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Keeping in Touch!

A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers of Colorado Children with Blindness,
Low Vision, CVI, or Deaf-Blindness
November – December 2025

Thanks for
the memories,
lessons,
and joy this year.



To say that 2025 passed in the blink of an eye hardly captures it. It feels like only yesterday we were together for the 2025 Braille Challenge, CDE O&M Seminar, Summer Institute, and everything else that filled the days of the year. Before long, we'll be stepping into 2026—another year full of opportunities for training, collaboration, shared time, and, most importantly, being a part of life-changing moments with students.

New lessons await, and with them, new memories and genuine joy ahead.

Thank you for another amazing calendar year. Wishing each of you a restful holiday and looking forward to seeing you in the new year.

Kind regards, Tanni

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Figure 1: Erika Anderson Ko and Meghan Crosby with a student at the Western Low Vision clinic.

Low Vision Evaluation (LVE) Clinic News

Expectations for CDE Low Vision Evaluation Clinics

We have completed three out of four of our scheduled LVE Clinics for this school year. A big thank you to all who have made the Southern, Western, and Northern LVE Clinics a success for our students. What has worked beautifully has been the students, the families, and the TVIs in attendance! Also, our great team of Dr. Kara Hanson, Dr. David Simpson, Jim Olson, Erika Andersen Ko, and Krista Berkey. Our host sites have been fantastic. The reports have been in the mail pretty close to 2-3 weeks post clinic. Where we need to improve is getting the clinic paperwork ahead of the clinic in a timely manner for our team to review and plan. We are making some changes to the Parent / TVI form and will be doing a trial online form process for our Metro LVE Clinic. This will help to determine if this is a more efficient process, but we still need people to complete the paperwork. Stay tuned on how it works!



Northern Low Evaluation Vision Clinic

Thank you to **Aryn McNichol, Amber Korban, Jill Bookwalter, Hanna Waladay, Jeanine Holmes, Samantha Thuis, Melissa French, Abby Horner, Liz Wieder, and Sally Burch** for bringing students to the Northern clinic in Fort Collins on November 13 and 14! We had an impressive 100% attendance rate this year across all 12 of the students who had appointments. Extra special thanks to **Sam Thuis** for coordinating with the space and the other TVIs to collect paperwork—your willingness to help bring these clinics to your region is so valuable!

We also want to provide thanks to **Ensign Skills Center** for allowing us two full days of using their amazing space! We couldn't have asked for more gracious hosts.



Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

The Metro Low Vision Clinic will take place on February 19 through 21, 2026, at Anchor Center for Blind Children. Forms for TVIs will be available by early January. They will be due no later than first week of February for a child to be accepted for a clinic appointment. Krista Berkey is our Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Coordinator.

For logistical questions about the clinics, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

Figure 2 (left): A student using a magnifier at the Southern low vision clinic.

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 Project) has begun its third year of its federally-funded five-year grant cycle. The purpose of the project, awarded to every state and U.S. territory, is to identify children and youth with deaf-blindness and provide free technical assistance (TA) to the identified children, their families, and service providers. Key project activities are to maintain an annual Child Count process, host professional learning events that include an annual webinar series and the long-offered Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness and Significant Support Needs, and to provide tiered and customized technical assistance to families and/or service providers.



The project has four broad goals: (1) timely identification of children with deaf-blindness; (2) family networking, training, and TA support; (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 four CDE employees (Project Co-Directors **Tanni Anthony** and **Gina Herrera**, TA Specialist **Jessica Meisel**, and Program Support Assistant **Krista Berkey** and a contracted Family Engagement Specialist **Cindy Colwell**. For training, support documents and resources, please check out our [Deaf-Blind website](#). A big thank you to everyone who are currently updating and/or completing the Colorado Deaf-Blind Child Count Forms for our December 1, 2025 Count. You and others have contributed to the current identification of 167 infants, toddlers, and school-age, and transition program students with deaf-blindness in Colorado.

Colorado Deaf-Blind Project Offers Intervener Training

The Colorado Services for Children and Youth with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss (Colorado Deaf-Blind Project) is conducting intervener training program, free of charge, twice during the school year. A new cohort will begin in January 2026. The program is designed to provide the background knowledge needed for working one-on-one with students who are deaf-blind and who are on the CO Deaf-Blind Child Count. This program provides a wonderful opportunity for schools or agencies with a staff member(s) who would like to receive intervener training. The training will include:

- ◆ An online course of study—hosted by the Colorado Deaf-Blind Project —using modules developed by the National Center on Deaf-Blindness. This includes feedback on all assignments
- ◆ Coaching/mentoring and consultation from the Colorado Deaf-Blind Project personnel
- ◆ On online support network of other interveners in Colorado, including
- ◆ Ongoing professional development opportunities from the Colorado Deaf-Blind Project

Do you have a new intervener who needs this training? For more information and to register, please contact Jessica Meisel at Meisel_j@cde.co.state.us.

Free Technical Assistance for Learners with Deaf-Blindness

Technical assistance (TA) is the mission of the CO Deaf-Blind Project. TA recipients include Colorado families of children and youth who are deaf-blind, early intervention and school personnel, and agencies providing services to identified 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 per your request
- ◆ virtual workshops and state in-person trainings, including an annual Summer Institute
- ◆ 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 our [e-Technical Assistance Request Form located here](#). If you have questions, reach out to Gina Herrera at Herrera_G@cde.state.co.us or call at 303-253-0451.

