

Editor:

Tanni L. Anthony, Ph.D.
CDE State Consultant on
Blindness/Low Vision

CO Department of Education
Exceptional Student Services
1560 Broadway, Suite 1100
Denver, CO 80202

(303) 503-4647 (cell)

E-mail:

anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

KEEPING IN TOUCH!

A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers
of Colorado Children with Visual Impairment, Including Blindness
January—February 2023



All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten

by Robert Fulghum

ALL I REALLY NEED TO KNOW about how to live and what to do and how to be I learned in kindergarten. Wisdom was not at the top of the graduate-school mountain, but there in the sandpile at Sunday School. These are the things I learned:

Share everything.

Play fair.

Don't hit people.

Put things back where you found them.

Clean up your own mess.

Don't take things that aren't yours.

Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody.

Wash your hands before you eat.

Flush.

Warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.

Live a balanced life - learn some and think some
and draw and paint and sing and dance and play
and work every day some.

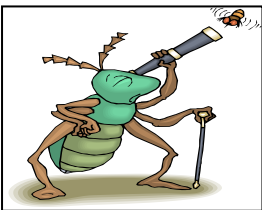
Take a nap every afternoon.

When you go out into the world, watch out for traffic,
hold hands, and stick together.

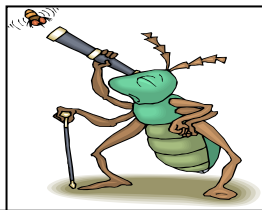
Be aware of wonder.

Table of Contents January—February 2023

All I Really Need to Know	1	EDI	18
Low Vision Evaluation Clinics	2	Calendar of Events	20
Colorado Deaf-Blind Project News	3	Connecting the Dots	24
CAER	6	Transition Information	27
Check it Out	7	Just for Parents	30
Resources and Materials	12	Jobs	32
CDE Happenings	14	Colorado Connections	33



LOW VISION NEWS



Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Schedule

Clinic	Clinic Date	Due Date for Paperwork	Site Coordinator
Metro LVE Clinic	February 22-24, 2023	Tuesday, February 7, 2023	Karin Hensel

Low Vision Awareness Month

February is low vision awareness month! Thanks to Perkins school for the blind for these 4 ways to make your social posts accessible to folks with blindness/visual impairment: Low vision is a condition that can be caused by eye disease in which visual acuity is 20/70 or poorer in the better-seeing eye and cannot be corrected or improved with regular eyeglasses, surgery, or medical treatments.

And now the tips:



1. Ensure your images and text have high **#ColorContrast** for readability



2. Font choice matters: sans-serif fonts are the best, and avoid looping and swirling fonts.



3. Use **#CamelCase** by capitalizing the first letter of each word in your **#Hashtags**



4. Include **#AltText** or **#ImageDescriptions** in all of your posts with imagery.

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.



We are actively working on completing the grant proposal for 23-28! If you would like to write a letter of support, please let us know! The proposal is due March 13, 2023.

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 Family Specialist contractor (**Cindy Colwell**) on board with the project.

Be in the know about our monthly trainings, intervener support, parent workshops and networking opportunities, and the June 2023 Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness! Also, 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 The December 1, 2022 Child Count Forms was sent out to key contact personnel in early December to identify all learners, ages birth through 21 years with combined vision and hearing loss. Your time, and attention to detail is most appreciated! Children on the Child Count are eligible for free technical assistance from the project. As you identify new 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! Child Count updates forms are due back to CDE by March 15, 2023.

2022-23 Webinar Series: The last webinars of this school year will be offered from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. on February 22, and March 29th.

We hope you will join us to learn more about how to identify and support children and youth with combined vision and hearing loss project.



Colorado Deaf-Blind Project News

Intervener Training

The Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project (aka the CO Deaf-Blind Project) offers intervener training and mentoring to provide support throughout the intervener certification process.

This program provides a wonderful opportunity for individuals who would like to receive intervener training, and to obtain it free of charge if they are working with a student who is registered on the CO Deaf-Blind Child Count. The program is designed to provide the background knowledge needed for working with students who are deafblind and leads to National Intervener Certification. For more information, please contact Jessica Meisel at Meisel_j@cde.co.state.us



Free Technical Assistance for Learners with Deaf-Blindness

Technical assistance is the term that field uses to mean “support” or “information” for individuals providing support to children and youth (ages 0-21) with deafblindness. This might be families of children and youth who are deaf-blind, school personnel, and agencies providing services to such children and youth.

Technical assistance may also include:

- personalized on-site consultation with family members / early intervention agency staff / school staff
- in-service training customized to the team’s needs
- workshops sponsored by the project across the state
- family support service, such as Parent Retreats, coffee hours, family outings etc.

We are here to support you! **To request a school or home visit**, complete the Technical Assistance Request Form located [here](https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/techassistrqst): <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/techassistrqst>

Return the form by fax to 303-866-3808 or email Gina Herrera at Herrera_G@cde.state.co.us. You can also call Gina at 303-866-6605. Or fill out our new Google Form for Technical Assistance located at <https://forms.gle/FAWsSVo2itikrtLR6>

New Resource on Deaf-Blindness for School Administrators



School administrators play an important role in supporting the identification and referral of children who are deaf-blind. **Identification of Children with Deaf-Blindness: Resources for School Administrators**, by Deborah A. Ziegler, provides information to help school administrators increase their knowledge of deaf-blindness and strategies they can use to ensure that children with deaf-blindness are identified, referred, and receive appropriate services.

SAVE the DATE



COLORADO
Department of Education

2022 - 2023 DEAF-BLIND WEBINAR SERIES

The Colorado Deaf-Blind Project is pleased to announce a series of webinars that will be offered once a month throughout the 2022-2023 school year. **Time for all webinars: 3:30 -5:30 p.m.**

- **January 24, 2023** Topic Setting for the Early Communicator with Megan Mogan
- **February 8, 2023** Student-Led IEPs with Donna Carpenter
- **February 22, 2023** Tactile Strategies
- **March 29, 2023** Tactile Sign Language with Linda Alsop

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.

For questions regarding registration, please contact Roberta Curtis at curtis_r@cde.state.co.us 

- **January 25, 2023**
- **February 8, 2023**
- **February 22, 2023**
- **March 29, 2023**

REGISTER
NOW!!

Please be aware that:

- It is a policy in the Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) that all training registrations must be closed 2 weeks prior to the event. This is deadline is in place to allow proper time to meet all the conference/meeting logistical needs.

For any questions regarding content/topics, please reach out to :

 Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

 Gina Herrera at herrera_g@cde.state.co.us



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



AER Town Hall Meeting

The AER Town Hall is now scheduled for February 23, 2023, at 7:00 pm (eastern).

Join us as we discuss the current status of our membership, the new Journal, our strategic planning process, and more!
Please register by clicking the link.
We look forward to seeing you then!

[Register Here!](#)



AER Orientation and Mobility Division

The Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Division of AER is now accepting applications for the 2023 Donald Blasch Scholarship through March 10th, 2023.

AER's O&M Division presents an annual scholarship competition for students enrolled in an AER-approved O&M program. The scholarship recognizes the vital contributions of the late Donald Blasch to the profession of O&M during his long tenure at Western Michigan University.

Individuals selected for the scholarship receive an unrestricted award of \$1,000. Two scholarships are awarded each year.

The deadline for receiving applications for the Blasch Scholarship is March 10th, 2023.

All O&M students enrolled in AER-accredited programs are encouraged to apply.

