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KEEPING IN TOUCH!

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



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Colorado Definitions, Resources, Professional Learning, and Support Activities Specific to Children and Youth who are Blind/Visually Impaired and Deaf-Blind, Their Families and Service Providers for School Year 2023-24

Compiled by Tanni Anthony

State Consultant on Blindness/Visual Impairment, Colorado Department of Education

Legend for Acronyms:

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



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

A Shared Vision: This 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is Colorado’s leading provider of early intervention vision services for children who are blind or visually impaired. Their goal is that all families of children with visual impairments have access to and receive essential early intervention services from a community of highly skilled and collaborative professionals. We support three programs. Through the Early Intervention Vision Services program, the team of 15 EI-TVIs provide direct early intervention home-based vision services to families and young children, birth to age three, in 55 counties across Colorado. The services are defined by the families’ Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP) developed in conjunction with A Shared Vision, Community Center Board service coordinators, and other early intervention providers. This program supports the key principles and evidence-based best practices of early intervention in Colorado by providing education and empowerment to families with young children who are blind or visually impaired in their homes and in community settings.

In 2022, A Shared Vision supported 212 children, providing 1,675 educational service visits. A Shared Vision provided 61.4% of all early intervention vision services to families statewide. Through their Family Support Program, A Shared Vision provides education, community connections, and support for families of children with visual impairments through in-person and virtual group activities, the newsletter, website resources, and other communications. EI-TVI Kimala Rein from Grand Junction has led our “Mystery Parties” for families since last year. The one-hour virtual format features topics such as how to support their child’s sleep to a craft activity the family can do with their child. This July, EI-TVI Maggie Tutt joined Kimala as they showed families how to make a sensory cube and demonstrated how playing with it develops tactile, language, and orientation and mobility skills. Finally, A Shared Vision’s Education Program builds the community of highly skilled and collaborative professionals who serve infants and toddlers with blindness/visual impairments. In July 2022, A Shared Vision was awarded the contract from Early Intervention Colorado to update the state’s vision screening protocol as we return to in-person evaluations. The updated protocol supports EI evaluations conducted in person, via telehealth, as well as a hybrid approach. Nearly 400 EI evaluators, Community

Center Boards, professionals, and other providers have attended the training. For more information about A Shared Vision, or if you'd like to join our team, contact Paula Landry at plandry@asharedvision.org.

Anchor Center for Blind Children: **Anchor Center for Blind Children:** Headquartered in Denver for 40 years, Anchor Center for Blind Children specializes in serving children with visual impairments or combined vision and hearing loss during their most formative years of development, ages birth to five years. Staffed by a transdisciplinary team of highly trained teachers of students with visual impairments, early childhood special educators, therapists, and a pediatric ophthalmologist, Anchor Center's vision services are customized to meet each child's unique needs and strengths. Families also receive support, guidance, practical knowledge, and connections to other important resources. Anchor Center's primary programming includes: vision assessments and pediatric ophthalmology exams; early intervention home-based services (for children, ages birth to 3 years); center-based programming for infants (newborn – 18 months), toddlers (18 months – 3 years), and preschoolers (3 – 5 years); occupational, physical, and speech/language therapies; recreational, music, and horticultural therapies; summer camps and family respite care; and family support, including programs for caregivers and siblings. Anchor Center charges a nominal tuition fee for toddler and preschool programs but does not charge for infant services. No child is ever denied access to services based on the family's inability to pay. In the 2022-23 school year, Anchor Center served 400 children, caregivers and siblings in home and community-based settings, and at their state-of-the-art facility in the Central Park neighborhood, located at: 2550 Roslyn Street, Denver, CO 80238. For more information, please visit the Anchor Center website at www.anchorcenter.org or call (303) 377-9732.

Audio Information Network of Colorado: Audio Information Network of Colorado (AINC) started providing audio editions of publications to individuals needing an alternative to print in 1991. Volunteers continue to read these publications. Four original podcasts are now part of AINC's offerings. The Aftersight podcast is a weekly interview program with guests who are blind or have low vision. It usually ranks in our top five programs. Blindsight is dedicated to the healing of the mind, body, and soul. Bill Lundgren and guests address mental health, trauma, and relationships. Navigating Life with Vision Loss covers a different topic each month giving a voice to the challenges facing people with blindness or vision loss. Blind Level Tech is our newest offering. Evan and Jonathan discuss adaptive technology, both traditional and cutting edge. It is quickly becoming one of AINC's most popular shows. These podcasts are available on all the primary podcast platforms as well as the AINC website. All the new programming is based on input from our Programming Advisory Committee, now in its second year.

AINC provides services beyond our audio programming. The White Cane Project provides free fiberglass folding canes with the standard red/white/black coloration. This initiative is funded by the Colorado Lions Clubs. Other new offerings include a weekly virtual peer support group and a monthly virtual audio book club. The Audio Trekkers just completed their third annual hike on August 12th. For more information about AINC or how to access our services, go to www.aincolorado.org or call (303) 786-7777.

Braille and Large Print Format Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) Test Review: TVIs have the opportunity to meet with the CDE Unit of Student Assessment and the CMAS publisher to review braille CMAS tests. There will be continued work specific to these assessments and educators are always needed. If you are interested in signing up for the educator pool, for reviewing the state tests, please contact Tanni at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us.

Colorado Administrative Units: The term "administrative Unit" (AU) means a school district, board of cooperative services, or the State Charter School Institute, which is providing educational services to exceptional children and is responsible for the local administration of the Exceptional Children Education Act. For purposes of the education of school age (ages three through 21 years) children with visual impairment, including blindness, an administrative unit can be the family's local school district, as well as the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. The vast majority (over 90%) of school-age students with visual impairments, including blindness are served in their neighborhood school district with a locally hired TVI and/or O&M Specialist. Some administrative units may use contract services for their TVI and/or Orientation and Mobility services. For questions about main contact personnel for students with visual

impairment, including blindness or deaf-blindness in each administrative unit (AU), please contact Tanni at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.

CAER - Colorado Chapter of AER: As professionals who serve the community of individuals who are blind/visually impaired, we have an active Colorado chapter of our national Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (CAER for short!) professional organization. CAER provides continuing education units (free currently online), request of items from our adaptive equipment aid program, as well as opportunities for gathering within our specialized field. The current CAER board is comprised of members from all forms of education, including child and adult. Please consider joining the board for the opportunity to receive ACVREP credit, as well as the wonderful opportunity to meet new friends in the field. For more information about scheduled meetings and activities, for member benefits, or joining the board, please contact Heather Solberg at caerboard@gmail.com or (303) 505-2758.

CAER Online Presence with a Website and a Facebook Page: Please go to the following website for updated information regarding Colorado AER: <https://aerbvi.org/about/chapters/colorado/>. They are continually working with national to restore links and add content. If you are on Facebook, you might get an invite to join the group.

CAER Annual Awards Banquet and Business Meeting: This event occurs in conjunction with the annual CDE O&M Seminar. The banquet is a time to celebrate colleagues and friends and to announce the recipients of the following awards: the Gary Schmidt Award, Connections Award, President's Award, Ken Neve Award, and Lifetime Achievement Award. CAER just celebrated their 2022 banquet in May, so look for future information in emails about the upcoming banquet in 2023. Nominations for the awards will be due 8 weeks prior to the event and should be submitted to caerboard@gmail.com.

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

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

Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Braille Competency Certification: Funds have been reserved for four braille proctors (Nancy Cozart, Chris Maynard, Brenda Shepard, and Julie Wetzstein) to provide opportunities for TVIs / braillists to take the Colorado Braille Competency Test and/or the 15+ clock-hours of CDE established renewal modules. Care must be taken to spread out the completion of the modules over the five-year-renewal period so that competency can be truly demonstrated across a period of five years. For information about braille competency testing and renewal requirements, please go to http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_guidedocs. For more information, please contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.

CDE Brailist Listserv: This listserv is exclusively for school braillists working in Colorado administrative units. It is a venue for braillists to share information, ask questions, and gather information. Persons wishing to be added to the braillist listserv should contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.

CDE Braille Mentors: Our amazing CDE Braille Committee personnel (Nancy Cozart, Chris Maynard, Brenda Shepard, and Julie Wetzstein) are available to provide mentoring to TVIs who need support in preparing for a minimum of a second round of the Colorado Braille Competency Test. Mentoring is not available to other professionals or TVIs who

are taking the test for the first time. Please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647 for more information.

CDE Keeping in Touch (KIT) Newsletter: This e-newsletter is sent out to CO parents of children and youth who are blind/visually impaired (who are signed up for this purpose), TVIs, COMS, braillists, and BVI paraeducators. It is posted on the CDE Blindness/ Low Vision website for others to download. The following e-editions are planned for this school year: August / September 2023, October 2023, November / December 2023, January / February 2024, March / April 2024, and May 2024. For more information, please contact Tanni at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647. The newsletter is posted on: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_activities.

CDE Low Vision Evaluation Clinics: Right now, the word is to stay tuned. Tanni is working to pull together a new team of experts for the Western, Northern, and Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinics. Jim Olson is on board for the Southern LVE Clinic. We know that the Western Clinic will not happen in September and maybe not at all this year. Tanni will provide updates as she has a formal announcement on if this can be a continued CDE activity with CSDB's support for the Southern Region.

CDE O&M Seminar: The topic(s) and dates for this training are under discussion. The goal will be an in-person April 2024 training. If in-person training is not feasible, we will offer a virtual training. The contact person is Tanni at (303) 503-4647 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

CDE State Conference on Blindness/Visual Impairment: This in-person conference will be held on September 27th and 28th, on the Lowry Campus. The featured speaker will be Robbin Clark and our topic will be *the 21st Century Expanded Core Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Practices*. There will be a kick-off assistive technology demonstration session on the 26th with CATT. For more information, contact Tanni at (303) 503-4647 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

CDE TVI COMS listserv: This listserv is exclusively for Colorado TVIs and O&M Specialists working in Colorado administrative units. It is a venue for professionals to share information, ask questions, and gather information. Persons wishing to be added to the listserv should contact Tanni at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.

CDE BVI Sound Bites: Sounds Bites will be offered one time a month via a zoom platform and will run on a given Wednesday of each month, beginning in September from 3:30 – 5:00 p.m. Preregistration will be required through a sign-up process. The dates, topics (as they are established), and the registration link will be posted in the *Keeping in Touch* Calendar of Events section. For more information, please be in touch with Tanni at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.

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

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

Colorado Center for the Blind Youth Programs: The Colorado Center for the Blind has brought high-quality, welcoming, and yet challenging programs and training for youth ages 4 to college since 1990. Whether it's CCB's year-round Fun Activities and Skills Training (FAST) program, mentoring for students attending the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB), Confidence BELL Academy, residential summer programs for teens, or collaborating with partners such as Cyber.org for CCB's first coding and robotics camp, CCB is committed to creating opportunities that raise expectations for blind students and help them build the confidence to pursue their dreams as successful adults.

At the beginning of the summer, CCB collaborated with the company cyber.org to introduce blind students in the Denver-Metro area to the exciting world of coding. Students aged 11-15 were able to demonstrate some skill in

technology, coding and programming a Microbit, an open-source hardware ARM embedded system. Students were even able to code their devices to say their names with a healthy competition to see whose device would have the most intelligible speech. Of course, after using all of that brainpower, all of the participants and a few positive blind role models traveled to the Gravel Pond at Chatfield State Park for some refreshing time kayaking and ensuring everyone got wet.

During the month of June, the Colorado Center for the Blind also had their annual 2-week BELL Confidence Camp for elementary aged students. The theme of this year's camp was transportation. Students took the bus to the grocery store for a practical shopping experience and took the light rail and train to Denver International airport for an interactive tour and presentation from airport and airline staff. The young participants improved Braille Literacy skills, challenged themselves with rock climbing and other challenge recreational activities, and made themselves lunch in the center's training kitchen. In July, CCB hosted 15 teenagers from across the country and abroad in the four-week No Limits to Learning program, and seven outstanding summer counselors working with them. While learning Braille, accessible technology, cooking, cleaning, and cane travel skills, They also had the opportunity to go rock climbing, kayaking, visit the Fiske Planetarium on the CU-Boulder campus and much more! On Saturday, September 16, CCB's fun activities and skills training will return at the Carson Nature Center in Littleton. Participants will be able to play some fun games, interact with live animals, and experience the natural environment within South Platte Park.

