

Winter 2023 Pre-Convention Issue



Visual Impairment and Deafblind Education Quarterly

Volume 68, Issue 1

The Voice and Vision of Special Education



Cover photo description: The cover photo contains student art from the Kentucky School for the Blind. The photo shows three art creations of different interpretations of the face of a lion. The student artists used different colored pieces of paper, such as different shades of brown and grey, to create the faces of the lion.

Photo submitted by: Martin Monson

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DVIDB CEC Social & Awards Ceremony

Join us for an evening of socialization & celebration.

Appetizers & tickets for a drink of choice will be included.



When & where:
March 2nd, 2023
6:00P.M. - 8:30P.M.
427 B South 4th St.
Louisville, KY 40202

Pictured above:
entrance to Tavern on Fourth from
the outside

Pictured on the right:
people inside the restaurant,
playing social games such as
ping pong



Message from the Editor

Kathleen M. Farrand

Associate Professor, Arizona State University

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Happy 2023! As we kickoff the first issue of the new year, I am inspired by all the great work being done in the field. In this issue, you are provided with a collection of articles focused on pre-convention. This issue begins with two amazing articles, by our two presenters, Erika Fundelius and Dr. Cheryl Kamei-Hannan, for the upcoming DVIDB Pre-Conference on Friday, February 24th, 2023, from 9 AM- 4 PM (EST). I encourage you to read more about their work and the content of their upcoming sessions. DVIDB members can attend their sessions for

free and non-members can attend for \$60. You also can earn up to 6 ACVREP credits. [Please register today.](#)

Then, you can read about all the phenomenal award winners for DVIDB for 2023! First, you can read about Cameron Smith, the Virginia M. Sowell Students of the Year Award winner, who is making a difference as a TVI and a graduate student. Then, read about the Deborah D. Hatton Outstanding Dissertation of the Year Award winner, Dr. Adam Grave's, whose research has the potential to making lasting impacts of deafblindness. Next, you can read about Cecelia Peirano, Teacher of the Year Award winner, a National Board Certified TVI and elementary school teacher making a difference in the lives of students in Ohio. Suzanne Dinwiddie, Exemplary Advocate Award winner, is serving the field as an educational consultant for the Tennessee Deafblind Project and advocate for students with visual impairments and blindness and their families. Lastly, read about Dr. Craig Meador, Distinguished Service Award winner, who has focused his life on supporting those in the field as an educator, administrator, and now president of APH. Congratulations to all the 2023 DVIDB award winners!

The final two articles focus on sharing more about a university program and school for the blind in the great state of Kentucky. As many of us prepare to travel to Kentucky for the upcoming 2023 CEC Convention, I thought it would be nice to read about some of the great programs in the state. First, read about the University

of Kentucky Visual Impairment Program, celebrating their 10th year as a graduate certification program to train teachers of the visually impaired. The final article is a partial reprint of an article from the *Kentucky Teacher* publication on the Kentucky School for the Blind.

I hope you enjoy this issue as much as I enjoyed putting it together. Thank you to our authors and award winners for all that you do for the field of visual impairments, blindness, and deafblindness. You can find information about the DVIDB social before this article and a full list of all the in-person sessions at the 2023 Convention after the President's Message. I hope to see you all in Kentucky!

Happy Reading!

President's Message

Kathleen Stanfa,

Professor, Kutztown University,

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I hope the new year is off to a great start for you. We are welcoming two new DVIBD board members and saying goodbye to two members whose terms have ended. First, I'd like to thank Rachel Schles and Katherine Ericson for their service as their terms end. Their directors' positions are now being filled by Gwynn Suttell and Kathleen Zeider. We appreciate our new board members for stepping forward and we are also happy to have Karen Koehler return as re-elected

DVIDB Treasurer along with Beth Jones who will serve an additional term as director.

Among the DVIDB board excitement is building for the CEC Convention and Expo in Louisville, KY, March 1- 4. I hope you will be able to join us this year. There are many wonderful reasons to come to convention.

Our division will host many fantastic sessions at this year's convention. You can earn ACVREP credits while learning from experts across the country on a variety of topics related to working with students with visual impairments and deafblindness. You can talk to educators, researchers, and policymakers. You can spend time with old friends and meet some new ones too. You can learn about the latest products and technology, and you can shop for new teacher tools.

Convention is a wonderful time to learn, to catch up, and to recharge. Don't forget to join DVIDB at the Tavern on Fourth on March 4th from 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM for our annual social event where we will celebrate our division award winners and enjoy the company of our colleagues. Appetizers and a ticket for a drink of choice are included. There are even some great door prizes available.

To gear up for convention, consider registering for our all-day pre-convention workshop to be held on February 24th. This is a virtual event offering up to 6 ACVREP credits and includes dynamic presentations where you can learn

effective strategies for working with emergent bilinguals and multilingual learners with visual impairments. This will be a terrific event and is free to members.

I especially look forward to this time of year. There are so many opportunities to learn and to connect with others in the field. I hope to see you in Louisville!