For questions, contact Margaret Winn, Chair of the Blasch Scholarship Committee, BlaschScholarship@gmail.com

2023 Donald Blasch Scholarship Application



The Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER), is excited to announce that the first issue of our new practitioner-focused journal—*The New RE:view* (TNR) is now available to you!

Please visit <https://meridian.allenpress.com/the-new-review> to read the first issue now. The first two issues of TNR will be open access and free to everyone. Subsequent issues will be complimentary to AER members as a benefit to their association membership and are available through the AER website.

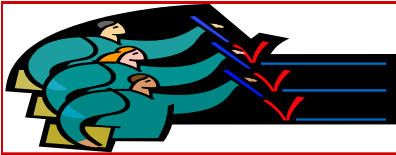
The New RE:view (TNR) offers a forum for professionals who provide education and rehabilitation services in this specialized field. TNR's purpose is to share practice-focused insights, personal teaching experiences, and research findings. Through a broad range of full-length articles and shorter pieces, TNR offers new opportunities to share promising instructional techniques, applications, and strategies. The new journal is intended for professionals, people with visual impairments, their families, and anyone who works within the field of visual impairment.

Authors are encouraged to provide specific information that will permit their work to be applied by other practitioners and researchers. Through a rigorous peer-review process, TNR fulfills its commitment to align practice with theory and research and to assist practitioners in strengthening their services to individuals who are blind or have low vision.

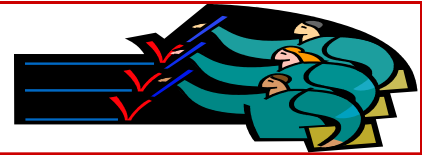
TNR accepts manuscripts submitted electronically year-round through the Editorial Manager portal at <https://www.editorialmanager.com/thenewreview/>.

If you are not currently an AER member and want to learn more about membership, please visit our [website](#) or email michele@aerbvi.org.

[Access TNR Here](#)



CHECK IT OUT!



VIRTUAL CATE 2023

Conference for Assistive Technology and Education

June 5-6

Registration is now open!



Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering (CIDE)
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, DESIGN AND COMPUTING
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER | ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS



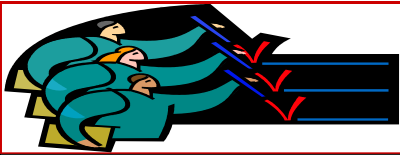
The 2023 Virtual Conference for Assistive Technology and Education (CATE) will be held on **June 5 - 6, 2023**. Learn more by visiting the [CATE Webpage](#). Registration and schedule are coming soon!

Take a sneak peek at our workshops and breakout sessions:

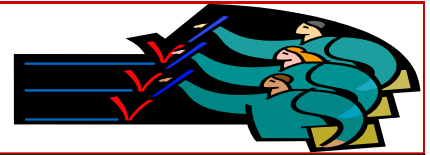
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Positioning to Optimize Function and Determining and Optimizing Access
- Make Stuff and Love People, Part 2: New Tools, Materials and Techniques
- Mission Possible: Robots Provide Inclusive School Experiences for Homebound Students
- AAC and Gestalt Language Processing
- Building Capacity through Effective Professional Development
- Teaching the Swipe Generation: Carefully Curating Apps for Early Childhood
- AAC Partner Training: Systematic Instruction for School Teams
- The Next Generation of Environment Control and Home Automation
- Prepared not Scared: Equipping AAC User to Discuss Personal and Body Safety
- A Different Model for AAC Evaluation
- Thinking Outside the Classroom: AAC & Social Skills in the Post-Secondary Environment
- Gadget & Gizmos to Support Students with Learning Challenges
- and more...

Add the event to your calendar:

[Google Calendar](#) | [ICS](#)



CHECK IT OUT!



Conversations on Literacy: Strategies for Engaging Children with BVI and Additional Disabilities

Organized by Getting In Touch With Literacy

Our next virtual conversation is:

Monday, March 27, 2023, from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. (Eastern Time)

This seventh virtual "Conversations on Literacy: Content and Connections" will be a conversation with Dr. Nicole Johnson-Mest and Dr. Amy Parker on **Literacy Strategies for Children with Visual Impairments and Additional Disabilities including Deafblindness**.

Join Nicole and Amy as they discuss strategies to engage children who have visual impairments and additional disabilities including deafblindness in literacy activities. Evidence based interventions will be discussed along with resources available to teachers, families, and students. The conversation will focus on sustainable, inclusive routines for children to develop literacy skills.

Important Information about the Virtual Conversations

- Tickets are required to attend the virtual conversations. Cost per ticket is \$30.00. **Each ticket allows access for up to two people.** Feel free to invite a co-worker, colleague, or even someone you met at the last Getting In Touch With Literacy Conference.
- For those that applied their 2021 conference registration to the **Conversations on Literacy**, your tickets will be issued at no further cost.

ACVREP CEUs are available for each session.

Remember ... your \$30.00 registration allows you to bring a guest!

To register (you and your guest) for the Monday, March 27, 2023, 2:00-3:30 p.m. (ET) Virtual Conversation, select the link below:

[Register Now for Conversations Session Seven: Literacy Strategies for Children with Visual Impairments and Additional Disabilities Including Deafblindness](#)

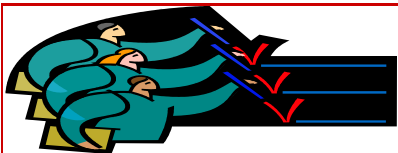


[We welcome you to visit the new ESSER Report, a blog about the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Funds and their connections to Colorado.](#)

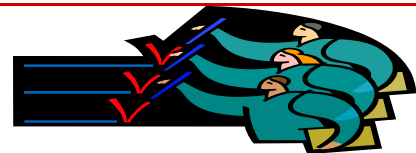
The blog will feature stories about the distribution of the federal funds, where the money went, what it is doing for the students of Colorado, who are its stewards and exciting ways we are presenting the information for you to track the spending.

Please enjoy our first stories about ESSER I, the teacher mentor grant and a link to an interactive graphic on common uses for ESSER I.

As always, if you have story ideas, questions about ESSER or an ESSER story to share, [please send us an email.](#)



CHECK IT OUT!



Hi everyone,

I am a TVI/COMS in Adams 12 and I am hoping you can help me out. I am completing my final research for my PhD in Special Education and need your help with recruiting families to participate. I am looking at resiliency within families of children with visual impairment.

On your caseload do you have a family of a child with low vision who meets the following criteria:

- They have fully accepted their child's visual impairment and embrace it
- They are active and positive participants in the IEP process
- They are involved in what you do with their child in a positive way
- They hold their child to the same standards as other children in their family
- They give them the same opportunities as other children in their family
- They work to connect their child with other people with visual impairments

If so, I would love to invite them to be a part of my research study. I am hoping to gain more information on the risk factors that are involved for families of children with visual impairments and the protective factors that allow them to overcome that adversity to move forward in a positive direction. For this study, I am targeting families of children with low vision. The criteria I would like to use is something between: an acuity of no better than 20/70 in the better eye, a field restriction of 20 degrees or less, or a physical condition of the visual system, which cannot be medically corrected on one end of the continuum and dual readers on the other. If braille is their primary literacy mode, they would not work for this study. Families would be asked to complete a short questionnaire, 1-2 interviews, and short journal responses. Please respond individually to me to let me know if you have a family who would match this criterion and I will send you the link to the initial survey. Thank you!

Debbie Mendoza (mend7547@bears.unco.edu)

The Blind Coloradan Blog—Kevan Worley does a Blind Coloradoan Blog that has great stories and information. It is a blog of reflection, contemplation, and celebration. He would love for you to take time to read it and share it with students and families. Check it out at: <https://theblindcoloradan.blogspot.com/>.

