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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**

August - September 2026



To A Great School Year Ahead: Keep On!

By Tanni Anthony

Welcome to the 2026–27 School Year! Whether you are returning to a familiar role or beginning a new position, thank you for the work you do on behalf of children and youth who are blind, have low vision, or are deaf-blind. We are fortunate that Colorado has specialized early intervention services for our infants and toddlers, solid school-age educational services and supports, and meaningful transition programs that are specific to the abilities and needs of our students. In addition, there are many other key support resources in our state, as noted in the article on the next pages. Take some time to become familiar with CO opportunities.

The education of our students depends on professionals who have highly specialized knowledge and skills. Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVIs), Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialists, braillists, interveners, blindness/low vision paraeducators work every day to provide accessible instruction, support communication and independence, prepare customized learning materials, and ensure students have the tools they need to participate fully in school. Families provide insight, advocacy, and partnership to shape meaningful educational programs and support their children as they develop the skills needed for school, employment, and adult life.

The start of each school year brings new opportunities. Our field continues to evolve as we seek high-quality professional learning, reflect on our instructional practices, use progress monitoring to guide decision-making, and share ideas with one another. I look forward to working with each of you throughout this new school year, as we strengthen services, expand our collective expertise, and support outcomes for Colorado children and youth with blindness, low vision, and deaf-blindness. I believe in YOU and US as we “keep on" together.

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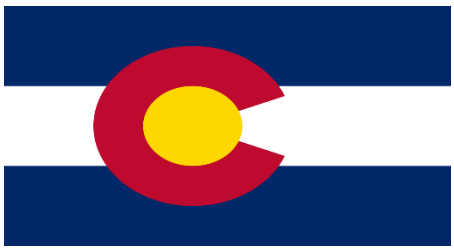
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Colorado Definitions, Resources, Professional Learning, & Support Activities Specific to Children and Youth with Blindness/Low Vision/ Deaf-Blindness, Their Families, and Service Providers for School Year 2026-2027

Compiled by Tanni Anthony, PhD
State Consultant on Blindness/Low Vision, 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



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 and outcomes are greatly improved when we work together to make announcements, have celebrations, and share resources.

Ascent Program: The Ascent program connects Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind (DHHDB) adults with families of DHHDB children and with DHHDB students (up to age 21) for mentoring and support. Ascent Advisors share lived experiences, support, and resources in families' homes as well as at schools and events. This program is sponsored by the Colorado Division of the Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind (CDDHHDB), and Colorado Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (COEHDI). Submit a visit request, email us at coehdi.cddhhdb@state.co.us, or learn more about the program.

A Shared Vision: Colorado's leading provider of early intervention vision services for children who are blind or have low vision, provides specialized in-home services to children and families across the state. In 2025, our teachers served 182 children and their families through 1,585 home visits A Shared Vision's statewide shared-

services model supports Early Intervention Teachers of the Visually Impaired (EI-TVIs) with the infrastructure they need to serve families effectively. By providing centralized support for licensing, technology, billing, training, and other administrative responsibilities, our teachers can focus more of their time and expertise on children and families. This model also connects EI-TVIs across Colorado as part of a collaborative professional community while allowing them to serve families in their own communities.

Our website extends that support with practical information and resources for families and professionals, while our digital newsletter shares sensory-rich learning ideas developed by our teachers for use in everyday family routines.

Vision Screening Training continues to be the primary focus of A Shared Vision's education program. With vision screening playing an important role in annual Early Intervention reassessments, professionals need practical tools to consistently identify possible vision concerns and determine appropriate next steps. A Shared Vision's 2025 Vision Screening Protocol© for children from birth to age three provides a structured, non-diagnostic approach for identifying ocular and possible brain-based vision concerns and determining when follow-up with a pediatric professional is appropriate. Interest in the training continues to grow among Colorado Early Intervention professionals. Professionals from other states are also completing the training so they can use the Protocol in their own communities.

For questions about A Shared Vision's programs, services, or opportunities to join our team, please contact Paula Landry at plandry@asharedvision.org.

Anchor Center for Blind Children: Headquartered in Denver for more than 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 pediatric ophthalmologists, 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 general family support, including programs for caregivers and siblings.

Anchor Center charges a nominal tuition fee for toddler and preschool programs, and financial assistance is available--no child is ever denied access to services based on the family's inability to pay. In the 2025-26 school year, Anchor Center served over 500 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.

In addition to these services, Anchor Center has additionally established a CVI Initiative to broaden our scope, benefit children and families in need, and positively impact research and practice in our growing field.

The CVI initiative includes three core components: 1) CVI screening and assessment services both at Anchor and at Children's Hospital BLOSSOM clinic; 2) research to advance CVI understanding, early identification, and evidence-based practices; and 3) valuable training for parents, caregivers, educators, and healthcare professionals on the application of best practices for young children with blindness and CVI.

There are two ways this may be of direct benefit to you as professionals in the field as well as to the families you serve:

- **CVI Screening and Assessments:** Please feel free to refer any children you feel may be at risk for CVI to Anchor Center for an evaluation with one of our ophthalmologists. The eye clinic sees children of all ages. The contact information is (720) 557-3741 eyeclinic@anchorcenter.org
- **Training:** They have created online training resources to learn more about how to do a functional vision assessment with children 0-3 and how to complete the NAVEG screening for CVI. These trainings are free for anyone but also offer the option to earn continuing education credits for educators as well as for medical professionals. If you know of a community physician or eye clinic interested in learning more about how to conduct the NAVEG for earlier identification of CVI, please share our contact information, Erin Rupe, erupe@anchorcenter.org In addition, we are continuing to develop resources for parents and community members, so please check our website for more resources in the future!

Aftersight: Aftersight uses audio information to serve people who are blind, low vision, or would benefit from alternatives to print for other reasons. Aftersight was formed In 1990 shortly after David Dawson moved to Colorado. When he arrived, he was stunned that there were no "reading services" in the area. Back east, he would use a reading service because it made local print accessible. The model was simple, volunteers would narrate and record print, and people who were blind or low vision - people like David - could tune in to a broadcast for free. All kinds of print were available: local papers, magazines, transit schedules, etc.

By 1991, David Dawson had replicated the model in Colorado. He built a team of volunteers to read and record Colorado print, and Rocky Mountain PBS was carrying a broadcast of those recordings. People would register, get a special receiver, and turn it on. Instant accessibility. After 35 years, Aftersight still offers this reading service, now called "Audio Editions." It is *still* completely free, and it is *still* extremely simple. Listeners ask their (free) smart speaker to play the local paper or favorite magazine (in English or Spanish). Others use their phone or computer and use Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and others. Over 100 titles are available thanks to ~130 volunteers who record 125 hours of content each week or about 6,500 hours per year.

Aftersight now offers a small number of "Aftersight Original Podcasts" which are planned, hosted, and produced by people with vision loss or blindness. For example, Penn Street (or *The Blind Chick)* talks to people who are blind or have low vision about their experiences. Original Podcasts also cover topics that range from mental health to life skills. Finally, Aftersight also offers white canes and virtual groups - like a support group

and a book club. If Aftersight does not have it, they will try to connect you to someone who does. To learn more or to register, go to www.aftersight.org or call (303) 786-7777.

Blindness / Low Vision Coalition: The Blindness/Low Vision Coalition is a statewide advisory committee on educational and extracurricular activities for students with blindness/low vision, training and support activities for parents, and professional development and technical assistance activities specific for service providers. Members include Tanni Anthony (CDE ESSU), Michelle Chacon (Metro region), Abby Horner (Northern Region), Jonathon Karli (CSDB School for the Blind), Donna Keale (CSDB BVI Outreach), Paula Landry (A Shared Vision), Judy Mathews and (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation), Tammy Miller (Anchor Center for Blind Children, Tiffany Moon (Colorado Center for the Blind), Anitha Muthukumaran (UNC), Jim Olson (Colorado Instructional Materials Center), Mike Plansker (Western Region), and Chloann Woolley (Southern Region and CAER), The BLV Coalition meets three times a school year. For more information, please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.

Braille and Large Print Format Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) Test Review: Selected Colorado TVIs / braillists 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 this specialized review pool for reviewing the state assessments, 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 provides 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 and deaf-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: CAER is a professional organization that serves the community of individuals who are blind/visually impaired. Our chapter supports professionals through continuing education information, mini-grants and service recognition with our annual awards banquet. The Colorado Chapter of our national Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AERBVI) includes members from educators serving birth to adults in all settings from early childhood agencies, schools, vocational rehabilitation and veteran rehabilitation. Please join the board for the opportunity to meet and collaborate with colleagues in the field. For more information about scheduled meetings and activities, for member benefits, or joining the board, please contact Chloann Woolley at caerboard@gmail.com or (719) 494-6337. Join AERBVI here.

CAER Online Presence with a Website and a Facebook Page: Please visit the website for updated information regarding Colorado AER. Request to join and contribute to our Facebook group Colorado AER (CAER)

CAER Annual Awards Banquet and Business Meeting: CAER Annual Awards Banquet and business meeting: ~~This event~~ will occur in conjunction with the State BLV Conference, which will be held at the Adams 12 Conference Center on October 8th. The CAER Chapter will be discussing the Future of the State Chapter at the business meeting this year along with the awards ceremony. Please look for details about the location of the Annual CAER Banquet on October 8th. The banquet is a time to celebrate colleagues and friends and to announce the recipients of the following awards

Nominations for the awards are due September 11th (strong deadline) submit to caerboard@gmail.com

- President's Award: This award recognizes outstanding leadership in service to people with visual disabilities. True to its name, the current President will select and present this award.
- Gary Schmidt Award: This award honors an AER member who works directly with students/clients. Nomination criteria include; ethical standards, sense of humor, degree of excellence in job performance, and professionalism. The CAER Board reviews the nominations for this award.
- Connections Award: This award recognizes cooperative efforts that cross organizational lines, perhaps even groups working collaboratively to benefit our field. The CAER Board considers the nominations.
- Lifetime Achievement Award: This award is presented to professionals who have given of themselves to students/clients throughout their career and are preparing for retirement.
- Ken Neve Award: This award is to recognize an AER professional in the area specific to orientation and mobility. The CAER Board considers the nominations.

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 funds received. Applications are accepted throughout the year and are due November 1st for review.

CAER Partial Reimbursement for ACVREP Certification:
* Certified Low Vision Therapist (CLVT(r))
* Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist (COMS(r))
* Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (CVRT(r))
* Certified Assistive Technology Instructional Specialist for Individuals with VI (CATIS(tm))

Reimbursement of $100 for initial certification and a $50 reimbursement for renewed certification is available to CO AER (CAER) 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 - must provide proof of AER membership.

Colorado Camp Abilities: Camp Abilities Colorado- Blind Youth Adventure's mission is to empower visually impaired students to be an integrated and active part of their world. Through physical activity and challenges, youth build confidence, self-awareness, and endurance to enable them to self-advocate. By building self-efficacy students learn about their boundaries and how best to communicate and problem-solve for access to the goals they want to achieve. They held their first camp in June 2027 with 7 Colorado athletes. Plan are underway for Summer 2027. For more information, go to: CO Camp Abilities

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 Colorado TVIs / braillists to take the Colorado Braille Competency Test and/or the 15+ clock-hours of CDE braille renewal modules. Visit the website for information about braille competency testing and renewal requirements. For more information, please contact Tanni Anthony at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.

