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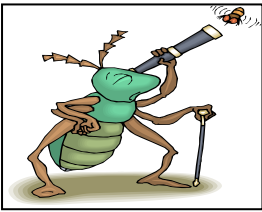
KEEPING IN TOUCH!

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

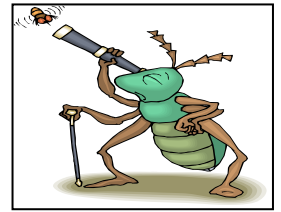
**THANK
YOU
FOR
MAKING
A
DIFFERENCE
EVERY
DAY.**

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LOW VISION NEWS



Caption: Dr. Tom Theune, Jim Olson, Wendy Stoltman, and Debbie Haberkorn

High Five to Our LVE Teammates for Their Service

As the school year winds down, we want to pay our respect for our three members of the Low Vision Team who are stepping away from their clinic work. We are so grateful for all they have done to build and support the clinic over the past many years. Thank you so Debbie, Wendy, and Tom.

Debbie Haberkorn—Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Coordinator: Debbie has been with the CDE Regional Low Vision Evaluation (LVE) Clinics since 2012. In this role, she has coordinated the dates and procedures of the clinics with the local site coordinators and the involved paperwork. Debbie has also been the Southern Region LVE site coordinator. These roles were built into her CIMC responsibilities with CDE support for her overtime on the clinic work. Under Debbie's watch, her teammates were well prepared for each clinic, and reports were disseminated on a timely basis at the conclusion of the clinics. She also was key in all the work of loading and unloading the van with the clinic inventory and driving members of the team to clinic sites outside of the southern region. Debbie is in a new role within CSDB and finished her last LVE Clinic this spring. We are so grateful for all her amazing coordination for the clinics these many years!

Wendy Stoltman—Low Vision Therapist: Wendy is a TVI, COMS, and a Certified Low Vision Therapist. Her college education was from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Northern Colorado. She has been working with students with disabilities since the early 1980s and taught in both the Madison Metropolitan School District and in Brighton School District 27J. She is also a CDE TA Specialist with the Colorado Deaf-Blind Grant and has been a mentor/coach to Colorado TVIs and Orientation and Mobility Specialists. Wendy's role in discerning the low vision needs of students of all ages has been a major asset of this team. She understands kids, school needs, and supporting low vision access across all learning environments. Wendy is retiring from her role with the LVE Clinics, and we thank her for her immeasurable contributions.

Thomas Theune - Low Vision Specialist – Optometrist: Tom shares that he has been honored to be a part of the Colorado LVE Clinic since its inception in 1998. He was truly part of the original plan to actualize regional low vision clinics for school-age learners across Colorado. His role was to provide insight into proper devices and strategies that can maximize vision and support literacy. After being diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa and experiencing his own vision loss, Tom chose to specialize in the field of low vision. For the past 30 years, he has provided low vision care for patients of all ages in Colorado Springs. He uses low vision devices and adaptive technology on a daily basis and has been a powerful role model to so many kids. He has been a powerful teacher to those attending the LVE clinics and several Sound Bites sessions. He has a wonderful way of explaining low vision concepts, assessment tools and procedures, and how best to support the use of devices and low vision strategies. We have learned from him for so many years and we have profound gratitude for his work with the 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 final 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. The team worked tirelessly to prepare a new grant proposal that was submitted several days ahead of the March 13th deadline. If awarded, the new cycle will begin October 1, 2023. Stay tuned!

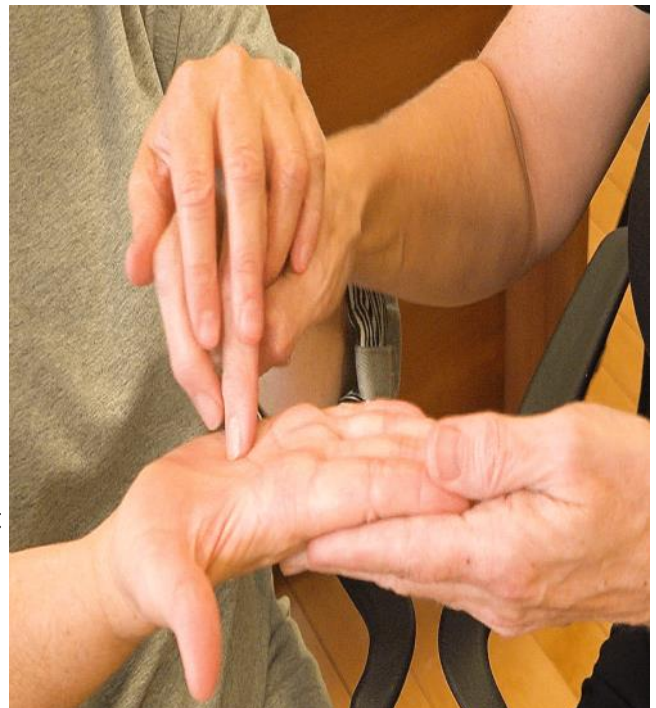


Key project activities are to maintain an annual Child Count process, host professional learning events, and provide tiered and customized technical assistance. The current project has three broad goals: (1) timely identification, (2) family networking, training, and TA support, and (3) professional training and TA support, and 4) intervener recruitment and training / support. 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 our specialized Family Engagement Specialist contractor (**Cindy Colwell**) on board with the project. Check out our website at: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-db>

A big thank you to the CO Deaf-Blind Project team (especially Gina!) for organizing our Deaf-Blind Family Workshop on May 5-6, 2023. It was a pleasure and a privilege to host this two day training / networking event for Colorado families of children with deaf-blindness. We were so happy to host the following presenters: **Michele Williers** from PEAK Parent Center, **JoAnne Hirsch** from the iCanConnect Program, **Dr. Robin Brewer** from the Colorado Department of Education, **Patti McGowan** from National Family Association for Deaf-Blind, **Jonathon Pringle** from the Helen Keller National Center, **Jessica Meisel** from the CO DB Project, **Megan Bowser** from Family Voices, **Bryan Wickoren** from CDE, **Tanni Anthony** from the CO DB Project, and **Gina Herrera** of the CO DB Project. A huge thank you to our Colorado DB Project Family Engagement Coordinator **Cindy Cowell** and Program Support Assistant **Roberta Curtis** for their preparation and hosting assistance. A special thank you to volunteers assistants **Abby Curtis** and **Chris Cannizzaro**.

Child Find Count of Colorado Children and Youth with Deaf-Blindness The December 1, 2022 Child Count has been finalized. Thank to all who assisted! It is so important that we identified each and every child with deaf-blindness to provide free technical assistance.

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.



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>

Usher Syndrome Identification

A new NCDB product on Usher syndrome, authored by Nancy O’Donnell, Outreach Director at the Usher Syndrome Coalition, is now available on the National Center on Deaf-Blindness (NCDB) website.

“[Identification of Usher Syndrome: Information and Resources](#)” offers a wealth of information on the types and characteristics of Usher, how it is diagnosed, and the importance of timely referral. It includes fact sheets with information specifically designed for educators, healthcare professionals, and families.

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.

Colorado Deaf-Blind Project News

Literacy Website Relocation: The Literacy for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss website has been moved to [the NCDB site](#). It has all the same content, which has not been updated except to remove links to resources that are no longer available.

New Book: A Mother's Story of her Son Who Is Deaf-Blind: In **Born to Shine, Fought to Survive: The Aiden Ervin Story**, mom Kerrian Ellis tells the story of her son who is deaf-blind and their determination

Community Intervener Program

HB23-1067 Family Intervener Program Deafblind Children has become law! It was signed into law on Monday, May 15th. The program provides children who are deaf-blind the services of a community intervener. The Colorado Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblind will oversee the program. The program is funded through the Colorado telephone users with disabilities fund.

A big shout out to all the people who worked so specifically on this project: Megan Bowser, Kiera Zink and Christy Blakely. Other family members and interveners were also instrumental in working with Representatives Mary Young and Mary Bradfield, and Senators Lisa Cutter and Joann Ginal. At the signing ceremony with Governor Polis, Ms. Young acknowledged the good work of school-based interveners and highlighted the value of the community intervener program to support children and youth with deaf-blindness to experience and enjoy community activities.



Back Row: Tanni Anthony, Lt. Governor, Dianne Primavera, Christy Blakely, Megan Bowser, Cassandra Kooyers, Ofelia Caballero, Representative Mary Young, Kiera Zink, Gina Herrera, and Governor Jared Polis.

Front row: Wilder and Wesley Bowser, and Jordy Zink.

The gathered group at the official signing

Representative Mary Young, Governor Jared Polis, and Lt. Governor Dianne Primavera.

HB23-1067 Family Intervener Program Deaf-Blind Children signed into law!





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

CAER Awards

The CAER Awards Banquet and Ceremony was held on May 12th. Thank you to our CAER Board for all their important work to support early intervention, school, DVR and VA-based services and supports to individuals with blindness/visual impairment or deaf-blindness, their families, and service professionals.