For more information on youth programs in Colorado or to stay up to date on our monthly youth activities, visit CCB's youth Programs page at <https://cocenter.org/our-programs/summer-youth/>, or contact Director of Youth Services, Chaz Davis at Cdavis@cocenter.org or by phone at (303) 778-1130.

Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC): Housed on the campus of CSDB, the role of the CIMC is to provide braille and large print textbooks and serve as a repository for APH educational materials for all Colorado students ages birth through twelfth grade who are blind/visually impaired. The CIMC also houses a lending library of professional materials for access by TVIs. The CIMC hosts an email distribution list for all braillists in Colorado, contact Jim Olson, jolson@csdb.org, to be added to the group. For CIMC questions or assistance, contact CIMC staff: Jim Olson, Coordinator, jolson@csdb.org, (719) 578-2195. CIMC pilot number (719) 578-2196 rings all CIMC staff phones simultaneously but does not have voicemail capabilities. Taylor Leinbach (braille book orders), tleinbach@csdb.org, (719) 578-2197. Felizia Gosine (shipping/receiving, APH orders), fgosine@csdb.org, (719) 578-2198. Maddee Durossette (your agency's statewide student registration database, federal quota census program), mdurossette@csdb.org, (719) 578-2199. Our other email addresses: cimcaphorders@csdb.org, cimcbookorders@csdb.org, cimcBrailierTechSoftware@csdb.org, and cimcregistrations@csdb.org. The CIMC page of the CSDB website: www.csdb.colorado.gov – select "Outreach"; from the drop-down menu, click on "CIMC-Colorado Instructional Materials Center."

CIMC First Friday Meetings: Contact CIMC staff for meeting times and Zoom meeting links. These online Zoom meetings are scheduled for the first Friday of each month, except for September and October (second Fridays). There is no set agenda for this meeting, it is simply an opportunity to ask CIMC staff, and your colleagues around the state, any questions you may have in an informal setting. We try to feature information on new APH products as they are announced. Meeting dates for the 2023-2024 school year: September 8 (second Friday), October 13 (second Friday and the week after APH Annual Meeting), November 3, December 1, January 5, February 2, March 1, April 5, & May 3.

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB): The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind is a state funded school within the Colorado Department of Education. The school was established for the purpose of providing comprehensive educational services for children, birth to age 21, who are blind/visually impaired and/or deaf/hard of hearing. Services are provided directly to students enrolled at the school, and outreach programs service students, staff, and families in communities throughout Colorado. There is no tuition charge for students to attend CSDB, which is located in Colorado Springs; however, there is a charge to districts receiving outreach services. CSDB is required to follow all state-education laws that apply to other public-school programs. Parents may choose to enroll their child with blindness/visual impairment after conversation about placement with their school district Special Education

Director or Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. For more information about CSDB on-campus programs, contact Kathy Emter, CSDB Special Education Director at (719) 578-2177 or kemter@csdb.org. For more information about CSDB outreach programs, contact csdboutreach@csdb.org

CSDB Cane Quest: Cane Quest is a challenging orientation and mobility contest for students in grades 3-6. Scout contestants team up with older students and earn coins as they compete in various challenges that demonstrate mastery of basic orientation and mobility skills. CSDB sponsors an annual event. Stay tuned for more details on if this event will occur during the 2023-2024 school year.

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

CSDB and CSDB Outreach National Braille Challenge: The Colorado regional contests will again be held at CSDB and the Colorado Center for the Blind during the 2023-2024 school year. Students may also compete individually in their home school with their TVI administering the tests. Students compete in various categories such as spelling, reading comprehension, speed and accuracy, proofreading, and charts and graphs. The Braille Challenge will be held on the campus of CSDB on February 22, 2024. The contact for the CSDB day is Jamie Lugo at jlugo@csdb.org. CSDB Outreach will co-host the Braille Challenge at the Colorado Center for the Blind, which will be held on February 23, 2023. The contact will be Taylor Leinbach, tleinbach@csdb.org (719) 578-2197. Please visit the CIMC page of the CSDB website and www.brailleinstitute.org for additional information about the National Braille Challenge.

CSDB Specialized Assessments and Consultation: Specialized assessments; for example, functional vision, learning media, O&M, cognitive and social-emotional, may be provided to school districts, BOCES and charter schools to assist school staff in developing appropriate educational services and supports for students with vision losses. There is a fee for this service. For more information, contact csdboutreach@csdb.org.

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

Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project (also called the Colorado Deaf-Blind Project): We are finishing the last months of our current five-year cycle. A new five-year cycle will begin on October 1, 2023 with an increase in funding. There are currently 154 children and youth, age birth through 21 years, who have combined vision and hearing loss (deafblindness) in Colorado. Key activities include:

- Annual Child Count of Colorado children and youth with deaf-blindness
- Free technical assistance is provided to the families and service providers of children and youth with deaf-blindness
- Training and coaching for school-based interveners.
- Annual Webinar Series
- Annual Family Conference for parents and key caregivers.
- Annual Summer Institute, which focuses key assessment of and intervention / instructional strategies for children and youth who are deaf-blind
- deafblind and/or who have significant support needs.
- Website with over 100 fact sheets (in English and Spanish) on information specific to deaf-blindness.

- Lending library is open to parents and professionals and is stocked with great resources, including about 100 items specific to visual impairment. The library's inventory is listed on the website, where there also is a downloadable book-loan order form.

For more information about the CO Deaf-Blind Project's free technical assistance services, contact Gina Herrera at Herrera_g@cde.state.co.us or (303) 866-6605. Also check out the project's continually updated webpage: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-DB.asp>

Colorado Talking Book Library: For people who cannot read standard print, CTBL provides free audio, braille, and large print books. All services and materials are free, including accessible audio book players and braille e-readers. Books and magazines go through the mail postage paid. Audio and braille books are also available for download through the BARD mobile app. For more information, please contact the library via email at ctbl.info@cde.state.co.us or by phone toll free at 1-800-685-2136.

Community Intervener Program: Family Voices Colorado is proud to be handing the Community Intervener Program over to the Colorado Commission for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind starting in October. The project offers Colorado children and youth 10 hours a month of 1:1 services with a professional intervener in their home and out enjoying their communities in ways they have not been able to participate before. For more information contact Elli Streifer call or text at 303-912-2896 or email elli@familyvoicesco.org

Eligibility – Deaf-Blindness: The determination of whether a school-age (ages three to 21 years) child meets the eligibility criteria as a "child with deaf-blindness" is the responsibility of the local administrative unit's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, which includes the child's parents, and is based on state approved eligibility criteria. For children who are entering the public-school district from an early intervention program or a private early childhood program, eligibility for school-based special education services and supports is not determined by personnel associated with these early-years programs. It is critical that parents are given accurate information about the eligibility process with school district staff. It is the IEP team who will further determine the need for an intervener. If there are questions about the school-age special education eligibility criteria, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.

Eligibility – Visual Impairment, Including Blindness: The determination of whether a school-age child meets the eligibility criteria as a "child with visual impairment, including blindness" is the responsibility of the local administrative unit's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, which includes the child's parents, and is based on state approved eligibility criteria. For children who are entering the public-school district from an early intervention program or a private early childhood program, eligibility for school-based special education services and supports is not determined by personnel associated with the early intervention / private early childhood programs. It is critical that parents are given accurate information about the eligibility process with administrative unit staff. If there are questions about the recently updated school-age special education eligibility criteria, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.

Foresight Adventure Guides for the Blind: Foresight provides goal-oriented outdoor adaptive recreation experiences for students with low vision and blindness. Students have two opportunities to participate in Foresight's fun, safe and transformative programs. The Winter Learn to Ski/Snowboard program and the *Summer Camp for Blind Youth*. Both programs use outdoor recreation to promote self-confidence, independence, and personal growth for students who are blind or experiencing low vision. Each winter, students from a half dozen Colorado school districts plus Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind travel to Vail with teacher chaperones for two days of skiing/snowboarding. Returning students who have mastered basic skiing/snowboarding skills are paired with a Foresight guide and shadow to practice their skills and explore Vail's varied terrain. Students new to the sport receive professional ski or snowboard instruction from Vail's Adaptive Ski School. All the students experience the joy and freedom of skiing blind! Foresight provides the students with roundtrip transportation to Vail, lift tickets, ski or snowboard equipment, professional

instruction (if needed), two days of lunch, and one-night lodging, for a requested minimum donation of \$75. However, Foresight will not turn any student away if they cannot pay the suggested donation.

Foresight's *Summer Camp for Blind Youth* offers students three days and two nights of fun outdoor experiences in the Vail Valley. Campers participate in stand-up paddle boarding, horseback riding, rock climbing, hiking and more. Team building and leadership activities are also incorporated into the camp. Foresight provides two nights lodging, lunch daily, one dinner, and all activities for a requested minimum donation of \$100. Again, students will not be turned away if they cannot pay. Camps take place in mid-June and mid-July. Both the Learn to Ski program and summer camps promote components of the National Federation for the Blind's Expanded Core Curriculum. Foresight's programs reinforce elements such as socialization, self-determination, orientation and mobility, independent living skills, and of course sports/recreation skills development. Participants also report developing close friendships with people "just like them." Send your students to Vail to learn important life skills all while mastering activities they can safely enjoy with friends and family throughout their lives. Please contact Christine Holmberg, Foresight Executive Director, at (303) 506-3859, or email her at christine@foresightskiguide.org for more information on the summer camp, and to get on the calendar for the upcoming ski season. You can also follow Foresight Ski Guides on Facebook and Instagram, and visit their website at www.foresightskiguide.org

Metro TVI / O&M Specialists Meetings: The meetings will be held virtually throughout the school year. For more information, please be in touch with Jeannie Lei (jlei@cherrycreekschoos.org) or Nancy Cozart (ncozart@lps.k12.co.us). Stay tuned for the meetings dates / locations for this school year.

Northern TVI / O&M Specialists Meetings: The meetings will be held periodically throughout the school year. For more information, please be in touch with Aryn McNichol at (303) 702-8354 x58354 or mcnichol_aryn@svvdsd.org Stay tuned for the meetings dates / locations for this school year.

Southern Region TVI-DVR Meetings: The meetings will be offered throughout the school year with different hosts, locations, and topics. Contact Jim Olson (jolson@csdb.org) for information,

READ Act: The CO Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (READ Act), passed by the legislature in 2012 and focuses on literacy development for all students and especially for those at risk to not read at grade level by the end of the third grade. The READ Act focuses on literacy development for kindergarteners through third-graders. Students are evaluated for reading skills, and those who are not reading at grade level are given individual READ Plans. TVIs should collaborate closely with general educators / literacy specialists on the READ Act screening, and if needed, diagnostic procedures to assure accessibility. This may include preparing materials in braille, utilizing commercial screening tools in braille format, assisting with magnification and other low vision needs of the visual presentation of the screening / assessment materials. The TVI may provide consultation to assist with the interpretation of results on timed screening / assessment procedures for learners using braille materials where normed testing was based on print readers.

See the Future 'Tools for Life' Program: Providing financial assistance to the families of students who are blind/ visually impaired (PreK – Transition) who are residents of Colorado. This assistance is to help purchase necessary adaptive equipment, which students may own and use in their home, school, and community. These tools will support literacy and the pursuit of higher education. Applications are **Due November 15, 2023**. For more information, [Click Here](#).

See the Future Education for Life Program is pleased to award scholarships to qualified Colorado students who are blind/visually impaired. This scholarship fund is made possible through generous donations by optometrists, ophthalmologists, educators, opticians, technicians, corporations, foundations, and many others with an interest in the lives of these learners. This program provides scholarships to support Certificate Programs such as massage therapy, Associate's 2 year degree, BA degree, MA degree, or a doctoral degree. Scholarships are awarded based on academic achievement, school and community service, and individual need. **Deadline: March 1, 2024** For more information, <https://www.seethefuture.org/efl-app-info.html>

UEB Technical versus Nemeth Code: The Braille Authority of North America has recognized both UEB Technical and the Nemeth Codes as approved braille math codes. As such, the decision of which code will be used for a child who is a beginner through an advanced braille reader is determined by the local Individual Education Program team. Textbooks can be ordered in both codes, the CMAS State Assessments are offered in both codes, and there are procedures to order College Board tests in either code.

