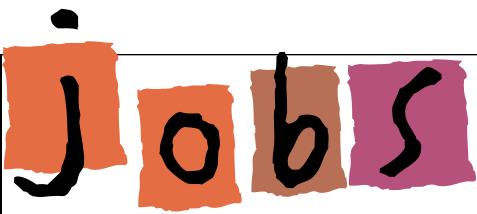
Su familia recibirá \$150 como compensación por este estudio después de la tercera parte (una persona de la familia recibirá una tarjeta de regalo). Si decide abandonar el estudio durante la segunda parte, aún, le proporcionaremos la mitad de la compensación (\$75). Si no completa el diario al menos una vez al día, le proporcionaremos la mitad de la compensación. Sin embargo, ofreceremos la opción de prolongar el diario por dos semanas más y, si es constante, recibirá los \$150 completos.

Si tiene preguntas sobre la participación en esta investigación o desea participar en este estudio, póngase en contacto con Vinitha Gadiraju, estudiante de doctorado, (preferimos correo electrónico o texto).

Email: vinitha.gadiraju@colorado.edu

Teléfono celular: [\(503\)-467-1599](tel:503-467-1599)

¡Gracias!



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](#).
- ◆ **1 FTE TVI (Home Visit focus)** - Anchor Center for Blind Children. For more information, please reach out to Melinda Carter at mcarter@anchorcenter.org.

Across Metro, Norther, and Western Regions

- ◆ **Contact Work with Flexible Hours**—A Shared Vision. For more information about working in many areas of the state with the 0-2 population, please contact Steve Lindauer at slindauer@asharedvision.org.

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 Ronda May at rmay@d49.org

Eastern Region

- ◆ **O&M Specialist Contract Work**—East Central BOCES—Contact Beverly Bragg at (719) 740-0544 or bevb@ecboces.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 want to be added to CDE's contract list, please be in touch with Tanni at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us.





colorado connections



Braille Competency News

- ◆ Hats off to **Evan MacDonald** from CSDB and **Brittany Snow** from Aurora School District for earning their CDE Braille Certificates! Hats off to **Will Reynolds** and **Abby Horner** for earning their CDE Braille Renewal Certificates. Even more hats in the air to the following individuals who have earned braille renewal clock hours: **Melissa, French, Sarah Goodfellow, Jeanine Holmes, Abby Horner, and Will Reynolds.**
- ◆ Thanks to the CDE braille proctors **Chris Maynard, Brenda Shepard, and Julie Wetzstein!**

Professional Development Contributions

- ◆ We thank **Dr. Susan Bruce** for her presentation on January 11th on the topic of Classic Literacy Lessons. Dr. Bruce is a premier expert in research in deaf-blindness. She has truly been one of the top people in the country validating our instructional strategies with this population. TVIs in attendance included: **Tanni Anthony, Elsa D'Angelo, Donna Keale, Beth Myers, Sara Noel, Jim Olson, Mike Plansker, and Wendy Stoltman.**
- ◆ A great debt of gratitude to **Dr. Frances Mary D'Andrea** for her time with us across five sessions of Weaving the Strands: The Science of Reading and Students with Visual Impairment. A huge thank you to all who attending one or more, even all five of the sessions. It was a big pivot from the originally planned in-person training and it needed everyone's flexibility. Almost every administrative unit with a TVI personnel attended some or all of the trainings. If you were not able to attend, there will be some follow-up work done over the summer to preserve some of the excellent content on the CDE website.
- ◆ Thank you to the **UNC Office of Extended Studies** who works very quickly to be able to offer the Weaving the Strands course for a university credit. So glad it worked out as we had 8 people take advantage of this offer.
- ◆ A big thanks to Drs. MaryAnn Demchak and Chevonne Sutter for their presentation on February 8th on the topic of *Systematic Instruction for Students with Severe Disabilities (Part 2): Constant Time Delay* TVIs in attendance included: **Paula Landry, Janis Mountford, Mike Plansker, Sara Noel, and Wendy Stoltman.** Interveners **Catherine Bivens** and **Laura Rodriguez** were also in attendance.
- ◆ Thanks to **Wendy Stoltman** and **Dr. Tom Theune** for their January 19th BVI Office Hours presentation on Functional Visual Field Assessment. In attendance were **Deb Andrews, Tanni Anthony, Jill Bookwalter, Danielle Burden, Sally Burch, Mary Chambers, Nancy Cozart, Jayme Cusimano, Elsa D'Angelo, Jennifer Holt, Ann Marie Jansen, Carol Jordan, Jeannie Lei, Kaitlin Lombardi, Lori Mattick, Brenna Moser, Beth Myers, Sara Noel, Jim Olson, Melissa Shular, Angela Sims, Edie Smith, Wendy Stoltman, Tom Theune, and Hanna Waldman.**
- ◆ An informal but fun conversational group gathered for the February 16th BVI Office Hours to chat, share resources, and give feedback to CDE. In attendance were **Tanni Anthony, Elsa D'Angelo, Kaitlin Lombardi, Sara Noel, and Wendy Stoltman.**