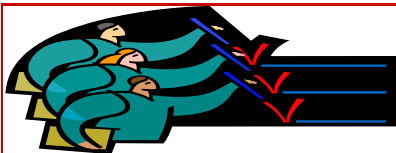
2023 Hall of Fame Nominations Now Being Accepted

Who should be the next inductees into the Hall of Fame for Leaders and Legends of the Blindness Field? Learn more about the easy electronic [nomination process](#) and submit a nominee to join the 52 inductees today. The nomination process will close on April 30, 2023.

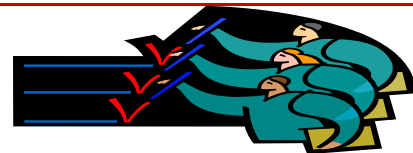
Save the date: Colorado Education Recruitment Fair—The Colorado Association of School Executives will host the only state-wide teacher and special service provider recruitment fair on Saturday, March 4, at the Douglas Country School District Legacy Campus in Lone Tree. The fair is designed to get candidates face-to-face with school districts throughout the state. This is a great opportunity for those interested in switching their career path, just getting started in the profession or looking to relocate to a new area.

Approximately 65 school districts will be participating, including three BOCES. Candidates will have access to rural, urban, large and small districts. Registration begins at 7:30 a.m. and doors open at 9 a.m.

[More details for the event and registration information can be found on the CASE website.](#)



CHECK IT OUT!



Recruiting for Nemeth Code within UEB Contexts Courses

What is Project INSPIRE?

Project INSPIRE is a 5 year training grant to support braille literacy for professionals and students to build their skills and knowledge in the braille codes for STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) courses.

What courses are being offered at no cost?

- **Course 1:** Nemeth Code within UEB Contexts and Strategies for Supporting the PreK-1st Grade Student in Building Math Skills
- **Course 2:** An Introduction to Nemeth Code Symbols Used in Grades 2 to 5 and Strategies for Supporting Elementary Students in Building Math Skills
- **Course 3:** Grades 2 to 5: Nemeth Code Symbols for Fractions and Spatial Problems, Instructional Tools, Materials and Technology
- **Course 4:** Geometry and Tactile Graphics for Students in Grades 3 to 8
- **Course 5:** Nemeth Code Symbols Used in the Middle Grades and Strategies for Supporting Math Learning
- **Course 6:** Nemeth Code Symbols Used in High School and Strategies for Supporting Math Learning **NEW COURSE**

Who are the target groups for the courses?

Teachers of students with visual impairments	Paraprofessionals who support braille readers
Individuals who are preparing braille materials	University students preparing to become TSVIs

How are the courses structured?

Participants will: (a) complete a pre-test, (b) complete 7 self-paced lessons, and (c) complete a post-test.

What are the logistics of the courses?

- **Dates:** February 20, 2023 to March 24, 2023
- **Delivery Model:** All materials will be online. There will be an optional assignment with an answer key.
- **Time Commitment:** 12 to 15 hours
- **You may only enroll in one course.**
- If you complete all course activities you will receive a certificate.

How can I learn more and sign up for a course?

Please complete the sign up form at https://uofsc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9LETR41INnEqX54.

You will then receive additional information the morning of February 20, 2023.

For more information or with questions email: herzberg@uscupstate.edu or call 864-503-5572

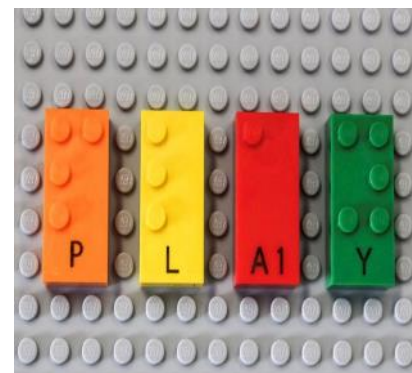
Web site: <https://www.uscupstate.edu/project-inspire/>

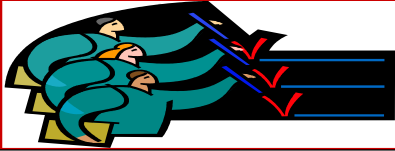
Facebook: Project Inspire: Increasing STEM Braille Potential

Survey On Playful Learning & Literacy Development with LEGO Braille Bricks

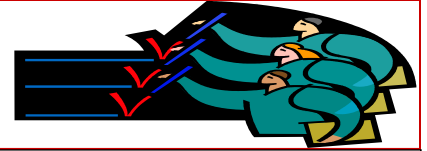
Professor John Ravenscroft from the University of Edinburgh in the UK is reaching out about a research study he is working on. He has been awarded a grant to independently research playful learning and literacy development with LEGO Braille Bricks. He developed a survey to collect information and is particularly interested in the practitioners' views and thoughts on the teaching of braille. These professionals are invited to participate: TVIs, Occupational Therapists, and Speech Language Pathologies. **LEGO Braille Bricks Survey Link:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LBB2023>





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 out the Calendar of Events for more details.

Resources and Materials

Paths to Technology Website and Blogs



Paths to Technology is designed to assist educators and families in learning and staying current on ever-changing technology for students with visual impairments and blindness. Wherever you are in your technology journey, you will find help with our library of resources designed to define and disseminate best practices, training, and support for teachers of the visually impaired, braille transcribers, other education professionals, parents, and students themselves. Check it out: <https://www.perkins.org/paths-to-technology/>

TEACH Colorado Resource Guides—Do you know a future educator? Over the past year, TEACH Colorado has expanded its list of comprehensive guides to help aspiring educators explore licensure options, prepare for content exams, find financial aid and more. Be sure to share these resources with future educators in your community!

[Visit TEACH Colorado's Reports and How-To Guides webpage for more information.](#)

AT Resource Center Accessibility Tip

Accessibility Experts from the Assistive Technology Resource Center at CSU created an entire website to help educators understand and create accessible content. If you're not quite sure what "electronic accessibility" means or how to convince teachers, administrators, and other content creators of its importance.

Visit Accessibility by Design to learn more and find resources you can share with colleagues: <https://tinyurl.com/yeyzdmur>

**"Teachers who
love teaching,
teach children to
love learning."**

— Unknown

iPad Wheel of Apps for Learners with Complex Additional Support Needs

This document has been refreshed and updated!