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

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

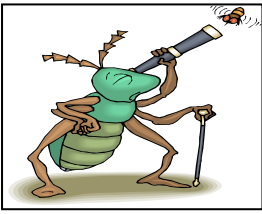
United States Association of Blind Athletes: USABA is a Colorado-based 501(c) (3) organization that provides life-enriching sports opportunities for every individual with a visual impairment. A member of the U.S. Olympic Committee, USABA provides athletic opportunities in various sports including, but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

Vision Coalition: The Vision Coalition is a statewide advisory committee on the educational activities for students who are blind/visually impaired, support activities for their parents, and professional development activities specific to their service providers. Members include Tanni Anthony (CDE ESSU), Nancy Cozart (Metro region), Chaz Davis (Colorado Center for the Blind), Melissa French (Northern region), Donna Keale (CSDB Outreach), Paula Landry (A Shared Vision), Jamie Lugo (School for the Blind – CSDB), Tammy Miller (Anchor Center for Blind Children, Michelle Reed (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation), Jim Olson (CIMC), Erin Schroeder (Western region), and Chloann Woolley (Southern Region), The VC meets three times a school year. For more information, please contact Tanni at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.

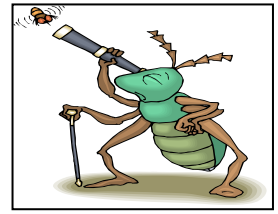
Western Slope TVI / O&M Specialists Meetings: The meetings will be held periodically throughout the school year. For more information, please be in touch with Erin Schroeder at (970) 254-5414 or erin.schroeder@d51schools.org Due to the distance involved, all Western Slope meetings are held virtually.

White Cane Day: October 15th of each year marks White Cane Day across the country. There may well be celebrations across the state in a variety of school districts. CSDB will have one! As celebrations are planned, we will work to disseminate information. Time to raise a little or a big cane!

That is a lot going on in our state—please take time to fully understand and use these resources to gain professional learning updates and to support students and families.



LOW VISION NEWS



2023-2024 Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Schedule

Clinic	Clinic Date	Due Date for Paperwork	Site Coordinator
Southern LVE Clinic	October 20, 2023	Tuesday, October 4, 2023	Jim Olson
Northern LVE Clinic	November 9-10, 2023	Wednesday, October 25, 2023	Liz Weider
Metro LVE Clinic	February 7-9, 2024	Tuesday, January 23, 2024	Roberta Curtis
Western LVE Clinic	? Based on Student #s	TBD if this or next school year	Angela Sims

Meet Our 2023-24 Low Vision Evaluation Team!

- **Roberta Curtis** is a Program Support Assistant with the Exceptional Student Services Unit. In this capacity she supports our CO DB Project and the BVI activities of Tanni Anthony. Roberta has personal experience with the LVE Clinic as a parent and has graciously agreed to take on the role of LVE Clinic State Coordinator.
- **Dr. Kara Hanson** is an associate professor of ophthalmology at the University of Colorado and Director of the Low Vision Rehabilitation Service at the UCH-Sue Anschutz-Rodgers Eye Center. She also provides low vision evaluations for preschoolers at Anchor Center for Blind Children. She graduated with her Doctor of Optometry degree from the University of Houston College of Optometry and was on faculty there before moving to Colorado in 2005. She has been a long time friend to students with blindness/visual impairments, their families, and providers.
- **Karin Hensel** has been teaching for 21 years, initially as a classroom teacher in middle and elementary school, and as a certified Teacher of Students with Visual Impairment (TVI) since 2006. Karin earned the Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist (COMS) and Certified Low Vision Therapist (CLVT) certifications in 2011 through the University of Arizona. Since moving to Colorado in 2011, Karin has worked as a TVI/COMS for students 3 to 21 years of age; served on the ACVREP CLVT Subject Matter Committee in 2021 and 2022; and coordinated the Denver Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinics for the past two years. She earned a Master in Teaching degree from Sierra Nevada College; completed the graduate program at University of Arizona to specialize in Visual Impairments; and completed the UNC’s Director of Special Education credential program.
- **Jim Olson** is a TVI, COMS, and Certified Low Vision Therapist. In his current role as the CIMC Coordinator, Jim understands how many Colorado learners with low vision can benefit from magnification tools. Jim works closely with the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) on materials and tools that benefit learners with low vision. He is our APH Ex Officio Trustee and oversees our annual APH and State Registration Counts. Jim was a TVI / COMS with El Paso 11 District before his work at CSDB. Jim serves as a Low Vision Therapist for the southern region clinics and has been with the LVE Regional Clinics since the beginning of our history!
- **Dr. David Simpson** is an assistant professor of ophthalmology at the University of Colorado. He graduated with his Doctorate of Optometry from the Illinois College of Optometry, then completed a residency in Low Vision Rehabilitation at Salus University in Philadelphia. Previously, Dr. Simpson was on faculty at the Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry where he oversaw the low vision clinics, including a weekly clinic at the Oklahoma School for the Blind.

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. The purpose of the project, awarded to every state and US territories is to identify children and youth with deaf-blindness and provide free technical assistance (TA) to the identified children, their families, and service providers. We started the current grant award on October 15, 2018, and it will be completed on October 14, 2023. The project has been housed within the Colorado Department of Education's Exceptional Student Services Unit for over 30 years. The team worked tirelessly to prepare a new grant proposal that was submitted several days ahead of the March 13th deadline. The grant has been awarded for another five years and our review ratings were 98 out of 100! So we are off and running again as of October 1, 2023!



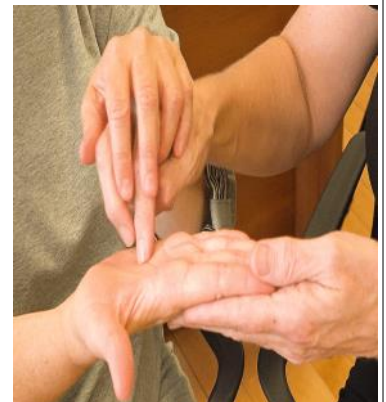
Key project activities are to maintain an annual Child Count process, host professional learning events, and provide tiered and customized technical assistance. The current project has three broad goals: (1) timely identification, (2) family networking, training, and TA support, and (3) professional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

Child Find Count of Colorado Children and Youth with Deaf-Blindness: As you identify new children 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.



Blog: Advocating for Max, My Son Who Is Deaf-Blind

Tiara's blog shares her story of raising Max, who is Deaf-Blind, and their journey of living and learning beyond what doctors expected. Tiara advocates for Max to have the same experiences and opportunities as any other child. Check out their story of advocating and pushing through in [Advocating for Max, My Son Who Is Deaf-Blind](#)



Colorado Deaf-Blind Project News

Colorado Deaf-Blind Project Offers 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. Our next cohort begins in January 2024, and a second cohort will begin August 2024.



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 attachment to Gina Herrera at Herrera_G@cde.state.co.us. You can also call Gina at 303-253-0451. Or fill out our new Google Form for Technical Assistance located at <https://forms.gle/FAWsSVo2itikrtLR6>



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.



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

AER Members and Perkins E-Learning Discount

AER members receive a 20% discount on the total cost of Perkins self-paced tutorials. Each provides an opportunity to enhance your knowledge, skills and abilities, and job performance! AER members only may use the *voucher code* **20AER20** to take advantage of this member benefit and earn CE hours. Click here to get started: [Perkins Discounts](#)

Instructions: Select the tutorial. Add to your cart and when checking out enter code **20AER20** in the Voucher Box. Enter re-calculate and the discount will appear.

- ◆ On the next screen, sign in (if you already have an account with Perkins Learning Center or Register if you do not yet have a Perkins Learning Center account.
- ◆ On the final page, enter your AER member number in the Phone Number field. Your AER member number will be verified. If you encounter any problems or have any questions, please email perkins.elearning@perkins.org.

The Peer Viewer's Role in Producing Quality Writing

As a young child, you may have heard the word “peer” used to describe the act of looking at the world around you with careful attention. You eventually learned that “peer” could also mean a person whose age, experience, and knowledge are similar to yours. Perhaps you were in college when you first heard “peer review” used to describe the process of considering and preparing material for publication.

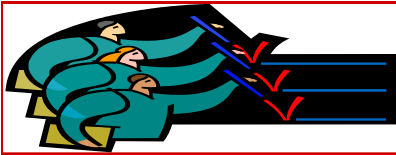
As a professional, you recognize the role of the peer review process in enabling editors to decide which material will be most useful to readers. Peer reviewers are experienced professionals who volunteer to assist in selecting the most promising articles for a journal's reading audience. Reviewer feedback helps maintain high quality and consistency.

The New RE:view (TNR) publishes peer-reviewed articles that have been carefully evaluated by professionals who work with people with visual impairments. Reviewers are selected because they have knowledge and experience related to the submitted article. They provide constructive feedback about style and content. Ultimately, reviewers recommend whether an article should be published, needs changes, or is not appropriate for publication.

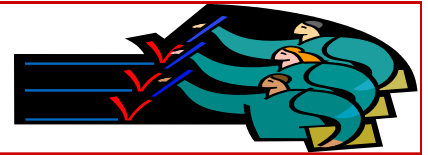
A returned manuscript rarely meets the authors' highest hopes or fulfills their deepest trepidations. The author will read carefully to understand the perspectives and perspectives of the reviewers. A successful revision requires time and thought to address concerns of the reviewers, and usually leads to publication.

TNR continues to seek peer reviewers who can provide a practical review of articles that are submitted for consideration. We appreciate the work of professionals who regularly serve as reviewers. We are especially interested in professionals who have expertise in specialized skill areas. If you would like to serve as a peer reviewer for TNR, please contact us at tnr@aerbvi.org for details on how to apply to be a TNR peer reviewer. We hope to hear from you soon!

Submitted by Jane Erin, Assistant Executive Editor



CHECK IT OUT!



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

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

International Network of STEM for the Blind and Low-Vision, Inc.

Dear Members and Friends of the International Network of STEM for the Blind and Low-Vision,

Our Envision-Yourself-in-STEM sticker has been launched! Please see the sticker image or read the alt text below image.

Each sticker is 5.00 USD (United States Dollar). Shipping to anywhere in the world is FREE! To get the sticker, please click this link to place an order: <https://tinyurl.com/344tpsst>

Note: For each order, the maximum number of stickers that can be purchased is 10. If you would like to buy more than 10 stickers, please email us at contact@intlstemblv.net.



This sticker is 3"x3" (7.62 cm x 7.62 cm) circular. It is made of thick, durable vinyl that protects it from scratching, rain, and sunlight!



Also, if you would like to help increase awareness, please forward this email to those you think might be interested or simply show people the QR code below for them to make a purchase!

Thank you!

Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering (CIDE)

Colorado Assistive Technology Expo 2023

The Conference Center at Adams 12

September 15 | 10 AM - 4 PM

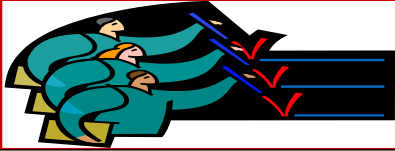
25 YEARS SWAAAC

The Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering (CIDE) is proud to present the second annual Colorado Assistive Technology Expo.

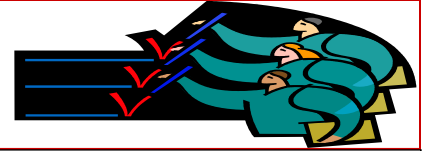
Friday, September 15, 2023 at 10 am - 4 pm
The Conference Center at Adams 12 Five Star Schools

RSVP TO ATTEND THE EXPO

This expo is a FREE one-day, in-person event featuring over 35 Assistive Technology (AT) vendors to provide opportunities for networking, collaboration, and hands-on learning. Come experience new tools, products, and features to increase independence for all. Learn more by visiting the [Colorado Assistive Technology Expo webpage](#).



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

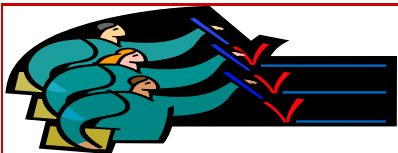
The [National AEM Center at CAST](#) has developed resources to support students who need accessible materials and technologies while learning remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic.



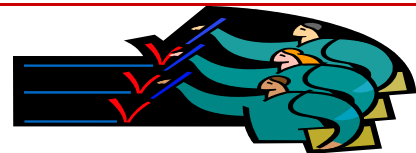
** eBooks

[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!



The OT Toolbox

When working with children, teachers strive to make their classroom a fun and engaging place of learning.