CDE Braille Competency Test: It is a requirement that all TVIs working in Colorado administrative units must demonstrate braille competency within their first year of employment. The CDE braille test has two components, a 100 multiple-choice test that addresses reading braille and knowing the rules of the UEB Code and (b) the production of a 3.5-page braille sample using a Perkins brailler that addresses the ability to produce braille. TVIs taking the test for the first time should have taken their first university-level braille course or have evidence of an extensive other form of braille study. If braille competency is not completed in a timely manner, the AU(s) who employs the TVI will be cited for noncompliance. If this occurs, the AU must complete a corrective action plan.

CDE Braille Renewal Modules: All TVIs working in Colorado administrative units are required to renew their CDE Certificate of Braille Competency one time. Care must be taken to spread out the completion of the 15 renewal modules over a five-year-renewal period so that competency can be truly demonstrated across this time frame. A minimum of two modules must be retained for the last year of the five-year renewal period. If the braille renewal modules are not completed in a timely manner, the AU(s) who employs the TVI will be cited for noncompliance. If this occurs, the AU must complete a corrective action plan.

CDE Braillist 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 one-time mentoring to TVIs who need support in preparing for a minimum of a second round of the Colorado Braille Competency Test. Mentoring assistance is reserved for TVIs working in Colorado public schools who have failed the CDE Braille Test on the first occasion. Mentoring is reserved for up to ten hours and is not designed to teach the candidate the braille code, but to refresh skills using exercise and practices lessons for improvement. Please contact Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647 for more information.

CDE *Keeping in Touch (KIT)* Newsletter: The link to each e-newsletter is sent out to TVIs and O&M Specialists with the expectation that the weblink is forwarded to parents of and braillists, and paraeducators working students with blindness/low vision. The KIT is posted on the CDE Blindness/ Low Vision website for people to download. The following e-editions are planned for this school year: August / September 2026, October 2026,

November / December 2026, January / February 2027, March / April 2027, and May 2027. For more information, please contact Tanni at Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647. The KIT Newsletter is posted online here.

CDE Low Vision Evaluation (LVE) Clinics: We are excited for another year of regional clinics. Drs. Kara Hanson and David Simpson, low vision therapists Jim Olson and Erika Andersen Ko, and Statewide LVE Coordinator Krista Berkey are our LVE team for the 2026-27 school year. We will have regional clinics in Fort Collins, Colorado Springs, and Denver. The clinics are only open to Colorado public school students with low vision who have a current Individualized Education Program (IEP). Students will be accepted if paperwork is completed no later than two weeks of the LVE dates. A family member and the assigned TVI are expected to attend the LVE Clinic with each accepted student. TVIs and parents should come prepared with a plan for purchasing prescribed devices.

CDE O&M Seminar: The topic(s) and dates for this training have yet to be finalized. The goal will be an in-person training scheduled for late April or early May 2027 training. The contact person is Tanni Anthony 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 October 8-9, 2026, at the Adams 12 Conference Center The featured speaker will be the topic on *CVI and ACC: Collaborate, Individualize, and Amplify*. This conference is exclusively for CO TVIs and there will be some allowance for speech language pathologists to attend (one per AU, as appropriate). For more information, contact Tanni Anthony 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, A Shared Vision, and Anchor Center for Blind Children. It is a place for professionals to share information, ask questions, and gather information. Persons wishing to be added to the listserv should contact Tanni Anthony 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 2026 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
- NIMAS / NIMC
- Orientation and Mobility
- Visual Impairment, Including Blindness

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), Career fairs for high school/college students, residential summer programs for teens, or partnering with organizations like the National Science Foundation for an

astronomy camp experience, 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.

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, or contact Director of Youth Services, Tiffany Moon at tmoon@cocenter.org or by phone at (303) 778-1130.

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.
- The CIMC pilot number (719) 578-2196 rings all CIMC staff phones (on the Microsoft Teams platform) simultaneously but does not have voicemail capabilities.
- Danielle Steele (shipping/receiving, APH orders), dsteele@csdb.org - (719) 578-2198
- Maddee Durossette (your agency's statewide student registration database, federal quota census program), mdurossette@csdb.org - (719) 578-2199
- Debbie Haberkorn (CIMC braillist and braille book orders), dhaberkhorn@csdb.org - (719) 578-2197.
- Our other email addresses: cimcaphorders@csdb.org, cimcbookorders@csdb.org cimcBraillerTechSoftware@csdb.org and cimcregistrations@csdb.org

Use this link to go directly to the CIMC webpage; or go to the homepage of the CSDB website csdb.org and click on "Outreach" from the menu ribbon. This will open the Outreach page. From the left menu box, under the Outreach heading, click "Blind Services," This opens a "Blind Services" page. From the left menu box, click on "CIMC – Colorado Instructional Materials Center," and this will open the CIMC page of the website.

CIMC "First Friday" Meetings: Contact CIMC staff for meeting links. These monthly online Zoom meetings are scheduled for the first or second Friday of each month. Each date will offer a morning session (9-10am) and an afternoon session (2:30-3:30pm). There is no set agenda for these meetings. They are simply an opportunity to ask CIMC staff, and your colleagues around the state, any questions you may have in an informal setting. CIMC hosts try to feature information on new APH products as they are announced. Meeting dates for the 2026-2027 school year:

- 2026: August 14 (Second Friday), September 11 (Second Friday), October 2, November 6, and December 4

- 2027: January 8 (second Friday), February 5, March 5, April 2, and May

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 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 inquire about enrolling 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 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 using the library's community use form. The libraries are open on 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 to either library. For more information, please refer to the CSDB website at www.csdb.org

CSDB and CSDB Outreach National Braille Challenge: The Braille Challenge is the only international academic competition of its kind for students in grades 1 through 12 who are blind or visually impaired. Developed by the Braille Institute, it motivates students to hone vital braille literacy skills through regional and global events testing reading, spelling, and tactile literacy. Students in first through twelfth grades who read and write braille are eligible for the Braille Challenge. The categories include reading comprehension, spelling, speed and accuracy, proofreading, and tactile charts/graphs. The Braille Challenge is divided into five groups from Apprentice (grades 1-2) to Varsity (grades 10-12).Format: Preliminary regional contests take place globally from January to March, leading to a final round for top qualifiers.

Colorado offers two Braille Challenge experiences. One at CSDB and one at the Colorado Center for the Blind. For more information about dates, please stay tuned. The contact person for the CSDB site is Tina Bos at tboss@csdb.org and the contact person for the Colorado Center for the Blind site is Debbie Haberkorn, dhaberkorn@csdb.org, (719) 578-2197.

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

In addition to assessments and consultations, CSDB provides limited support from Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs) and Orientation and Mobility (O&M) specialists to local school districts. CSDB also partners with Local Early Intervention Brokers (LEIBs) to provide early intervention services for families and children ages 0–3, primarily in the Pikes Peak region. These services are offered on a fee-for-service basis. To request services or learn more, please 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 with 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 starting the third of our currently funded five-year cycle, which began on October 1, 2023. There are currently 175 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 CO children and youth, ages birth through 21 years, with deaf-blindness.
- Free technical assistance is provided to the families and service providers of children and youth with deaf-blindness.

- Training, coaching, and networking for school-based interveners.
- Annual Deaf-Blind 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.
- The 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) 253-0451. Also check out the Deaf-Blind Project's continually updated webpage.

Colorado State Assessments: CMAS Assessments: 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 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. CoAlt Assessments: 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.

Colorado Talking Book Library: CTBL provides free library services to people who cannot read standard print. The collection includes audiobooks, braille, and large-print books and magazines, along with accessible audiobook players and braille e-readers. All materials and services are free. Books and magazines are mailed postage-free, and audiobooks and braille books can also be downloaded through the BARD Mobile app. The library also offers patron programs, including a book club, summer reading activities, and Winter Reading Bingo. For more information, email **ctbl.info@cde.state.co.us** or call toll-free at 1-800-685-2136.

Community Intervener Program: The Community Intervener Program is housed under DeafBlind Programs at the Colorado Division for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind (CDDHHDB). The program offers Colorado infants, children and young adults who are DeafBlind 14 hours per month of 1:1 service with a trained Community Intervener. Some DeafBlind adults are also eligible for the program under certain specifications and guidelines. Services can be utilized within the home or out in the community, and the DeafBlind individual can participate meaningfully in their lives in ways they choose, including those they have not been able to before. For more information or to sign up, please contact Elli Streifer, the DeafBlind Programs Coordinator, at DBP.CDDHHDB@state.co.us

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. To be eligible, the child does not need to meet the full eligibility criteria for hearing

impairment, including deafness and visual impairment, including blindness. This information is outlined on eligibility checklists.

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 and/or a request for training on high risk factors / identification considerations specific to deaf-blindness, 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 that document adverse educational impact and the need for specially designed instruction.

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 school-age special education eligibility criteria and/or a request for training, 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 $150. 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, rafting and more. Team building and leadership activities are also incorporated into the camp. Foresight provides two nights' lodging, daily lunch, one dinner, and all activities for a requested minimum donation of $50. 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, 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@foresightskiguides.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.

Empowering Vision Foundation: This Colorado non-profit founded in 2025 by a family who has a daughter that is deafblind with additional disabilities. We provide direct one to one in-home and community vision services to children ages 3-21 who are blind and visually impaired and have additional disabilities in Colorado. We recognize that families and children often need more access to direct vision services outside of school in addition to families and caregivers also benefiting from guidance from a Teacher of Students with Visually Impairments to better understand their child's vision diagnosis and learn the tools and strategies that support their success. To meet this need, Empowering Vision Foundation contracts with TVIs across the state of Colorado and matches them with the interested families, funding on average 13 sessions per family/per year with their TVI. These sessions are flexible and can be used for co-treatment with OT's, SLP's, or ABA providers, community outings and events, virtual sessions, and activities that address all areas of the Expanded Core Curriculum with both the family and child. Families interested in applying can do so online at Empoweringvisionfoundation.org (under the apply page). They also invite TVI's interested in additional work outside of the school day, including weekends or summer sessions, to contact our Executive Director, Kiera Zink at 303-515-0833 (kiera@empoweringvisionfoundation.org), to learn more about contracting opportunities. For more information, visit the webpage.

Helen Keller National Center – Serving Colorado: Jonathon Pringle our regional representative. His regions includes AZ, UT, CO, ND, and SD. Visit the HKNC website for more information. HKNC is currently working with Colorado state and local providers related to DeafBlind services, advocacy, and outreach. Jonathon has a background with Vocational Services and specializes in working with Vocational Rehabilitation as well as Blind Services.