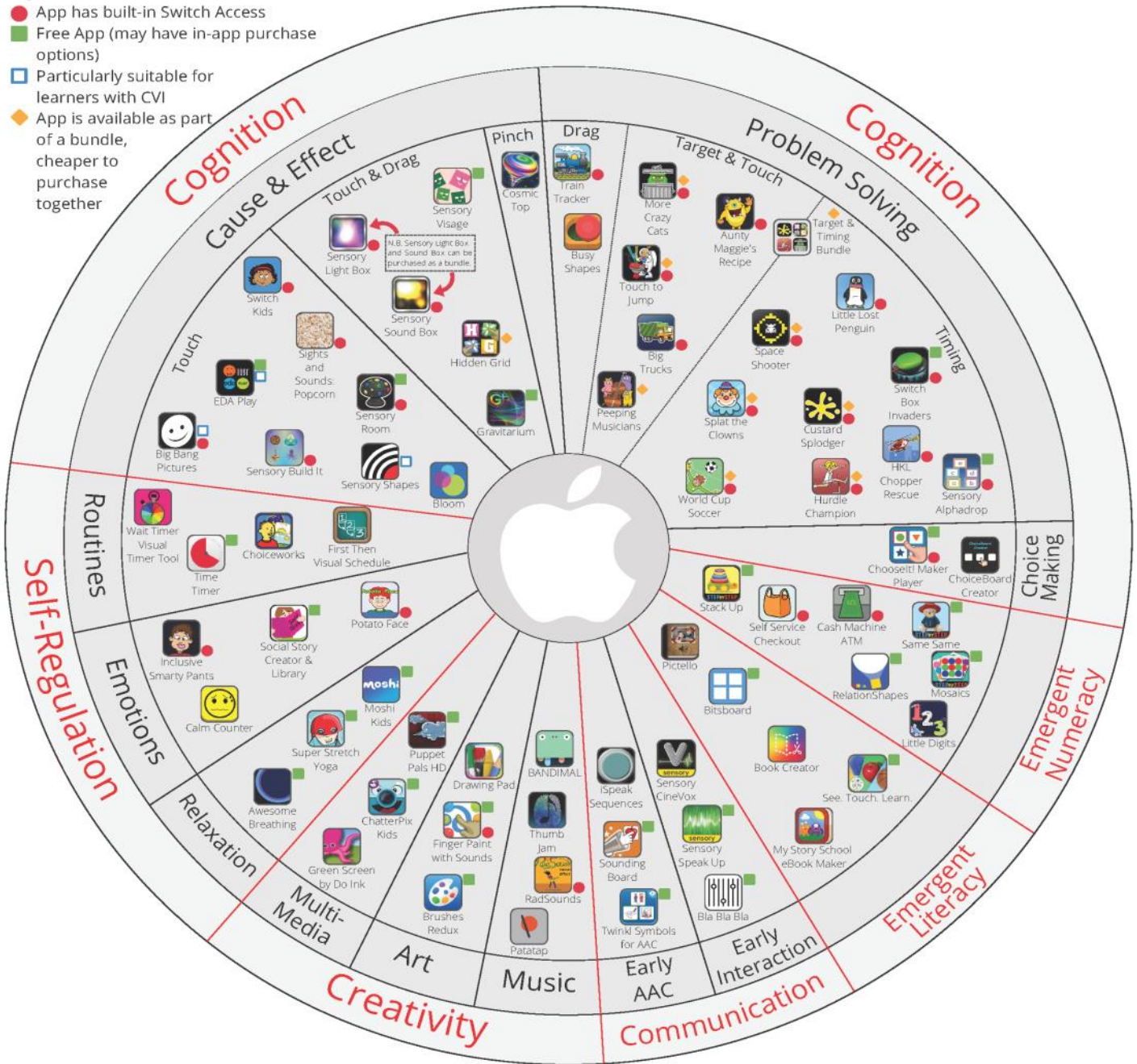
See next page for a sample and a QR code to download. Download a copy from here:

<https://www.callscotland.org.uk/.../ipad-apps-for.../>

iPad Apps for Learners with Complex Additional Support Needs

Key:

- App has built-in Switch Access
- Free App (may have in-app purchase options)
- Particularly suitable for learners with CVI
- ◆ App is available as part of a bundle, cheaper to purchase together



More Information

If you are using the electronic version, click on an App icon to get more information (including pricing) from the UK App Store.

Using iPads with Learners Who Have Complex Needs

Using iPads with learners who have Complex Needs it is important to consider the why and how when using iPads with learners who have complex needs; asking the question, 'Why am I doing this?' so that the use of an iPad does not become an end in itself, but rather a means of learning new skills. Learners with Complex Needs need to experience and learn cognition, communication and social interaction skills. An environment which focuses on responding, interacting and communicating is essential. With careful planning, an iPad can become part of this responsive environment, creating opportunities for communication and interaction. For more information on using technology with learners who have Complex Needs, see here: <http://bit.ly/CSN-INFO>

Identifying Suitable Apps

The wheel does not include every App available in each category, nor do the categories represent a comprehensive list of all developmental areas. Instead, we have selected particular areas where an iPad and App can be teaching and support tools. Some apps could fit within multiple categories, but we have listed them under a single category that is particularly relevant to the App.

Guided Access

Many learners are so in love with the iPad itself (especially if they are used to using it primarily for watching TV, films and listening to music) that they can be more interested in pressing the 'Home' button and swiping around than staying within one App. To support a learner to make the best use of an app for learning and developing skills, Guided Access allows you to control which features of the iPad and App you want to make available and which you want to 'lock'. For information on how to set up Guided Access, see here: <http://bit.ly/Guided-Access>



Download an electronic version of this poster: bit.ly/3Yst0L



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

CALL Scotland,
The University of Edinburgh.
CALL Scotland is part funded by
Scottish Government.
Version 3.0, December 2022
www.callscotland.org.uk



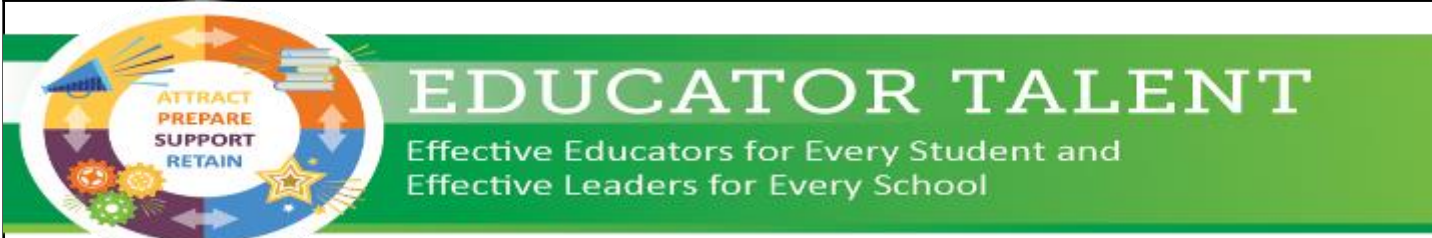
Initial Licensure and Endorsement Specific to Special Education Specialist: VI

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>.



Early Learning & School Readiness

Universal Preschool begins July 1, 2023

The Universal Preschool Program will launch on July 1, 2023 at which time the Colorado Preschool Program will end. CDE will continue to administer preschool special education for children ages 3 through 5 in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Exceptional Children's Educational Act.

[Questions about implementing the Colorado Preschool Program during the 2022-23 school year should be directed to CDE's Preschool Special Education staff.](#)

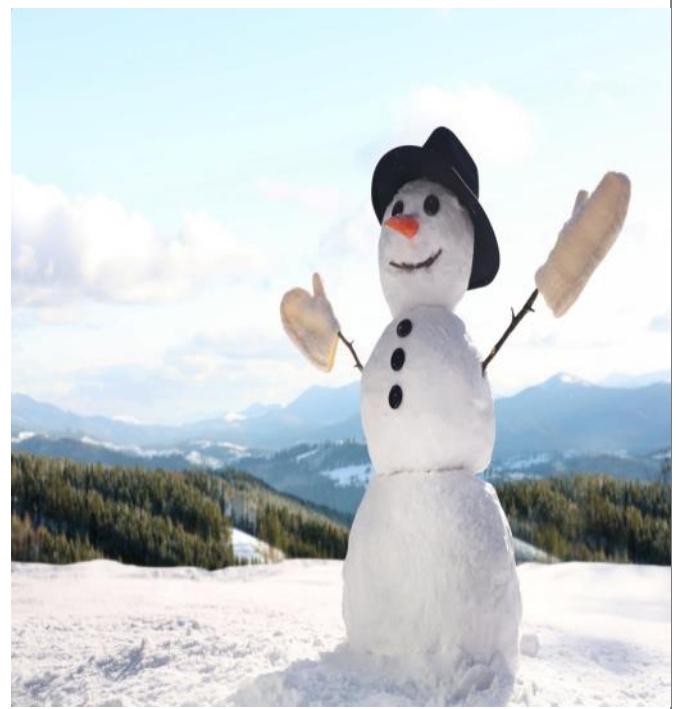
[Questions regarding ongoing implementation of IDEA requirements for preschoolers should be directed to CDE's Preschool Regional Specialists.](#)

[For information about preschool implementation effective on or after July 1, contact the Colorado Department of Early Childhood.](#)

State Board of Education Gives Final Approval to Revised Academic Standards in Social Studies

[At its November meeting, the Colorado State Board of Education voted to approve final revisions to the Colorado Academic Standards for social studies after adding the contributions of ethnic and religious groups as well as LGBTQ+ people in teaching about civil government.](#)

Each school district and charter school will have until the beginning of the 2024-25 school year to transition to the revisions to the social studies standards. However, local education providers must incorporate Holocaust and genocide studies into an existing course required for high school graduation by July 1, 2023.