😊 So many classroom theme sets have fun colors, bright designs, and patterns, contrasting bulletin board borders, etc. designed to do just that.

🌈 Many believe that having a colorful classroom will keep children interested and engaged, and the themes and coordinating colors CAN definitely be used...but...

👁️ Visual Noise is just that: a visually distracting, or “noisy” visual scene in the classroom. A lot of teachers set up bulletin boards throughout the room with cut-outs in various themes: animal/monster/any theme, alphabet stickers, and painted murals on the walls.

👁️ Maybe your classroom has a circle time rug that includes the ten different color squares.

👁️ Perhaps you want to make sure all the children have something they like to do, so you have 20 fine motor choices in the manipulative area.

There is just one problem with using these types of visuals in the classroom, they are distracting! 🚨

🚨 Classroom décor and organization can directly effect the engagement level of children in any classroom or learning space. When the environment is too visually stimulating, a student’s ability to focus becomes difficult. 🚨

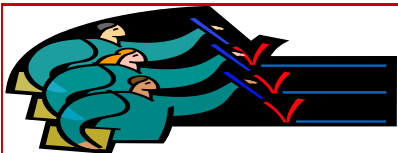
Keeping children’s attention can become frustrating. When a classroom environment that is soothing and organized is created, children are better able to stay engaged. In our latest blog, you will learn about three different ways to make your classroom visually calm AND still have the cute-factor!

To learn more check out [The OT Toolbox, Visual Noise and Learning](#).

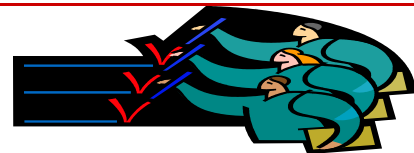
Recreational Accessibility Information from APH

Learn how to make the following physical activities accessible:

- **Bowling** (<https://test.aphconnectcenter.org/visionaware-2-3/recreation-and-leisure/sports-and-exercice/bowling-5862/>)
- **Running** (<https://test.aphconnectcenter.org/visionaware-2-3/recreation-and-leisure/sports-and-exercice/running-2/>)
- **Walking and Hiking** (<https://test.aphconnectcenter.org/visionaware-2-3/recreation-and-leisure/sports-and-exercice/walking-and-hiking/>)
- **Tandem Bicycling** (<https://test.aphconnectcenter.org/visionaware-2-3/recreation-and-leisure/sports-and-exercice/tandem-bicycling/>)
- **Sailing and Boating** (<https://test.aphconnectcenter.org/visionaware-2-3/recreation-and-leisure/sports-and-exercice/sailing-and-boating/>)
- **Skiing** (<https://test.aphconnectcenter.org/visionaware-2-3/recreation-and-leisure/sports-and-exercice/skiing/>)
- **Swimming** (<https://test.aphconnectcenter.org/visionaware-2-3/recreation-and-leisure/sports-and-exercice/swimming-6126/>)



CHECK IT OUT!



Dear Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments,

If you are still currently teaching students with visual impairments, I am inviting you to participate in a course designed to eliminate the learning curve and potential frustrations of using an abacus to teach mathematical skills to students with visual impairments. The course is designed to learn foundational mathematical skills, instruction of addition and subtraction using complementary numbers, adaptations of mathematic equations, and strategies for teaching school age children who are blind or have low vision. Both environments offer nine (9) hours of Academy for Certification of Vision Rehabilitation & Education Professionals (ACVREP) credit following the completion of the professional development.



Because school is starting and you are focusing on your caseloads, the study will be held from October 19 until November 27, 2023. Half of these participants will enroll in a course that meets Thursdays via Zoom® from 3:00-4:30 pm EST for five weeks. The second half will enroll in the APH Hive® learning management system. You may choose between synchronous (Zoom®) or asynchronous (APH Hive®) for your learning environment. Your involvement in the study is expected to last approximately six weeks.

With almost 300 teachers interested, please register quickly to reserve your space. To enroll in the professional development, please complete this survey which is available for the next three (3) weeks: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AbacusPD2023>

Thank you for participating in this study, *The Effects of Online Synchronous Versus Online Asynchronous Abacus Professional Development*. If you have questions related to the study's purpose and procedure, please contact Leanne Grillot at (386) 986-6506 and/or lgrillot@fsu.edu. For questions related to the rights of research participants, please contact the Florida State University Human Subjects Office at 850-644-7900 or humansubjects@fsu.edu.

Sincerely,
Leanne Grillot, American Printing House for the Blind



SAVE THE DATE!

The 2024 Virtual Conference for Assistive Technology and Education (CATE) will be held on June 6 - 7, 2024

The Center for Inclusive Design and Engineering (CIDE) and the Colorado Department of Education are proud to announce open registration for the **2024 Conference for Assistive Technology and Education (CATE)**. This 2-day virtual conference features sessions with nationally-renowned trainers addressing a wide variety of assistive technology topics related to the academic support needs of students with disabilities.

** More information and event updates will be posted on the [CATE webpage](#) as they become available!

Resources and Materials

upcoming ski season. You can also follow Foresight Ski Guides on Facebook and Instagram, and visit their website

Thanks to **Sara Rode** for sharing this information! This app would work for creating a dictionary for students when they have signs or gestures that they use to communicate. so everyone is on the same page.

APP for Creating a Communication Dictionary

[My IssieSign: a simple platform for creating a sign and gesture library](#)

My IssieSign (free on [iOS](#) and [Android](#) within the IssieSign app) is an app that provides a simple solution for introducing and teaching signs.

U.S. Department of Education Strengthens Guidance to Improve Equal Educational Opportunity for Children with Disabilities

On July 24th, the **U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)** released [updated policy guidance](#), which takes immediate effect, to ensure and strengthen the rights and protections guaranteed to children with disabilities and their families under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Making Sense of Educational Assessment: A New Fact Sheet for Educators

This blog by **REL Northeast & Islands** introduces [Making Sense of Educational Assessment](#), a fact sheet that explores the different types and purposes of educational assessments and how district, school, and teacher leaders can use assessment results. You can also access a related fact sheet: [Making Sense of Educational Assessment](#).

Reading and Writing Milestones by Grade: Watch My Literacy Skills Grow

TVIs should be families with the grade-level expectations for literacy skills. Check out the milestone updates to keep you on track.

- [Kindergarten](#)
- [First Grade](#)
- [Second Grade](#)
- [Third Grade](#)
- [Fourth Grade](#)
- [Fifth Grade](#)



Resources and Materials

The Hive

Looking for more educational opportunities? Head over to the American Printing House for the Blind Hive, our FREE eLearning platform for educators and families that you can access at any time to earn ACVREP credits from the comfort of your home and office. With a growing course catalog covering categories like Early Childhood, Expanded Core Curriculum and more, we're compiling the resources you need to serve students. [Learn more and sign up today!](#)

Literacy News

Thank you to the Utah State Board of Education for creating this NEW document that provides recommendations for the K-3 Literacy Block. The resources include research based recommendations on the suggested time and content of literacy instruction in each grade. https://drive.google.com/file/d/12UIFbPSr3QbnvFNfqS0SDWv_csaF4UyC/view.

Great Free Math Resources from APH

Here is a list of American Printing House for the Blind free math apps

[AnimalWatch VI Building Graphics Literacy \(for iPad\)](#)

[AnimalWatch Vi Suite \(for iPad\)](#)

[Practice2Master Abacus \(for iOS and Android phones and tablets\)](#)

[Practice2Master Fractions \(for iOS devices\)](#)

[Math Robot \(for iOS devices\)](#)

[Math Flash for Android Devices](#)

[SlapStack Math \(for iOS devices\)](#)

[Draw2Measure Protractor \(for iOS devices\)](#)

In addition, APH have also designed several 120 charts for teachers to download and emboss. They are good for those who are teaching and learning the place value concept and are good for both UEB and Nemeth codes users. The charts include:

- 120 Chart
- 120 Chart - Blank Grid
- 120 Chart - Even Numbers
- 120 Chart - Odd Numbers
- 120 Chart - 5 Count
- 120 Chart - 10 Count

These are PDF files (11.5" X 11") that teachers could emboss using graphic embossers. The could be downloaded through APH's Tactile Graphics Image Library (TGIL). You could log into or sign up with TGIL [here](#). After you log in, you can locate the charts under the Mathematics category. You can also find other ready-to-use math images.





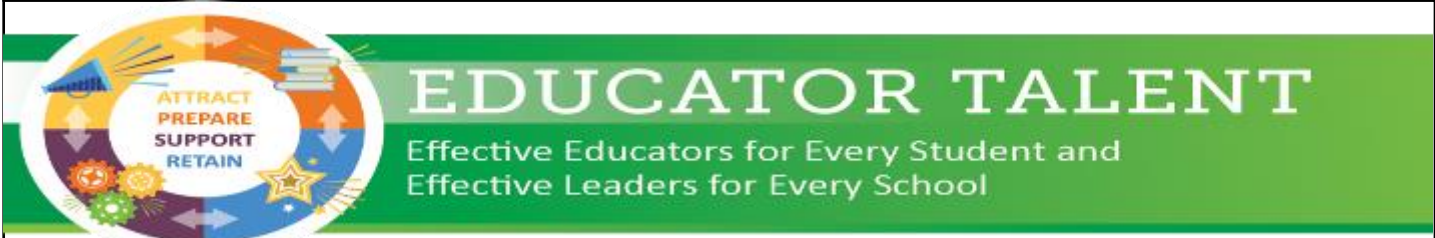
Initial Licensure and Endorsement Specific to Special Education Specialist: VI

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 (for both initial and renewal licenses).
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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>.



Assessment Communication Toolkit Now Available

State assessment results were presented and publicly released at the August 17 State Board of Education meeting. [An assessment communication toolkit is available to help districts and schools communicate with families about CMAS, PSAT and SAT scores.](#)

Educator Recruitment and Retention

2023-24 Educator Recruitment and Retention Financial Assistance

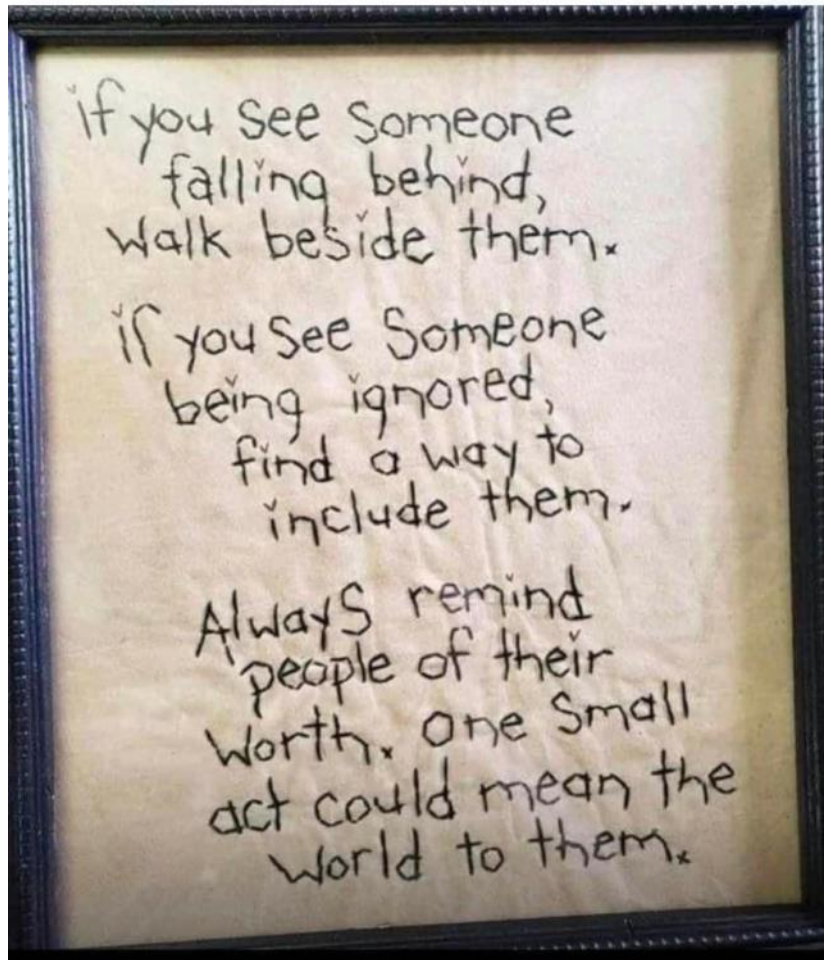
The 2023-24 Educator Recruitment and Retention financial assistance application is open through Wednesday, August 30. Qualified educators may apply for up to \$10,000 to help cover their educator preparation program costs. Recipients must teach in a shortage area for three years. Additional application windows will open October 1 - November 15, 2023 and January 3 - February 15, 2024. [Visit the ERR program webpage for guidance and eligibility details.](#)

Guidance for READ Plans

Beyond Third Grade

[Guidance for supporting students who remain on READ plans in grades four through 12 is available for districts including research, resources and training opportunities for educators.](#)

For more information, contact Olivia Gillespie, Office of Standards and Instructional Support, at 720-930-1298, or gillespie_o@cde.state.co.us.