Explore the Latest Edition of DbI Review – Fall 2025

Check out the release of **DbI Review #74**, our Fall 2025 edition, dedicated to the theme of the **Global Education Campaign – “Let Me In”**. This issue brings together powerful stories, groundbreaking research, and inspiring initiatives from across the globe, highlighting the voices and experiences of people with deafblindness.

- Discover how 30 new research projects in Africa, Asia, and Latin America are transforming education.
- Read about innovative teacher training in Malawi, digital empowerment in Kenya, and inclusive rehabilitation in Guatemala.
- Learn how the WHO ICF Core Sets for Deafblindness are advancing global policy and inclusion.
- Be inspired by personal journeys, like Koula Somaraki's travels to 88 countries as a deaf woman with Usher Syndrome.

Whether you're a professional, advocate, educator, or ally, this edition offers insight, connection, and hope.

Read the full magazine here: [The DbI Review #74](#)

JVIB - Issue on Deaf-Blindness

The Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness (JVIB) is now accepting submissions for its *2026 Special Issue on Communication, Language, and Literacy for Individuals with Visual Impairments or Deafblindness Who Have Complex Support Needs*. This issue will feature research and practice-based insights aimed at improving outcomes for individuals of all ages with vision loss or deafblindness who also have additional disabilities.

JVIB submissions may include original research, conceptual papers, short reports, and descriptions of effective practices using a variety of methodologies. The deadline for submissions is February 28, 2026. [Check out the JVIB Call for Papers for this special issue at their website.](#)

Resources and Materials

APH ConnectCenter Latest Content

- [Maximize Your Sight: Non-Optical Low Vision Devices for Daily Life](#)
- [Does My Blind/Low Vision Child Have Additional Disabilities?](#)
- [Ace Your New Job: Tips for the First Weeks of Employment](#)



Table Manners for Teens

It is always important for teens who are blind or low vision to brush up on dining etiquette. This blog offers practical tips to help teens feel confident and polished at the table, whether they're with family, friends, or future employers. [Table Manners for Blind or Low Vision Teens](#)

Cedric's Cartesian Quest App by APH

Take a look at the latest free APH app called [Cedric's Cartesian Quest](#), which is gamified learning at its finest, turning coordinate grids and early algebra into an epic adventure for students with visual impairments!

American Printing House for the Blind Apps

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) is truly a game changer with the release of their two latest apps—Cosmic Number Lines and Cedric's Cartesian Quest! These tools are revolutionizing how students who are blind or low vision interact with foundational math content—from early number sense on the number line to deeper exploration of coordinate planes and algebraic thinking. With built-in accessibility, engaging themes, and smart design, they not only make math more inclusive—they make it *fun*. These apps are setting a new standard for accessible, high-quality digital math learning!

The Dignity of Risk Course for Parents and Professionals

This free course, developed by Vanderbilt University's Department of Special Education in partnership with EMPOWERing Youth with VI, is now live. A Colorado parent, Rob Harris, had the privilege of authoring Lesson #3: A Father's Perspective.

The *dignity of risk* is a vital concept for educators, professionals, families, and advocates. It challenges us to remember that taking risks, making decisions, and sometimes making mistakes are not things to be prevented — they are essential steps in learning, growing, and living fully.

About EMPOWERing Youth with VI: This national program equips blind and visually impaired youth with the skills, confidence, and leadership tools they need for adulthood and active community participation.

[Take the Dignity of Risk Course for Parents and Professionals here.](#)

Please complete the feedback survey at the end — your insights will help shape future resources and support the grant that made this course possible.

Media Literacy Resource Bank

Resources for Media Awareness and Healthy Social Media Use

- Resources to help Colorado's youth analyze the information, claims, and sources presented through traditional and digital media
- Classroom resources and research pertaining to the mental and physical health impacts of social media use, healthy social media use, internet safety, and cybersecurity
- Search by grade level, topic, type and more
- Search by audience student & parent/families/trusted adult resources

This resource bank was developed by committees created through CRS 22-2-145 (media literacy) and CRS 22-2-127.8 (Social media impacts on mental health education literacy). Committees identified resources for K-12 educators, parents/families/trusted adults, community members, and youth to support teaching media literacy and the impacts of social media use. Resources include professional development opportunities, instructional strategies, research based scholarly articles, and promising program materials. Topics include: Information literacy, digital citizenship, impacts of social media on mental and physical health, internet safety, cybersecurity, and cyberbullying.

Check it out at: [CDE Media Literacy](#)

IEP Self-Paced Course Collection

This collection of self-paced courses provides foundational information about the individualized education program (IEP) and describes the role of the IEP in developing and implementing high-quality educational programming that meets procedural, substantive, and implementation requirements and ensures that students with disabilities have access to free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment as outlined by IDEA.



Specific courses focus on critical parts of the IEP (e.g., PLAAFP statement, measurable annual goals), while others include overarching information about the IEP and IEP team members. Current courses in this collection range from 30-60 minutes. Click on the courses below to learn more about each of the courses in the collection. Additional courses in this collection will be added.

To access these courses in this series, you will need to log in or register for an account in the PROGRESS Center and NCII Learning Module Library. You will only be able to access the course completion certificate once the module has been completed.

Please contact studentprogressmoodle@air.org with any questions.

[Check out the courses at the Promoting Progress website.](#)

Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) Resources

CVI Now



CVINow.org is here to empower professionals and families with CVI knowledge, resources, and tools to support students with CVI.