Changes in the Referral and Evaluation Process for Children Under Age 3

Beginning on May 1, 2022, all referrals and evaluations for children under the age of 3 with developmental concerns or disabilities will be coordinated through Early Intervention Colorado.



This change to Early Intervention referrals and evaluations* is being made to:

- Ensure families and children across Colorado have equitable access to developmental support
- Streamline the program to be easier for families and providers to navigate

*granted by legislation SB21-275

Please note that Child Find (Colorado Department of Education/local school districts) will no longer accept referrals for children under age 3 as of May 1. All referrals and evaluations for children under 3 with disabilities or developmental concerns will be coordinated through Early Intervention Colorado.**

Early Intervention referrals and evaluations will occur within a coordinated, state system.

Families will continue to receive Early Intervention services through local Community Centered Boards, either in person or virtually.

Anyone can make a referral to Early Intervention!

A referral can be made online, by phone or by fax:



Complete the [online referral form](#)



Call 833-733-3734 (833) REFER-EI



Email GetStartedwithEI@state.co.us



Download the [referral form](#) and fax to 303-866-5944



Contact your [local Community Centered Board](#)

If you have questions about this change, please contact Jody Berg, Early Intervention Evaluations Manager at jody.berg@state.co.us or (720) 633-6099

**Early Intervention Colorado is currently part of the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS). Once the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) is established, Early Intervention Colorado will reside within the CDEC.





Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)



Life after High School: A Guide for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Families of Youth with Disabilities

This guide is offered in nine languages: English, Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. Wow, eh? From Open Doors for Multicultural Families. Go to: <https://www.multiculturalfamilies.org/programs-services/youth-transition-program/transition-guide-download/>

An Interview with Denna Lambert

Black History Month is a time to honor the contributions of African Americans to the United States. Staff from the American Printing House for the Blind spoke with Denna Lambert, a project manager at NASA, to learn more about her story and perspective on this important time of year. Read Denna's blog (<https://www.aph.org/black-history-month-an-interview-with-denna-lambert/>).

Blog about Stevie Wonder

Stevie Wonder is one of the most famous musicians of all time. Have you ever heard about his unconventional childhood education on the road? Read the APH Stevie Wonder blog (<https://www.aph.org/perspectives-on-a-piano/>) to learn about Stevie's early days of fame and

“EDUCATION IS THE
PASSPORT TO THE FUTURE,
FOR TOMORROW BELONGS
TO THOSE WHO PREPARE
FOR IT TODAY.”

MALCOLM X



COLORADO
Department of Education

2023 Seminar on Orientation and Mobility

at Lowry Conference Center
1061 Akron Way, Denver, CO 80230

Date: May 11-12, 2023

Time: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM

Registration is limited to Colorado O&M Specialist or O&M Specialist-in-university training who reside in Colorado.



Chris Tabb is an Orientation and Mobility Specialist working to advance the independence of students and clients, provide training opportunities and knowledge exchange for professionals and families, and bring accessible information to the community. He is presently employed at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (TSBVI), Outreach Programs, as Statewide Orientation and Mobility Specialist. Chris has worked as an Orientation and Mobility Specialist in California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Texas, providing services in residential programs, as an itinerant, an outreach specialist providing technical assistance, and as a private contractor. He enjoys working with all age groups, including infants and toddlers, school age students, adults, and senior populations. Chris' greatest professional interests are all things Orientation and Mobility, as well as Assistive Technology.

For more information or questions about the seminar contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

Day One Topic: Orientation & Mobility Smorgasbord: Evaluations, Apps, & Sensory Efficiency

This session will begin the discussion and resources related to evaluations, followed by apps such as Soundscape, Seeing AI, Goodmaps Outdoors, and other technology for travel in the community; and conclude with a focus on sensory efficiency, and how all *three* training topics can come together for helping learners grow in independence.

Day Two Topic: Field Loss: What are We Missing?

This session will provide discussion and hands-on activities for developing greater understanding of the impact of field loss, as well as providing strategies and resources for addressing challenges that are common with loss of visual field, even when acuity is 20/20 or better.

Requirements to Receive Credit

- Attend both days of training
- Write an application paper.

Fifteen (15) CDE contact hours and One (1) UNC grad semester hour will be offered



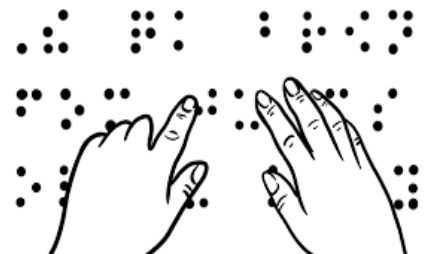
Questions regarding registration, please contact Roberta Curtis, curtis_r@cde.state.co.us

Registration is open until April 27, 2023




Calendar of Events

2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
February 22	CO Deaf-Blind Project Webinar Series— 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. on Tactile Strategies Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us										
February 22-24	Metro LVE Clinic— Anchor Center for Blind Children in Denver Contact: Karin Hensel at khensel@dcsdk12.org										
February 23	Braille Challenge— CSDB Contact: Jamie Lugo at jlugo@csdb.org										
February 24	DVIDB Council—Teaching Multilingual Learners with VI Register: DVIDB Council for Exceptional Children 2023										
March 3	First CIMC Friday (virtual meeting) from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. or 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org										
March 10	Deaf-Blind Child Count Forms DUE Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us										
March 15	Sound Bites— 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. on Ask the Doctor / Last Visit with Dr. Theune Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us										
March 27	Conversations on Literacy— 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. on EST Register: Getting In Touch With Literacy										
March 29	CO Deaf-Blind Project Webinar Series— 3:30 - 5:30 p.m. on Tactile Sign Language Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us										
April 7	First CIMC Friday (virtual meeting) from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. or 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org										
April 19	Sound Bites— 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. on Dyslexia and Visual Impairment Register: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/1959b4c9d59a4914896bfce0ac5f9bfb										
May 5	First CIMC Friday (virtual meeting) from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. or 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org										





Calendar of Events

2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023

- May 11-12** **Orientation and Mobility Seminar**—Lowry Conference Center
Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- May 17** **Sound Bites**— 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. on Assessment of Students with BVI
Register: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/1959b4c9d59a4914896bfce0ac5f9bfb>
- June 5—6** **Conference for AT and Education (CATE)**—Denver
Contact: www.swaaac.org
- June 13-15** **Western Region Early Intervention Conference (WREIC)** - Cheyenne, WY
Contact: www/wreic.org
- June 27—28** **Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness & SSN**—Adams 12 Conference Center
Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- July 1-6** **2023 National Federation of the Blind Convention** - Houston, Texas
Contact: nfb@nfb.org
- Nov 29 - Dec 2** **Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference**— St. Pete’s Beach, FL
Contact: <https://www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org/>

If you have any items to get on the calendar, please be in touch with Tanni so we can keep people in the loop on events locally, statewide, and nationally.