The following individuals received CAER awards:

Lifetime Achievement: **Nancy Knight** was given this award. Nancy Knight lives the meaning of this award- dedication, passion, and inspiration in her work in Littleton Public Schools (LPS). She has been a teacher for students with vision loss in LPS for over 25 years. She has made a beautiful imprint on so many people in the LPS community! All who know Nancy Knight in her role in Littleton Public Schools understand her warm, respectful, and compassionate relationships she has with each of her students, parents, and staff. Nancy has a true gift of knowing when to encourage, when to challenge or when to step back with her students. Parents know her to be an advocate, a resource, and a supporter of their child/family. Staff know her to be a knowledgeable contributor and a welcome member of school teams across the district of LPS.

Here are a few words from her VI team/family: Nancy is a knowledgeable and patient teacher. She builds strong relationships with her students and their families. She has made a positive impact in the many schools she serves (Lisa Brocard, Nationally Certified Braille Transcriber)

- It is such a privilege to work with Nancy! Her kindness and empathy towards others create an atmosphere of connectivity. Her light is reflected in those around her. She gives so much of herself to her students, taking time for each one's personal and social life in addition to academics. She has a deep commitment to assure each student's success in life. We love you, Nancy! (Ingrid Mayer, Colorado Certified Brailist) I've been with the Visually Impaired Program for almost 5 years. I was lucky enough to spend a good amount of time with Nancy during my first year. What a gift I had in spending time with Nancy and seeing her share her knowledge and compassion with her students. The care and attention that she brings to each student is lovely to witness, her main goal is to make sure that her students are given every opportunity to thrive and grow at every grade level. We do indeed love you Nancy!! (Christine Forner, BVI Paraprofessional)
- Nancy is without a doubt a patient, kind, humorous teacher who wants all her students to achieve success in their own unique way. I have had the privilege of getting to know Nancy first as a paraprofessional who worked with students Nancy provided services for, as a student teacher with whom Nancy mentored, and now as a colleague. Nancy is humble. She knows her students and how to connect with them to determine their needs and the support to meet these needs. She is an amazing team leader who strives to share her knowledge not only in the Vision program but also in various schools she provides services in. She, indeed, will be missed by so many next year, but we all wish her the happiest retirement! (Alyshia Shelton, TVI/ O&M Practicum Student)
- Nancy Knight, who is the other Nancy from "The Nancys" in the visually impaired program, has been at my side in LPS for a quarter of a century. I was a TVI/COMS in LPS before she started in the district and I will be in LPS after her retirement. It will never be the same! These years have been professionally fulfilling with Nancy Knight at my side. She lives her faith through her teaching of others- not just her students and parents, but colleagues have learned from her knowledge and her genuine, loving manner. On a personal note, she is a giver- of support, prayers, laughter/humor, and dear friendship. (Nancy Cozart, TVI & O&M Specialist)



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

Lifetime Achievement: Scott LaBarre. This award would be given posthumously to his wife Anahit to honor Scott's many contributions over his lifespan as a passionate advocate for the rights of blind people. Words used to describe Scott during the January Celebration of Life Service included "dynamic, dedicated, diligent, determined, hardworking, passionate, kind, and gentle." What I remember was that booming voice, filled with expectation of work yet to be done. He took a great interest in how to support the lives of blind children and adults.

Scott was a champion for blind people within Colorado. He served as affiliate NFB president in Colorado from 2005 until 2021. He led the State NFB Conventions with a conviction for empowerment. He was named one of Colorado's Super Lawyers and Best Lawyers, a distinction reserved for the top five percent of Colorado attorneys. He was a founding member of the Disability Rights Bar Association and served on its Executive Board as vice chair. He was a role model to many.

Scott was a champion of people across the United States for the many years he served as chief counsel for the National Federation of the Blind, which also involved managing a multi-million-dollar legal advocacy program. He made a name for himself not only among blind people but among colleagues who also practice in the legal profession across the country. Because of Scott, applicants can now use assistive technology as an accommodation on the multistate bar examination and can pursue a Doctor of Chiropractic degree with their desired accommodations

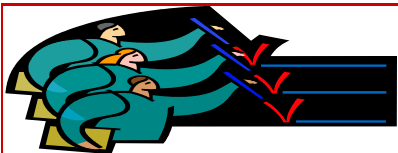
Scott was a champion for blind people across the world as he was instrumental in the drafting and adoption of the Marrakesh Treaty, permitting the sharing of books in special formats among the blind and print disabled of many countries.

There are many other contributions and tales to tell of this great man. He changed laws, practices, minds, and hearts. We are better because of him and will do better because of him. His lifetime achievements truly matter. (Nomination made by Tanni Anthony)

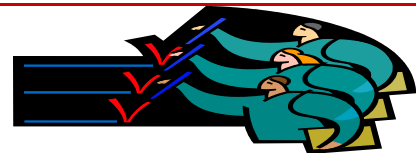
President's Award: Kaitlin Lombardi received this award. Kaitlin has been involved in the field of BVI for over 16 years. During this time, she has been employed and volunteered at many districts and organizations around the State of Colorado. Kaitlin has provided instruction and services where, if she was not doing so, many children and families would have to have gone without this important support. Kaitlin is dedicated, hardworking, resourceful, and all-around amazing human being! She does not shy away from challenges, especially when it will benefit children or the profession. I have personally been on numerous committees, CAER Boards, snowshoeing trips, and adventures with Kaitlin. She does an exceptional job of ensuring that all the asked are covered, challenging for all individuals involved and fun!

Kaitlin takes the time to continually grow professionally as well. She becomes involved with committees both in the Metro Denver area and at the state level. Kaitlin educates herself in many different aspects of education and has obtained the Perkins School for the Blind CVI Certification. All her lessons are well planned and created with care to not only educate the student but create challenges that push them to be better humans. Kaitlin epitomizes the spirit of the Gary Schmidt Award and my hope is that CAER will consider for such an honor. (Nomination made by Barb Galgano / Trina Boyd Pratt).

Gary Schmidt Award: Elsa D'Angelo received this award. Else has always been a compassionate teacher and leader on the DPS Team. My experience with her as a Director of Youth Programs at the CCB has always been positive. However, it is when I began working as a DPS team member, that I realized how diligent, kind, invested in her students and staff she is. At the same time, I love how she is not afraid to show her human side, the fact that sometimes we do not have the answers, sometimes we have questions that will provoke a good discussion. I enjoy watching how she is willing to take a risk of asking a question that does not have a right or wrong answer. The level of support she provides the team members with is incredible. Elsa is a kind and dedicated leader and creative and supportive teacher. (Nomination made by Anahit LaBarre)



CHECK IT OUT!

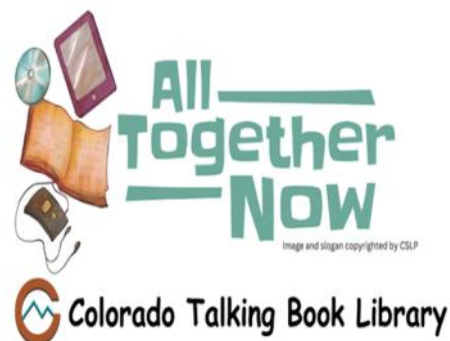


Reminder from the Feds— In March 2023, the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) emailed copies of two memoranda to IDEA Part B Directors and Section 619 Coordinators regarding the child find requirements in IDEA. OSEP took this action in response to concerns that initial evaluations to determine whether a child has a disability have sometimes been delayed or denied by LEAs until a child goes through a state’s multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) process, sometimes referred to as Response to Intervention (RTI). Read OSEP’s correspondence and connect with the memos at the link in the title.

[RTI/MTSS May Not Be Used to Delay or Deny IDEA Evaluation](#)

Summer Reading 2023 - Reading for All - When you think about summer reading you might think that it’s just for kids, or that it requires meticulously keeping track of each minute spent reading. This year we’re changing things a bit and CTBL’s Summer Reading program, All Together Now™, will be open to all library patrons- from preschoolers to those whose school days were long ago and everyone in between! Instead of tracking minutes, this year you’ll complete ten activities from our Activity Guide. Starting June 5th call (303) 727-9277 or 800-685-2136) or email ctbl.info@cde.state.co.us to let us know you would like to participate, and we’ll send you a small prize just for signing up!

In the spirit of this year’s All Together Now™ theme, when you sign-up you will have a chance to vote for an organization that the Friends of CTBL will donate to at the end of the program. The more people complete the program, the larger the donation will be. There will also be online programs hosted by the National Library Service throughout the summer, including a special kick-off event June 26th. Details will be available on www.myctbl.org

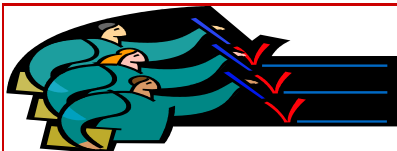


The Blind Coloradan Blog—Kevan Worley does a Blind Coloradan Blog that has great stories and information. It is a blog of reflection, contemplation, and celebration. He would love for you to take time to read it and share it with students and families.

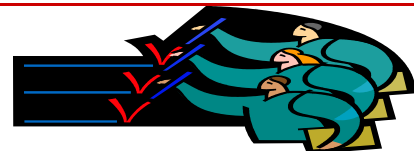
Check it out at: <https://theblindcoloradan.blogspot.com/>.