HKNC continues to expand and update our Summer Youth programs to now include a targeted Braille workshop for individuals who use Sign Language to communicate and Programs targeting the STEAM programs in employment and education. They offer our traditional Summer Youth Vocational Program (SYVP) and the My Pursuit of Work, Empowerment and Resources (M-Power). Check out these opportunities on the youth programs page. They are also currently able to offer our DeafBlind Immersion Experience (DBIE) For individuals with complex needs in the home community as well as at the center in NY> Please reach out with any questions related to combined Vision and Hearing loss. Jonathon's phone is 1-516-417-1165 and his email is jpringle@helenkeller.org

Metro Region TVI/O&M Meetings: The meetings will be held virtually throughout the school year. For more information, please be in touch with Jeannie Lei (jlei@cherrycreakschools.org Stay tuned for the meeting dates / locations, topics for this school year.

National Instructional Materials Standards (NIMAS:) NIMAS is the national source file format created by IDEA 2004 for use in the production of accessible formats, such as braille, large print, and digital text, for K-12 instructional materials. Publishers submit files in the NIMAS format to the NIMAC in accordance with state and district procurement contracts. Designated users in the states can then download the files for use in producing

accessible formats on behalf of qualifying students. NIMAS files require further conversion work before use. They are not distributed directly to students but make it possible for students who require an accessible format to receive it in a timely manner. The NIMAC receives a wide range of student-facing instructional materials. Under IDEA 2004, states and districts can require NIMAS from publishers for "textbooks and related printed core materials." This means materials written and published primarily for use in elementary school and secondary school instruction and required by a State Education Agency or a Local Education Agency for use by students in the classroom. Some materials, such as trade books (e.g., novels), are exempt from NIMAS requirements.

In May of 2020, the U.S. Department of Education clarified that the term ''print instructional materials,'' regarding the scope of NIMAS in IDEA 2004, includes digital instructional materials if those materials can be produced in valid NIMAS format. For more information, visit the NIMAS and Digital Materials FAQ on the NIMAC's website or the Notice of Interpretation FAQ from the National AEM Center.

> **Eligibility for NIMAS:** Under IDEA 2004 Part D, Section 674 (e)(3)(A), to qualify for materials produced with NIMAS files, students must have both an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and a qualifying disability under the eligibility guidelines of the National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled (NLS): An "eligible person," is defined as someone who is blind; has a visual impairment or perceptual or reading disability that cannot be improved to give visual function substantially equivalent to that of a person who has no such impairment or disability and so is unable to read printed works to substantially the same degree as a person without an impairment or disability; or is otherwise unable, through physical disability, to hold or manipulate a book or to focus or move the eyes to the extent that would be normally acceptable for reading.
>
> Eligibility must be certified by one of the following: Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Osteopathy, ophthalmologist, optometrist, psychologist, registered nurse, therapist, and professional staff of hospitals, institutions, and public or welfare agencies (such as teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI), a social worker, case worker, counselor, rehabilitation teacher, certified reading specialist, school psychologist, superintendent, or librarian).

For more information about NIMAS and Colorado's authorized users, please visit the NIMAS page.

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@svvsd.org Stay tuned for the meetings dates / locations for this school year.

Paraeducator Training: Paraeducators play a critical role in supporting students with blindness/visual impairment. As such, it is critical they receive limited specialized training in blindness/visual impairment-specific strategies. This structured 4-hour training, led by a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI), is essential to ensure paraeducators develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to provide appropriate and effective support. Thanks to Michelle Chacon, Nancy Cozart, Donna Keale, and Katilin Lombardi, there will be three offerings this school year. The one held at CSDB on August 13 has already happened under the leadership of Donna Keale. The two remaining trainings are scheduled for:

- **September 18th** at the Greeley-Evans Service Center. The contact person is Kaitlin Lombardi at kaitlinmlombardi@gmail.com
- **September 25th** in Mark Twain Elementary School in Littleton. The contact person is Nancy Cozart at nkcozart28@gmail.com

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 Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act (READ Act), passed by the Colorado legislature in 2012, focuses on early literacy development for all students and especially for students 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 Fund: Tools for Life (TFL) - Applications due November 30, 2026 & April 15, 2027

The Tools for Life Program provides financial assistance to the families of blind/visually impaired students (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 and community. Scholarships are awarded based on financial need**.** Visit the website for more information.

See the Future Fund: Education for Life (EFL) Program - Applications due March 1, 2027

The 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, 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 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. **Visit the website for more information.**

Meet the 2026 EFL recipients here!

For more information about the See the Future Fund programs, please contact: Thomas W. Theune, OD, STF Founder & Chairperson, at (719) 640.0997 or twtheune@comcast.net

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. Anitha Muthukumaran is the Interim Program Coordinator. For more information, please visit the UNCO VI Program website.

UNC Non-degree Licensure Orientation and Mobility Program: The program provides 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. Silvia Correa-Torres is the Interim Program Coordinator. For more information, visit the UNC O&M Program website.

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 USABA at (719) 866-3224.

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 Mike Plansker at mplansker@sjboces.org or (303) 870 7649. Due to distance across the 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. As celebrations are planned, we will work to disseminate information. Time to raise a little or a big cane!

Western Regional Early Intervention Conference: The WREIC is a biennial conference that brings together professionals who support young children, birth to age five, with blindness or low vision, deafness or hard of hearing, and deafblindness. For more than 35 years, WREIC has connected early intervention providers across the western United States to share practical strategies, evidence-based practices, and real-world solutions that strengthen services for children and families. Hosted in rotating western states, the conference offers high-quality sessions, experienced speakers, and meaningful opportunities to learn, connect, and collaborate. The next WREIC will be hosted by Colorado on June 7-9, 2027. For more information, visit the WREIC website.

The YMCA-Estes Park Experience for BLV Students: The group is expected to return to late April/early May 2027. The trip is catered to students with visual impairments, ages 10-18, working on independent age appropriate skills, in a supportive and fun environment. Past trips have allowed students to experience archery, rock climbing, hiking/snowshoeing, games, fire building, knot tying, swimming, roller skating, and more! Students leave this trip with newfound confidence, meaningful relationships, and plans to attend the following year. It is thanks to so many incredible Colorado teachers of visual impairments and certified orientation and mobility specialists across the state who volunteer their time to make this trip successful year after year. Information and registration will be sent out in January 2027. For more details, or to be added directly to the email list, contact kaitlinmlombardi@gmail.com.

Low Vision Evaluation (LVE) Clinic News

2026-2027 Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics

Clinic	LVE Clinic Date(s)	Due Date for Paperwork	Site Coordinator
Northern LVE Clinic @ Ensight Skills Center	November 12-13, 2026	October 29, 2026	Samantha Thuis thuis_samantha@svvsd.org
Southern LVE Clinic @ Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB)	December 3-4, 2026	November 19-20, 2026	Jim Olson jolson@csdb.org
Metro LVE Clinic @ Anchor Center for Blind Children	February 24-26, 2027	February 8, 2027	Krista Berkey Berkey_k@cde.state.co.us

Regional Low Vision Evaluation Clinics are Coming Your Way!

We are so happy that our regional LVE Clinics are funded and full staff for this school year. We are thrilled to have our full team returning for this school year. This includes optometrists Drs. Kara Hanson and David Simpson and low vision therapists Jim Olson and Erika Andersen Ko. Also, Krista Berkey is back on board as our Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Coordinator. We are grateful to have Sam Thuis, Jim Olson, and Krista Berkey as our regional site coordinators for the Northern, Southern, and Metro Low Vision Evaluation . We will have three regional clinics this year. The Northern Clinic will include Dr. Karen Hanson and Erika Andersen Ko, the Southern Clinic will include Dr. Kara Hanson and Jim Olson, and the Metro Clinic will include Dr. David Simpson and Erika Andersen Ko.

TVIs, your work is now to fill the clinics, which are reserved for school-age learners who have a good likelihood of benefiting from magnification tools during their school day, at home, and in the community. Please be aware that the LVE Clinics are for students with low vision who will benefit from low vision accessibility tools. The clinic is reserved for students with Individualized Education Programs. It is not designed for students with cerebral / cortical visual impairment. It is a requirement of the clinic that eligible children and youth must have an active IEP and be served by a teacher of students with visual impairments. Both the TVI and a parent **must** attend the clinic with the child.

There is no cost for the clinic evaluation. Device costs are the responsibility of the family and/or administrative unit. We ask that a fiscal plan be discussed ahead of the clinic in anticipation of prescribed devices. It is the TVI's responsibility to review the LVE report with the family and student, and to train the child on the ordered devices. The clinic reports will be sent to the TVI three weeks following the clinic through a secure portal.

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

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) will begin our fourth year of a five year cycle on October 1, 2026. 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 to provide tiered and customized technical assistance to families and/or service providers.

The project has four key 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 staff (Project Co-Directors **Tanni Anthony** and **Gina Herrera,** TA Specialist **Jessica Meisel**, and Program Support Assistant **Krista Berkey .** We also have a contracted Family Engagement Specialist **Cindy Colwell.** For training, support documents and resources, please check out our Deaf-Blind website.

Meet our Family Engagement Coordinator!

My name is Cindy Colwell. I am the Family Engagement Coordinator for the Colorado Deaf-Blind Project. I live in Colorado Springs, and I am the primary support person for my son Wyatt. Wyatt is 23 years old with a big list of medical and physical support needs including CVI. In supporting Wyatt over the years, I have naturally been drawn to professional and personal opportunities to support other families and help teams work together. I have previously held positions as a Parent Advisor at PEAK Parent Center and as an IEP Facilitator with the Colorado Department of Education.

In my role as the Family Engagement Coordinator, I want to be a point of contact for families in the Deaf-Blind Community. My goal is to build relationships, so everyone feels comfortable contacting me when they need support or information. I also am involved with setting up parent trainings and family activities. I would also like to hear ideas from families about possible speakers, training opportunities, virtual meet ups and in person meet ups.

The best way to reach Cindy is coloradocollaboration2020@gmail.com or 719-419-4754 during routine business hours Monday through Friday. I look forward to hearing from our families with a child or children with combined hearing and vision differences!

Colorado Deaf-Blind Project Offers Intervener Training

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 began in August 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.

National Center on DeafBlindness (NCDB) News

Professional Development Opportunities

Are you looking for professional development opportunities to share with teachers, families, and others in your state? The **Professional Development Opportunities page** on the NCDB website provides information about modules, webinars, and courses on deafblindness and instructional practices for children and youth who are deafblind.

"Deafblind Isn't Just Helen Keller" Webinar Recording

On June 25, the National Center on Deafblindness, state deafblind projects, and Parent Center network partners came together for the national webinar, *Deafblind Isn't Just Helen Keller*. Presenters shared how collaboration between parent centers and state deafblind projects has strengthened referrals, expanded training opportunities, and improved outcomes for families. **View the recording**.

Deafblind International (DBI) Review June 2026 Issue

The June 2026 issue of *DbI Review* is available for free online. *DbI Review* is the official magazine of Deafblind International, featuring insights, stories, and updates from the global deafblind community. This issue celebrates DbI's 50th anniversary. **Read the latest issue**.