Get the latest expertise, research, and information on CVI Now! CVI Now is a go-to resource that is rooted in research and centers the lived experiences of people with CVI and their families. Learn about CVI and the brain, the CVI visual behaviors, instructional strategies and supports, environmental and material adaptations, communication, calendar systems, and much more.

Follow [@CVINow on Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/CVINow) for trusted answers, resources, and CVI strategies!

Online Education

Perkins offers several paths to CVI education through **on-demand courses and webinars**. [Visit The Perkins CVI Protocol webpage](#) for the most up-to-date information.

CVI Communities

Join a CVI Community today! The CVI Center team at Perkins oversees two vibrant CVI communities on Facebook:

- [CVI Now Parents](#)
- [CVI Now for Educators](#)

CVI Newsletter

[Subscribe to CVI Now's monthly newsletter](#) to be the first to know about new resources, research, and happenings.

[CVI Scotland](#)



CVI Scotland has made a video because of the incorrect perception that if someone can see something, particularly something small, there cannot be visual impaired leading to a misunderstanding about children with CVI.

This video shows one of the many aspects of CVI that can be extremely disabling, even when the person can see small things clearly, and why CVI needs to be taken seriously

Check out the [CVI Scotland video on Vimeo](#).

Check It Out!

Positive Eye Resources and Online Courses

[Online Course: Supporting Social & Emotional Wellbeing of Students with Vision Impairment](#)

Starts January 12, 2026

£190.00 / ~\$251.00



[Online Course: Positive Looking Visual Skills Programme](#)

First session starts January 8, 2026

£200.00 / ~\$265.00

FREE Resources

- ◆ [Marvin's Story Time Show Literacy Programme: Online Shows on Zoom](#)
- ◆ [Positive Eye's Newsletter](#)
- ◆ [Free Resources via Positive Eye](#)
- ◆ [Free Positive Looking App](#)

State Assessment Accommodations Office Hour for TVIs

Please be sure to attend this information-packed guidance webinar on allowable accommodations on the CMAS Assessments for learners who are blind/low vision. The webinar will once again be hosted by Dr. Arti Sachdeva, the Students with Disabilities Assessment Principal Consultant of the CDE Assessment Unit.

NCPEID Video

[Learn about SHAPE America's position statement on determining if a child should be considered for APE Services!](#)

National O&M Conference

It's been almost 30 years since SOMA and SWOMA (SE and SW O&M Associations) got together for a HUGE O&M conference (more than 500 O&Ms from around the world!) in NEW ORLEANS, and it is happening again on December 5-8, 2026! You are invited to share your wisdom, experience, innovations, and ideas with your colleagues. [Our conferences are known](#) for engaging their participants with interactive / hands-on / feet-in-the-street / derrieres-out-of-the-chairs sessions, and this will be no exception! The planning committee especially invite first-time presenters.

The [Call for Papers](#) deadline is January 15.

Registration and information is on our [home page](#)

SWAAAC Monthly Webinar: Control the Chaos with Executive Functioning Skills

This webinar will be held on Tuesday, January 20th, 2026, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. MT

Presented by Stephanie Howell.

Description: For students to be successful in school, there is an increasing need to have more developed executive functioning skills. In today's classrooms, teachers are moving away from being the main source of delivering instruction and moving towards more of a facilitator role. However, many students are struggling with this new model of learning due to skill gaps in executive functioning. Once we fill the gaps, they are ready to succeed and become owners of their learning.

Target Audience: Colorado Public School Assistive Technology Specialists, Special Educators, Speech-Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Reading Specialists, Teachers for the Visually Impaired, Special Education Paraprofessionals, Administrators, and Parents.

[Register for the SWAAAC monthly webinar here.](#)

Perkins Digital Math Resources



Take some time and truly review the wealth of [digital math resources from Perkins School for the Blind](#).

There are resources, training options (e.g. tactile graphicacy for math webinars), skill checklists, manipulatives information and much more. Amazingly good stuff!

Accessibility / I am Not Remarkable / Apple - Check out This Video

After our wonderful Low Hanging Fruit of Accessibly Technology Sound Bit, I was sent this link of a video specific to accessible technology and a whole bunch more of good stuff.

The world is better when it is accessible!

Check it out: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KmFPWxjmngE>

OSEP-Funded TA Centers

** Early Childhood



The [Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center](#) provides 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.



** Learners Who Are Deaf-Blind



The [National Center on Deaf-Blindness](#) covers OSEP guidance, technical assistance, resources for families and service providers, and learning for proficient communicators who are deaf-blind. The website is 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.



** Accessible Materials and Technologies



The [National AEM Center at CAST](#) has provides TA, coaching, and resources increase the availability and use of educational materials and technologies for learners with disabilities across the lifespan.

*** Professional Learning Modules

The [IRIS Center](#) is a dedicated to improving education outcomes for all children, especially those with disabilities birth through age 21 through the use of effective evidence-based practices and interventions.



*** Center for Parent Information & Resources (CPIR)

CPIR is the hub of valuable information and products specifically designed for the network of Parent Centers serving families of children with disabilities



CDE Happenings



Implementation of House Bill 25-1278 is Underway

The Assessment Division continues to work closely with teams across CDE to coordinate the implementation of this major initiative. The Assessment team hit several recent milestones to keep us on track for delivering all Assessment-related components successfully.

Transition to Online CMAS Testing for all Districts and Schools

- ✓ Communicated elimination of CMAS paper assessments (except for students with documented IEP needs) beginning spring 2025 to District Technology Coordinators during their 2025-2026 kickoff webinar.
- ✓ Provided outreach / transition support to districts with schools previously administering paper tests.
- ✓ Notified former CSLA participating districts of the shift to full online administration and shared available resources.