TEDx Talk— Please take moment to check out Rishika Kartik’s TEDxTalk! The topic is Creativity is More Accessible Than Meets The Eye. In my talk, Rishika highlights her personal experiences working with the blind/visually impaired community and how the community has inspired her to become an advocate for accessibility and creativity. She shares, “When we create things with accessibility in mind, we make them better for everyone. And when we embrace creativity, we can unlock our own potential and create a more

CVI Scotland— CVI-SIM (Virtual Reality Simulation Programme) Update! The St Andrews University team have secured funding to develop CVI-SIM to make the actual programme available & considerably extend the virtual world, to be relevant for both adults & children affected by CVI. Also, two new St Andrews MSC Computer Science students are joining the team for summer projects. They are very excited and can’t wait to share their progress with you. https://cviscotland.org/mem_portal.php?article=267



CHECK IT OUT!



Southeast Deafblind Webinar



The Arkansas Project
CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH SENSORY IMPAIRMENTS
and additional disabilities
 1401 West Capitol Ave. Suite 450 Little Rock, AR 72201
 (501)682-4221

May 18, 2023

Presenter: Dr. Gordon Dutton Title: Understanding CVI in Children, and Helping Those Affected: With a Focus on Dorsal Stream Sparring and Dysfunction



GEORGIA
SENSORY
ASSISTANCE
PROJECT

Bio: Professor Gordon Dutton is a Pediatric Ophthalmologist who worked for over 20 years at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Glasgow. He is now Emeritus Professor of Visual Science at Glasgow Caledonian University. His current special interests include medical education and cerebral visual impairment (CVI) in both children and adults. Professor Dutton has lectured as a Keynote Speaker on a range of ophthalmic topics in relation to pediatric ophthalmology, both nationally and internationally. He has contributed to over 200 refereed publications, and to four textbooks concerning cerebral visual impairment in children, as well as to two information websites for teachers and parents, namely ‘The CVI Society’ and ‘CVI Scotland’.

Summary: The aim of this presentation is to help us understand how the two pathways in the brain, the dorsal and ventral streams, can be disordered by injury or dysfunction and the nature of the outcomes.

First a case in which the occipital lobes and ventral stream have been lost will be described. This will show how the dorsal stream works. Next, cases in which the dorsal stream is disordered but the ventral stream is intact will be shown to illustrate the origin and nature of the resulting experience. Dorsal stream dysfunction is the commonest visual disorder in those with cerebral visual impairments. The aim of this talk will be to explain what the dorsal stream does, and to highlight what it is like to live with dorsal stream dysfunction, so that we can all come to better understand and optimally help those affected.

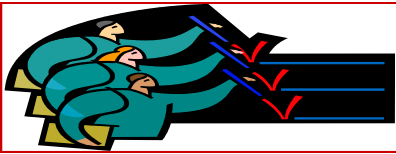
Documents:

1. [Identifying and characterizing cerebral visual impairment in children: a review.](#)
2. [Perceptual visual dysfunction in children.](#)

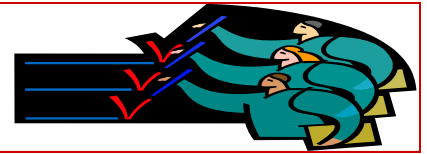


[Southeast Regional DeafBlind Webinar: Gordon Dutton registration](#)





CHECK IT OUT!



CCB Youth Services Summer Programs

The Colorado Center for the Blind's Youth Services will offer three summer programs. All will be held at the Colorado Center for the Blind, which is located at 2233 W. Shepperd Avenue in Littleton, CO. For questions about any of the programs, please be in touch with Chaz Davis at (303) 778-1130, x212, or email at cdavis@cocenter.org

Confidence Camp/BELL Academy

Dates: June 12 - 23, 2023 **Ages:** 5 to 10 years **Location:** Colorado Center for the Blind

Program Description: This two-week day program will be filled with learning, challenge, and fun. Your child will meet competent blind role models who will work with the kids on cooking, cleaning, Braille, independent travel, and technology. The kids will learn how to take the bus and use the light rail. They'll have fun swimming, rock climbing, making a tactile art piece and going on exciting field trips.

To apply, please navigate to: <https://nfb.org/programs-services/education/nfb-bell-academy/nfb-bell-colorado>

Coding/Robotics Camp

Dates: June 13-16, 2023 **Ages:** 13-17 years **Location:** Colorado Center for the Blind

Program Description: Okay, what if you had a robot that could do your chores, things like take out the trash or do the dishes. The Colorado Center for the Blind, in partnership with cyber.org, is offering a coding/robotics program for kids in the Metro Denver area this summer! There will be three days of coding and robotics taught by the cyber.org experts, daily from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and tailored for blind and low vision students. The final half-day will be a kayaking trip to nearby Chatfield Reservoir! We'll need some physical activity after all that brain work.

No Limits to Learning Camp

Dates: July 9 to August 4, 2023 **Ages:** 14 to 21 **Location:** Colorado Center for the Blind

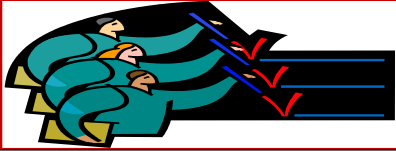
Program Description: This four-week residential program will change your life. You will live in an apartment with other students and a staff member. Learn about the world of work and meet blind people who work in all kinds of jobs. Challenge yourself through our program by participating in rock climbing, goal ball, boating, and much more. Build your core skills in Braille, technology, home management and cane travel. Expand your skill set in STEM fields with hands-on experiments using accessible, nonvisual tools and strategies. College coming up soon? Learn what it takes to be successful, including how to navigate the unfamiliar new landscape of higher education. You will learn that being blind will not limit you from pursuing your dreams.

Admission Requirements for All Programs

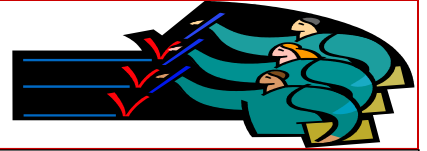
- Must be legally blind
- Interested in learning non-visual techniques
- Age 14 to 21
- Possess stamina to handle a full day of class and activities
- Independent with self-care skills

Admission Process: First, complete the online application by May 2, 2023: <https://cocenter.org/summer-application/>

Typically, vocational rehabilitation agencies are able to fund our program as part of their Pre-ETS programs. We can assist you with the approval process if necessary. Discuss your interest in our program with your rehabilitation counselor if you have one. The staff at the Colorado Center for the Blind will interview each applicant.



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

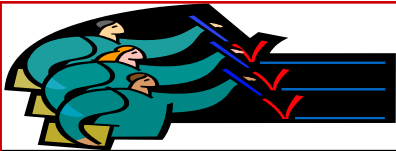
The [National AEM Center at CAST](#) has developed resources to support students who need accessible materials and technologies while learning remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.



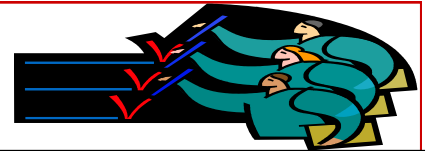
** eBooks

[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!



APH Abacus Bee

Created in China in 1200 C.E., the abacus is an ancient tool used by generations of mathematicians and students before the invention of the calculator. Despite its age, the abacus remains one of the most effective tools for teaching math basics accessibly to students who are blind or low vision. In 2022, APH kicked off their first Abacus Bee competition for students in celebration of this foundational tool.

Get Your Bee On

Interested in having your student participate in the next Abacus Bee? The American Printing House for the Blind plans to hold preliminary rounds in the fall of 2023, between August and December, with Finals taking place March 21-24, 2024! Reach out to our Outreach Team at outreach@aph.org to learn how your region can participate or let Jim Olson know and he can find out for us!

2023 National Convention Registration Open

The National Federation of the Blind National Convention is the largest gathering of blind people in the world. It is the premier event for training, support, and information for the blind community. It also serves as a governing body, democratically electing our [leadership](#) and establishing each year's organizational priorities. Join us for the largest event of the year, July 1 through July 6. Our empowering convention is fast-paced, fascinating, and fun. [Register now for #NFB23.](#)

Global Accessibility Awareness Day

May 18 is Global Accessibility Awareness Day ([#GAAD](#)). To highlight GAAD, OSERS & the Office of Education Technology (OET) have teamed up to share accessibility resources all month. We'll [tweet resources all month](#), but you can also check two of them out now:

- **OSERS Blog | Accelerate Access**

Read OSERS Blog post: [Accelerate Access: OSERS Resources for Digital Accessibility in Education](#)

- **OET Medium | Celebrating GAAD: Accessibility Resources for Educational Communities**

Read OET's Medium post: [Celebrating GAAD: Accessibility Resources for Educational Communities.](#)



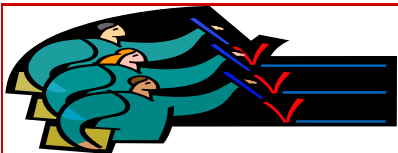
OSERS/OET May 18 Webinar | Implementing Accessibility: Learning from the South Carolina Department of Education Join the May 18, 2023, 2–3 p.m. EDT live Webinar after completing [this registration form](#)

Wednesday, May 24, 2023, 7:00 – 7:30 PM EST

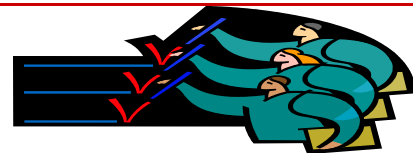
Physical Activity and Mental Health in Youth with Visual Impairments

Physical activity is important for a child's physical development as well as their overall mental health. You will hear the latest research on physical activity and mental health in youth who are blind or low vision. You will be provided with strategies for increasing their physical activity participation levels.