ICF Core Set for Deafblindness

Have you heard about the project to develop a World Health Organization International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) Core Set for Deafblindness? ICF frameworks are designed to describe and measure health and disability. This recent **open access article** in the *British Journal of Visual Impairment* describes the development process for the deafblindness core set. You can view the frameworks on this webpage: **The WHO ICF Core Set for Deafblindness**.

DeafBlind Kids Website

This website, www.deafblindkids.org, serves as a good starting resource for those who are seeking to learn about Protactile and utilize Protactile to connect with their child and members of the DeafBlind community. Their video resource series offers an in-depth exploration of Protactile, providing insights into its various aspects and how it can be used effectively in tactile communication. Each video offers a different aspect of how Protactile works and how it can benefit you and your child, as well as others in the DeafBlind community.

For first-time visitors, they recommend starting with Lesson 1: Co-Presence. Following this, they suggest continuing through the rest of the lessons. They are in process of making new videos.

HKNC Now Offering NCDB Modules for CEUs

Great news! NCDB's *Teaching Children Who Are Deafblind: Professional Development for Educators* modules are now available through the **HKNC Learning Center**. For a limited time, each is available for $5.00 and offers continuing education units. Here is **a flyer** with more information.

For more information about four foundational modules (impact of deafblindness on learning, early intervention, communication, and preparing for life after high school), it provides learning objectives and details about the content and length of videos in each lesson.

Check It Out

Essay Contest for Blind and Low Vision Students

The Aurora Chapter of the NFB of CO will be sponsoring an essay contest to celebrate blind Americans this fall. First Prize is $100. Blind and Low Vision students in grades 6-12 are welcome to submit an essay about a blind American who has meant something to them. The contest will start in September. Details will be sent out in August. For more information, contact Peggy Chong at chongpeggy10@gmail.com.

Save the Date: 2026 PEAK Conference on Inclusive Education

This year's conference will take place October 13th and 14th in Grand Junction, CO. Keep an eye on PEAK Parent Center's website for more details as they come out!

Special Education History Timeline

The History of Special Education in the United States, on the Council for Exceptional Children website, is a new timeline that highlights pivotal moments, influential figures, landmark court cases, and transformative laws that have shaped the educational landscape for children and youth with disabilities. It is interactive, so you can scan it to learn what happened in specific years ranging from 1880 to the present.

Assistive Technology (AT) in the Workplace

What Professionals Need to Know: Highlights from the Access Technology in the Workplace Study, by the National Research and Training Center on Blindness and Low Vision at Mississippi State University, summarizes relevant findings from a longitudinal study on the use of assistive technology at work by people who are blind or have low vision. In addition to types of AT, it addresses training and services from vocational rehabilitation and other agencies. The intended audience is vocational rehabilitation counselors and other rehabilitative professionals.

Unlocking Digital Math for BLV Students with LaTeX

A recording of the webinar "Unlocking Digital Math for VI Students with LaTeX," is now available on YouTube! Please feel free to watch and share. The webinar covers the importance of digital math equation reading and writing for blind students and demos Access Digi Math, a free website built with and for TVIs to learn about digital math access.

Creating Readable Print Materials

This resource explains the rules that will make text readable for everyone, including people with reading, language, or visual disabilities and their families.

APH Survey – Provide Your Feedback

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) Press is asking for feedback on current publications as well as input to identify areas for updates and priorities for new content. Your perspectives are welcome! Please consider responding to this APH Press Publications Needs Analysis survey

Introducing Scribe for TVIs: No-Cost, Automatic Document Remediation for Teachers of the Visually Impaired

Thanks to Michelle Chacon for sharing this information.

Scribe for Education was launched during COVID because students needed access immediately and the world was not ready to deliver it. They are now relaunching that program now as Scribe for TVIs.

You upload the material you have been handed. In seconds, you get it back as:

- Screen-reader-ready HTML
- Braille-ready files (BRF — Grade 1, Grade 2, UEB, Nemeth)
- Large print
- EPUB and DAISY
- MP3 audio in natural voices

That DAISY file transfers straight to an NLS Talking Book Machine, giving your students structured navigation, indexed sections, and a way to study on the go using tools they already know.

Under the hood: 140+ document languages, 30+ braille codes, math detection with MathML, and roughly 96% automated accuracy. When a document needs a higher bar, human remediation is available with a 72-hour turnaround.

For qualified K-12 TVIs, Scribe for TVIs is provided at no cost. Not a trial. Not a promo. Annual re-verification keeps the program focused on the educators it was built for.

If you are a K-12 Teacher of the Visually Impaired with a valid school email, you can apply at https://pneumasolutions.com/ScribeForTVIs. They will verify your role and your credential and get you set up.

Academy of Blind Scientists Newsletter

Last October, seven people founded something that had never existed: a global professional society led entirely by blind PhD scientists. They named it the Academy of Blind Scientists. They created it to give one another community, mentorship, and accessible STEM tools.

Above all, it exists to demonstrate that blind scientists belong in science. Our first newsletter was published on August 15. Each edition will bring you the voices and work of blind scientists around the world.

Sign up for the first edition.

Follow the Academy on LinkedIn.



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 that 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 who are 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

Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) Resources

Save the Date: 2026 CVI Webinar Series

Get ready to learn, connect, and see CVI in a whole new way. Join the 2026 CVI Webinar Series hosted by the Pediatric VIEW Program at The Children's Home of Pittsburgh.

Mark your calendars:

- 8-week conversation series
- October 1 – November 19

Each session brings new, specialty-focused content connected to CVI—plus insights from PVP practitioners and special guest speakers.

More details are coming soon.

Questions about the webinar series? Please contact Kelsey Myers at kmyers@chomepgh.org or call 412-441-4884 for more information

Save the Date – CVI and AAC Training for Colorado TVIs

The October 8-9, 2026 CDE Conference on Blindness/Low Vision will focus on *CVI and AAC: Collaborate, Individualize, Amplify*. Our presenter will be Sylvia Mangan, who is a Perkins CVI Coordinator Supervisor and speech-language pathologist, supporting students with CVI and complex communication need. Tanni has sent out a calendar invite for CO TVIs who hold the date.

The flyer and registration will be ready in early August. Stay tuned for how this training will include targeted speech language pathologists who are working with learners with CVI. This part is yet to be finalized.



CVI and AAC Guidance

Check out this helpful resource from *CVI Now* at Perkins School for the Blind: **What Do You Need To Know About CVI, Complex Communication Needs, and AAC Systems?** It includes a video and written information on variables to consider (e.g., backlighting, contrast, visual fatigue) when developing AAC systems for children with cerebral visual impairment.

The 2026 Innovations in CVI: A Conversation Series is coming up this fall!

Join leading CVI experts for eight one-hour webinars featuring research, practical strategies, and innovative tools to support individuals with cortical visual impairment. Register today!

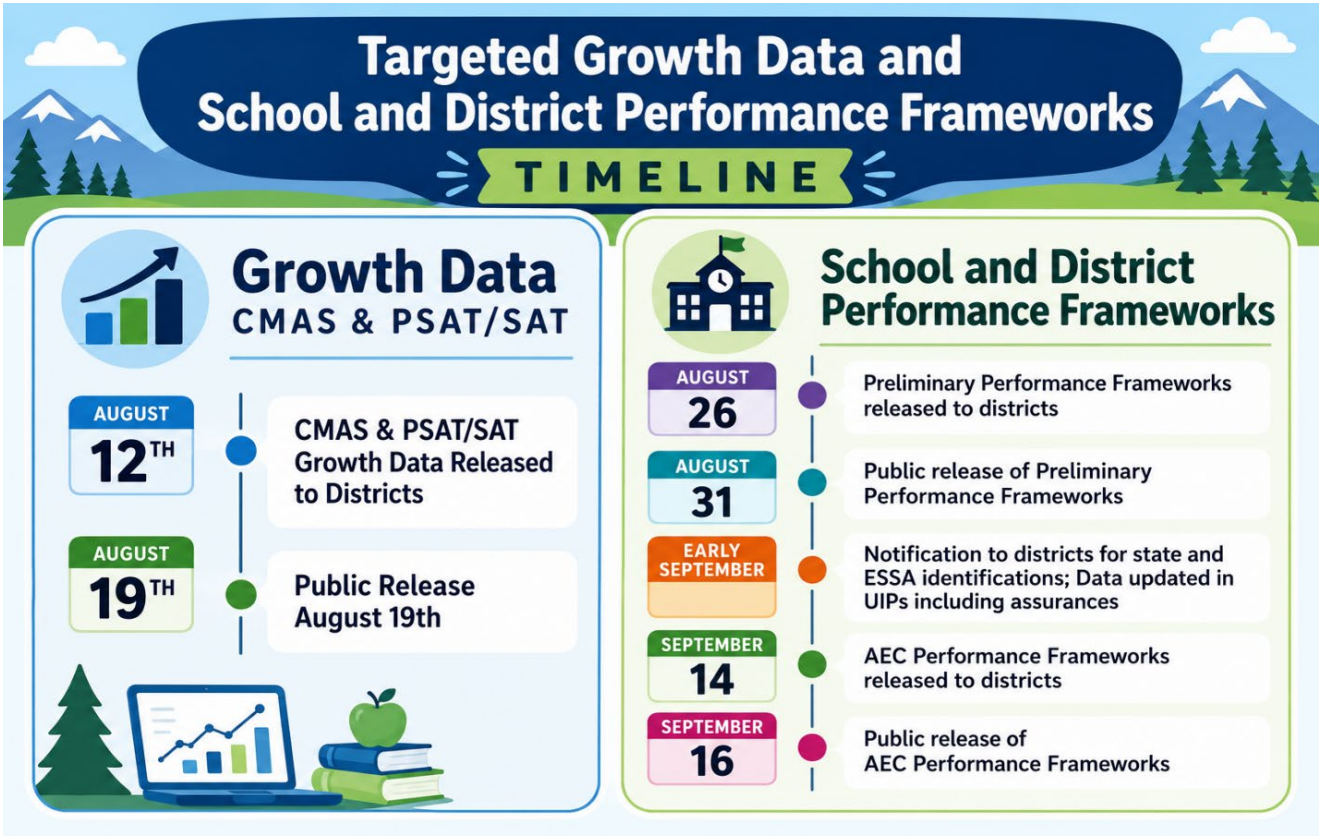
CDE Happenings

Educator Preparation Program Search

The Colorado Department of Education has an educator preparation program search engine where people can look for personnel training programs. All alternative programs require a bachelor's degree. An apprenticeship pathway is the one that allows someone to be working in a classroom while completing their bachelor's degree.

Disaggregated Achievement and Growth Results Along with School and District Results will be Publicly Released on August 19

State content assessment results were released on May 27, marking Colorado's fastest results release to date. CMAS and PSAT/SAT growth results and School and District Performance Frameworks will be available soon.



See the extended reporting timeline on the Assessment and Accountability Analytics Division's webpage.