Sound Bites

(Virtual Monthly Professional Learning / Conversations)

Sounds Bites are 2022-23 opportunities for personnel trained to work with learners with visual impairment, including blindness to gather once a month for professional learning and conversations on improving educational assessment and programmatic practices.

Some sessions will be restricted to teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs).

All participants must register no later than two weeks in advance for each training/conversation event.

The dates are as follows from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m.

November 16, 2022 - *Cortical Visual Impairment: Unique Considerations for Functional Vision Assessment & Learning Media Assessment* with Chris Russell

December 7, 2022 - *Cortical Visual Impairment: Approaches to Intervention and Educational Program Development* with Chris Russell

January 18, 2023 - *Tactical Math Strategies* with Dr. Derrick Smith

February 15, 2023 - *Cortical Visual Impairment: Considerations for Augmentative & Alternative Communication Development* with Chris Russell

March 15, 2023 - *Ask the Doc: Low Vision Evaluation, Tools, and Anything Else on Your Mind* with Dr. Tom Theune

April 19, 2023 - *Dyslexia and Visual Impairment* with Kelly Bevis and Amie Davenport

May 17, 2023 - *Assessment Considerations for Learners with Blindness/ Visual Impairment* with Cara Johnson and Tanni Anthony



When registering, please indicate if you will require special aids, services, and or accommodations at least two weeks ahead of each training event. Once registered, the link and handouts will be sent two days ahead of the training.



COLORADO
Department of Education

If you have any questions please contact Tanni Anthony (anthony_t@cde.state.co.us)

Western Region Early Intervention Conference



June 13-15, 2023

Little America Hotel and Resort
Cheyenne, Wyoming

June 13 - Pre-conference \$75.00

June 14-15 - Conference Registration \$210.00

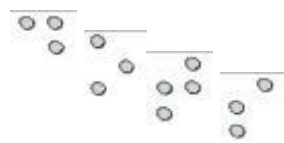
*Registration rates increase on May 1st

Register at [Eventbrite](#)

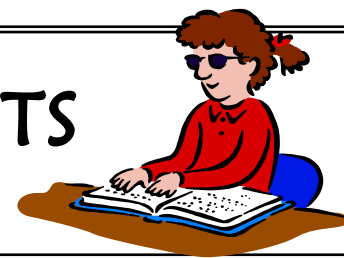
The Western Regional Early Intervention Conference (WREIC) is designed to support professionals working with children birth to five who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Blind/Visually Impaired or Deaf-Blind, and their families.

The WREIC has taken place for over 35 years, making it one of the longest ongoing early intervention conferences in the nation. Speakers and workshops have always focused on the most current research, technology, resources, and practices in our ever-evolving field. Colorado has been a long time partner in the WREIC and several CO agencies are sponsoring speakers or serving as presenters. We hope you will join us at this amazing event!

For more information go to www.wreic.org _____



CONNECTING THE DOTS



Colorado Braille Competency Committee

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

The committee consists currently of the following individuals:

Tanni Anthony	(303) 866-6681	Anthony_T@cde.state.co.us
Nancy Cozart	(303) 905-4074	Nkcozart@yahoo.com
Christine Maynard	(719) 229-4981	Maynard_C@cde.state.co.us
Brenda Shepard	(303) 995-7913	Shepard_B@cde.state.co.us
Julie Wetzstein	(303) 819-7887	Wetzstein_J@cde.state.co.us

Christine Maynard is our southern 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. If there is a testing need on the western slope, Tanni should be contacted.

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 2022 –23 assistance, please be in touch with Tanni first to secure an available proctor / mentor.

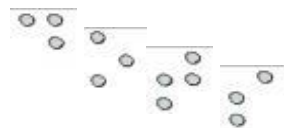
UEB Technical Versus Nemeth Braille Codes

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.

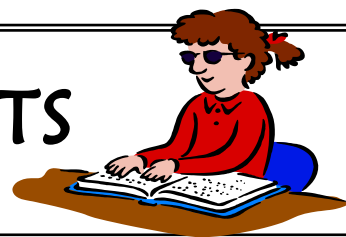
Braillewriter Repair

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

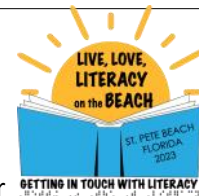




CONNECTING THE DOTS



A Survey of Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments on Braille Instruction—Getting In Touch With Literacy Invites You to Participate!



Getting In Touch With Literacy (GITWL) is pleased to support this research on braille instruction from Rice University and the University of British Columbia. In keeping with the GITWL goal of increasing our knowledge base of effective literacy instructional strategies specific to people with visual impairments, the committee readily agreed to share this wonderful opportunity with the GITWL community. (A bonus is that you can receive a \$10.00 Amazon gift card!)

The research committee plans to present the results of this research at the Getting In Touch With Literacy Conference, November 29 - December 2, 2023, in St. Pete Beach, Florida! This is your opportunity to be on the ground floor of this exciting research.

Dear Colleagues, We are conducting a research study, with funding from the Institute of Education Sciences (Award #R324A190093), to explore the knowledge, skills, and strategies teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs) need to effectively teach braille reading and writing. We are looking for qualified TVIs to take a survey that will take approximately 30 minutes. In the survey, we will ask you questions about your TVI training program and inservice experience and about your attitudes and beliefs about braille.

You will also respond to several scenarios in which you imagine interacting with a hypothetical student. We hope that your participation in the study will result in a deeper understanding of how braille is read and taught with potential benefits to the community of braille readers as a whole. We know that 30 minutes is not an insignificant amount of time, and if you provide your email address on the survey you will receive a \$10 Amazon Gift Card for your participation.

Complete the survey at https://riceuniversity.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5suV7cevrklNshw

Opportunity for 2nd-5th Grade Braille Readers to Build Graphics Literacy Skills

Dr. Tina Herzberg and Dr. Penny Rosenblum have had 10 students-TSVIs signed up for our graphics literacy study for 2nd-5th grade US braille readers. They have more slots, so don't delay! Learn about this amazing opportunity and find the information for both TSVIs and families to sign up. Not only will students learn to locate and interpret information in line plots, pictographs, and bar graphs, they'll learn about lemurs and blue whales! To get all the info, visit the post on Paths to Technology hosted by Perkins School for the Blind.

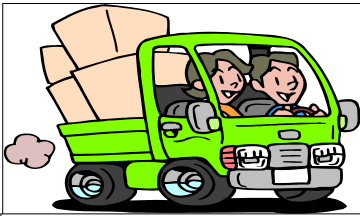
<https://www.perkins.org/resource/recruiting-tsvi-and-students-building-graphics-literacy-skills/>

APH Tactile Demonstration Thermometer: Product Redesign Input Survey

Teachers who have used APH's original Tactile Demonstration Thermometer are invited to complete a survey seeking input on a product redesign. Contact Karen Poppe, Tactile Literacy Product Manager, kpoppe@aph.org with any questions about this survey. [Take the Tactile Demonstration Thermometer Survey.](#)

Creative Writing as an Immersive Task in Braille Literacy

Immersive creative writing lessons in braille grant us the ability to conjure new realities, achieve our goals, and explore both new and familiar areas of interest. Read the APH [creative writing blog](#) to discover the importance of creative writing as it relates to braille literacy and find some activities you can do with your students.