[Register Here for Physical Activity and Mental Health in Youth with Visual Impairments](#)



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



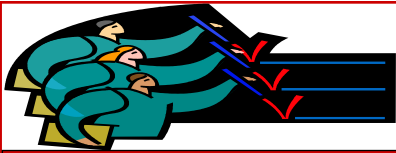
The 2023 Virtual Conference for Assistive Technology and Education (CATE) will be held on June 5 - 6, 2023. Learn more by visiting the [CATE Webpage](#). Registration and schedule are coming soon!

Take a sneak peek at our workshops and breakout sessions:

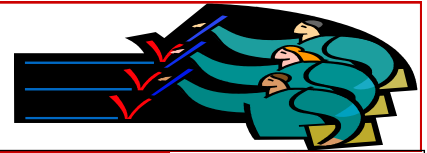
- Augmentative and Alternative Communication: Positioning to Optimize Function and Determining and Optimizing Access
- Make Stuff and Love People, Part 2: New Tools, Materials and Techniques
- Mission Possible: Robots Provide Inclusive School Experiences for Homebound Students
- AAC and Gestalt Language 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!



Welcome to the Future of Teaching



NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND

Live the life you want.

Applications open for professional development program.

EMPOWER YOUR STUDENTS. CREATE LIFELONG CONNECTIONS.

The National Federation of the Blind Teachers of Tomorrow is an immersive, professional development program connecting teachers of blind and low-vision students to the lived experiences of blind people. We equip participants with knowledge about the skills and attitudes that help blind students succeed in school and beyond.

- Connect with fellow teachers
- Develop relationships with blind adults
- Learn skills that will benefit you and your students for years to come

If you are preparing for a career in teaching blind students, or if you are an early career educator looking to enhance your teaching, the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) invites you to apply for a spot in the 2023-2024 cohort, kicking off this fall.



One member of the 2022 cohort said, “It has truly been a pleasure being a part of the Teachers of Tomorrow program. It has been phenomenal, and I want more. I also want to give back in other ways. As a blind individual, I received negative connotations about the NFB, but they were false. This program and these approaches are priceless for lack of better terms.”

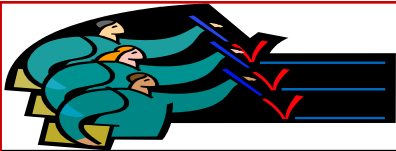
Applications Due May 31, 2023

[Learn more about the program and apply today!](#)

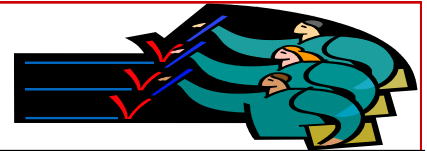
We look forward to your participation and support.

About Our Education Initiatives

The National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines the future for blind students. Through our extensive education programs, we present blind students with new ideas, expose teachers and families to our positive philosophy on blindness, and encourage blind youth to reach their full potential.



CHECK IT OUT!



This study is being completed by Dr. Susan Bruce, Chris Brum, and Dr. Sarah Ivy

Here is what we are looking for:

- A student with visual impairment (under 18 years old)
- Who has been successful with a tactile tangible symbol system
- Has to have at least 10 symbols (but doesn't have to know or use them all)
- Success is defined by the teacher!
- Anywhere in the U.S.



STUDY00000326
FSU IRB Approved
3 October 2019

DO YOU USE TANGIBLE SYMBOLS WITH A STUDENT WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT?

We are conducting a study to describe how students with visual impairment are using tactile tangible symbols systems, and need your help!

What are tactile tangible symbol systems?

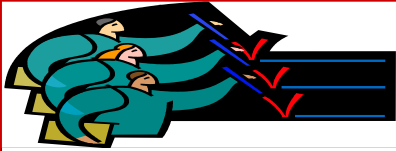
A set of whole or partial objects used to represent objects, people, places, actions, or ideas for expressive or receptive communication purposes.

Who can participate?

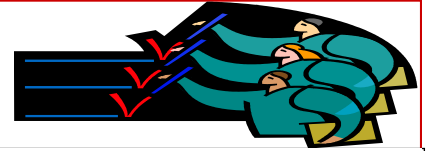
We are looking for school professionals who, during the school day, are responsible for the majority of communication interactions with at least one student with visual impairment, at any age or ability level, who has been successful with learning a tactile tangible symbol system. The school professional must have played a major role in the development of the tactile tangible symbol system.

What is involved?

- An approximately 1-hour interview about the design, development, and implementation of tactile tangible symbol systems
- A short survey on student characteristics
- A day in which researchers observe interactions using tactile tangible symbol systems in the school
- We will also ask for parent permission to observe their child and collect artifacts related to the tactile tangible symbol system



CHECK IT OUT!



Mental Health

Supporting Children's Mental Health: Tips for Parents and Educators

Create a sense of belonging. Feeling connected and welcomed is essential to children's positive adjustment, self-identification, and sense of trust in others and themselves. Building strong, positive relationships among students, school staff, and parents is important to promoting mental wellness.

Promote resilience. Adversity is a natural part of life and being resilient is important to overcoming challenges and good mental health. Connectedness, competency, helping others, and successfully facing difficult situations can foster resilience.

Develop competencies. Children need to know that they can overcome challenges and accomplish goals through their actions. Achieving academic success and developing individual talents and interests helps children feel competent and more able to deal with stress positively. Social competency is also important. Having friends and staying connected to friends and loved ones can enhance mental wellness.

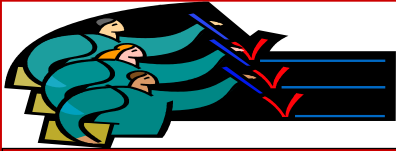
Ensure a positive, safe school environment. Feeling safe is critical to students' learning and mental health. Promote positive behaviors such as respect, responsibility, and kindness. Prevent negative behaviors such as bullying and harassment. Provide easily understood rules of conduct and fair discipline practices and ensure an adult presence in common areas, such as hallways, cafeterias, locker rooms, and playgrounds. Teach children to work together to stand up to a bully, encourage them to reach out to lonely or excluded peers, celebrate acts of kindness, and reinforce the availability of adult support.

Teach and reinforce positive behaviors and decision making. Provide consistent expectations and support. Teaching children social skills, problem solving, and conflict resolution supports good mental health. "Catch" them being successful. Positive feedback validates and reinforces behaviors or accomplishments that are valued by others.

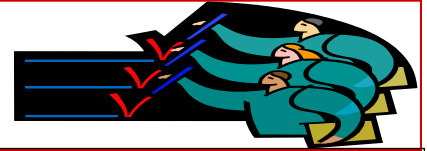
Encourage helping others. Children need to know that they can make a difference. Pro-social behaviors build self-esteem, foster connectedness, reinforce personal responsibility, and present opportunities for positive recognition. Helping others and getting involved in reinforces being part of the community.

Encourage good physical health. Good physical health supports good mental health. Healthy eating habits, regular exercise and adequate sleep protect kids against the stress of tough situations. Regular exercise also decreases negative emotions such as anxiety, anger, and depression.

Educate staff, parents and students on symptoms of and help for mental health problems. Information helps break down the stigma surrounding mental health and enables adults



CHECK IT OUT!



Supporting Children's Mental Health: Tips for Parents and Educators

and students recognize when to seek help. School mental health professionals can provide useful information on symptoms of problems like depression or suicide risk. These can include a change in habits, withdrawal, decreased social and academic functioning, erratic or changed behavior, and increased physical complaints.

Ensure access to school-based mental health supports. School psychologists, counselors, and social workers can provide a continuum of mental health services for students ranging from universal mental wellness promotion and behavior supports to staff and parent training, identification and assessment, early interventions, individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, and referral for community services.

Provide a continuum of mental health services. School mental health services are part of a continuum of mental health care for children and youth. Build relationships with community mental health resources. Be able to provide names and numbers to parents.

Establish a crisis response team. Being prepared to respond to a crisis is important to safeguarding students' physical and mental well-being. School crisis teams should include relevant administrators, security personnel and mental health professionals who collaborate with community resources. In addition to safety, the team provides mental health prevention, intervention, and postvention services.

© 2017, National Association of School Psychologists, 4340 East West Highway, Suite 402, Bethesda, MD 20814, 301-657-0270, www.nasponline.org

NASP has developed a [Spanish translation of this handout](#) to share with Spanish speaking students, families, and staff.

Contributor: Katherine C. Cowan

Please cite this document as:

National Association of School Psychologists. (2017). *Supporting children's mental health: Tips for parents and educators* [Handout]. Bethesda, MD: Author.