New Guidance on the Rules for Restraint and Seclusion

On April 8, 2026, the Colorado State Board of Education (SBE) adopted changes to the Rules governing the administration of the **Protection of Students from Restraint and Seclusion Act (RSA),** 1 CCR 3-45 (RSA Rules) to align with House Bill 25-1248. This legislation consolidates all requirements concerning the use of restraint and seclusion in the public-school setting by adding Article 15.5 (RSA) to Title 22 of the Colorado Revised Statutes. This guidance document provides an overview of substantive changes to the use of restraint and seclusion in the school setting. For questions, please contact Bill Brown, our Affective Needs/ Serious Emotional Disability Specialist at brown_w@cde.state.co.us.

Spring 2026 State Assessment Results

Districts and schools received access to their confidential CMAS and CoAlt (science and social studies) student-level results on May 27 to support planning and system-level instructional decision-making ahead of the 2026-27 school year. TVIs are encouraged to check out their students' state assessment results and work with instructional personnel on how best to support their shared students' instruction in the new school year.

Parents can view their students' assessment results without waiting for the distribution of paper reports. State assessment achievement results are available for families through the following online platforms:

Assessment	Platform	Date
CO PSAT/SAT	Student's online College Board account	May 14
CMAS (all content areas) and CoAlt (Science and Social Studies)*	Pearson's Family Portal	May 27
CoAlt ELA and Math (DLM)*	Kite Parent Portal	June 1

***Families need their student's state ID (SASID) to access CMAS and CoAlt results.** Many districts added SASIDs to their student information systems where parents can easily find them. They are also found on prior year CMAS and CoAlt performance reports. Summary state-level results are available on CDE's website.

See the 2026 Colorado State Assessments Reporting Timeline for the full results schedule.

Spring 2026 state-level CMAS and PSAT/SAT results were presented during the June 11 State Board meeting. Full state, district, and school disaggregated achievement and growth results are scheduled for public release on August 19, with District Assessment Coordinator (DAC) and media embargoed-data access information to be shared in early August.

2026-2027 School Year Assessments

WIDA ACCESS

All multilingual learners (NEP and LEP) participate in the state English language proficiency assessment system. ACCESS results help educators tailor instruction and support to meet student needs.

Administration Window: January 11 - February 12, 2027

Interpretation Resources for Parents

- Student Performance Report Guides

Interpretation Resources Educators

- Interpretive Guide to Reports

Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS)

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 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 in grade 7.

Administration Window: April 5 - April 23, 2027

Interpretation Resources for Parents

- Understanding Score Reports Fact Sheets
- Student Performance Report Videos Guide for Parents

Interpretation Reports for Educators

- Interactive Guide - Interpreting Assessment Results
- Interpretive Guide to Assessment Reports
- Understanding Score Reports Fact Sheets

PSAT/SAT

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

Administration Window: April 12 - April 23, 2027

Interpretation Resources for Parents

- Understanding Scores for Students and Families

Interpretation Resources for Educators

- Comprehensive Guide to Scores for Educators

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 grade 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

Interpretation Resources for Parents

- Understanding Scores for Students and Families

Interpretation Resources for Educators

- Comprehensive Guide to Scores for Educators



National & International Assessments

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), commonly known as **The Nation's Report Card**, is the largest ongoing and nationally representative assessment of what U.S. students know and can do in core subjects. Mandated by Congress and administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), it tracks student achievement over time across the nation, states, and select urban districts. NAEP produces state level results, but the assessments are not designed to produce individual student, school, or district results.

A representative sample of Colorado 4th and 8th grade students participate in NAEP reading and math assessments every other year.

Results from the 2026 administration are scheduled to be released in early 2027.

Next NAEP Administration Window: 2028

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 updated Braille Competency Guidance documents can be found at: 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. The Braille Authority of North America approves two math codes. 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

Webinars on Tactile Graphics and Braille

There are weekly webinars on embossers, tactile graphics, and other braille topics. There is a newsletter with sign up information.

BANA Publishes Guidance on Transcribing Mathematics and Science in UEB

At its face-to-face meeting in May, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) approved *Guidance on Transcribing Mathematics and Science in UEB.* This publication replaces *Provisional Guidance on Transcribing Mathematics in UEB* and is now available in PDF and BRF versions on the BANA website.

The newly adopted guidance document incorporates recent revisions to the international publication *Guidelines for Technical Material*, section 1.7 Choice and Placement of Grade 1 Indicators, by the International Council on English Braille (ICEB). The guidance document also includes an expanded selection of examples to illustrate transcription of math and science expressions in UEB.

Dot Inc.

Dot Inc. presents the Dot Pad, a next-generation tactile graphics display. Experience the power of multi-line braille and real-time graphics that bring digital content to life through touch. Dot Inc. provides innovative accessibility solutions for users who are blind or have low vision.

Read more about Dot Inc.

The Global Braille Survey is Now Open!

The **Global Braille Survey is now open**!

As part of the Global Braille Literacy Campaign – *More Braille: More Empowerment* – the survey provides an important opportunity for people around the world to share their experiences and perspectives on braille literacy. Led by the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI), the World Blind Union (WBU), and collaborating organizations and individuals, this global research initiative aims to strengthen our understanding of how braille is learned, taught, accessed and used – and of the factors that enable or create barriers to braille literacy.

Who can participate? We warmly invite responses from:

- Adults aged 18 years and over are blind, have low vision, or are deafblind;
- Parents and guardians of children of any age who are blind, have low vision, or are deafblind;
- Teachers and other professionals involved in braille education; and
- Braille transcribers.

Share your experience - Take the Global Braille Survey: tiny.cc/braillesurvey

Multilingual Learners Identified or Suspected of Having Educational Disabilities

Training Opportunities Specific to Multilingual Learners

Join us for three engaging 2026–2027 professional learning webinar series designed to strengthen instruction and improve outcomes for Multilingual Learners (MLs), including students who are identified with or suspected of having educational disabilities. Learn alongside nationally recognized experts, Colorado practitioners, and university partners, including Dr. Holly Porter, the CU Boulder School of Education, and the BUENO Center for Multicultural Education.

- **Genre-Based Instruction for Multilingual Learners** *(5 sessions)*
  Connect reading, writing, language, and literacy through purposeful report writing.
  Register Here: Genre-Based Registration Link

- **Co-Teaching in Action for Multilingual Learners** *(3 sessions)*
  Build effective co-teaching partnerships with guidance from **Dr. Holly Porter**.
  Register Here: Co-Teaching Registration Link

- **Translanguaging in Action** *(5 sessions)*
  Strengthen instruction with practical translanguaging strategies that support inclusive classrooms.
  Register Here: Translanguaging Registration Link

Register early! Registration closes two weeks before each series begins, and space is limited. Live attendance is strongly encouraged to earn a certificate of completion. If you miss a session, recordings will be available to keep you on track, but recordings do not qualify for a certificate.

Visit our website for session dates, presenter information, learning objectives, and complete details for each webinar series.



Calendar of Events



Date	Event
August 26	**Sound Bites: Braille and CVI w/ Katie Lane Karnas & Mae Lane Karnas** – Virtual (4 pm – 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for Sound Bites
September 10	**DeafBlind Webinar Series: DB Risk Factors & Overview of the DB Child Count w/ Tanni Anthony & Gina Herrera** – Virtual (4 pm to 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for the DeafBlind Webinar Series
September 11	**CIMC Second Friday Meeting** – Virtual (9 – 10 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm) Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
September 15	**Southern Region TVI/DVR Meeting** – CSDB (Bring photo ID to front desk.) Contact: Jonathan Karli at jkarli@csdb.org
September 16	**Blindness/Low Vision Coalition Meeting** – Virtual (8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
September 18	**Northern Region BLV Paraeducator Training – Greeley** (Register Here!) Contact: Kaitlin Lombardi at kaitlinmlombardi@gmail.com
September 24	**Pathways, Possibilities, & Opportunities** – Colorado Center for the Blind, 9:45 am – 3 pm Contact: Charles Bennett at cbennett@cocenter.org
September 25	**Metro BLV Paraeducator Training – Littleton** (Register Here!) Contact: Nancy Cozart at nkcozart28@gmail.com
September 30	**Sound Bites: Agriculture / Biology w/ Dr. Tiffany Wild** – Virtual (4 pm – 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for Sound Bites
October 2	**CIMC First Friday Meeting** – Virtual (9 – 10 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm) Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org

Date	Event
October 8 – 9	**CDE State Conference on BLV: CVI and AAC: Collaborate, Individualize, Amplify –** Adams 12 Conference Center Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for the CDE State Conference on BLV
October 13 – 14	**2026 PEAK Conference on Inclusive Education** – Grand Junction, CO More information will be made available on the PEAK Parent website.
October 15	**DeafBlind Webinar Series: CO DeafBlind Project Overview and DB-Specific Resources w/ Gina Herrera and Tanni Anthony** – Virtual (4 pm to 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for the DeafBlind Webinar Series
October 21	**Sound Bites: Parent Partnerships w/ Kat Rains** – Virtual (4 pm – 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for Sound Bites
November 4	**Sound Bites: Astronomy and Chemistry w/ Dr. Tiffany Wild** – Virtual (4 pm – 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for Sound Bites
November 6	**CIMC First Friday Meeting** – Virtual (9 – 10 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm) Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
November 12	**DeafBlind Webinar Series: Children and Youth with Deaf-Blindness: Making Sense of Behavior w/ Dr. Tim Hartshorne** – Virtual (4 pm to 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for the DeafBlind Webinar Series
November 12 – 13	**Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic** – Ensight Skills Center Contact: Samantha Thuis at thuis_samantha@svvsd.org
November 17	**Southern Region TVI-DVR Meeting** – Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Contact: Judy Mathews at judy.mathews@state.co.us
November 30	**Tools for Life Application Deadline** TFL Information
December 2	**Sound Bites: Braille Display Decision-Making Tips w/ Eli Sanchez and Leslie Edmonds** – Virtual (4 pm – 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for Sound Bites

Date	Event
December 4	**CIMC First Friday Meeting** – Virtual (9 – 10 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm) Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
December 5 – 8	**SOMA/SWOMA International O&M Conference** – New Orleans More information and registration on the SOMA/SWOMA website.
December 10	**DeafBlind Webinar Series: Capacity First: Redefining How We Assess and Support Deafblind Learners w/ Julie Maier** – Virtual (4 pm to 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for the DeafBlind Webinar Series
January 8, 2027	**CIMC Second Friday Meeting** – Virtual (9 – 10 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm) Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
Jan 11 – Feb 12, 2027	**WIDA ACCESS Testing Administration Window**
January 14, 2027	**DeafBlind Webinar Series: Shared Reading and Children with Deafblindness w/ Dr. Chris Brum** – Virtual (4 pm to 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for the DeafBlind Webinar Series
January 19, 2027	**Southern Region TVI-DVR Meeting** – Academy District 20 (Bring a photo ID to the front desk.) Contact: Melissa Shular at melissa.shular@asd20.org
January 20, 2027	**Blindness/Low Vision Coalition Meeting** – Virtual (8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
January 27, 2027	**Sound Bites: TVI and AT Competencies w/ Dr. Benjamin Lytle** – Virtual (4 pm – 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for Sound Bites
February 5, 2027	**CIMC First Friday Meeting** – Virtual (9 – 10 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm) Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
February 10, 2027	**Sound Bites: AT Needs Assessment w/ Dr. Yue-Ting Su** – Virtual (4 p.m. – 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for Sound Bites