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

DVR Training on Personal Adjustment—The Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Personal Adjustment Training Unit offers specialized training programs to assist individuals who are blind or visually impaired in becoming independent at home, in the community, and in employment. Training is tailored to each individual's unique needs, experiences, and employment goals and is provided in the home and local community. Services are available at no cost to eligible individuals. Center-based training options are also available. Training may include the following instructional areas: Adaptive Communications, Assistive Technology, Daily Living Skills, Low Vision, and Orientation & Mobility.

Please check out our informational videos that will provide you with an overview of the training we can provide to individuals who are blind or visually impaired: [Blind and Low Vision Services -- Personal Adjustment Training](#)

Training is available statewide to active DVR clients with a vision impairment. Referrals for training are made by Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. To get started, contact a local DVR office. Please share this letter with anyone you think will benefit from our services. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via email or phone.



COLORADO
Division of Vocational
Rehabilitation

Department of Labor and Employment

Thank you! **Bryan Baldwin**

Assistive Technology Specialist, Blind and Low Vision Services

Please check out our [informational videos](#) that will provide you with an overview of our services.

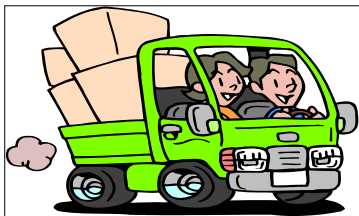
“Central Bark: A Guide Dogs for the Blind Podcast” Features Careers & Canine Connections with APH

ConnectCenter—Check out the American Printing House for the Blind’s Central Bark, a podcast from our friends at Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB), where Richard Rueda previews what is in store for our August event with Guide Dogs for the Blind’s Careers & Canine Connections. Host, Theresa Stern, sits down with GDB Youth Outreach Specialist, Jane Flower, and Richard Rueda from APH CareerConnect to discuss the upcoming collaborative project: Careers & Canine Connections. Geared toward young adults ages 18-24, this FREE week-long workshop will be equal parts fun and future-focused to help prepare attendees who are blind or low vision to enter the workforce with confidence and an understanding of how a dog guide might fit into that plan.

Listen at www.GuideDogs.com/podcast. Additional information and registration is available at <https://www.guidedogs.com/get-a-guide-dog/youth-programs>

Transition to College—APH CareerConnect is pleased to share a testimonial and reminder of our [Transition to College: Program Activity Guide](#) for Educators and Rehabilitation Counselors.... An educator of 20 years shares, “The [Transition to College: Program Activity Guide for Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired](#) was fantastic! It was easy to find a lesson to match one of my student’s goals and objectives. I currently have a student who is a senior in high school. She appreciated lesson 16, Rights and Responsibilities as a College Student with Vision Loss, so much so that she wanted to share the website with her family!” APHs love hearing what most resonates with our APH CareerConnect site visitors. If you have suggestions and/or kudos on what is working for you and your cohort, please drop them a note at ConnectCenter@aph.org

NFBCO 2023 Scholarship Program—For further information on the Scholarship and to apply please visit the [NFBCO Scholarship Programs](#) webpage. Please don't forget that all applications must be completed by 11:59 P.M. on April 15, 2023. Scholarship winners will receive expenses paid trips to both our National convention in, Houston TX and our state convention in Lone Tree, CO along with an academic scholarship. Should you have any questions regarding the application or application process please don't hesitate to reach out to me at codyjbair@yahoo.com or (970)673-6998.



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

Scholarship Program

The National Federation of the Blind's annual scholarship program is the largest of its kind in the nation. Every year, we award more than \$250,000 in cash and prizes to blind scholars across the fifty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico in recognition of their achievements and professional aspirations.



Thanks to our generous partners, there are thirty \$8,000 merit-based scholarships currently available. All scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic excellence, community service, and leadership. The finalists are announced every spring. They then attend our national convention in July when the winners of each individual scholarship are selected. Scholarship winners have gone on to succeed in careers ranging from computer science and engineering to civil rights law and international diplomacy.

New in 2022: \$8,000 Awards & More

Read the latest news release: [National Federation of the Blind Enhances Largest Scholarship Program for Blind Scholars](#).

How to Apply

Please complete the application in full by March 31, 2023.

[Online Application](#)

Eligibility

The following requirements apply to all applicants:

Must be [legally blind \(PDF\)](#) in both eyes.

- Must be residing in the United States, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico.
- Must be 18 years of age by July 1, 2023.
- Must be pursuing or planning to pursue a full-time, post-secondary course of study in a degree program at a U.S. institution in the fall of the year of application (one scholarship may be given to a person employed full-time while attending school part-time).
- Must participate in person in the entire NFB National Convention and in all of its scheduled scholarship program activities (finalists will receive assistance to attend the national convention).
- For more information regarding eligibility, we strongly encourage you to review our [scholarship program FAQs](#).

Four (4) Jim Halladay HumanWare/NFB Scholarship Opportunities

The National Federation of the Blind and HumanWare have proudly collaborated over the years to offer HumanWare/NFB STEM development opportunities to students. For 2023, the newly renamed Jim Halladay HumanWare/NFB scholarship has doubled the opportunities offered and will award 4 scholarships instead of 2! This year, HumanWare is offering to each of the four winning candidates one Brailiant BI40 braille display and \$1000 to be used towards tuition fees to help winning students complete their studies and be ready to take on the world! To apply for these awards, NFB scholarship applicants will have an opportunity to select a checkbox which will give them access to the Humanware scholarship application questions as well. Please note: The selection process for these Humanware scholarships is entirely separate from the selection process for the 30 NFB scholarships. Those selected as Humanware/NFB scholarship winners will be notified separately by Humanware of their winner status. If NFB scholarship applicants do not wish to fill out the application questions for the Humanware/NFB scholarships, simply do not check the box within the NFB scholarship application and bypass the associated questions.

Early Intervention Eligibility Update

December 29, 2022

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2023: The eligibility definition for the Early Intervention Colorado program will be 25% in two or more domains OR 33% in one or more developmental domains.

This is a **CHANGE** from the previous eligibility of 33% in one or more developmental domains.

BACKGROUND

- The Colorado Department of Early Childhood’s Early Intervention program received additional funding to broaden the definition of developmental delay in order to serve more children and families in the Early Intervention Colorado program
- Stakeholder engagement occurred between September 28 and November 9, 2022 to develop recommendations for the new eligibility criteria
 - Three Eligibility Definition Workgroup meetings
 - Two Public Town Hall meetings
- The Colorado Department of Early Childhood’s Rules Advisory Committee unanimously agreed to move forward an emergency rule to change the eligibility on December 8, 2022
- The Executive Director of the Department of Early Childhood adopted the emergency rule on December 16, 2022 for an effective date of January 1, 2023
- The Early Intervention program is obtaining approval of the policy change from the federal Office of Special Education Programs
- Final reading of the rule will take place in February, 2023 and the rule will be permanently adopted by April 15, 2023
- Evaluation Entities were notified of the impending change on December 21, 2022 in order to be aware and prepared for the change

Contact Information:

Christy Scott, Early Intervention Colorado Program Manager

christy.scott@state.co.us

just for PARENTS

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

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

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

- Families with at least one child (grades K-6) 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. The interview will take up to 2 hours. During the study, the researchers will ask you questions about behavioral development and literacy learning practices at home. We will also ask you to show books and technology you 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 up to 2 hours.

You have the option of participating remotely. In this case, the interviews will take place over Zoom and we will either set up a digital journal for you or email all journaling materials to your home and ask that you mail the journal back after two weeks. 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>.