Resources and Materials

New NCEO Product

The National Center on Educational Outcomes has a new product called [Communicating about Annual State Assessment Participation for All Students: A Communication Toolkit](#). It can be used when communicating with educators, policymakers, families, and students about why it is important that students participate in

OSEP Fast Fact on Students with Traumatic Brain Injury Served Under IDEA, Part B

OSEP's latest [OSEP Fast Facts: Students Identified With Traumatic Brain Injury](#) takes a closer look at data from the data collections authorized under IDEA Section 618 including those collected through child count, educational environments, discipline and exiting data collections with a lens on students identified with traumatic brain injury.

Highlights from OSEP Fast Facts: Students Identified with Traumatic Brain Injury

Students with traumatic brain injury are less likely to be identified for special education and related services in the age range 5–11 and more likely to be identified for special education and related services in the age range 12–17 than all students with disabilities.

In school year 2021–22, White students are more likely to be identified with traumatic brain injury and Hispanic/Latino students were less likely to be identified with traumatic brain injury than all students with disabilities.

In SY 2020–21, children with traumatic brain injury, ages 14–21, exiting school were more likely to graduate and less likely to drop out than all students with disabilities.

In SY 2021–22, students with traumatic brain injury were less likely to be served inside a regular class 80% or more of the day than all students with disabilities.

Guidelines for Determining Frequency of Services to Support Learners with CVI

CViConnect's Stephanie Steffer and TVI Chaesa MacWilliams, have released [The Guidelines for Determining the Frequency of Services to Support Learners with CVI](#), to support educators in this task. This document provides a comprehensive overview of the factors that should be considered when determining the appropriate frequency of services for children with CVI.

The guidelines are based on the principles of the CVI Range, which is a comprehensive tool used to assess and support the visual functioning of children with CVI. The document outlines the various stages of the CVI Range and provides specific recommendations for frequency of services based on the child's stage of visual functioning.

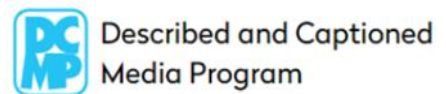
The tool requires professionals to use the data they have collected about their students and their professional judgment to determine how the services should look, and what needs will be addressed during these service times. It was designed as a guideline, to assist Individualized Educational Programming (IEP) teams. At each IEP meeting, service time and delivery are ultimately the IEP team's decision

For more details, go to [The Path to Literacy Resource Webpage](#)

Resources and Materials

Described and Captioned Media Program

The Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP) provides a streaming library of [accessible education videos](#), teaching tools, and [professional development opportunities](#). They [partner](#) with educational content creators to provide high-quality [captioning](#), audio description, and American Sign Language (ASL) translation. Check out their work and inventory.



Launch into STEM: Upcoming Event for Blind and Low-Vision Students

Hands-on activities. Accessible graphics. Blind role models.

The National Federation of the Blind works to improve opportunities for blind students in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). NFB STEM2U brings nonvisual accessible lessons and activities to blind youth. Students of varying ages across the country will learn fundamental nonvisual tools and techniques they can use to pursue further education and careers.

This program is great for youth in grades three through twelve* who:

- Are interested in experiments and investigations
- Could benefit from fun programs specific to blind students
- Need hands-on, nonvisual skills training opportunities

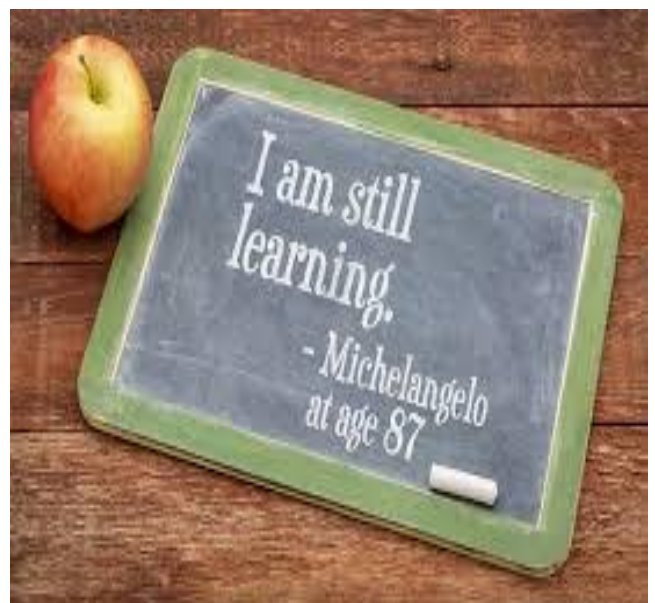
**Some programs may accept students in younger grades.*

The theme this year is space! In collaboration with the Center of Science and Industry (COSI) join us for a day of excitement as we build and launch rockets, create a moon base, learn about the impact of craters, and make a parachute.

STEM can be accessible; let us show you how!

To learn more and to register visit:

<https://nfb.org/programs-services/education/nfb-stem2u>



Resources and Materials

New Webinar Recording: Evaluating Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

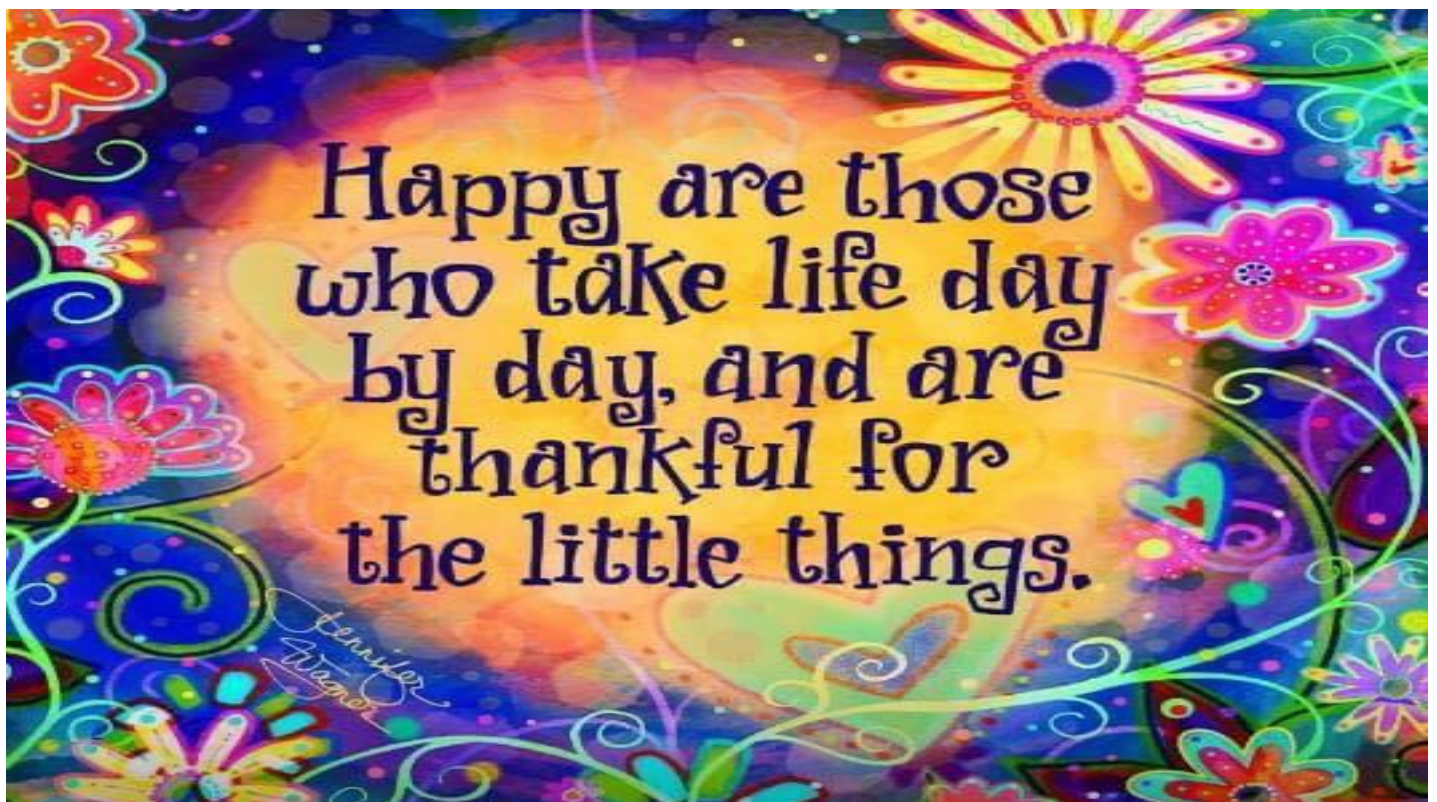
Do you need practical strategies for evaluating how early childhood practitioners are doing with implementing evidence-based practices? Not sure what to do with all the data you've already collected? The [DaSy Center's latest webinar](#) can help. Presenters discuss and share tips on high quality evaluation practices and analysis. Discussion includes what to measure, how to measure it, and what to do with all your data.

New IRIS Modules for Secondary Classrooms

The [IRIS Center](#) has just posted secondary versions for two of our most popular IRIS Modules. These self-paced, online modules can be embedded in educator preparation courses and school or district PD activities:

[Addressing Challenging Behaviors \(Part 1, Secondary\): Understanding the Acting-Out Cycle](#) discusses challenging behavior in terms of the seven phases of the acting-out cycle and offers strategies and tips for responding to students in each phase.