Strengthening of Participation and Communication

- ✓ Conceptualized a multi-pronged targeted participation strategy focused on educators, parents, and rural and low-participation districts.
- ✓ Reviewed current communication for revision and refinement focused on purpose, value, and clarity.
- ✓ Prepared for spring 2026 virtual administration that will provide students in fully online schools with the opportunity to take CMAS remotely.

Support for Students with Special Timing Needs

- ✓ Created a new fact sheet outlining when and how to divide CMAS into smaller sections for eligible students. The spring 2026 CMAS administration training and procedures manual will also include the developed information and guidance.

Faster Reporting of Results

- ✓ Continued communication and support for the paper-mode phaseout—reducing processing time and enabling faster results delivery to schools and districts (target: before June 1).
- ✓ Completed an automated scoring study with Pearson; endorsed by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to move forward, paving the way for shorter ELA scoring timelines.
- ✓ Began implementing a streamlined student data review process to ease district burden and accelerate final data completion.

Elimination of SAT Optional Essay

- ✓ An optional SAT essay will not be available in spring 2026 through PSAT/SAT training webinars and district communications.

Computer Adaptive Testing/Shortening CMAS Assessment Study

- ✓ Worked on design and execution of study in collaboration with Pearson.
- ✓ Presented initial plan to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) for feedback.

If you have questions about your students' needs for paper-based tests, please work with your District Assessment Coordinator and ensure the IEP is clear about this needed assessment accommodations.

CMAS News

The Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) is the only assessment given to all Colorado students that measures what students should know and be able to do at the end of each assessed grade. Concepts and skills explicitly identified in the Science Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) are the basis for CMAS. ELA and math assessments are administered to students in grades 3-8; science assessments are administered in grades 5, 8 & 11; and social studies assessments are administered to a sample of students in grades 4 & 7.

Administration Window: April 6 - April 24, 2026

Other Assessment Information

Colorado Alternate Assessment Program (CoAlt)

CoAlt assessments are administered to students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. The program includes Colorado-developed science assessments in grades 5, 8, and 11 and social studies assessments in grades 4 and 7. English language arts and math assessments are developed in collaboration with the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) assessment consortium and administered to students in grades 3-11.

Administration Window: Aligned to CMAS and PSAT/SAT (April 13 - April 24, 2026)

SAT / PSAT Information

Colorado administers the SAT college entrance exam to all 11th grade students and the PSAT to 9th and 10th grade students.

Administration Window: April 13 - April 24, 2026

National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) Update

A representative sample of Colorado 4th and 8th grade students participate in NAEP reading and math assessments every other year. NAEP produces state level results, but the assessments are not designed to produce individual student, school, or district results.

Administration Window: January 26 – March 20, 2026

CMAS Colorado Spanish Language Arts (CSLA) Online Practice Resources Are Now Available!

Students and educators can now get a first look at the online CSLA, which will be administered digitally for the first time in Spring 2026. Practice resources are available on the Colorado Practice Resources webpage, giving 3rd and 4th grade students a chance to experience the test format on a computer!

Share these resources with districts and schools that participate in CSLA. Practice materials for all CMAS assessments and CoAlt science and social studies assessments are available in the same location.

CMAS State Assessments – Be in the Know

It is important for parents to understand the role of statewide assessments. Check out the Fact Sheets below and please share with your families.

Role of State Assessments

This fact sheet explains the role of statewide assessments in increasing academic achievement.

- [Role of State Assessments - English \(PDF\)](#)
- [Role of State Assessments - Spanish \(PDF\)](#)

TVIs, do you have access and tools to understand how your students are doing on CMAS state assessments? Check out the Fact Sheets below to be in the know.

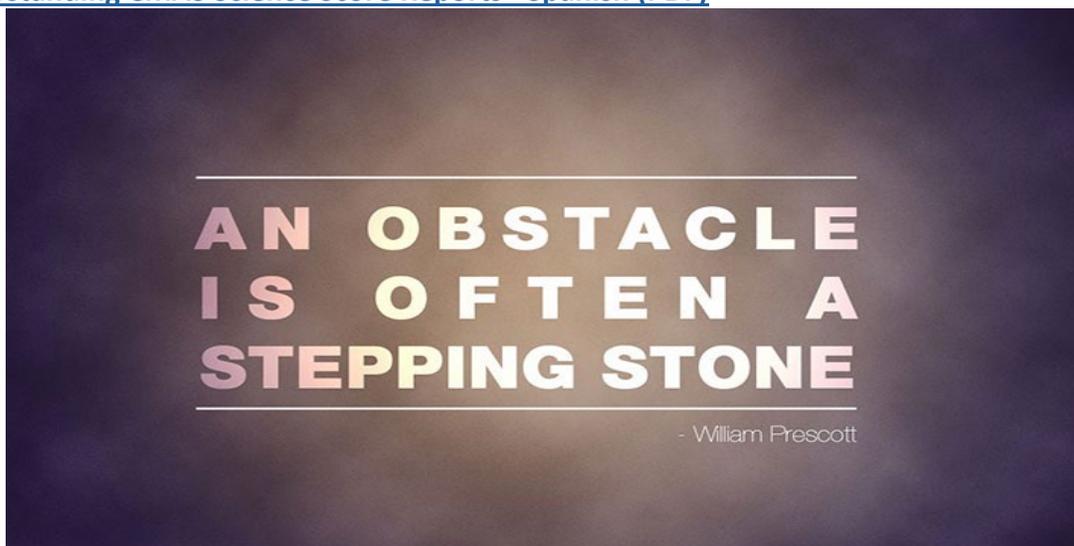
Understanding Score Reports

This fact sheet explains how to understand score reports for CMAS English language arts and math:

- [Understanding CMAS English Language Arts & Math Score Reports - English \(PDF\)](#)
- [Understanding CMAS English Language Arts & Math Score Reports - Spanish \(PDF\)](#)

This fact sheet explains how to understand score reports for CMAS Science:

- [Understanding CMAS Science Score Reports - English \(PDF\)](#)
- [Understanding CMAS Science Score Reports - Spanish \(PDF\)](#)



Connecting the Dots: A Commitment to Braille

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 CDE Braille Specialists Committee consists currently of the following individuals:

Name	Phone Number	Email Address
Tanni Anthony	(303) 503-4647	Anthony_T@cde.state.co.us
Nancy Cozart	(303) 905-4074	Cozart_N@cde.state.co.us
Christine Maynard	(719) 229-4981	Maynard_C@cde.state.co.us
Brenda Shepard	(303) 995-7913	Shepard_B@cde.state.co.us
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](#).

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) 503–4647 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

APH Hive New Course Alert: Teaching Graphicacy Skills

The American Printing House for the Blind's Hives newest course, Teaching Graphicacy Skills, equips educators with tools to bridge braille literacy and graphicacy. The objectives of the course include:

- ◆ Define tactile graphicacy and describe how it relates to braille literacy.
- ◆ Describe a variety of instructional strategies tied to effective tactile graphics reading and tactual perceptive skills.
- ◆ Explain the key elements of graphics learning and their role in developing tactile graphics literacy.
- ◆ Identify resources that can be used to evaluate students' tactile perceptual capability and determine areas for targeted instruction.

[Visit the APH Hive website to enroll.](#)

UEB Math/Science (or "Technical Material in UEB") Resources

Below is a list of UEB Math/Science resources that Kyle DeJute compiled. Kyle is a Braille Trainer at the American Printing House for the Blind.

The webinar [UEB Math Science: Frozen Juice Concentrate](#) explains some principles that expand through all UEB Math/Science materials, and it is packed full of resources for reference and study. This webinar handouts are hosted on the Access Academy Handouts page. Below are links to a variety of free resources for learning to use UEB to transcribe technical materials.

- ◆ UEB Mathematics Program from UEBOnline
- ◆ UEB Math Tutorial online, from APH
- ◆ UEB Math + Formats = Success webinar recording and handouts, from FIMCVI (Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired)
- ◆ Provisional Guidance for Transcribing Mathematics in UEB, from BANA
- ◆ The National Braille Association has webinars about UEB Math/Science on their webinar-based learning webpage.
- ◆ The Primary Math Cheat Sheet, from UEBOnline is one list of some UEB symbols used in technical materials. See below, under the heading "Techniques," for information about the UKAAF document "Generating mathematical symbols using Math AutoCorrect or Unicode.
- ◆ Project INSPIRE, which has created a host of Nemeth-Code-related resources for teachers, is now focusing on UEB Math/Science. Kyle would recommend visiting Project INSPIRE's microsite on Paths to Literacy.

Multilingual Learners Identified or Suspected of Having Educational Disabilities

2025-26 Webinar Series on Multilingual Learners

The Multilingual Learners with Educational Disabilities: Voices from the Intersection of Language, Literacy, Culture, & Opportunity engaging series brings together a star-studded lineup of national and Colorado-based researchers and practitioners who are leading the field with practical, student-centered approaches.

Mark your calendars! Sessions run from 8:30–9:30 on a.m. on December 11 (2025), February 19, and March 5 (2026).

[Webinar Series Informational Booklet](#) (PDF)

[Registration Link](#)

For each webinar, attendees will receive 1 hour of Special Education recertification credit, Registration will close two weeks prior to each webinar to ensure accessibility for all.

An Important Decision Making Resource

- ◆ The CDE's Linguistically Responsive Data-Based Instructional Decision-Making for K-12 Multilingual Learners

Opportunities that offer Special Education Recertification Credit:

- ◆ The CDE's Culturally Responsive School-Based Family Interviewing: Engaging in Empathic Family Partnerships
- ◆ The CDE's Indigenous Students and Those with Exceptionalities Modules



Calendar of Events



Date	Event
December 13, 2025	CO Center for the Blind Youth Program: Holiday Celebration, Santa Time Contact: Tiffany Moon at tmoon@cocenter.org
	Welcome to 2026!
January 4, 2026	Happy Birthday to Louis Braille! Thank you to Louis!!
January 7	Blindness/Low Vision Coalition (Virtual) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
January 7	State Assessment TVI Accommodations Office Hour – 4:00 – 5:00 State Assessment TVI Accommodations Office Hour Meeting-Join Microsoft Teams
January 9	First Friday CIMC Virtual Call from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
January 12 – February 13	ACCESS Testing Administration Window
January 14	Sound Bites: Making Math Accessible with Morf , presented by Anitha Muthukumaran and Dr. Hari Palani (Sound Bites Registration)
January 17	CO Center for the Blind Youth Program: Ice Skating Outdoor ice-skating at the Parker Ice Trail at Discovery Park. Contact: Tiffany Moon at tmoon@cocenter.org
January 26 – March 20	National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) Administration Window for selected 4th / 8th Grade students in ELA and Mathematics
February 6	First Friday CIMC Virtual Call from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
February 11	Sound Bites: Dispelling Myths When Choosing Braille Code Options for Math and Science , presented by Dr. FM D’Andrea (Sound Bites Registration)