Date	Event
February 11, 2027	**DeafBlind Webinar Series: The Forgotten Senses w/ David Brown** – Virtual (4 pm to 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for the DeafBlind Webinar Series
February 16, 2027	**Southern Region TVI-DVR Meeting** – District 49 (Bring a photo ID to the front desk.) Contact: Lori Mattick at lori.mattick@d49.org
February 24-26, 2027	**Metro Low Vision Evaluation Clinic** – Anchor Center for Blind Children Contact: Krista Berkey at berkey_k@cde.state.co.us
March 1, 2027	**Education for Life Scholarship Application Deadline** EFL Information
March 5, 2027	**CIMC First Friday Meeting** – Virtual (9 – 10 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm) Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
March 7 – 10, 2027	**The 9th Biennial POSB STEM Institute for Instruction** – Spartanburg, SC More information is available on the POSB STEM website.
March 11, 2027	**DeafBlind Webinar Series** – Virtual (4 pm to 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for the DeafBlind Webinar Series
March 17, 2027	**Sound Bites: Low Vision 1 w/ Dr. David Simpson** – Virtual (4 pm – 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for Sound Bites
April 2, 2027	**CIMC First Friday Meeting** – Virtual (9 – 10 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm) Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
April 5 – April 23, 2027	**Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) Administration Window**
April 7, 2027	**Sound Bites: Low Vision 2 w/ Dr. Kara Hanson** – Virtual (4 pm – 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for Sound Bites
April 12 – April 23, 2027	**PSAT/SAT Administration Window**

Date	Event
April 16, 2027	**DeafBlind Webinar Series: Collaboration with Families w/ Cindy Colwell** – Virtual (4 pm to 5:30 pm) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us Register for the DeafBlind Webinar Series
April 28, 2027	**Blindness/Low Vision Coalition Meeting** – Virtual (8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) Contact: Tanni Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
May 7, 2027	**CIMC First Friday Meeting** – Virtual (9 – 10 am and 2:30 – 3:30 pm) Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
May 18, 2027	**Southern Region TVI-DVR** – CSDB/CIMC (Bring a photo ID to the front desk.) Contact: Jim Olson at jolson@csdb.org
June 7 – 9, 2027	**Western Regional Early Intervention Conference (WREIC)** – Denver, CO More information is available on the WREIC website.



Dr. Cay Holbrook passed away on August 22nd. The world lost a spectacular bright light, and our field is forever grateful for her many contributions. She was a prolific author, a keen thinker, and deeply dedicated to children with blindness/low vision across the globe. She and Dr. Alan Koenig gave us the Learning Media Assessment and Learning Media Plan and so much more. She was a scholar, colleague, writer, mentor, and friend to so many. For me, she was a north star and someone I admired greatly. We say thanks to you and for all that you gave us, Cay.

COLORADO
Department of Education

Established 1874
Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

PARAEDUCATOR TRAINING: WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH BLINDNESS/LOW VISION



Paraeducators play a critical role in supporting students with blindness/visual impairment. As such, it is critical they receive limited specialized training in blindness/visual impairment-specific strategies. This structured 4-hour training, led by a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (TVI), is essential to ensure paraeducators develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to provide appropriate and effective support.

Training Dates & Locations

All trainings are from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Thursday, August 13, 2026

Colorado Springs @ CSDB w/ Donna Keale

Friday, September 18, 2026

Greeley @ Greeley-Evans Service Center w/ Kaitlin Lombardi

Friday, September 25, 2026

Littleton @ Mark Twain Elementary w/ Nancy Cozart



Scan the QR code or click the link below to register!

bit.ly/CDE-BLV-PARA27

Training Description

A 4-hour TVI-led paraeducator training provides essential knowledge, hands-on experience, and real-time practice to ensure paraeducators can effectively support students with blindness/low vision. This training enhances consistency, promotes student independence, and improves access to instruction across educational settings.

The 4-hour format allows sufficient time for (a) direct instruction (foundational concepts); (b) interactive discussion and questions; (c) hands-on simulations; (d) practice with real materials; and time for (e) reflection and application planning.

COLORADO Department of Education

Established 1874 Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

PARAEDUCATOR TRAINING:
WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH BLINDNESS/LOW VISION

What will participants experience and learn?

1

Foundational Knowledge for Intentional Support of the Student(s)
- Blindness/low vision and their impact on learning
- Educational implications (e.g., access, sensory needs, hands-on experience)
- The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC)

2

Consistency and Fidelity of Support
- Implement teacher-directed strategies with accuracy
- Reinforce concepts and skills across environments
- Avoid over-prompting or fostering dependence

3

Hands-On Simulation to Build an Understanding for Student-Centered Support
- Reduced visual fields, acuity loss, or glare sensitivity
- Real-life challenges with navigation, materials, and classroom tasks
- Solution based thinking and strategies

4

Real-Time Learning and Practical Application (Learn by Doing)
- Practice with adapted materials (braille, tactile graphics, large print)
- Guided use of tools (magnifiers, communication systems, positioning supports)
- Immediate feedback from the TVI

5

Student Access and Independence
- Support access without doing tasks for the student
- Encourage active engagement and independence
- Facilitate communication and interaction opportunities

6

Collaboration with the Educational Team
- Work effectively under the direction of the TVI and classroom teacher
- Understand goals, accommodations, and modifications
- Communicate observations that inform instruction

7

Safety and Environmental Awareness
- Support safe movement and positioning
- Recognize environmental barriers
- Promote orientation and mobility awareness in daily routines

Please reach out to your regional contact person if you have questions!

CVI and AAC: Collaborate, Individualize, Amplify

WHEN:
October 8-9, 2026
8 am to 4 pm

WHERE:
Adams 12 Conference Center
1500 E. 128th Ave. Thornton, CO 80241

WHO:

This training is restricted to CO TVI and the possibility of adding up to one SLP per AU. If you have a TVI on a team working with a child with CVI, you may share this flyer with them. Due to space restrictions, ONE SLP per AU may attend. If we have space, we will allow more SLPs. It is the responsibility of the TVI to convey the information to their team, including SLPs, following the training.

ABOUT:

The training will examine the powerful collaboration needed to develop individualized Augmentative Alternative Communication (AAC) systems for learners with Cerebral / Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI). Each learner is unique, but there are guiding principles to support individualization to amplify each learner's voice. A combination of lectures will view the most recent peer reviewed research, examine case studies, and small group work, as well as open forum question and answer sessions to end each day.

PRESENTER:

Sylvia Mangan is the CVI Coordinator Supervisor and speech-language pathologist (SLP) who works at Perkins School for the Blind. She attended graduate school at Northwestern University, and worked in public schools, with a special interest in supporting students with Complex Communication Needs (CCN) and Augmentative-Alternative Communication (AAC).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Describe the unique challenges an individual with CVI may face in order to access typical AAC display and systems.
2. Demonstrate how to utilize a collaborative decision making guide for designing and implementing AAC systems for learners with CVI.
3. Outline the role that data collection and revisiting specific design choices should play in implementing and generalizing AAC use across environments.

Register:

bit.ly/CDE-BLV-1026

Questions?

Contact **Tanni Anthony** at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or 303-503-4647.

COLORADO
Department of Education

Transition Preparation for Life Post Public School

AFB Research on Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Employment

A new report from the American Foundation for the Blind, ***Working with the Machine: AI's Expanding Role in Employment for People with Disabilities***, examines how people with and without disabilities are using AI throughout the employment process and explores the opportunities and challenges AI presents in the workplace.

Among the findings:

- **Nearly two-thirds (62%) of job candidates** reported using AI to assist with their job search.
- **More than two-thirds (68%) of workers** reported using AI at work, most often for writing, research, and note-taking.
- **Among workers with disabilities, 32%** reported using AI for visual description on the job, and **25%** reported using AI for captioning.
- **One in five workers** reported that workplace AI policies affected how well they could perform their job, and many described restrictions on AI tools they believed would support their work.

The report also explores AI in candidate screening and automated interviews, the use of AI as a workplace accommodation, workplace AI policies, AI-based workplace surveillance, and recommendations for employers, policymakers, and AI developers.

Building on AFB's broader AI research, it provides an in-depth analysis of the employment findings first presented in ***The AI Quagmire: Benefits, Risks, and Aspirations through a Disability Lens***.

Explore the full findings and recommendations on how AI is shaping employment for people with and without disabilities.

Read the report here!

Introducing HKNC's NEXUS

Helen Keller National Center has a **new national initiative called NEXUS**, which is designed to bring people, expertise, and resources together to improve outcomes for DeafBlind youth with complex support needs. The program creates a coordinated connection point for state agencies, educational teams, adult service providers, professionals, families, and DeafBlind individuals working toward successful transitions from school to adult life. Stay tuned as your CO DB Project staff get on board with this new initiative, which centers on students with deaf-blindness with complex support needs who are secondary age.

National Deaf Center Resources

The National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes has an array of resources to help improve postsecondary outcomes. From their **homepage**, you can browse resources for students, disability services

professionals, or vocational rehabilitation professionals. Or you can go directly to their most popular resources: a transition planning guide, an online educational game called Deafverse, and certificate programs.

Independent Futures that Work: Learning Independently, Here We Come!

This checklist identifies some key skills needed to learn more effectively, optimize learning experiences, and achieve better results from learning experiences.

We need to hear from students with disabilities!

The Colorado State Youth Council is working to hear directly from young people across Colorado about their experiences finding and navigating education and career pathways. We want to better understand what is helping them, what is getting in the way, and what needs to change so that statewide systems and resources work better for young people. What we learn will help inform recommendations for improving resources such as My Colorado Journey and the Quality Career Pathways Framework. **It is especially important that we hear from young people whose voices and experiences may not always be represented when these systems are designed.**

Survey: Colorado Youth Readiness Survey
Deadline: August 31. Time to complete: About 5–7 minutes

Thank you for helping the State Youth Council make sure young people's experiences are informing this work. Your partnership can help us reach youth we might not otherwise hear from.

Just for Parents

Colorado IEP Parent Training

CDE is excited to share that the Colorado IEP Parent Training is now available on the CDE website. This free, on-demand training was created to help parents and families better understand the special education process and meaningfully participate in IEP meetings and decision-making. The training includes ten modules covering IEPs, parent and student rights, and key federal and state special education laws and procedures. This training was developed in response to Senate Bill 24-069, now codified in Colorado Revised Statutes § 22-20-122, which directed CDE to create and make publicly available a parent training program on IEPs and related rights and procedures. **The ten modules and all related resources can be accessed here.**

Contact Katherine Rains, rains_k@cde.state.co.us, with any questions or to inquire about an in-person training.