[Addressing Challenging Behaviors \(Part 2, Secondary\): Behavioral Strategies](#) describes six low-intensity strategies that can increase initial compliance to teacher requests and prevent or decrease challenging behaviors. The low-intensity strategies include: behavior-specific praise, pre-correction, active supervision, high-probability requests, and opportunities to respond. The module also explores differential reinforcement of alternative behavior (DRA) for situations when low-intensity strategies are not sufficient to prevent or de-escalate a student's challenging behavior. Both modules include classroom video examples, [free PD Certificates of Completion](#), Kahoot games, and more.





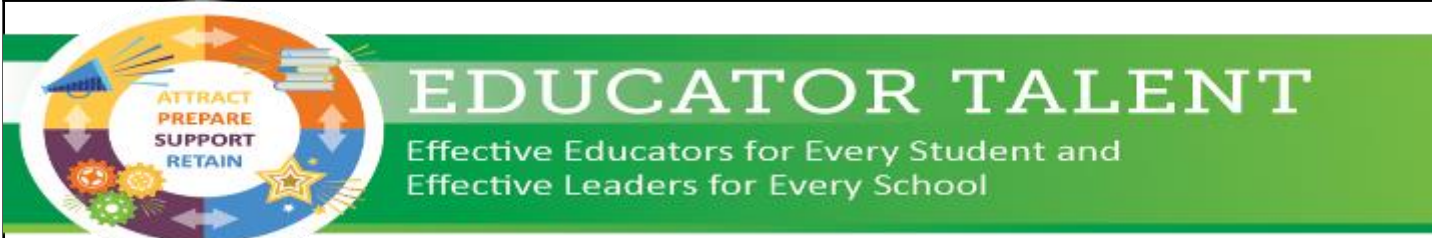
Initial Licensure and Endorsement Specific to Special Education Specialist: VI

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 350 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 Certified O&M Specialist 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

⠠ ⠠ ⠠ ⠠ ⠠ ⠠ ⠠ ⠠
You can do it !



Colorado Educator Talent Pool Recommendations

CDE seeks applications and recommendations for the Colorado Educator Talent Pool. Elementary and secondary educators who have a minimum of five years of experience and who demonstrate unusual instructional and leadership abilities are encouraged to submit their name for consideration. The recommendation deadline is Friday, June 2.

The Colorado Educator Talent Pool is a list of candidates for advisory boards, task forces and special recognition programs. Your recommendations will identify educators who will be of great value to your community and state and who may also ultimately be considered for a prestigious recognition.

[For more information and to access the Talent Pool Recommendation Form, visit the Colorado Educator Talent Pool webpage.](#)

Watch for Standards Review and Revision Committee Applications in August 2023

The Colorado Academic Standards benchmarking process is underway for the content areas of computer science, English language proficiency, physical education, and world languages. The State Board of Education plans to discuss and decide on revisions based on the benchmarking reports at their August meeting. If the board decides revisions are necessary, CDE will solicit applications for standards revision committees. The committees are essential to ensuring stakeholder engagement in the standards revision process. PK-12 educators, higher education professionals, parents, business community members and students will all be welcome to apply to be on a standards revision committee. If committees are needed, applications will open in mid-August.

Colorado statute requires one-third of the Colorado Academic Standards to be reviewed every two years. The review process begins with a benchmarking study comparing the CAS to high-quality national, state and international standards. Updates and additional information will be posted to the [Colorado Academic Standards Review and Revision webpage](#).

Teacher Retention Focus Groups: We Want to Hear From Teachers!

Are you a current or former Colorado teacher willing to share what motivated you to become a teacher and what drives you to continue to teach or why you left the profession?

As part of efforts to improve teacher retention, CDE and the Colorado Department of Higher Education have partnered with the Regional Educational Laboratory, or REL Central, to conduct virtual focus groups in spring 2023 to learn what influenced people's decisions to become a teacher, what encourages them to stay, what prompts them to leave or what caused them to move away from teaching altogether. All teachers are invited, especially our BIPOC educators. Feel free to forward this invitation to those interested.

[Complete this brief form to express interest in participation.](#)

Questions? Contact Carolyn Haug at haug_c@cde.state.co.us.

Educator Recruitment and Retention—Know Someone Who Would Be an Incredible ECE Teacher?

TEACH Colorado has been hard at work expanding its [free resources to support universal preschool](#) and to broaden the funnel of aspiring early childhood educators. These future world-changers have access to a growing [suite of resources](#), including a new early childhood educator guide to simplify information about qualification pathways, \$50 career stipends, and advising in both English and Spanish from early childhood career experts.

Contact Elizabeth Cordova at ecordova@teachcolorado.org for more information.



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)



Native American Resource Collection

Check out this invaluable resource collection designed expressly for Parent Centers to support new and current staff in their outreach to Native American parents of children with disabilities. The collection is organized in 4 tiers of learning that reflect what we know about journeys of multicultural growth. Each product within contains current information about the traditional culture and contemporary issues important to Native families. Consider, for example, articles such as [Cultural Awareness and Connecting with Native Communities](#) and [The Impact of Traditional Native Values on Transition Planning](#).

FREE CONFERENCE: Multilingual Learners: A Collaborative Approach to Success

The CDE is proud to offer a FREE one-day in-person conference in Grand Junction, CO on June 15th. The conference is offered to special education teams and ELD teachers to learn about culturally and linguistically responsive special education evaluation process, as well as specially designed instruction for MLs. We will have a keynote and a panel discussion. [Click here to learn more.](#) [Click here to register with your team!](#)






Calendar of Events

2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
May 17	Sound Bites— 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. on Assessment of Students with BVI Register: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/1959b4c9d59a4914896bfce0ac5f9bfb										
May 18	World Accessibility Awareness Day										
June 3	Retirement Party for Dr. Tom Theune— Colorado Springs										
June 5—6	Conference for AT and Education (CATE)— Denver Contact: www.swaaac.org										
June 12-17	Camp Abilities Four Corners 2023 - Cameron, Arizona Contact: campabilitiesfourcorners@gmail.com										
June 12-23	Confidence Camp/BELL Academy - Colorado Center for the Blind Contact: Chaz Davis at (303) 778-1130, x212, or email at cdavis@cocenter.org										
June 13-16	Coding / Robotics Camp - Colorado Center for the Blind Contact: Chaz Davis at (303) 778-1130, x212, or email at cdavis@cocenter.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										
July 9—August 4	No Limits to Learning Camp - Colorado Center for the Blind Contact: Chaz Davis at (303) 778-1130, x212, or email at cdavis@cocenter.org										
July 24-27	International Conference on Low Vision— Denver, CO Register: https://www.vision2023denver.com/										
September 15	Colorado AT Expo — SAVE the DATE										



Calendar of Events

2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023 2023

September 20 **Vision Coalition Meeting**—virtual
Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

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.

Registration Now Open for Camp Abilities Four Corners 2023



Inviting visually impaired athletes ages 9-17 to attend a **FUN FILLED** week of camp!

When: Monday, **June 12** (arrival 1 PM) to **June 17, 2023** (depart 3 PM)

Possible Activities: swimming, paddle boarding, golf, rock climbing, horsemanship, hiking, basketball, and soccer.

Location: Cameron Trading Post, Cameron, Arizona (1 hour northeast of Flagstaff, AZ)

Cost: \$200 per athlete (payment accepted via check, mail order, Venmo, Pay Pal, or Zelle)

Interested? Fill out the interest form under the Athlete Registration tab at www.campabilitiesfourcorners.org

Need More Information: Email campabilitiesfourcorners@gmail.com



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

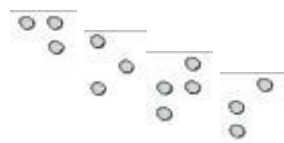
*Registration rates increase on May 1st

Register at [Eventbrite](#)

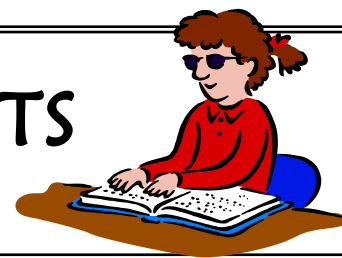
The Western Regional Early Intervention Conference (WREIC) is designed to support professionals working with children birth to five who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Blind/Visually Impaired or Deaf-Blind, and their families.

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, please contact Tanni.

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 2023 assistance, please be in touch with Tanni first to secure an available proctor / mentor.

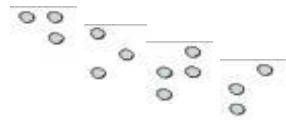
UEB Technical Versus Nemeth Braille Codes

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 an 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

- Kirk McCall (303) 875-4527 (phone) and email km2320@msn.com
- Mark Carpenter (719) 634-8720 (phone) and email carpdiane@yahoo.com





CONNECTING THE DOTS



Attend 2023 NFB BELL® Academy: Registration Now Open!