About DonorsChoose: The Colorado Department of Education, in collaboration with DonorsChoose, is providing \$1,000 in funding to help teachers purchase classroom supplies. Every Colorado PreK-12 public school teacher is eligible to apply for this opportunity while the \$11 million in COVID-19 relief funds last.

Who is DonorsChoose? DonorsChoose is a 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit connecting teachers to resources across the country. Since DonorsChoose was founded in 2000, more than 10,000 Colorado

teachers representing school districts across the state have received over \$16 million for projects that help them go above and beyond in the classroom. Seven school districts in Colorado, including Denver Public Schools, are currently part of the DonorsChoose District Partnership Program. To help districts, schools and teachers communicate and take advantage of this funding opportunity, we've created a number of resources to spread the word in schools

Create a project on DonorsChoose: Submit a project on DonorsChoose using the campaign code **COLORADO**, and keep your total project goal under \$1,000, that's about \$800 in materials. Since funding is limited, submit as soon as possible for the best chance to get your project approved. [To submit a project on DonorsChoose, click here.](#)

CDE and DonorsChoose: Starting on August 24, 2023, the Colorado Department of Education will award up to \$1,000 in Federal COVID Relief funding to Colorado classroom teachers' projects requesting resources to support students in response to COVID-19. Funding for eligible projects will be applied shortly after a project is approved.

- [Check out the Program Eligibility Information, here.](#) *[Check out all the Project Request Details, here](#)
-

How to Quality:

- [Create a teacher account on the DonorsChoose website, if you don't already have one.](#)
- [Click here to learn more on how to qualify.](#)

Which educators qualify; who is eligible? All Colorado public school educators who teach students in PreK-12th grade are eligible for the program. For the purposes of this program, "Colorado educator" is defined as any full-time equivalent public-school employee who spends the majority of their time directly educating or counseling students. [Read a more detailed list of eligibility requirements on the DonorsChoose website.](#)

I already have a DonorsChoose account, do I need to make a new account to submit a project? No. Only one DonorsChoose account per teacher is permitted. If you already have a DonorsChoose account sign in to that account before submitting your project.

What resources can educators request? Educators can request classroom resources, including but not limited to supplies, technology and instructional materials.

Can a non-educator nominate an educator and/or project? No. Funding through this partnership is intended to address the individual and specific need(s) of each educator and classroom. Educators must submit their own projects to participate in the program. [See the CDE Communications toolkit if you'd like to share about this program on social media.](#)

Can educators submit multiple projects for funding? Each Colorado educator can only have one project funded through this funding opportunity. However, educators are encouraged to post additional projects to DonorsChoose and benefit from the community of donors.

[For more information on if your project qualifies, visit the DonorsChoose Help Center.](#)



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)



New OELA Infographic: Educators of English Learners

The Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) has released a [new infographic](#) for educators of English learners (ELs). The infographic addresses topics of EL teacher availability, need, and preparation. Forty-five percent of public-school teachers reported teaching ELs in school year 2020–21. Explore the infographic for more insights and valuable resources for educators.

New Resource: English Learner Civil Rights Brief

Check out OELA's latest resource, "[English Learner Civil Rights Brief - Practices to Increase Access to Advanced Coursework and Specialized Programs for Students Who Are English Learners](#)," which features practices that districts and schools may consider to increase access to advanced or specialized programs for EL students. Equal access to challenging or specialized courses and programs is essential, but barriers to enrollment in these opportunities often affect students who are English Language Learners. The brief provides valuable resources to assist educators and administrators in addressing these challenges effectively.

Teacher Appreciation: Spotlight on Multilingualism Podcast

This [podcast](#) features a listening session moderated by Montserrat Garibay, the Assistant Deputy Secretary and Director of OELA. The panelists are four educators from around the country. This conversation focuses on the experiences and expertise of multilingual teachers in supporting ELs and their families. The podcast highlights resources to promote multilingual education and the maintenance of Native languages.

New on the NCELA Blog: Addressing English Learners with Disabilities

As we celebrate the 33rd anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) this July, it is essential to acknowledge its significance in ensuring equal rights and opportunities for people with disabilities. Helping ELs with disabilities requires a comprehensive approach that considers their unique linguistic, cultural, and academic needs.

By embracing the principles of the ADA, we can collectively strive toward a future that is more equitable and accessible for all. In the new [Addressing English Learners with Disabilities](#) blog, we highlight strategies shared by educators during OELA's National Convening on English Learners' Civil Rights.

How to Address Native American Issues as a Non-Native

This 14-page guide is an excellent resource for allies to consult, with great pictures and pithy truth-telling observations, such as this one: "It's time to start focusing on strongly held Native values—like commitment to family, reverence for the land and environment, and appreciation for unity and community—in order to understand and communicate more truthfully about Native American life"



Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)



Resource on Confronting Racial Discrimination in Student Discipline:

also available in Spanish: [Recurso para evitar la discriminación racial en la disciplina estudiantil](#))

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights and the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division jointly released the *Resource on Confronting Racial Discrimination in Student Discipline*. The departments recognize and appreciate school administrators, teachers, and education staff across the nation who work to administer student discipline fairly, and to provide a safe, positive, and nondiscriminatory educational environment for all students, teachers, and other educators.

New Culturally Relevant Education PD Pack

This PD Pack explores issues of diversity with an emphasis on professional learning and policy intentionally designed to improve the achievement and outcomes of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and explores ways to prepare, recruit, and retain a diverse and effective workforce. Engage with experts around these issues, learn about strategies from stakeholders, and consider available products and tools from CEEDAR partners and collaborating centers and organizations.

Check it out at: [Culturally Relevant Education PD Pack | CEEDAR \(ufl.edu\)](#)

Resources from [Colorin Colorado](#)

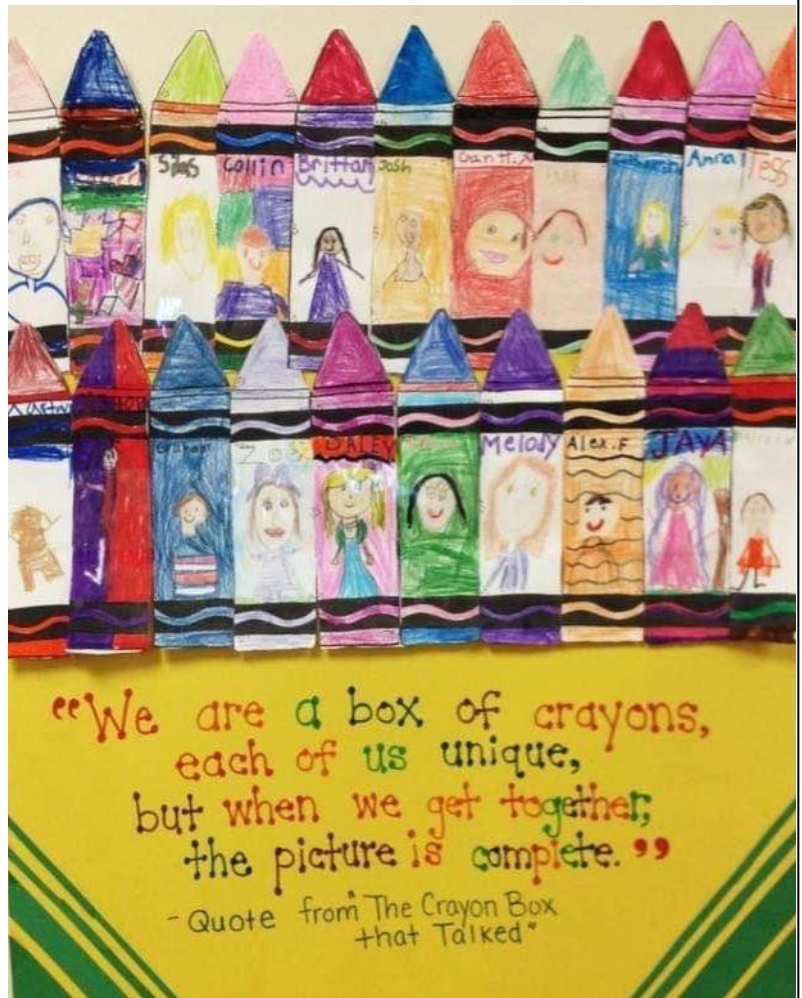
- [Special Education and English Language Learners](#)
- [Colorin Colorado ELLs with Disabilities: How ESL/Bilingual Specialist can Collaborate for Student Success](#)

Office of English Language Acquisition ([OELA](#)) Resources

- [Benefits of Multilingualism OELA](#)
- [OELA Tool Kit](#)
- [Tools and Resources of Addressing the Needs of English Language Learners with Disabilities](#)

Department of Education ([DOE](#)) Resources

- [Pyle Dear Colleague Letter 2014](#)






Calendar of Events

2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023	2023
September 8	CIMC Second Friday —virtual Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org										
September 12	Southern Region Meeting: Host/Location: CSDB from 2:30—4:30 PM Contact: Jamie Lugo at jlugo@csdb.org or Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org										
September 13	Sound Bites — 3:30-5:00 PM—Update for Eligibility Criteria for BVI Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/3003fe0868204b739e52e195b0e9e6d6										
September 14	Employment Connections Resume Writing —6 to 7 PM Registration: https://aph.zoom.us/webinar/registration										
September 15	Due Date to Order CMAS Braille Practice Tests Contact: Work with your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)										
September 15	Colorado AT Expo — SAVE the DATE Contact: https://www.swaac.org/colorado-assistive-technology-expo										
September 20	Vision Coalition Meeting —virtual Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us										
September 26	CDE Assistive Technology Demo/ Reception to State Conference at Lowry Conference Center Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us										
September 27-28	CDE State Conference on BVI (Expanded Core Curriculum) at Lowry Conference Center Contact: Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us										
September 8	CIMC Second Friday —virtual Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org										
October 4	Sound Bites — 3:30-5:00 PM—Strategies/Resources-Nemeth/UEB for Math/Science Registration: https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/3003fe0868204b739e52e195b0e9e6d6										
October 13	CSDB White Can Day Celebration (Acadia Park in Colorado Springs) – 10-11 a.m. Contact: Jamie Lugo at jlugo@csdb.org										
October 23	Deaf-Blind Webinar Series – New DB Project Cycle and Resources Contact: Tanni Anthony – Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us										
October 23	Southern Region Meeting: Host/Location: DVR from 2:30—4:30 PM Contact: Megan Brouard at megann.brouard@state.co.us										
October 27	Southern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic at CSDB Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org										
November 2-4	SW Orientation and Mobility Association Conference —virtual Registration: https://www.tsbvi.edu/statewide-resources/conferences/swoma/swoma-conference-information										




Calendar of Events

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

- November 8** **Sound Bites**— 3:30-5:00 PM—Middle School Students with BVI Accessing Technology
Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/3003fe0868204b739e52e195b0e9e6d6>
- November 8-9** **Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic** at the Enight Center in Fort Collins
Contact: Liz Wieder at wieder_elizabeth@svvsd.org
- November 15** **Tools for Life Applications Due**
Go to: <https://www.seethefuture.org/learn-more-tools-for-life.html>
- November 27** **Deaf-Blind Webinar Series** – Topic to Be Determined
Contact: Tanni Anthony – 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/>
- December 1** **CIMC First Friday**—virtual
Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- December 13** **Sound Bites**— 3:30-5:00 PM—Assessment for Visually Impaired Learner Access (AVILA).
Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/3003fe0868204b739e52e195b0e9e6d6>