Just for Paraeducators

Southern Region Paraeducator Training

The first of three scheduled training sessions for paraeducators working with blind/low vision students occurred on August 13th on the campus of CSDB. This training was the result of a collaborative effort with **Michelle Chacon, Nancy Cozart, Donna Keale,** and **Kaitlin Lombardi**. The Southern Region's training was hosted by Donna Keale in her role with CSDB BLV Outreach and provided by **Donna Keale,** CSDB BLV Outreach TVI and COMS**, and Nancy Cozart,** retired TVI and COMS / CDE Braille Proctor and Mentor. There were 19 paraeducators in attendance from CSDB school & residential staff, District 49, Manitou Springs, and Woodland Park RE-2 School District. Thanks to **Michelle Boyer, Julie Harrison, Jonathon Karli, Lori Mattick,** and **Chloann Woolley** for supporting their paraeducators to attend.

Maddie Durossette from the CIMC provided support throughout the training and was able to provide specific information about CIMC materials. CSDB tech support was available for set-up as well as being on standby for any issues that could arise. Thank you to all who supported the logistics and success of this training.

Editor's Note: This email came in from Lori Mattick after the Southern Paraeducator Training: *Thank you so much for the Para Training offered in Colorado Springs yesterday! . One of my paras shared the slides with me this morning - what a great training for our paras. Awesome topics and agenda! The feedback from the paras that I have had a chance to interact with is that they loved the training and thought that it was very valuable! They loved the information and really appreciated all the hands-on activities while they were learning. They believe that this training helped them to have some insight into our students' worlds and allows them to be more comfortable with our students. Ultimately, this will positively impact all of our students and will lead to more people in our world with more knowledge about blind and visually impaired individuals. The para training is definitely a "Win, Win Win!! Donna and Nancy, thank you so much for teaching this training. The paras loved your knowledge, your experience and your interactions!!*

We are off to a great start with the paraeducator training series. A huge shout out to Donna and Nancy for this first one. Thank you to **Krista Berkey** from CDE for creating flyer, registration, evaluation, and certificates. There will be two more training sessions this school year. One in the Northern region (Greeley) and one in the Metro area (Littleton). For dates and the registration link, check out the details in the Calendar of Events.

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 braillist, and/or a colleague already in the teaching profession.

Please work with Dr. Silvia Correa Torres 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

- **0.5 FTE TVI/COMS** – Denver Public Schools. For more information, contact Julie Hemphill at jorswel@dpsk12.net.

Southern Region

- **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.
- **0.2 FTE TVI / O&M Specialist** (two days a week) – Widefield School District. For more information, contact Rachel Lake at lakerachel@wsd3.ort
- **1 FTE TVI / O&M Specialist** – Pikes Peak BOCES. For more information, contact Caryl Manuszak at CMANUSZAK@ppboces.org.

Statewide

- **1 FTE TVI / O&M Specialist** — CSDB Outreach. For more information, contact Dale Wolf at dwolf@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

Are You 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.

Special Education Specialist: Visually Impaired Ages Birth-21: (9.02)	✓ 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.

For information about the endorsement requirements for the School Orientation and Mobility Specialist, go to the Endorsements page on the CDE website.

School Orientation and Mobility Specialist Ages 0-21: (11.03)	✓ 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.**

New Faces and New Places



New Faces

- ✓ **Christine Craft** is a virtual TVI providing virtual services to students across several school divisions and programs in Colorado this school year. This will be her fifth year working as a TVI, both remotely and in person. She is from Fincastle, Virginia. Christine graduated from Radford University with her master's degree in Vision Impairment/Special Education. Prior to becoming a TVI, she spent 19 years teaching middle school science and math.

  Christine will be working with students in the following Colorado : District 49, Fountain-Fort Carson School District, Lewis-Palmer School District 38, Monument Academy, Mountain BOCES, and San Luis Valley BOCES. Christine shares that she truly loves what she does and looks at each school year as another opportunity to learn, grow, and prepare herself for the next step in this field.

- ✓ **Jessica Meisel** is currently attending UNC to obtain a master's degree in visual impairment and is working part-time in Westminster Public Schools as a TSVI. She has her master's degree in special education with a concentration on deaf-blindness /multiple disabilities from Hunter College and bachelor's in communication sciences and disorders from Queens College in New York City. She moved back home to Colorado in 2014 and has since worked with children in public and non-profit schools as an early childhood special educator (ECSE) and as significant support needs (SSN) teacher for students from kindergarten to 5th grade

  Jessica is also a Technical Assistance (TA) Specialist with the Colorado Department of Education's Deaf-Blind Project where she has worked for the past 5 years. In her free time, Jessica enjoys spending time with her 2 dogs, hiking and reading.

- ✓ **Sarah Mora** is on board with CSDB as the new Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) / Independent Living Skills Teacher for the School for the Blind. Sarah recently moved to Colorado (again) with her family after living in Oregon for the past 12 and a half years. In Oregon she worked as a VR Counselor for the Oregon Commission for the Blind for Youth in Transition while also coordinating a residential Summer Work Experience Program during 2008 to 2013.

  Sarah worked as VR Counselor for Colorado DVR for individuals who are Deaf, Blind and DeafBlind with a focus on youth in transition. In that role, she partnered quite a bit with CSDB's Bridges to Life program. Sarah shared that she is ecstatic to be back in Colorado Springs, a city that she loves for all of its natural beauty and access to so many fun activities.



- ✓ **Alyson Romine** is a virtual TVI now working in Fountain Fort Carson. She graduated from Oklahoma City University with a bachelor's in early childhood education. She spent her first four years of teaching 2nd and 3rd graders in North Texas. Alyson shared her passion of braille with her general education students, which motivated to her to go back to school to become a Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments. She graduated from Texas Tech University with a master's in special education with a focus in Visual Impairments in December 2024.

After spending time working in North Texas as an itinerant Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments, Alyson decided to become a remote TSVI to allow flexibility in where she lives. She is currently working on the Library of Congress Literary Braille Transcriber Certification. Alyson is working in a number of Colorado school districts. Welcome to Alyson as a Colorado TVI!

New Places

- ✓ **Colleen Havey** has been hired by District 49 where she joins the team of Lori Mattick and Natalie Hale.

- ✓ **Karin Hensel** is with the Littleton Team working half time. She joins Alyshia Shelton, Jenny Campbell, and Lisa Hebbert.

- ✓ **Joe Odekerkan** is now on board with St. Vrain School District. He will be working with local teammates Amber Korben, Aryn McNichol, Samantha Thuis, and Liz Weider.

- ✓ **Will Reynolds** has moved to Douglas County School District. He will be working with teammates Dana Downey, Brenna Moser, Anitha Muthukumaran, Micah Scott, and Maggie Tutt.

- ✓ **Hanna Waladay** is now with Boulder Valley School District. She will team with Sally Burch.

- ✓ **Jared Walker** is now with Thompson School District. Jared will team with Ellen Wallis.

If there are other new faces or TVIs in new places for the 2026-27 School Year, please let Tanni know.

Colorado Connections



Braille Competency

- Quadruple hats off to TVI **Margi Moldane** and braillist **Perla Gamez** from Denver Public School District. **Alyson Romine,** a virtual TVI working in Fountain Fort Carson School District, and **Alysa Webb**, a CSDB TVI, for earning their Initial CDE Braille Competency Certificates.

- **Aimee Pemberson**, a braillist from Aurora School District, **Julia Hutchinson,** a Colorado virtual TVI working in Santa Fe and South Central BOCES, **Bryan Moles**, a TVI from Cherry Creek and **Caitlin Geoffrion** a TVI from Adams 12 earned their CDE Renewal CDE Braille Competency Certificate.

- Hats off to **Caitlin Geoffrion**, **Aleah Green, Brittany Hogdson, Jessica Hank, Julia Hutchinson**, **Chris Kinney, Evan MacDonald, Bryan Moles**, **Aimee Pemberton,** and **Alyshia Shelton** for completing braille renewal modules over the summer months.

- Thanks to **Nancy Cozart, Chris Maynard, Brenda Shepard,** and **Julie Wetzstein** for their proctoring and mentoring work. Thanks also to **Jo Pinto** for braille proofreading work!

- Thank you so much to **Debbie Haberkorn** and **Jim Olson** of the CIMC for helping with braille production of part of the CO Braille Competency Test. Great expertise and service! You both ROCK!

- A special thank you to the team for guidance on a new document specific to *Braille Competency for Colorado Virtual TVIs* and specially to **Brenda Shepard** and **Nancy Cozart** for creating new passages for our braille competency test. Also, to **Nancy Cozart** and **Chris Maynard** for assisting with the review and update the Colorado Braille Competency Testing support documents. These updated documents can be found at: CDE Braille Competency Test Documents

  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!

- Many thanks to **Michelle Chacon** for her amazing accessibility expertise. Michelle has worked closely with **Krista Berkey** to ensure our Low Vision Evaluation and Deaf-Blind Child Count paperwork is fully accessible to screen reader users. Thank you, thank you!

- Thanks to **Leonor Rosser**, an early intervention TVI, recently volunteered to make the braille signs for the Wow Museum in Lafayette. She also created an activity for children and braille that includes a book she brailled as well.

Professional Development Accolades

- Thanks to rock stars Boulder Valley School District TVI **Sally Burch** and A Shared Vision TVI **Paula Landry** for their CATE Presentation on June 4 and 5 on the topic of *ABCs of Access: Building a Foundation for Communication using AAC for Children with CVI Part 1 and Part 2.*

- **Dr. Wendy Sapp** and **Dr. Tanni Anthony** provided an AER-sponsored webinar on *Orientation and Mobility Services in the Early Years* on June 11. The training was based on their *Foundations of O&M* chapter. It was fun to see some Colorado O&M Specialists on the webinar.

- The Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness was held on June 15-16. Thanks to **Susanne Morrow** for her training specific to *Tactile Communication & In-Depth Considerations for Children and Youth with DeafBlindness.* TVIs in attendance included **Sasmita Bisoi, Michelle Chacon, Barb Galgano, Ann Marie Jansen, Donna Keale, Paula Landry**, **Jeannie Lei,** and **Tanni Anthony.** They were joined by 40 other early intervention or school-based team members of children with deaf-blindness.

- Colorado was represented at the AER International Conference held in Louisville, KY this July. In attendance were **Ellie Carlson, Amy Gunning**, **Kelly Mitchell,** and **Chloann Woolley.**

- Colorado provided four presentations at the July 2026 CVI Summit. In Boston, MA: (a) *Using Eye-Tracking Metrics to Investigate the Impact of Simplifying Complex Storybook Images for Students with CVI* and (b) *Effectiveness of Using an Early Vision Screening Tool to Identify Risk of CVI with* Erin Rupe from the Anchor Center for Blind Children and (c) *Comorbidities of CVI* and (d) *Building Awareness of CVI in a New Rare Disease Community: Lessons from the Down Syndrome Community* presented by Dr. Linda Lawrence and Colorado's **Dr. Elizabeth Boatwright**.