Date	Event
February 19 – 21	Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic – Anchor Center for Blind Children Contact: Krista Berkey at berkey_k@cde.state.co.us
February 19	CSDB Braille Challenge Contact: Jonathan Karli at jkarli@csdb.org
February 21	CO Center for the Blind Youth Program: Skiing with Ignite Adaptive Sports Enjoy a half-day on the slopes of Eldora! Contact: Tiffany Moon at tmoon@cocenter.org
February 23	Makeup Day for CSDB Braille Challenge Contact: Jonathan Karli at jkarli@csdb.org
February 27	Metro Braille Challenge – Colorado Center for the Blind in Littleton Contact: Jonathan Karli at jkarli@csdb.org
March 1	Education for Life Scholarship Applications Due More EFL information is available on their website.
March 6	First Friday CIMC Virtual Call from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
March 11	Sound Bites: Tech for Low Vision , presented by Erika Andersen Ko (Sound Bites Registration)
March 21	CO Center for the Blind Youth Program: Curious About It? Let us Show You. Demonstrations and hands-on skills training in technology, braille, independent living skills, travel, and sports. Contact: Tiffany Moon at tmoon@cocenter.org
April 3	First Friday CIMC Virtual Call from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
April 6 – April 24	Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) Administration Window
April 13 – April 24	Colorado Alternate Assessment Program (CoAlt) Administration Window
April 13 – April 24	Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)/PSAT Administration Window

Date	Event
April 15	Tools for Life Applications Due
April 22	Sound Bites: Low Vision Tests and Their Role, presented by Dr. Kara Hanson (Sound Bites Registration)
May 1	First Friday CIMC Virtual Call from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
May 6	Sound Bites: What Can You Learn from a Little Information?, presented by Dr. David Simpson (Sound Bites Registration)
June 4 – June 5	Conference on Assistive Technology in Education (Virtual) Contact: SWAAAC@ucdenver.edu
June 5	First Friday CIMC Virtual Call from 2:30 - 3:30 p.m. Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
July 29 – August 2	AER Biennial International Conference – Louisville, KY More information is available on the AER website.



Figure 3: Dr. Kara Hanson working with a student at the Southern low vision clinic.

Transition Preparation for Life Post Public School

Participating in Colorado's PSAT/SAT Program Opens Doors for Colorado Students

The **PSAT** (Preliminary SAT) is a practice test for the SAT that also qualifies students for the [National Merit Scholarship Program](#). The **SAT** is the official college entrance exam that is scored higher (400-1600) than the PSAT (320-1520) and is a primary factor in college admissions decisions. Both tests share a similar structure with Reading and Writing, and Math sections, but the SAT is more challenging and has a higher score range.



Big opportunities start with Colorado's high school assessments. Here's what students get just by participating in the PSAT/SAT program:

- **A State-Funded SAT Score:** Colorado pays for all 9th and 10th graders to take the PSAT And for all 11th graders to take the SAT. That means students get a college entrance score for free—no fees, no appointments, no barriers that can hold students back from exploring life after high school.
- **A Step Toward Graduation:** SAT scores can help students meet a Colorado Graduation Guideline. It's one way to check a big requirement off the list.
- **Career & College Insights:** PSAT and SAT score reports show:
 - Example careers that match student strengths
 - Skills the student is building
 - Jobs they might not have even heard of yet to help build awareness about potential future options
- **Future Planning with BigFuture:** College Board's BigFuture program helps students explore:
 - College options
 - Career paths
 - Scholarships & financial aid
 - What steps to take next
- **Scholarship Opportunities – Just by Planning for the Future:** When students complete steps like building a college list, starting a career list, applying to college, or completing FAFSA, they earn chances to win \$500 and \$40,000 scholarships every month.

A Colorado student from Adams 12 won a \$40,000 BigFuture scholarship in November! Another Colorado student could be next!

Announcing the 2026 NFB Scholarship Program

The National Federation of the Blind is pleased to announce their 2026 scholarship program. They offer thirty \$8,000 scholarships to blind students who will be at least eighteen years of age by July 3, 2026. Students may apply if they reside in the fifty states, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico and will be enrolled in a full-time accredited post-secondary degree program during the 2026-2027 school year. The National Federation of the Blind may award up to five of the thirty scholarships annually to applicants enrolled part-time who meet all other eligibility requirements. Additionally, we recognize that employment, family caregiving, and ongoing medical care concurrent with post-secondary enrollment can contribute to a need for students to carry a part-time course load. Our application has been revised in order to provide an opportunity for students who will be enrolled part-time in the fall to share additional information with the committee.

All scholarships will be awarded at their 2026 National Convention, which will take place in Austin, Texas, from July 3-8.

The application period begins December 1, 2025, and closes at midnight EST on March 31, 2026.

[For more information, visit the NFB Scholarship page.](#) To apply during the four-month open period: read the rules and the submission checklist, complete the official 2026 scholarship application form, supply all required documents, and request and complete an interview with an NFB affiliate president.