2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024

- January 5** **CIMC First Friday**—virtual
Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- January 8-26** **Initial Window to Order Braille Format CMAS Tests**
Contact: Work with your District Assessment Coordinator (DAC)
- January 9** **Southern Region Meeting:** Host/Location: Falcon SD from 2:30—4:30 PM
Contact: Lori Mattick at lmattick@d49.org
- January 22** **Deaf-Blind Webinar Series**—Topic to Be Determined
Contact: Tanni Anthony – Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- January 24** **Sound Bites**— 3:30-5:00 PM—Executive Functioning Considerations for Students with BVI
Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/3003fe0868204b739e52e195b0e9e6d6>
- January 31** **Office Hours** : CoAlt/SwD for BVI learners (4 – 5 PM)
Contact: Arti Sachdeva at Sachdeva_a@cde.state.co.us
- February 2** **CIMC First Friday**—virtual
Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- February 7-9** **Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic** at the Anchor Center for Blind Children
Contact: Roberta Curtis @ curtis_r@cde.state.co.us



Calendar of Events

2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024 2024

- February 13** **Southern Region Meeting:** Host/Location: Academy 20 SD from 2:30—4:30 PM
 Contact: Melissa Shular at melissa.shular@asd20.org
- February 21** **Sound Bites**— 3:30-5:00 PM—College Prep Considerations for Students with BVI
 Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/3003fe0868204b739e52e195b0e9e6d6>
- February 22** **Braille Challenge** at CSDB in Colorado Springs
 Contact: Jamie Lugo at jlugo@csdb.org
- February 23** **Braille Challenge** at the Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton
 Contact: Taylor Leinbach at tleinbach@csdb.org
- February 26** **Deaf-Blind Webinar Series** – Topic to be Determined
 Contact: Tanni Anthony – Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- May 1** **See the Future Fund Education for Life Scholarship Applications Due**
 Go to: <https://www.seethefuture.org/efl-app-info.html>
- March 1** **CIMC First Friday**—virtual
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- March 13** **Sound Bites**— 3:30-5:00 PM—Topic to be Determined
 Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/3003fe0868204b739e52e195b0e9e6d6>
- March 25** **Deaf-Blind Webinar Series** – Topic to be Determined
 Contact: Tanni Anthony – Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
- April 5** **CIMC First Friday**—virtual
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- April 10** **Sound Bites**— 3:30-5:00 PM—Topic to be Determined
 Registration: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/3003fe0868204b739e52e195b0e9e6d6>
- May 3** **CIMC First Friday**—virtual
 Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
- May 14** **Southern Region Meeting:** Host/Location: Ute Pass BOCES from 2:30—4:30 PM
 Contact: Chloann Woolley at cwoolley@upbooces.org
- June 6-7** **Colorado AT Conference**—virtual
<http://www.swaac.org/conference-for-assistive-technology-and-education-cate>

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



Orientation & Mobility

SWOMA 2023—VIRTUAL CONFERENCE!!

The Southwest Orientation & Mobility Conference is back... and this year is virtual!
This coming November we will be hosting our conference live via Zoom.

Over **13 hours** of CEU's (ACVREP and SBEC) are offered through SWOMA this year.

Conference Dates:

November 2nd: Pre-Conference (Optional)

November 3rd - 4th: Main Conference

Registration Fees:

Professionals - \$100 (Early) & \$125 (Late)

Family Members, Univ. Students, & Paras - \$25 (Early) & \$50 (Late)

Late registration begins October 2nd, and all registration ends **October 26th @ 5:00 PM Central!**

A late cancellation/no-show fee of \$25 may be applied to registrations that do not cancel by **October 26th @ 5:00 PM Central**. This includes "no-calls, no-shows." If you suspect that you are unable to attend, please log into your account to cancel your registration or contact us ASAP to avoid this charge.

[REGISTRATION INFORMATION](#)

For more information about this conference, please visit our [SWOMA Conference Page](#).



Qualtrics Survey: Risk Assessment Matrix Feedback Requested

This email is from Dr. Bill Koehler, who was a presenter at our 2022 O&M Seminar.

We are interested in understanding your experience using the Risk Assessment Matrix for Orientation and Mobility Instruction. For this study, you will be presented with information relevant to the RAM. Then, you will be asked to answer a few questions about it. Your responses will be kept completely confidential. Survey results will be presented at the SWOMA 2023 Fall conference. Results will also be available via Executive Summary by request to the contact listed below.

Follow this link to the Survey: [Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

https://qfreeaccountssjc1.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_emrWQdWD8c4Qv0G?RID=CGC_z303dAi9UW9KxQd&Q_CHL=email

Visual Impairment, including Blindness

Thank you to all of people who took time to discuss, craft, and comment on the updated eligibility criteria of Visual Impairment, Including Blindness. Thank you also to the Colorado State Board of Education for their careful view and constructive feedback on the draft version and the ultimate final version, which is effective as of June 2023.

The updated eligibility criteria can be found in the [Rules for Administration of the Exceptional Children Education Act](#).

2.08(11) A child with a Visual Impairment, Including Blindness has an impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects the child’s educational performance and that requires specialized instruction. The term includes low vision, blindness and/or progressive vision loss.

2.08(11)(a) A determination that a child is an eligible child with a Visual Impairment, Including Blindness may include but not be limited to:

2.08(11)(a)(i) Visual acuity of no better than 20/70 in the better eye after correction;

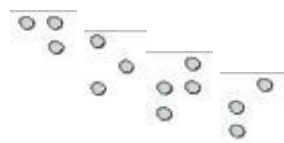
2.08(11)(a)(ii) Visual field restriction to 20 degrees or less; and/or

2.08(11)(a)(iii) A physical condition of visual system which cannot be medically corrected and, as such, affects visual functioning to the extent that specially designed instruction is needed.

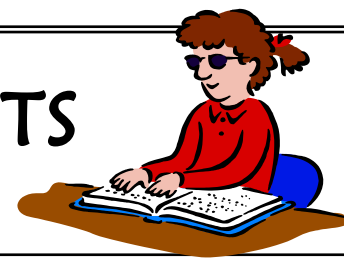
These criteria are reserved for special situations such as, but not restricted to cortical visual impairment and/or a progressive visual loss where field and/or acuity deficits alone may not meet the aforementioned criteria.

Tanni will be working with the Vision Coalition and internal CDE personnel to finalize training guidance. As with all eligibility categories, it is necessary to (a) define the vision impairment from an eye report that details diagnosis, prognosis, and clinical visual functioning ; (b) determine the educational impact based on educational evaluation; and (c) confirm the need for specially designed instruction.





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@cde.state.co.us
Christine Maynard	(719) 229-4981	Maynard_C@cde.state.co.us
Brenda Shepard	(303) 995-7913	Shepard_B@cde.state.co.us
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.

Thanks for being a steward of braille competency—our students are counting on your expertise for their specially designed instruction and instructional materials.

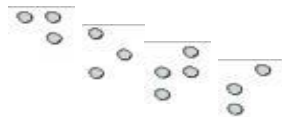
UEB Technical Versus Nemeth Braille Codes

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



BANA's position on UEB and Nemeth

This is still relevant: 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.**

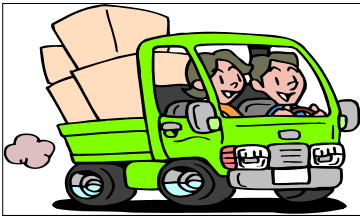
<https://www.brailleauthority.org/november-2015-bana-takes-action-fall-meeting-crystal-lake-il>

Current 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.



Guidance for Transcription Using the Nemeth Code within UEB Contexts



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

[15 Tips for Self-Advocates](#) (Also available in multiple languages; see list below)

Youth and young adults with disabilities may need services and supports to reach their goals. This often means communicating with agencies and systems that offer services to people with disabilities. It can also mean attending meetings and advocating for themselves. This fact sheet includes tips to help youth prepare for meetings, develop a service plan, and resolve conflicts that may arise in the process. *Available in:* Spanish, Arabic, Armenian, Chinese, Farsi (Persian), Hmong, Khmer, Korean, Russian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

[Applying for a Job: The Young Adults Guide](#) (Revised 2023)

This is a 5-page tip sheet for youth and young adults with serious mental health conditions about finding, applying for, and interviewing for jobs.

[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) on Pre-Employment Transition Services](#)

The account you create at NACT will give you access to a wide range of transition-related materials, such as this FAQ on pre-employment transition services. The questions and answers are organized into categories for easy browsing and include: administrative, allowable costs, definitions, service delivery, and RSA FAQs.

Parent Resources

[Talking to Kids About Sex and Dating](#)

Check out this suite of stand-alone articles from the Child Mind Institute, which rounds up resources on why it matters to talk to teens about sex and romantic relationships, and how to approach this sensitive topic. Dive into consent and how kids can confidently set and respect boundaries. The suite includes tips on how to help teens deal with unwanted attention, as well as warning signs of sexual behaviors that are concerning. Some DOs and DON'Ts are outlined to help teens make good choices as they enter their first relationships. Each article in the suite is also available in Spanish.

[Sexual Health and Wellness](#)

(Also available in Spanish: [Hablemos de sexo: Estudiantes con discapacidades y su salud sexual](#))

PEATC, Virginia's PTI, has developed a toolkit to help guide parents through discussing sexual health and wellness with their child with disabilities. The toolkit covers topics such as sexuality, self-care, relationships, social skills, and boundaries. Many additional factsheets and resource documents (including YouTube videos) are also available.

Employment Connections Resume Writing Tips and Tricks

Thursday, September 14, 2023, 6:00 – 7:00 PM EST

Join the team at APH CareerConnect for our very popular Employment Connections where we will be discussing resume writing tips and tricks. Our guest will be Barbara McCleave, Human Resources Recruiter and Career Counselor. We will be discussing the visual aspects of resume writing in an accessible, non-visual manner.

[Employment Connections Resume Writing Tips and Tricks](#)

Emphasizing the Need for More Cohesive Secondary Transition Planning for Students with Disabilities

The Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) released a [new blog series](#) as part of a continued effort to emphasize the need for more cohesive secondary transition planning for students with disabilities.

Additionally, OSERS kicked off its [Expect, Engage, Empower: Successful Transitions for All!](#) initiative earlier this year. This initiative focuses on effective transition planning to help young adults moving from school to postsecondary education, community living or competitive integrated employment. To learn more about OSERS secondary transition efforts, visit the [OSERS' Successful Transitions for All blog series](#).

Blog Series: Post 01



Introduction: Improving Systems to Better Prepare Students for Successful Secondary Transition Experiences

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!](#)

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.

The [Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network](#) is the first-ever national technical assistance center for those who serve grandfamilies and kinship families. The network exists, free of charge, to offer a new way for government agencies and nonprofit organizations in states, tribes, and territories to collaborate and work across jurisdictional and systemic boundaries—all to improve supports and services for grandfamilies and kinship families.

Be sure to check out the network's [resource library](#), a centralized hub of resources for professionals who are serving and supporting grandfamilies and kinship families. It features resources such as fact sheets, tip sheets, webinars, practical toolkits, reports, videos, and research/data.



just for PARENTS

Federal Communication Commission's Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP)

The ACP provides eligible households:

- Up to \$30/month off their internet bills (or \$75/month on qualifying Tribal lands), and
A one-time discount of up to \$100 off a connected device (laptop, tablet, or desktop computer) as long as the household contributes more than \$10 and less than \$50 towards the cost of the device.

Here are a few links to information about the Affordable Connectivity Program:

[Affordable Connectivity Program - Office of Educational Technology](#)

[ACP Consumer Outreach Toolkit | Federal Communications Commission \(fcc.gov\)](#)

[Home - Online For All](#) – national campaign in partnership with Civic Nation, includes resources for community partners.