  Also in attendance from Colorado: **Allison Alterman, Tammy Miller, Callie Robinson, Cathy Smyth,** and **Kiera Zink**. Colorado proud!

- **Tanni Anthony** attended the August 3-5, 2026 Deaf-Blind Network Meeting and OSEP Leadership Conference held in Washington, DC.

Personnel Updates

- We were sad to say goodbye to **Jill Bookwalter** who moved to Utah over the summer months. Jill was the TVI / O&M Specialist for Johnstown Milliken School District for the past couple of years.

- Graduate caps off in the air to Jenny Campbell on her graduation from the University of Nebraska Lincoln in August. She completed their TVI program. We are proud of her accomplishment! Jenny is working in Littleton School District.



TVIs in Action Over the Summer

- **Amber Korban**, from St. Vrain School District, did her UNC O&M blindfold class this summer. There were six in the class and she represented Colorado. Amber also attended the Usher Syndrome Conference held in Minnesota this July. She is our new Usher Syndrome Ambassador for Colorado. A USH Ambassador is a volunteer who is knowledgeable about Usher syndrome and the community and is willing to be a point of contact in their state or country. Ambassadors educate their community about Usher syndrome and the USH Trust*, provide information and resources, connect with others in their state/country. and may represent the Coalition at community activities such as workshops and conferences. The CO DB Project staff will be meeting with Amber to collaborate on Usher syndrome. Yay, Amber!

- *Editor's Note: Hats off to **Jennifer Campell** from Littleton School District and **Jon Fisher** from CSDB. Thanks to Jenny for sending this article.* This summer a group of about a dozen University of Nebraska Lincoln students went to the Kansas State School for the Blind (KSSS) to fulfill our requirements for the Vision/Early Intervention Grant. Individuals are studying in the fields of visual impairments, orientation and mobility or Early Interventionists. During our first week we joined the last week of KSSB's Extended School Year program where we joined Expanded Core Curriculum classes and joined students in the community. We completed "Grand Rounds" as we reported back on research-based interventions we implemented and what results came from our time with the student. During our second week we were able to have hands on experiential learning specific to access technology, impacting individuals with visual impairments. We worked side by side with individuals who use access technologies daily to explore the technologies, learn about resources available and develop appropriate technology instructional sequences. We were able to spend time during the week with Dr. Lytle who explained his recent dissertation work on access technology competencies as well as the time he spent in Iceland with Camp Abilities.

  During our down time in the evenings, we were hosted twice by the Children's Center for the Visually Impaired team that is very similar to our early intervention program in Colorado at Anchor Center. We learned about the shifting in their programming from center based to in home models. The alumni loving members from Delta Gama hosted us for dinner where we were able to explain and discuss our experiences in our fields as well as learn about their work in their philanthropy which is focused on supporting those with visual impairments. It was wonderful to be hosted by UNL, KSSB, CCVI, and Delta Gamma

Camp Abilities Colorado Program Summary

Camp Abilities Colorado was a tremendous success, bringing together seven athletes who are blind or have low vision, along with a dedicated team of volunteers and professionals from diverse backgrounds. Volunteers included Allison Alterman, Amberly Baum, Christy Hornig, Peter Rifenburg, Robyn Wyatt, Anna Rodrigo, Kai Ventling, and Chris Cannizzaro. Junior Volunteers were Vyronica and Emerson Hopper. In addition, four adults who are blind or have low vision (Randy, Penn, Kasey, and Peter) served as instructors and role models, leading activities such as tandem biking, beep baseball, goalball, hiking, running, and beep kickball. Sports specialists included Connor Rodrigo, Kasey and Erin Hopper, Peter Rifenburg, Randy George, and Penn Street. Photographers were Collin Pickett and Pennalopie Valentine. Board members **Gina Herrera**, Samatha Moe, and **Roberta Curtis**. Directors **Danielle Burden**, Connor Rodrigo, and Shelby Jones. We partnered with Colorado Discoverability, the National Park Service, and Aftersight.

To increase accessibility, Camp Abilities Colorado provided transportation assistance for families on the Front Range through Bustang and Sunshine Rides and provided three athlete scholarships to reduce financial barriers to participation.

Athletes and volunteers reported overwhelmingly positive experiences throughout the week. Favorite activities included paddleboarding, beep kickball, swimming, tandem biking, and the camp's highly anticipated talent show. The talent show featured singing, drumming, guitar, and flute performances, as well as comedy acts, allowing athletes to showcase their creativity, talent, and confidence.

The camp's impact was reflected in the athletes' own words:

- "I feel more independent here."
- "I can tell I'm gonna really like this."
- "I like meeting people like me."
- "I don't feel so alone."
- "I haven't had a lot of friends, so this is nice having people to be with."

A highlight of the week was a hike to Devil's Kitchen in Colorado National Monument. Although some questioned whether the trail would be too challenging due to the terrain, camp staff prepared athletes with adaptive tools and techniques, including trekking poles, urban explorer canes, tethers, auditory cues, and Osprey hydration packs. As a result, four of the six athletes who attempted the full route successfully reached the rock formation. One athlete chose not to continue, and another was unable to complete the hike due to time constraints.

The athletes' accomplishments left a strong impression on the park rangers who accompanied the group. In a follow-up email, they wrote: "Everyone did awesome on the hike, and you have an incredible, kind, talented, skilled team of folks helping out. Tim, Lily, and I were impressed—we don't even take our school field trip groups to Devils Kitchen; we just stay on the Connector Trail for those!"

Camp Abilities Colorado provided athletes with meaningful opportunities to build independence, develop athletic and recreational skills, form lasting friendships, and challenge expectations about what individuals with visual impairments can achieve. The overwhelmingly positive feedback from athletes, volunteers, and community partners demonstrates the program's lasting impact and value.

If you would like to volunteer to be part of Camp Abilities Colorado, we can be followed at Colorado Blind Youth Adventures on Facebook and Instagram (coming soon).

Our website is https://coloradocampabilities.org/ or email us at Campabilitiesco@gmail.com.

Who Ya Gonna Email / Call / Text?

SCHOOL YEAR 2026-2027

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

- For referrals – (upreferrals@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) 503-4647 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

- Blindness / Low Vision (BLV) Coalition (CDE State BLV Advisory)
- CDE Braille Competency Testing /Braille Certification Renewal
- CDE Initiatives specific to State Assessments, Standards, READ Act, Gifted Talented, etc.
- CDE Orientation and Mobility Seminar
- CDE State Conference on Blindness/Low Vision
- CDE TVI / O&M and Braillist Specialist listservs
- CDE web pages on Blindness/Low Vision, Deaf-Blindness, and Orientation & Mobility
- 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 Learning Media Plans, specially designed instruction
- Job Clearinghouse – TVI, O&M Specialist, and braillist positions within Colorado
- *Keeping in Touch (KIT)* Newsletter
- Licensure for TVIs and O&M Specialists
- NIMAS and NIMAC procedures within Colorado / webpages
- Policy / Guidance documents pertaining to learners with BLV and/or deaf-blindness
- READ Act and guidance specific for learners with blindness/low vision or deafblindness
- Sound Bites (monthly virtual trainings)
- Summer Institute on Deaf-Blindness and Significant Support Needs

Krista Berkey at (720) 661-3013 or Berkey_k@cde.state.co.us

- CDE Blindness / Low Vision or Deaf-Blindness training logistics
- CO Deaf-Blind Project Child Count (secure portal submissions)
- Metro Region Low Vision Clinic Coordinator
- Statewide Coordinator of Regional Low Vision Clinics

Danielle Burden at (970)-590-2210 or campabilitiesco@gmail.com

- Camp Abilities

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

- Braille Challenge – Metro Contest
- CIMC webpage
- 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
    - cimcbookordr@csdb.org for braille and large print "Book Order Form" submissions, sourcing inquiries, and questions
    - cimcBraillerTechSoftware@csdb.org for "Brailler-Tech-Software Order Form," "Brailler Repair Form" and questions
    - cimcregistrations@csdb.org for submissions and questions related to the "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 – Debbie Haberkorn, dhaberkorn@csdb.org (braille transcriber, questions related to braille book orders)
    - (719) 578-2198 – Danielle Steele, dsteele@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

Michelle Chacon at (303) 507-6291 or mchacon@adams14.org

- Metro TVI / O&M Specialist Region representative at Blindness/Low Vision Coalition meetings
- CDE / CSDB Paraeducator Trainer

Nancy Cozart at (303) 905-4074 or cozart_n@cde.state.co.us

- CDE Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor
- CDE / CSDB Paraeducator Trainer

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

- Colorado Center for the Blind Director

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

- CSDB Director of Special Education
- CSDB Enrollment Questions / Special Education at CSDB

Gina Herrera at (303) 253-0451 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
- Colorado Deaf-Blind Project Child Count (child-specific data)
- Intervener Training and Support (with Jessica Meisel)

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

- Foresight Ski Guides

Abby Horner at (970) 348-1920 or ahorner2@greeleyschools.org

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

Jonathan Karli (719) 578-2108 or jkarli@csdb.org

- Braille Challenge – CSDB Southern Regional Contest
- CSDB Adams' School for the Blind Principal
- CSDB School for the Blind representative at Blindness/Low Vision Coalition Meetings

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

- CSDB BVI Outreach Representative at Blindness/Low Vision Coalition meetings
- CDE / CSDB Paraeducator Trainer

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 Blindness/Low Vision Coalition meetings

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

- Metro TVI / O &M Specialist Regional Meetings

Katilin Lombardi at **(**303)-918-9465 and learningchannels.org

- CSDB / CDE Paraeducator Trainer
- YMCA of the Rockies (trip / experience for students with visual impairments)

Macy Marshall at 303-501-4758 or macy.marshall@state.co.us

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services Representative at Blindness/Low Vision Coalition meetings

Judy Mathews at (719) 696-1303 or judy.mathews@state.co.us

- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services Representative at Blindness/Low 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@anchorcdenter.org

- Anchor Center for Blind Children Director of Children's Programs and Services Program Coordinator
- Anchor Center for Blind Children representative at Blindness/Low Vision Coalition meetings

Tiffany Moon (303.778.1130 Ext: 256 or tmoon@cocenter.org

- Colorado Center for the Blind (CCB) Youth Programs
- CCB Youth Program Representative at Blindness/Low 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 Blindness/Low 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 / family orders of prescribed low-vision clinic devices

Mike Plansker at (303) 870 7649 or mplansker@sjboces.org

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

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- Anchor Center for Blind Children CVI Initiative



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- CDE Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

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- CSDB Superintendent

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- Talking Book Library Outreach Librarian

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- Colorado Talking Book Library Director

Samantha Thuis at (970) 685-8755 or huis_samantha@svvsd.org

- Site Coordinator for Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

Kim Ann Wardlow at (303) 786-7777 x 101 or www.aftersight.org .

- Aftersight (formerly) Audio Information Network of Colorado

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- CAER Rep at Blindness/Low Vision Coalition meetings
- Southern Region TVI / O&M Specialist Rep at Blindness/Low Vision Coalition meetings
- CAER President

IDEAs that Work

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