Blind Astronomer

Dr. Argiris Koumtzis is working as a data scientist in Berlin. He has launched a new website for students and others to check out for its information. Some of your students may find a great role model in Argiris, who is blind and has a PhD in Astrophysics. [Check out Audio Thrive at their website.](#)



The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: The Collaborative (NTACT:C) is a Technical Assistance Center co-funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) and the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). They provide information, tools, and supports to assist multiple stakeholders in delivering effective services and instruction for secondary students and out of school youth with disabilities

Check out their training and resources at <https://transitionta.org/about/>

Colorado Association for Education & Rehabilitation of the Blind & Visually Impaired



AER International Conference 2026:
Call for Presenters Now Open!

Join a Community of Change-Makers—Lead a Session at the AER International Conference 2026

July 29–August 2, 2026: Take the next step in growing your professional presence and influence. Presenting at the AER International Conference 2026 is an opportunity to showcase your expertise, expand your professional network, and enhance your credibility as a leader in the field.

When you share your work, research, and innovative practices with peers from around the world, you not only contribute to the advancement of education and rehabilitation for individuals who are blind or have low vision, but you also strengthen your own professional brand. Presenting at AER International Conference 2026 can:

- **Elevate your resume or CV** with recognized conference experience.
- **Increase your visibility** among colleagues, organizations, and potential collaborators.
- **Position you as a thought leader** in your area of expertise.
- **Connect with a global community** of professionals committed to innovation and impact.

Join us in *Sharing Our Stories – Impacting the Future* and be part of a transformative experience that celebrates growth, learning, and leadership. **Submit your proposal today** and take your place among the change-makers shaping the future of our field.

For proposal guidelines and submission details, visit the [AER Call for Proposals](#) website or contact conference@aerbvi.org with any questions.

CCB Holiday Jingle and Mingle



Join CCB and the Denver Chapter of the NFB for a joyful afternoon of holiday fun, creativity, and connection! Youth and their families are invited to come together for a festive celebration filled with laughter, friendship, and the magic of the season.

During the party, youth will have the chance to make a beautiful ornament to take home and pick a small gift to wrap for an important someone in their life. A delicious lunch will also be served. Choose between a meatball sub or an uncrustable sandwich.

Come and celebrate the holidays with other blind youth and adults. Be ready to create, share, and enjoy the spirit of the season together!

Date: Saturday, December 13

Time: 12 PM to 3 PM

Location: Colorado Center For The Blind, 2233 West Shepperd Ave., Littleton, CO 80120

[Please RSVP by Tuesday, December 9](#)

For questions, please contact Tiffany Moon at tmoon@cocenter.org or 303-778-1130x256.

CIMC Federal Quote Census

The first Monday in January, annually, is the date used for the nationwide Federal Quota Census. Inclusion into the census is dependent upon student enrollment on Monday, January 5, 2026, and meeting all of the eligibility requirements of the Census program.

Thank you to Colorado administrative units (AUs) for working closely with CIMC staff preparing for the 2026 census. All federal quota paperwork is due to the CIMC on Friday, January 30, 2026. If there are any questions, please reach out to Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org

Just for Parents

Virtual Research Study for Families

The Youth VIEW team at Texas Tech University is seeking families of children who are blind, low vision, or visually impaired to participate in a virtual research study. The goal of the study is to better understand how experiences in families, medical settings, schools, and the community may impact physical and mental health of blind, low vision, and visually impaired children. Children (ages 9 to 17) who are blind, low vision, or visually impaired, and living in the United States, are eligible to enroll, along with a parent or guardian. Participation is completely voluntary; whether you participate has no impact on you or your child's access to education, medical care, or employment.



To learn more about the study, please go to their prescreening survey page, which includes detailed information about study procedures, risks, and benefits. If, after reviewing this information, you would like to enroll, you can complete the prescreening survey, which takes 5-10 minutes of your time. Eligible families will then be contacted after completing the pre-screener to answer questions and to schedule your study session. To learn more or to complete the prescreening survey, click here: <http://tinyurl.com/whalaby>

In the meantime, if you have any questions about the study, please contact the team at Psychology.Youthview@ttu.edu

Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP)

PEP is a conference for families and parents who have children with disabilities, ages birth to 21. Parents include parents as couples, single parents, legal guardians, adoptive, and foster parents. A support person may attend and accompany a single parent. A support person is one who is helping a parent to raise a child(ren) with a disability or who is a caretaker of the child(ren) with a disability in the family (can include grandparent(s) or other relatives). PEP is a non-specific disability conference that focuses on commonalities, not diagnoses.

PEP In-person Conferences at Hotels: PEP in-person conferences are arranged at various hotels throughout regions in Colorado, and offers free registration, food, and lodging (if applicable). Special accommodations, language interpretation, and document translation are available. Transportation is not provided; consider carpooling if applicable; parking and sometimes valet service is available at the hotel venue.

Cost, Food, Lodging: PEP conferences are free to attend. Funded by both federal and state grants, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Exceptional Student Services Unit (ESSU) offers these conferences free of charge to eligible Colorado parents of children with disabilities and to Colorado professionals who work with children and youth with disabilities and their families. Parents are responsible for their own transportation to and from the hotel venue.

For more information about PEP check out the [CDE PEP website](#).

Jobs



We have vacancies for Colorado TVIs (teachers of students with visual impairments) and Orientation & Mobility Specialists. Please keep in touch with Tanni about your job openings. If you know of an anticipated opening in your part of the state, please begin working to recruit someone into our field by ensuring they have an opportunity to learn about being a TVI and/or an O&M Specialist. This may be a paraeducator, 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 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 our students.