[Promote ACP | Affordable Connectivity Program Resource Hub \(educationsuperhighway.org\)](#) – marketing materials for communities

Families who have students who receive free/reduced price lunch are eligible as well as families with household incomes of 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines or less and/or families which participate in:

- ✦ SNAP
- ✦ Medicaid
- ✦ Federal Housing Assistance, including:
 - ✦ Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program (Section 8 Vouchers)
 - ✦ Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA)/Section 202/ Section 811
 - ✦ Public Housing
 - ✦ Affordable Housing Programs for American Indians, Alaska Natives or Native Hawaiians
- ✦ Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- ✦ WIC
- ✦ Veterans Pension or Survivor Benefits or [Lifeline](#);

Or if they participate in one of these assistance programs and live on [Qualifying Tribal lands](#):

- ✦ Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- ✦ Tribal TANF
- ✦ Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
- ✦ Tribal Head Start (income based)

just for PARENTS

POSITIVE THINGS TO SAY TO YOUR CHILD

1. You are helpful.
2. You were right.
3. I know you did your best.
4. I'm grateful for you.
5. You have great ideas.
6. I love being your mom.
7. I believe in you.
8. You are important.
9. You make me proud.
10. You are loved.
11. You don't have to be perfect to be amazing.
12. I believe you.
13. You are worth it.
14. Don't be afraid to be yourself.
15. It's good to be curious.
16. We all make mistakes, it's OK.
17. I understand you.
18. You can say no.
19. This family would not be the same without you.
20. We can try it your way.
21. I appreciate you.
22. I know you did your best.
23. I forgive you.
24. I am so glad you're here.
25. That was really brave what you did.
26. I admire you.
27. It's your decision.
28. If you really believe in something, it's important.
29. Don't give up.
30. I could never stop loving you.
31. You can try again tomorrow.
32. Don't compare yourself to anyone else.
33. You are enough.
34. It's OK to be scared.
35. Even if you make a mistake, you can fix it.
36. Being kind does not make you weak.
37. Your ideas are great.
38. You don't have to do what everyone else is doing.
39. Anything is possible.
40. You can make a difference.
41. I love how you said that.
42. I'm listening.
43. You did that so well.
44. You make my heart full.
45. Not everyone will like you, and that is okay.
46. You have a choice.
47. That's a great question.
48. I'm so excited to spend time with you.
49. That was a really good choice.
50. I trust you.
51. I hear you.
52. Your attitude can change any situation.
53. You are a great friend.
54. Never stop trying.
55. I'll always love you.



IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

We are facing our first real shortage for this school year for TVI s= teachers of students with visual impairments and O&M Specialists = orientation and mobility specialists.

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!

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 for TVI / O&M Specialist** in Adams 12 School District. For more information, please contact Heater Greicius at gre008602@adams12.org
- ◆ **1 FTE TVI (or part time)** TVI 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 Cherry Creek School District. Please contact Amy Barr at abarr2@cherrycreekschools.org
- ◆ **1 FTE for TVI / O&M Specialist** in Denver Public Schools. Please contact Michelle Chacon at michelle_chacon@dpsk12.net
- ◆ **1 FTE TVI / O&M Specialist Position** in Littleton School District. Please contact Jennifer Templeton at jtempleton@lps.k12.co.us

Northern Region

- ◆ **1 FTE or part-time TVI / O&M Specialist**—Windsor School District. For more information, please contact Jennifer Sedaghat at Jennifer.sedaghat@weldre4.org





IMPORTANT! We have JOB OPENINGS!!

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) 520-2158.
- ◆ **1 FTE TVI Position**—El Paso County District 49. For more information, please contact Rhonda May at rhonda.may@d49.org or (719) 491-4630.
- ◆ **1 FTE** for a Secondary Social Studies teacher at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. Please contact Jamie Lugo for more information at jlugo@csdb.org

Western Region

- ◆ **1 TVI / O&M Position** in the Colorado River BOCES. For more information, please contact Julie Goldberg at Julie Goldberg at goldberg@crboces.org
- ◆ **1 PTE TVI/O&M Specialist**—Northwest BOCES. For more information, please contact Courtney Lincoln at Courtney.Lincoln@nwboces.org
- ◆ **1 FTE TVI/O&M Specialist** with Mountain BOCES and Summit School District. For more information, please contact Susan Udenberg at sudenberg@mtnboces.org and/or Ellen Clark at ellen.clark@summitk12.org.
- ◆ **Contract Work TVI and O&M Specialist** in Rio Blanco BOCES. For more information, please contact Bradley Bauer at brad.bauer@meeker.k12.co.us.

Across Metro, Northern, and Western Regions

- ◆ **Contract 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 TVI and/or O&M Specialist contractor list, please be in touch with Tanni at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us.



Who is New at the Colorado Center for the Blind

By Julie Deden, Executive Director

I am excited to welcome three new staff members to the Colorado Center for the Blind (CCB). They are passionate about the center and look forward to working with our students and also taking on new challenges.

In April we hired **Michelle Walsh Welty**, M. Ed., to teach Academic Skills at the Colorado Center for the Blind. She continues to teach Language Arts classes at neighboring Arapahoe Community College. It's easy to see why we were excited about her experience and qualifications being a great fit for our students. Over her career, Michelle has been dedicated to adult education, in both the professional and volunteer capacity. Whether in front of the classroom or during one-on-one instruction, she strives to create a positive, stress-free environment where learning can flourish. Beyond her professional commitments, she is an enthusiastic globetrotter, an ardent yoga practitioner, and a devoted dog pal – there's nothing she enjoys more than spending time with her four-legged friends.

And then comes **Dan Nixon**, our new Home Maintenance and Wood Shop instructor. Dan spent his first couple of months with us training under learning shades, including training in the wood shop, so that he would come to thoroughly understand how blind people can effectively use nonvisual skills to accomplish any number of tasks in the shop or around the home. Dan has a wealth of experience in a wide variety of venues. He's an artist and woodworker who has been part of Recreative Denver since moving to Colorado from Brooklyn. Recreative Denver is a nonprofit that recycles and repurposes art and other creative materials, as well as providing studio space to artists and a wood shop. Dan also does work refurbishing and rehabilitating older homes. He worked in the film, fashion and event production fields as a carpenter while living back east. He's an out-going member of Recreative Denver's Board of Directors.

With a background and experiences as diverse as Dan's you won't be surprised to hear that he embraced his training in our woodshop while wearing learning shades. During his learning shade training during the day through April and May, Dan also trained with former wood shop instructor David Nietfeld on Saturdays and an evening or two per week. (Dan will be working with us three days a week while continuing with his other ventures.) Needless to say, we're really excited to be able to offer Wood Shop and Home Maintenance class again – something we haven't been able to do since December. Once more, we can hear the sounds of the power drills and saws and catch the odor of fresh sawdust drifting up from the shop!

Anne Rigley came to work with us in June in our Older Blind Program. Anne is well known to us. She worked for the Center for a couple of years in the 2000s, but she's also the vocalist for the band Stray Dog, which also includes former CCB Cane Travel Instructor Eric Woods on guitar. Professionally, Anne worked for more than a decade as an Ombudsman for The Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG), investigating and resolving complaints and concerns of older Coloradans served by programs funded by DRCOG. Anne is a great fit for us because of her experience and her love of working with older blind individuals.

A big welcome to all new CCB Staff!!



Welcome New Faces and Personnel Now in New Places!

Over the summer, we gained TVIs and O&M Specialists and other key personnel serving learners with blindness/ visual impairment across Colorado. We want to give our new staff a big Colorado welcome!

Key Updates Include:

- ◆ **Jenny Appel** is starting as a TVI with the Denver Public Schools this school year. She worked as a special education teacher at a charter school in DPS for 10 years. She also worked in a middle school center based program before spending three years directing an 18-21 transition program for the same students I taught in middle school. Jenny decided to become a TVI because she loved working with her students with visual impairments and collaborating with TVIs. She is attending the University of Northern Colorado to gain her TVI credentials. When she is not working, she loves to get outside in the mountains with her husband and dog, Ruby, and see live music around Denver!
- ◆ **Chris Bates** has been a Social Studies teacher for 20 years. He has a master's degree in History, a bachelor's degree in History, and a Professional license in Secondary Social Studies. He shares that he is extremely excited and privileged to be the Social Studies teacher at the CSDB School for the Blind and is looking forward to working with their fantastic students and incredible staff. In his spare time, he likes to hike with his dogs, ski, play drums, and volunteer at a dog rescue sanctuary.
- ◆ **Sumer Bellinder** is on board with Pueblo 60 School District. She is a recent transplant from Northern Illinois. She has a bachelor's degree in special education with an emphasis on D/HH and a master's in special education with an emphasis on visual disabilities and O&M from Northern Illinois University. Go Huskies! Sumer also has a master's degree in educational leadership from Northeastern Illinois University. She finished her 20th year teaching. She and her husband have relocated to Pueblo, along with their fur babies to be close to family. Sumer shares that she LOVES using her Cricut to make materials for students who are tactile learners or who have CVI. A big Colorado welcome to Sumer!
- ◆ **Sasmita Bisoi** will be a new TVI with Jefferson County School District. Her beautiful name means "smiling and cheerful" in Sanskrit. She lives with her husband and two young children. Sasmita was raised in India and moved to the United States in 2007. She did my MA in Public Administration at Utkal University, Odisha, India. Then completed a MA degree in the Visual Impairment department at the University of Northern Colorado in 2021. She is making good progress with her training in Orientation and Mobility. Sasmita interned with Douglas County School District and learned and gained valuable skills, then worked as a paraeducator in the Cherry Creek School District for four years. Sasmita shares, "I wish to work in this field, contributing to improving my workplace and society. I am a self-motivated, hardworking, quick learner and disciplined soul. I am always keen to upskill myself by learning new things whenever I get a chance." In her free time, she enjoys free time with her friends, cooking, listening to music, watching Bollywood movies, reading, traveling, and playing indoor games.
- ◆ **Maddee Durossette** is the new Administrative Assistant II with the Colorado Instructional Materials Center. We are so glad to have you on board, Maddee!
- ◆ **Felizia Gosine** is the new Administrative Assistance I with the Colorado Instructional Materials Center. Welcome to the CIMC, Felizia!



Welcome New Faces and Personnel Now in New Places!

- ◆ **Chanelle LeVack** is the new Literacy Coach at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB). She will be working with our blind/visually impaired population this year. Prior to receiving her teaching degree, she worked in a variety of schools across Colorado as a paraeducator in special education settings including CSDB. Chanelle received her bachelor's degree in Inclusive Elementary Education from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs. After graduating in 2020, she went onto teach 4th grade and reading intervention while working on my master's degree. In 2022, she graduated from Colorado College with a master's degree in literacy focused on dyslexia therapy. She is currently registered with the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA) as a Certified Academic Language Practitioner (CALP). When she is not working, Chanelle loves spending time with her husband and 19-month-old son. She is excited to join CSDB this year and looks forward to being part of an amazing team.
- ◆ **Shannon Lovern** has lived in Colorado for almost 15 years. She is an active cosmetologist but about 5 years ago decided she needed a change. She graduated from Pikes Peak Community College (now State College) in 2019 with her associate degree in Elementary Education. From there she transferred to University of Colorado, Colorado Springs where she completed her BA in Psychology with a focus in adolescence development and her BA in Inclusive Elementary Education. She is currently in my second year at University of Northern Colorado completing her MA in Special Education, Teaching of Students who are Visually Impaired. Shannon is now the Secondary Science Teacher at CSDB and shares that she is so excited to be apart of the team! Shannon also shares she has the best support system at home with her husband and three wonderful sons. They love everything Colorado!
- ◆ **Ericka Stubbert** is a new O&M Specialist in Poudre Public Schools.

Familiar Faces in New Places!

- ◆ **Jill Bookwalter** has moved to Weld RE 5J School District in Milliken where she will be their TVI and O&M Specialist. Jill most recently worked in these roles with Denver Public School District.
- ◆ **Jayne Cusimano** is the new O&M Specialist in Pueblo 60. Jayne brings a wealth of experience as a former CSDB Outreach Consultant.
- ◆ **Amber Rundle Kahn** is a new TVI and O&M Specialist in Cherry Creek School District. Amber has worked for Englewood in this capacity for many years and as an administrator.
- ◆ **Leonor Rosser** received her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Florida International University and her Master of Science in Special Education with Specialization in Visual Impairment from the University of North Dakota. She is a licensed teacher in Colorado and Florida. She has teaching experience in Boulder Valley School District and with the Anchor Center for Blind Children. For the last two years, she has been working for Imagine! Colorado as an early intervention and teacher of students with visual impairments. Leonor is fluent in both English and Spanish, but I can also communicate in French, Portuguese, and Italian at a basic level. She has a background in Music, Art, and Montessori Education.
- ◆ **Micah Scott** is on board with Douglas County School District. She was formerly in School District 49.
- ◆ **Karen Woods** will continue her contract work (thank you, thank you!) She will be at Widefield School District 3 one day a week and serving NE BOCES, Fort Morgan, and Sterling.



colorado connections

Braille Competency News



- ◆ Congratulations to **Diana Lovato**, a brailist from Denver Public School District, **Ruthie Osborn**, a TVI from Academy 20 School District, and **Sasmita Bisoi** of Jefferson County School District for earning their CDE Certificates of Braille Competency. Kudos to **Jill Bookwalter** and **Marsha Duncan** for completing braille renewal modules. Thanks for **Nancy Cozart** and **Chris Maynard** for their work with our braille testing candidates over the summer months! Thanks to everyone for keeping our braille standards high!