[En español](#)

Enhance Braille and nonvisual skills with us in our summer program for blind and low-vision children. NFB BELL In-Home Edition is a virtual program that will be held July 24 through August 11. In person programs are available in states across the country. The current list of in-person programs includes:

- Ruston, Louisiana – June 4-10 Clarksville, Tennessee – May 30-June 3
- McCall, Idaho – July 24-29

The NFB BELL Academy—which stands for National Federation of the Blind Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning®—is a nationwide (United States and Puerto Rico) summer program that prepares blind and low-vision children to grow into confident and independent blind people who live the lives they want.

Who Should Attend: Blind and low-vision children, ages four through twelve*, who:

- Could benefit from more Braille exposure over the summer
- Would enjoy connecting with other blind and low-vision children
- Enjoy learning from blind role models



*Please note that some in-person programs may accept blind children who are older than twelve. Review details of each program for more details on eligibility. *Register Today:* [Learn more and register now!](#)

BANA's position on UEB and Nemeth

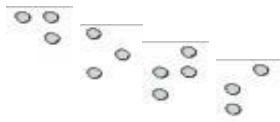
As a result of lengthy and in-depth discussions over several days in November 2015, the BANA Board members representing United States organizations approved the following statement regarding braille math and technical materials as it relates to the adoption of UEB in the United States.

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) recognizes and appreciates the genuine concerns from the braille community regarding the transition to Unified English Braille (UEB). BANA stands by our original motion to adopt UEB as a complete code as well as the implementation statement issued in 2014 in which we expressed that the Nemeth Code remains integral to braille in the United States. The Board of BANA could not reach consensus regarding the establishment of a single standard code for technical materials for braille in the United States. **The decision to use UEB or the Nemeth Code within UEB context for technical materials should be made based on braille readers' individual needs.**

<https://www.brailleauthority.org/november-2015-bana-takes-action-fall-meeting-crystal-lake-il>

Key Points

- There is no default math code. The code that is used by individual children can be EITHER UEB or Nemeth.
- Every other country that has adopted UEB is using ONLY UEB for all materials and has ceased to use Nemeth including Canada and New Zealand, or whatever their former math code was (which includes Australia, Ireland, the UK, and South Africa. Students in those countries continue to major in math and science, do all their work in UEB, and are go on to college. UEB is structured differently than Nemeth but it's perfectly capable of doing math and science at all levels.
- Since UEB contains symbols for all the math symbols, kids will see symbols such as the degree sign, percent sign, signs of operation and comparison etc. in all kinds of materials—cookbooks, weather reports, news reports that include stats, etc. In other words, kids will be learning all those symbols in UEB anyway . . . so the contention that learning these symbols is "added work" is also not correct.
- The Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) will be available in UEB starting next year.



CONNECTING THE DOTS



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

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:** June 5, 2023 to July 14, 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 and earn 80% or higher on the posttest, you will receive a certificate.

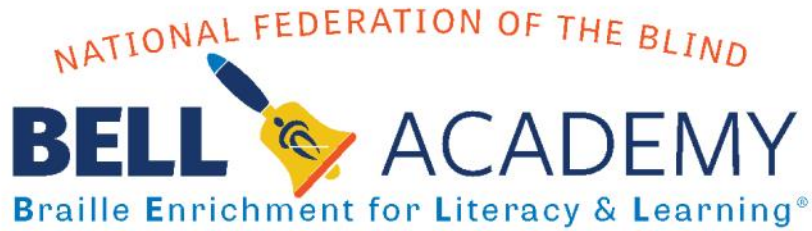
How can I learn more and sign up for a course?

Please complete the sign up form at https://uofsc.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8fis5XWKXsBJF1Y

You will then receive additional information the morning of June 5, 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



2023 Summer Program for Blind & Low-Vision Children: Enhance Braille and Nonvisual Skills

Coming soon to Littleton, Colorado!

The NFB BELL Academy—which stands for National Federation of the Blind Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning®—helps blind and low-vision children, ages four through twelve, develop the literacy skills that will empower them to achieve their academic goals and live the lives they want.



Receive Braille instruction and other nonvisual blindness skills through fun, hands-on learning.

Take advantage of this opportunity for your child to **connect with blind role models, students, and more!**

NFB BELL Academy will be offered at the Colorado Center for the Blind, June 12-23. Registration fee \$100. For additional information and to register visit our website at nfb.org/bell.





Programa de verano 2023 para niños ciegos y con baja visión: Mejore las habilidades en braille y no visuales

Próximamente en Littleton, Colorado!

La Academia NFB BELL, que son las siglas de National Federation of the Blind (Federación Nacional de Ciegos) Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning®, ayuda a los niños ciegos y con baja visión, de cuatro a doce años de edad, a desarrollar las habilidades de alfabetización que los capacitarán para lograr sus metas académicas y vivir las vidas que quieren.



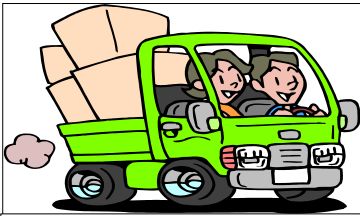
Reciba instrucción en Braille y otras habilidades no visuales a través de un aprendizaje práctico y divertido.

¡Aproveche esta oportunidad para que su hijo se **conecte con modelos a seguir ciegos, estudiantes y más!**

La Academia NFB BELL se ofrecerá en el Centro para Ciegos de Colorado, del 12 al 23 de junio. Cuota de inscripción \$100.

Para obtener información adicional y registrarse, visite nuestro sitio web en nfb.org/bell.





TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

Preparing for College and Beyond

Thanks to Lori Mattick for sharing this video on Preparing for College and Beyond from Foundations for Blind Children. It addresses what students need to be successful in college (technology, advocacy, problem solving, determination, etc.) and the work we do on a daily basis with our students. It is 33 minutes and worth the watch. Please also share with your parents. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nidT6AcDA2o>

TIME DATED!! Thursday, May 18, 2023, 6:00 – 7:30 PM EST—College Conversations: Communicating Your needs with Vocational Rehabilitation.

Many blind and low vision college students require support from rehabilitation services in their state. As systems and deliverables are facilitated uniquely in each state, College Conversations will focus on streamline approaches and provide guests with ample ideas and vetted practices that will yield and encourage a proactive rehabilitation experience. High school students preparing for university and parents wanting useful information to support their teen are encouraged to register. Join College Conversations as we learn community practices in navigating vocational rehabilitation as allies.

[Register Here for College Conversations: Communicating Your needs with Vocational Rehabilitation.](#)



What Does Accessibility Mean to You?

For Global Accessibility Awareness Day, the American Printing House of the Blind asked people who work to make the world a more inclusive place to share with us what “accessibility” means to them. Find out what the experts said and tell us what accessibility means to you (<https://www.aph.org/what-does-accessibility-mean-to-you/>)

New IEP Tip Sheet Focused on Transition Services

The PROGRESS Center has added a new tip sheet to their [IEP Tip Sheet](#) series. This tip sheet focuses on transition services, a key component of the individualized education program (IEP) once the child reaches 16 (or earlier in some states). The [transition services tip sheet](#) includes a brief summary of federal regulations, tips for implementation, and additional resources

just for PARENTS

Dear Parents,

We would appreciate your considering participating in the research study identified below.

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Chris Clark-Bischke, Ph.D. and Alexis Redford, M.Ed. at the University of Utah. The purpose of the study is to examine the impact of the transition to Unified English Braille (UEB) from the perspectives of all involved individuals (i.e. Teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs), administrators, parents, university personnel preparation program faculty, and braille transcriptionists/ paraprofessionals).

The goal is to acquire an understanding of the impact of the transition, identify supports for states/ territories and current TVIs.

For this study, participants will be asked to, complete an online survey (**less than 10 minutes**) and, if you are willing, participate in one individual interview via phone or Zoom (less than 30 minutes).

To indicate your consent to participate in this study, **and to begin the survey**, please click the following link: **Parent Survey:** https://educationutah.co1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_82Gt6zOiZgxrFxs

Please feel free to share this e-mail and the corresponding e-mail link with other relevant individuals. This e-mail includes only the Parent survey. If you do not receive the other surveys but would like access to them, please let us know. If you have questions about the study, please contact **Dr. Chris Bischke** at chris.bischke@utah.edu.

Given issues experienced by students who are blind or visually impaired, their parents, teachers of students with visual impairments, braille transcriptionists/paraprofessionals and administrators since the 2016 transition to UEB, the surveys aim to acquire information that has the potential to guide practice and policies.

Though not affiliated with any formal entity, the UEB Coalition was created several years ago with the goal of better supporting all students who are braille readers, while specifically supporting students learning the Unified English Braille Math/Science code. Members of the Unified English Braille (UEB) Coalition, have identified a need for information from the above noted individuals from across the United States so that better supports could be identified.

The UEB Coalition includes:

- ◆ Teachers of Students who are Blind or Visually Impaired (TVIs), including learners with deafblindness
- ◆ Representatives from Local and State Educational Agencies (LEAs and SEAs)
- ◆ Representatives from Instructional Material Centers and state agencies who serve individuals who are blind, visually impaired or deafblind
- ◆ Faculty from Blindness/Visual Impairment/Deafblindness personnel preparation programs and other stakeholders.

Thank you for your willingness to participate and help us identify areas where support is needed.