Metro

- **1 FTE or part-time TVI with developmental / early childhood experience**— Anchor Center for Blind Children. For more information, contact Tammy Miller at tmiller@anchorcenter.org
- **1 FTE TVI / O&M Specialist Position** — Aurora School District. For more information, contact Wendy Schlageter at wschlageter@aurorak12.org

Northern Region

- **1 FTE TVI / O&M Specialist** — Greeley Schools. For more information, contact Tabitha Miller at tmiller7@greeleyschools.org

Southern Region

- Possibly for SY 26-27: **1 FTE TVI and O&M Specialist** — Colorado Springs D11 School District. For more information, contact Nancy Maresh-Melo at nancy.mareshmelo@d11.org or 719-520-2153.
- **1 FTE TVI for Secondary English Language Arts** — Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. For more information, contact Jonathan Karli at jkarli@csdb.org.

Statewide

- **1 FTE TVI / O&M Specialist** — CSDB Outreach. For more information, contact Jac Tyrcha at jtyrcha@csdb.org.

Multi-Region

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

Retiring Soon?

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. If you are an O&M Specialist, please also maintain your ACVREP O&M certification. Please keep in touch with Tanni if you are interested in this type of work after your retirement! Let Tanni know if you want to be added to her list of private contractors by emailing her at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

Visual Impairment Professions Video

AER's Professional Personnel Recruitment Committee (PPRC) is proud to announce the release of the long-awaited recruitment video: "Visual Impairment Professions."

[Access the video without audio description.](#)

[Access the video with audio description.](#)

Initial Licensure and Endorsement for TVI / O&M

For information about the endorsement requirements for the Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired Ages Birth-21, go to [the Endorsements page on the CDE website](#).

<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 [the Endorsements page on the CDE website](#).

<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, and under the supervision of an Academy of Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education (ACVREP) certified orientation and mobility specialist. ✓ Passing of the ACVREP exam. ✓ Hold a current and valid ACVREP Certified O&M Specialist certificate (for initial and renewal licenses). ✓ Please do not let your ACVREP O&M Certification expire. If you are providing O&M services 0-21, please be sure you have a license to do so.
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Colorado Connections



Braille Competency

Hats off to **Emma Avery, Anne Belanger, Gena Anderson Francoer, Jon Fisher, Caitlin Geoffrion, Julie Harrison, Lauren King, Chris Kinney, Autumn Odette, Aimee Pemberton, and Jared Walker** for completing braille renewal modules. Congratulations to **Ellen Wallis** of Centennial BOCES and Thompson School District for earning her CDE Braille Competency Certificate and **Autumn Odette**, from CSDB, for earning her CDE Braille Renewal Certificate. Thanks to **Chris Maynard, Brenda Shepard, Nancy Cozart, and Julie Wetzstein** for their proctoring work. Thanks also to **Jo Pinto** for braille proofreading work.

If you are a new in-person or virtual TVI to a Colorado administrative unit have not demonstrated braille competency yet this school year, please reach out to Tanni to learn more and secure an immediate testing date. Thank you to everyone for keeping our standards for braille competency high!

Professional Development Accolades

A double thank-you to **Sara Larkin** and **Dr. Tina Herzberg** for their fantastic Sound Bites session on *Digital Math Checklists*. This webinar was offered on November 13th with 34 participants. We were treated to five checklists, with a new one added just the day before our training. It is exciting to offer more tools to our students with a focus on opportunities to be more proficient with online learning platforms / products. Thank you to Sara and Tina!

Thanks to **Dr. Mary Zatta**, from the Perkins School for the Blind, for her presentation on the *Perkins CVI Protocol: An Interactive Workshop*, an in-person training on November 12th. The weather cooperated for a great gathering of over 70 TVIs and OTs from the CDE OT/PT Advisory. There are many changes to the collective understanding of Cortical / Cerebral Visual Impairment and this new tool, and its nuances will change our work in identifying children with CVI, providing meaningful assessment, and effective specially designed instruction. Once again, thank you to Colorado's amazing TVIs and O&M Specialists for attending, participating, and honing their knowledge and skills for our learners with CVI. Always proud!

Thank you so much to **Dr. Yue-Ting Siu** for her wonderful presentation on the topic of the Low Hanging Fruit of Access Technology. This was the December 3 Sound Bites session. We had just over 50 attendees for this session and the applause was high for the highlighted resources.

We are so grateful to **Nancy Steele** who provided customized Communication Matrix Office Hours to four different early intervention or school-based teams who attended the 2025 Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness this past June. This follow-up opportunity was a beneficial way to touch base on their student's progress and think through the strategies to keep the child moving forward.

CMAS Braille Assessment Review

Thank you to **Lisa Brocard, Nancy Cozart, Alex Pillard, and Marty Rahn** for their fantastic work on November 18-20th Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) Math and Science braille format tests. This is an intense process with careful review of each test items, the involved graphic, possible transcriber notes, etc. Others involved include the test publisher / braille division personnel (Pearson), and CDE Assessment staff. Many thanks to everyone for a brilliant team effort.



Figures 4 and 5 (above): Alex Pillard (CSDB TVI), Nancy Cozart (retired TVI), and Lisa Brocard (Littleton School District Brailist) participate in CMAS Braille Format Review; Marty Rahn's (CSDB TVI) hands on a CMAS Braille format test, following along with the oral reading of a question.

Figures 6 and 7 (below): Lisa Brocard reading a test question; Marty Rahn and Alex Pillard checking tactile graphics of a CMAS Science Test.





Enjoy the winter break ahead. See you in the new year where we have a whole lot more to look forward to learn, share, and accomplish.

Until, then thanks for all you do to support one another.



Office of Special Education Programs
U.S. Department of Education

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