colorado connections

Professional Learning Highlights

- ◆ **Tanni Anthony** was pleased to be a part of the February 10-12, 2022 Texas Focus: A Well-Planned Journey to Implementation: What's After Evaluation? Her presentation was on *Play as an Assessment and Programmatic Vehicle in the Early Years*. The content of this virtual conference was excellent and we hope to bring some of these presentation to Colorado in the next school year.

Personnel Updates

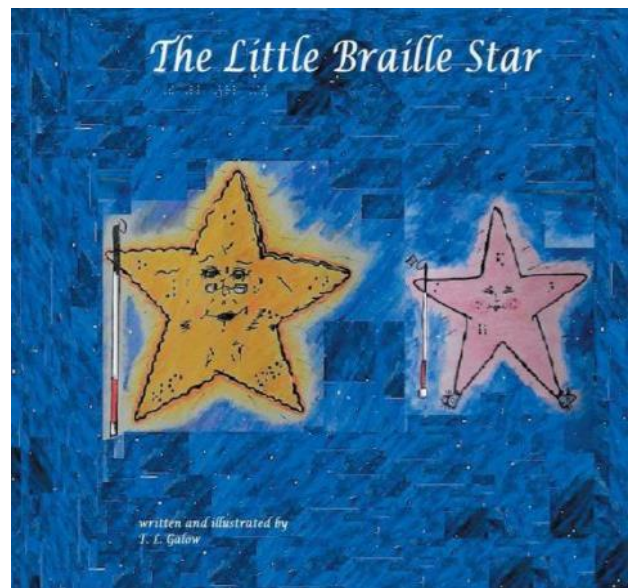
- ◆ On January 3, 2022, Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) welcomed a new Director of Outreach Programs, **Cheryl Austin**. Cheryl comes to CSDB from Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI) in Austin, Texas, with experience as an administrator in the Residential department and a teacher (TVI) in both the Residential and Short-Term Programs departments. Prior to her time at TSBVI, Cheryl worked as a TVI in a public elementary school in Dover, Massachusetts, and held several roles at Perkins School for the Blind. Special education is a second career for Cheryl, after nearly 15 years in the field of food and nutrition, with positions in hospital food service management, community food assistance programs, and clinical and public health research. Cheryl holds three Master's degrees, in Public Health, Medical Nutrition Sciences, and Special Education-Visual Impairment, and maintains her credentials as a Registered Dietitian. She now lives on the Westside of Colorado Springs with her husband and 6-year-old Lhasa Apso, Lola, and is ready to experience all that the CSDB community and the state of Colorado have to offer.

Other Great News!

- ◆ We are so proud of **Mike Pillow** who has graduated from the Missouri State University Program with a Master of Education in Special Education Blindness and Low Vision. Woo hoo and good for you! And for us!
- ◆ Wow – so great to have such talent in our midst. Congratulations to **Taryn Galow** for her book called *A Little Braille Star*. Taryn is an educational brailist with Denver Public Schools.

The book is about Little Braille Star, who is having a hard time shining, learns to navigate the night sky using a cane and learns to read Braille when she bumps into an older star quite by mistake.

[Check it out!](#)





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