Multi-University Consortium
Teacher Preparation Programs
In Sensory Impairments

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!](#)

Your Child's Strengths | 127 Student Strength Examples to Swipe for your IEP

IDEA lists the *strengths of the child* as the first item of an IEP. This is a critical part of the IEP and should set the tone of the meeting.

Table of Contents:

[Your Child's Strengths](#)

[What are your Child's Strengths?](#)

[Student Strengths in the IEP](#)

[Types of Student Strengths](#)

[Student Strengths Examples](#)

Check out the [video and support documents on the strengths section of the IEP:](#)

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.

Jobs 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.
- ◆ **1 FTE for TVI/ O&M Specialist** position in Douglas county for the 23–24 school year. Interested person should please contact Peg Collins at pacollins1@dcsdk12.org or look online for their job openings.
- ◆ **1 FTE for TVI / COMS and Vision Tutor (paraeducator)** positions with Jefferson County School District. For more information, please contact Karin Neugebauer at karin.neugebauer@jeffco.k12.co.us or (303) 982-3065.
- ◆ **.5 FTE TVI / O&M Specialist Position** in Littleton School District. Please contact Jennifer Templeton at jtempleton@lps.k12.co.us

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@cldb.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 TVI and/or O&M licenses expire, as you are in a great position to keep contributing 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 on the CDE's contractor list, please be in touch with Tanni at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us.

In Gratitude and Farewell

- ◆ **Nancy Knight** leads a life of service. Nancy has been a tremendous asset to the field serving those with visual impairment. In her career, Nancy has worked with babies and adults as well as with all the ages in between. Those who have been in this field of work in Colorado for decades may have worked with Nancy at Anchor Center for Blind Children, Colorado Vocational Rehabilitation and/or Jefferson County Public Schools. For the past 26 years, Nancy has been a TVI/COMS in Littleton Public Schools. All who know Nancy in her role understand her warm, respectful, and compassionate relationships she has with each of her students, parents, and staff. Nancy has a true gift of knowing when to encourage, when to challenge or when to step back with her students. She gives so much of herself to her students, taking time for each one's personal and social life in addition to academics. She has a deep commitment to assure each student's success in life. Parents know her to be an advocate, a resource, and a supporter of their child/family. Staff know her to be a knowledgeable contributor and a welcome member of school teams across the district.



In addition to her fulltime work, Nancy has given countless hours of service through a variety of projects including recreation & leisure activities for kids in the mountains of Colorado, coordinating some of the Denver Metro Low Vision Clinics, and 'Serving Sierra Leone' in Africa. In each service project she takes on, her whole heart is in it. Her kindness and empathy towards others create an atmosphere of connectivity. Her light is reflected in those around her. We wish her the very best as she begins her retirement (still with some CO TVI / O&M contact work!)

- ◆ **Jeff Hadala** Please join Jeffco in saying goodbye and good luck to Jeff Hadala. Jeff has worked as a TVI/O&M with Jeffco for the past six years and for Adams 12 for one year prior to joining Jeffco. He will be moving back home to Illinois at the end of the school year to be closer to family. Although Jeff is sad to be leaving Colorado as he loves everything outdoors: hiking, skiing, and just Colorado in general; he is excited for new opportunities. Jeff will be working as a TVI/O&M in Woodstock, Illinois, about 45 miles northwest of Chicago. He is hoping to get a coaching job in addition to teaching, as he is a rabid soccer fan, and was recently excited to receive a handmade mug from two of his students supporting his team, "Go Chelsea!" Jeff has enjoyed working with many students and staff over the years and has learned much from them all. He was honored with a Jeffco Foundations Heroes Award in 2022-23, for the difference he makes, and we know he will continue to do so in his new endeavors. So, as Jeff returns to the comfort of the familiar and moves into new adventures, help us say thanks and good wishes for whatever is to come!



- ◆ **Jenna Martin**, COMS/TVI, will be moving to Tacoma, WA with her husband at the end of the 2022-2023 school year. She will be an O&M Specialist for a private contracting group, with placement in a local school district. Jenna originally came to CO to work for the National Park Service, and needing something to do during the off season, she became a substitute teacher with the Estes Park R-3 School District. She was soon hired as a special education paraprofessional, where she worked with her first student with a visual impairment and learned about the profession of O and M.. In May of 2018, Jenna took a leap of faith and enrolled in the Special Education: Vi program at UNC. She accepted her first teaching position just 8 months later with the Weld RE-4 School District in Windsor, CO, and was the district's first on-staff TVI. This past school year, she had the opportunity to work primarily as a COMS with the Poudre R-1 School District. Saying goodbye to her friends, colleagues, and the Colorado sunshine will be difficult, but she is excited for new adventures.



- ◆ A huge thank you to **Karen Wood** for all her work in the Colorado Springs 11 School District these past few years. She came out of retirement to support the students in this district at such a critical time. Thank you, Karen, for all your contributions over the years. Happy real retirement ahead!!



colorado connections

Braille Competency News



- ◆ Congratulations to **Gena Francouer-Anderson** from Jefferson County School District for earning her CDE Certificate of Braille Competency. Also big hats off to **Maggie Tutt** from Douglas County School District and **Sarah Goodfellow** from Poudre Public School District for earning their CDE Braille Renewal Certificates! Kudos to **Lorraine Chevarria, Melissa French, Sarah Goodfellow, Aryn McNichols, Brenna Moser, Maggie Tutt, Hanna Waldman,** and **Liz Weider** for completing braille renewal modules. Thanks for braille proctors **Nancy Cozart** and **Brenda Shepard** for their work with our braille testing candidates in April and May. Thanks to everyone for keeping our braille standards high!

Shout Outs!

- ◆ Colorado early intervention / early childhood was well represented at a recent meeting of the Early Childhood Visual Impairment Alliance, a small international workgroup dedicated to improving services for young children who are blind/visually impaired and their families. The meeting held in Louisville, KY in late April was attended by **Tanni Anthony, Meghan Classen, Paula Landry, Steve Lindauer, Tammy Miller,** and **Cathy Smyth**
- ◆ We are so very proud of **Debbie Mendoza** who successfully defended her dissertation on May 11th. We are grateful for her research and applaud the soon-to-be Dr. Mendoza on her important contributions to the field.

Many Thanks for Another GREAT School Year!

- ◆ A big thanks to the 2022-23 Vision Coalition for their active participation our meetings this school year: **Tanni Anthony, Cheryl Austin, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, Chad Davis, Melissa French, Paula Landry, Jamie Lugo, Tammy Miller, Erin Noe, Jim Olson,** and **Chloann Woolley.**
- ◆ Thank you thank you to our amazing CDE Braille Team: **Tanni Anthony, Nancy Cozart, Chris Maynard, Jo Pinto, Brenda Shepard, Sarah Sonnier,** and **Julie Wetzstein.**
- ◆ Heaps of gratitude to our Low Vision Evaluation Team: **Debbie Haberkorn, Jim Olson, Tom Theune,** and **Wendy Stoltman.** Thanks to Site Coordinators: **Debbie Haberkorn, Karin Hensel, Erin Noe, Angela Sims,** and **Liz Weider.** Stay tuned for our hopeful plans for LVE Clinics in the 23-34 School Year!
- ◆ Big time appreciation to **Roberta Curtis** for all her work this past fiscal year on the many BVI and Deaf-Blind Projects and, especially with the work that goes into this very newsletter. Thank you, Roberta!





colorado connections

Professional Development

- ◆ Our huge thanks to **Kelly Bevis** and **Amie Davenport** for an amazing session on Dyslexia and Visual Impairment at our April 19 Sound Bites session. There was rich information and discussion on this important topic. TVIs in attendance included: **Tanni Anthony, Sally Burch, Nancy Cozart, Mary Chambers, Morgan Harrington, Meghan Crosby, Elsa D'Angelo, Caitlin Geoffrion, Anahit LaBarre, Jeannie Lei, Kaitlin Lombardi, Debbie Mendoza, Erin Noe, Sara Noel, Jim Olson, Natalie Palmer, Wendy Stoltman, Hanna Waldman, Julie Wetzstein, and Chloann Woolley.**
- ◆ Also thanks in advance to **Cara Johnson** for her time and expertise with the May 17th Sound Bites on the Assessment of Learners with Blind/Visual impairment.
- ◆ A big thank you to **Chris Tabb** for his time with us at the May 10-12 CDE Orientation and Mobility Seminar. The first day was spent on *Orientation and Mobility Smorgasbord: Evaluations, Apps, and Sensory Efficiency*. The second day addressed *Field Loss: What are We Missing?* Thanks to all the attendees for their participation and not letting a little rain keep us from learning and applying the content. Photos below and on the next page are of participants using low vision simulators specific to field loss in a map reading activity and then an O&M travel activity.





colorado connections



**Colorado
O&M
Specialists**



**Have
Cane**



**Will
Travel**



**Wishing you
all a
fantastic
summer!**





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

Joyce Rankin
3rd Congressional District

Rebecca McClellan
6th Congressional District

Angelika Schroeder
2nd Congressional District

Steve Durham
5th Congressional District

Lisa Escarcega
1st Congressional District

Karla Esser
7th Congressional District

Debora Scheffel
4th Congressional District

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