Shout Outs!

- ◆ Thanks to **Chloann Woolley** and others from the southern region for organizing and hosting a celebration party for **Dr. Tom Theune**, **Wendy Stoltman**, and **Debbie Haberkorn**, who served for many years on the Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics. Many people gathered to join the fun!!
- ◆ A big shout out to CDE Braille Proctors / Mentors **Nancy Cozart**, **Chris Maynard**, **Brenda Shepard**, and **Julie Wetzstein** for taking time to meet with Tanni over the summer to review our braille testing materials and procedures. Their knowledge and commitment to braille excellence for our Colorado students are unparalleled. A big thanks also to the ongoing work of our braille proofreader, **Jo Pinto**.

Professional Development

- ◆ Colorado was well represented at the Western Region Early Intervention Conference - TVIs / O & M Specialists / BVI and DB other professionals in attendance included: **Tanni Anthony**, **Cheryl Austin**, **Melinda Carter**, **Lorraine Chevarria**, **Gina Herrera**, **Paula Landry**, **Steve Lindauer**, **Tammy Miller**, **Kelly Mitchell**, **Jennifer Parker**, **Jennifer Taylor**, and **Chloann Woolley**.

The Colorado Deaf-Blind Project sponsored the preconference sessions with **Dr. Toni Linder**, **Dr. Tanni Anthony**, and **Dinah Beams** on the *Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment* and *The TPBA for Learners with BVI, DB, and DHH*. The project also sponsored **Heather Winslow** for an amazing session on *Tactile Strategies for Learners with Deaf-Blindness*. Also, Heather and Colorado parent **Mayra Prieto** were part of the powerful closing panel on sharing their parent perspectives.

A big thanks to the contributions of Colorado colleagues who were on the WREIC planning committee: **Tanni Anthony**, **Gina Herrera**, **Paula Landry**, **Steve Lindauer**, **Tammy Miller**, and **Ashley Renslow**. **Steve Lindauer** took a lead role in facilitating the Administrators' Meeting that preceded the conference. The next WREIC will be held in New Mexico in 2025!

- ◆ A big thank you to **Megan Mogan** for her wonderful presentation on the *Communication Matrix: Administration to Application* on June 27-28. TVIs and O&M Specialists in attendance included: **Tanni Anthony**, **Jill Bookwalter**, **Danielle Burden**, **Nancy Cozart**, **Dana Downey**, **Danielle Burden**, **Barb Galgano**, **Jeanine Holmes**, **Ann Marie Jansen**, **Donna Keale**, **Maggie Tutt**, **Hannah Waldman**, and **Chloann Woolley**.





colorado connections



- ◆ A big shout out to the **Anchor Center for Blind Children** and the **University of Colorado Medical Center** for the successful hosting the Vision 2023 Conference, which was held in Denver on July 24-27.

Colorado was well represented in attendance and presenters. This included: **Tanni Anthony, Cheryl Austin, Jadwiga Brown, Sally Burch, Peg Collins, Nancy Cozart, Elise Darrow, Dana Downey, Tina Ektermanis, Laura Ganguli, Kara Hanson, Emilie Jackson, Meghan Klassen, Alicia Knoll, Kaitlyn Lombardi, Mindy Doyle McCall, Lauren Mehner, Kelly Mitchell, Tammy Miller, Michelle Reed, Leonor Rosser, Callie Robinson, Covi Rodriguez, Micah Scott, Cathy Smyth, Tom Theune, Kathryn Tower, Hanna Wardman, Patty Wagner, Chloann Woolley, and Michael Wright.**

Thanks for the bottom of our hearts to the following people who are moved out of state, retired from our field, or moved onto other jobs.

- ◆ **Nicole Andersen** is remaining in Douglas County School District with a new position. We wish Nicole all the best and know she will make great contributions in her new role.
- ◆ **Tommie Sue Celli** left her position in Summit School District and Mountain BOCES and will be working with iSight Connections.
- ◆ **Jeff Hadala** has moved out of state. He was in Jefferson County School District!
- ◆ **Colleen Lydon** is remaining in Cherry Creek School District but with a new position. All the best to you, Colleen!
- ◆ **Jenna Martin** has moved to Washington. She was formerly with Poudre School District.
- ◆ **Brooke Miller** and family have relocated to Palmer, Alaska. We thank Brooke for her many years of service as a Colorado TVI and O&M Specialist.



BACK TO SCHOOL

2023-24 School Year



Who Ya Gonna Email / Call/ Text

SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024

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

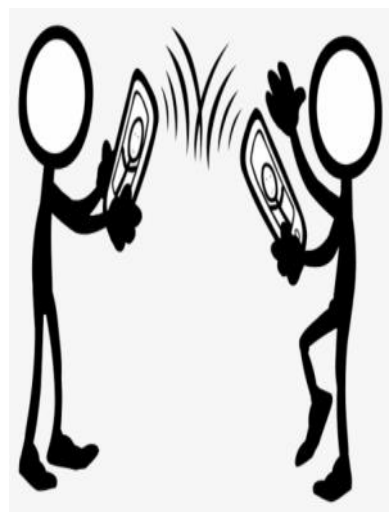
- For referrals - referrals@ASharedVision.org (general mailbox)

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

- For referrals or information on services / CVI Initiative contact (303) 337-9732

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

- Braille Competency Testing/Braille Certification Renewal
- CDE web pages on Blindness/Low Vision, Deaf-Blindness, and Orientation & Mobility
- CDE Initiatives specific to State Assessments, Standards, READ Act, School Readiness Act, etc.
- CDE Orientation and Mobility Seminar
- CDE State Conference on BVI
- CDE TVI / O&M and Brailist Specialist listservs
- Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision & Hearing Loss Project
- Deaf-Blind Webinar Series
- Eligibility of Learners with Visual Impairment, Including Blindness or Deaf-Blindness
- IEPs, Learning Media Assessments and LMA Plans, specially designed instruction
- Job Clearinghouse – TVI and O&M Specialist positions within Colorado
- *Keeping in Touch (KIT)* newsletter
- Licensure for TVIs and O&M Specialists
- NIMAS and NIMAC procedures within Colorado
- Policy / Guidance documents pertaining to learners with BVI and/or deaf blindness
- READ Act and guidance specific for learners with blind/visually impairment or deafblindness
- Sound Bites (monthly virtual trainings)
- Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness and Significant Support Needs
- Vision Coalition (CDE State BVI Advisory)



Cheryl Austin at (719) 578-2110 or caustin@csdb.org

- Interim Director of CSDB Outreach (BVI / DHH) Programs (contracted staff, Early Intervention)
- Dean of the School for the Blind

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

- USABA Membership and Outreach Coordinator

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

- CIMC webpage: <https://csdb.colorado.gov/outreach/cimc-colorado-instructional-materials-center>

Please encrypt all emails containing personally identifiable student information (PII) you send to the following email addresses:

- cimcaphorders@csdb.org for “APH Order Form” & “CIMC Professional Lending Library” submissions and questions
- cimcbookorders@csdb.org for braille and large print “Book Order Form” submissions, sourcing inquiries, and questions
- cimcBrailierTechSoftware@csdb.org for “Brailier-Tech-Software Order Form,” “Brailier Repair Form” and questions
- cimcregistrations@csdb.org for submissions and questions related to “Parent Consent Form,” “Registration Form,” and “Exit Form” 719) 578-2195 Jim Olson (Coordinator) jolson@csdb.org
- (719) 578-2196 CIMC pilot number (rings all CIMC computer-based phones simultaneously, no voicemail)
- (719) 578-2197 - Taylor Leinbach, tleinbach@csdb.org (braille transcriber, questions related to braille book orders)
- (719) 578-2198 - Felizia Gosine, fgosine@csdb.org (shipping & receiving related questions, APH instructional materials orders)
- (719) 578-2199 - Maddee Durossette, mdurossette@csdb.org (state / APH registrations, database reports, federal quota census, & related questions)
- Mailing Address: CIMC, 1015 East High Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80903-3559

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

- UNC Teacher Training Program on Visual Impairment / O&M Training Program
- UNC and CAER representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Nancy Cozart at (303) 734-3090 or nkcozart28@gmail.com

- CDE Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor
- Metro TVI / O&M Specialist Region representative at Vision Coalition meetings
- Metro TVI / O&M Specialist Regional Meetings

Roberta Curtis at (720) 456.2601 or curtis_r@cde.state.co.us

- CDE Program Assistant for BVI and Deaf-Blind TA Activities
- Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Site Coordinator

Chaz Davis (303) 778-1130 or cdavis@cocenter.org

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

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

- Colorado Center for the Blind Director

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

- CSDB Director of Special Education
- CSDB and Enrollment Questions

Christine Holmberg at (303) 506-3859 or christine@foresightskiguide.org

- Foresight Ski Guides

Karin Hensel at (775) 997 8874 or KHensel@dcsdk12.org

- Low Vision Evaluation Therapist for Low Vision Evaluation Clinics

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

- Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project
- Free Technical Assistance for Learners with Deaf-Blindness, Their Families, and Service Providers
- Intervener Training and Support (with Jessica Meisel)

Melissa French at (970) 219-7697 or mfrench@svvsd.org

- Northern Region TVI / O&M Specialist Representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Donna Keale at (719) 330-7387 or dkeale@csdb.org

- CSDB BVI Outreach Representative at Vision Coalition meetings

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

- A Shared Vision: Partners in Pediatric Blindness and Visual Impairment
- A Shared Vision Representative at Vision Coalition meetings

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

- Metro TVI / O & M Specialist Regional Meetings

Taylor Leinbach at (719) 578-2197 or tleinbach@csdb.org

- Braille Challenge – Metro Denver Contest



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

- Braille Challenge – CSDB Regional Contest
- CSDB Adams’ School for the Blind Principal
- CSDB School for the Blind representative at Vision Coalition Meetings

Christine Maynard at (719) 229-4981 or maynard_c@cde.state.co.us

- Southern Region CDE Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Aryn McNichol at (303) 702-8354 or mcnichol_aryn@svvsd.org

- Northern TVI / O&M Specialist Regional Meetings

Tammy Miller at (303)-377-9732 or tmiller@anchorcenter.org

- Anchor Center for Blind Children Director of Children’s Programs and Services Program Coordinator
- Anchor Center for Blind Children representative at Vision Coalition meetings

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

- CIMC webpage: www.csdb.colorado.gov and click on the “Outreach” tab, choose “CIMC” from the drop-down menu.
- Authorized NIMAS file user for Colorado
- CIMC braille & large print book orders and APH loan materials
- CIMC First Friday Meetings
- CIMC Professional Lending Library
- CIMC Representative at Vision Coalition meetings
- CIMC year-round registration of Colorado students who are blind/visually impaired
- Federal Quota Census registration (first Monday in January annually)
- Ex Officio Trustee for the Colorado Department of Education Federal Quota Accounts
- Southern Region TVI-DVR Specialist Meetings
- School district orders of prescribed low vision clinic devices

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

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services Representative at Vision Coalition meetings

Erin Schroeder at (970) 254-5414 or Erin.schroeder@d51schools.org

- Western Slope TVI / O&M Specialist Representative at Vision Coalition meetings
- Western Slope TVI / O &M Specialist Regional Meetings

Brenda Shepard at (303) 995-7913 or shepard_b@cde.state.co.us

- CDE Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Angela Sims at (970) 640-7096 or angela.sims@d51schools.org

- Site Coordinator for Western Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

Heather Solberg at (303) 505-2758 or heather.solberg@va.gov

- CAER Chapter President

Tera Spangler at (719) 578-2102 or tspangler@csdb.org

- CSDB Interim Superintendent· Colorado Talking Book Library Director

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

- Audio Information Network of Colorado

Jacky Weatherup at (719) 578-2102 or jweathrup@csdb.org

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

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

- Site Coordinator for Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

Julie Wetzstein at (303) 216-6124 or Wetzstein_j@cde.state.co.us

- CDE Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Chloann Woolley at (719) 494-6337 or cwoolley@upboces.org

- Southern Region TVI / O&M Specialist Representative at Vision Coalition meetings





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The contents of this newsletter were developed under a grant from the United States Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.