Your family will receive \$300 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 (\$150). 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 \$300.

If you have questions about participating in this research or would like to participate in this study, please contact Vinitha Gadiraju, Ph. D. student, at vinitha.gadiraju@colorado.edu or (503)-467-1599 (email or text is preferable).

Thank you!

just for PARENTS

National Family Association for Deaf-Blind (NFADB)

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.



Family Recharge Zone

Are you a family member of a child or adult who is blind, visually impaired, or deafblind? The Texas School for the Blind/Visually Impaired offers virtual trainings that you might be interested in attending. Stay connected by completing the Family Events & Training Signup Form. You will receive emails about events and training just for families... including the [Family Recharge Zone!](#)



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 not be available.

The next session is Wednesday, March 1, 2023, 7:30—8:30 PM EST

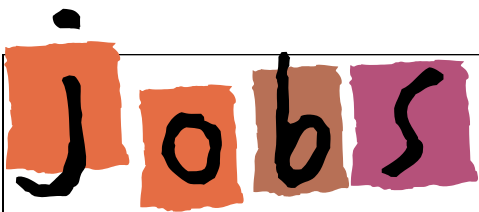
[Register Here for ParentConnect](#)

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!

For more information, call the Colorado Center for the Blind at (303) 778-1130.



IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with current vacancies for the current school year. Please keep in touch with Tanni about our 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. If you are looking for a job, please check out the listings below and also reach out to Tanni, who will have a current list of work across the state, including TVI and O&M Specialist contract work. Together, we can fill in the needed gaps to serve all of our students.

Metro Region

- ◆ **1 FTE TVI (or part time)** TVI for Early Intervention Visit Program at the Anchor Center for Blind Children. For more information, please reach out to Tammy Miller at tmiller@anchorcenter.org
- ◆ **1 FTE for TVI / O&M Specialist** in Adams 12 School District for SY 23-24. For more information, please contact Heater Greicius at gre008602@adams12.org
- ◆ **1 FTE for TVI / O&M Specialist** in Denver Public Schools. Contact Michelle Chacon at michelle_chacon@dpsk12.net for more information.

Southern Region

- ◆ **1 FTE TVI Position**—Colorado Springs District 11. For more information, please contact Nancy Melo Maresh at nancy.mereshmelo@d11.org or (719) 520-2153
- ◆ **1 FTE TVI** for Secondary Social Studies teacher at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. Please contact Jamie Lugo for more information at jlugo@csdb.org.

Northern Region

- ◆ **1 FTE or part-time TVI / O&M Specialist**—Windsor School District. Contact Jennifer Sedaghat at Jennifer.sedaghat@weldre4.org.

Eastern Region

- ◆ **TVI and O&M Specialist Contract Work**—East Central BOCES—Contact Beverly Bragg at (719) 740-0544 or bevb@ecboces.org.

Western Region

- ◆ **1 TVI / O&M Position** in the Colorado River BOCES for SY 23-24. Please contact Denise Rahe at drahe@crboces.org for more information.

Across Metro, Northern, 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.

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.





colorado connections

Braille Competency News

- ◆ Kudos to **Nancy Barron**, **Jennifer Caster**, and **Natalie Palmer** for completing braille renewal modules. Thanks for braille proctors **Chris Maynard** and **Brenda Shepard** for their work with our braille candidates.



Personnel: Farewell and Welcome Aboard!

- ◆ **LaVerne Dell** is retiring from the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation after thirty years of service. LaVerne has been totally blind, since she was two years old, due to Retinoblastoma. She attended Jeffco public schools and worked with Lucia Hasty, Jim Bresnaham, Cathy Hurd, Sheryl Herlevich and a few others along the way. LaVerne went on to obtain a Bachelor's degree in Human services from Metropolitan State College, now Metropolitan State University. After being a vendor as an independent living aid, LaVerne was hired in 1992 with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as a Rehabilitation Teacher, now known as a Vision Rehabilitation Therapist. Ultimately, LaVerne gained a Master's degree in Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling and has worked in various capacities as a VR Counselor, trainer mentor and supervisor. LaVerne's success can be attributed to her family, teachers (both general education and TVIs), VR counselors, Colleagues and her own fierce independence. LaVerne has enjoyed her time with VR and is moving onto working in the Field in a different role. What do you think LaVerne for her many years of leadership and service! She has been a friend, colleague, and mentor to many!
- ◆ Oh my, what can't you say about **Sarah Sonnier's** contributions to children and youth with visual impairments, her dedication to braille excellence, and her continued contributions after her retirement several years ago! Sarah was one of the first members of the CDE Braille Committee and later became a CDE part-time employee as a braille proctor and mentor. She continued this work well into her retirement and, just this month, retired from this role as well. We thank her for helping to design the content and process of our braille testing procedures, proctoring the CDE Braille Competency Test and renewal modules, and serving as a mentor. We say thank you from the bottom of our hearts to Sarah!
- ◆ We are happy to share that **Alyshia Shelton** is now working half time as a TVI in Littleton!

Professional Learning

- ◆ A big thank you to **Dr. Derrick Smith** for his February 1, 2023 session on Tactile Graphics. The following TVIs were able to attend: **Tanni Anthony**, **Ruthann Breen**, **Danielle Burden**, **Jennifer Caster**, **Mary Chambers**, **Nancy Cozart**, **Meghan Crosby**, **Jamie Cusimano**, **Elsa D'Angelo**, **Barb Galgano**, **Amy Gunning**, **Ashley Ives**, **Christopher Kinney**, **Jeannie Lei**, **Kaitlin Lombardi**, **Jamie Lugo**, **Lori Mattick**, **Beth Meyers**, **Brenna Moser**, **Erin Noe**, **Sara Noel**, **Jim Olson**, **Natalie Palmer**, **Wendy Schlageter**, **Wendy Stoltman**, **Maggie Tutt**, **Hanna Waldman**, **Ellen Wallis**, **Julie Wetzstein**, and **Chloann Woolley**. A fantastic turnout!!
- ◆ A huge shout out to **Chris Russell** for his February 15 Sound Bite session with us! He presented on CVI and AAC Systems. Outstanding content! We had 39 people in attendance: **Janet Anderson**, **Tanni Anthony**, **Deb Andrews**, **Jill Bookwalter**, **Ruthann Breen**, **Sally Burch**, **Danielle Burden**, **Mary Chambers**, **Nancy Cozart**, **Meghan Crosby**, **Elsa D'Angelo**, **Dana Downy**, **Barb Galgano**, **Morgan Harrington**, **Karin Hensel**, **Jeanine Holmes**, **Ashley Ives**, **Amber Rundle Kahn**, **Leslie Kelly**, **Anahit LaBarre**, **Kaitlin Lombardi**, **Jamie Lugo**, **Lori Mattick**, **Aryn McNicol**, **Brenna Moser**, **Beth Myers**, **Sara Noel**, **Jim Olson**, **Natalie Palmer**, **Mike Plansker**, **Melissa Russell**, **Wendy Schlageter**, **Alyshia Shelton**, **Angela Sims**, **Wendy Stoltman**, **Maggie Tutt**, **Hannah Waldman**, **Julie Wetzstein**, and **Chloann Woolley**.

We have three remaining Sound Bites left for the School Year—Hope you will join us!



COLORADO
Department of Education

FROM: Colorado Department of Education
Exceptional Student Services
1560 Broadway, Suite 1100
Denver, CO 80202

MAIL TO:

25-38B-3401

State of Colorado Department of Education

Commissioner: Dr. Katy Anthes

Colorado State Board of Education Members

Stephen Varela
3rd Congressional District

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