2023 CEC CONVENTION DVIDB In-Person Sessions

Wednesday, March 1st

Concurrent Sessions:

3:30 PM – 4:30 PM

Transition Help is Here! The APH CareerConnect Job Seekers Toolkit

- Olaya Landa-Vialard, American Printing House for the Blind ConnectCenter; Richard Rieda, American Printing House for the Blind ConnectCenter; Billy Parker, NSITE; Marianne Haegeli, NSITE

Thursday, March 2nd

Concurrent Sessions & Multi-presentations

8:00 am – 9:00 am

Access to Education for Students who are Deafblind

- Kristi Probst, Initiative Lead (IQP), National Center on Deaf-Blindness

11:45 am – 12:45 pm

Five Simple Steps to Honor Students' Personal and Bodily Autonomies

- Erika Fundelius, Florida State University

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Applying Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy with Students Who Have Sensory Disabilities

- Monique Coleman, San Francisco State University; Dana Kan, Vanderbilt University; Susan Bruce, Professor, Boston College; Kevin Miller, Concordia University – Nebraska

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

The Lifelong Experience of Learning: Studies on Braille, Assistive Technology and Transition (Multi-Presentation)

- Kathleen Stanfa (Moderator), Kutztown University of Pennsylvania
- Sub-sessions:
 - **Braille Brain-** Cheryl Hannan, California State University, Los Angeles
 - **Promoting Assistive Technology Integration: Strategies from a Postsecondary AT Lab-** Beth Jones, Texas A&M University-Commerce & Belinda Rudinger, Texas A&M University-Commerce
 - **Transition Connections: Enhancing Options for Children with Low Incidence Disabilities-** Karen Koehler, Shawnee State University; Emily Maginn, South Central Ohio ESC; Kim Picard, Shawnee State University

Poster Sessions

9:15 am – 10:00 am

Visual Impairment Professionals in Education Survey – Tennessee

- Rachel Schles, Peabody College Vanderbilt University

Exploring Educational Experiences of Congenitally Deafblind College Students

- Adam Graves, Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Teaching English Language Learners with Sensory Loss and Additional Disabilities

- Nicole Johnson, Kutztown University & Anne Brawand, Kutztown University

Friday, March 3rd

Concurrent Sessions & Multi-presentations

11:45 am – 12:45 pm

Literacy for Deafblind Students: Everyone Reads, Everyone Writes

- Julie Maier, Educational Specialist, California Deafblind Services

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Teaching Students the Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation

- Susan Larkin, Iowa Educational Services for Blind and Visually Impaired; Susan Osterhaus, Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired; Tina Herzberg, University of South Carolina Upstate

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Orientation and Mobility Referrals: Visual Impairment Policy and Practice

- Tina Herzberg, University of South Carolina Upstate & Justin Kaiser, University of Kentucky

2:15 pm – 3:15 pm

Reflections from Parents of Children Who are Deafblind

- Adam Graves (Moderator), Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired
- Sub-sessions:
 - **Latinx Parents of Children with Deafblindness: Addressing Challenges Through Advocacy**-MaryAnn Demchak, University of Nevada, Reno
 - **Parents of Young Adults with Deafblindness: Reflections on Wellbeing**-Brianna Grumstrup, University of Maine at Farmington & MaryAnn Demchak, University of Nevada, Reno

Poster Sessions

9:15 am – 10:00 am

Identifying Dual Sensory Impairment in Students with Extensive Support Needs

- Meagan Karvonen, University of Kansas & Julie Durando, National Center on Deaf-Blindness

Parent Perceptions of Early Deafblind Student Involvement in the IEP

- Lanya McKittrick, Lane of Inquiry - Deafblind Education Research and Family Support

15 Years Later: A National Survey of TVIs on Self-Determination

- Erika Fundelius, Florida State University

Wayfinding Experiences for Youth: A Mixed-Method Investigation of Campus Exploration

- Amy Parker, Portland State University; Elizabeth Schaller, American Printing House for the Blind; Denise Snow, American Printing House for the Blind

What's Your Why? Professional Pathways of TVIs Entering/Exiting Education

- Rachel Schles, Peabody College Vanderbilt University

We Deserve the Right to Order

- Jenna Haskins, Teacher of the Visually Impaired & Courtney Kirschner, Kutztown University

NIMAC + Bookshare + National AEM Center = Student Success!

- Nicole Gaines, American Printing House for the Blind; Cynthia Curry, CAST; Alice Wright, Montgomery County Public Schools, MD

11:45 am – 12:30 pm

A Common Call: Accessible STEM for Students With Visual Impairments

- Tiffany Wild, The Ohio State University & Derrick Smith, University of Alabama Huntsville

1:00 pm – 1:45 pm

Ensuring Positive Early Transitions for Deafblind Students and Their Families

- Lanya McKittrick, Founder, Lane of Inquiry - Deafblind Education Research and Family Support

Music Education for All

- Laura Zierer, APH & Justine Taylor, APH

Other Vision-Related Sessions

Friday, March 3rd

Multi-Presentations

10:30 am – 11:30 am

Systemic Change to Promote Family Partnership (Multi-presentation)

- Shana Haines (Moderator), The University of Vermont
- Sub-sessions:
 - **Increasing Family Engagement Through Collaboration: A District Approach-** Stacy Bewley, Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville, KY
 - **Making Us Better: Improving all Programming with Theory of Change-** Catherine Smyth, Anchor Center for Blind Children & Tamara Miller, Anchor Center for Blind Children
 - **Weaving Familial Stories: A Conceptual Framework for Special Education Practice-** Rae Tewa, Nicole Begay, & Elizabeth Ruiz, Mary Lou Fulton Teacher's College, Arizona State University

10:30 am – 11:30 am

Accessibility Tools for Teachers to Support Diverse Learners (Multi-presentation)

- Kimberly Bunch-Crump (Moderator), NC A&T State University
- Sub-sessions:
 - **Access and Apples for Preservice Educators-** Kimberly Bunch-Crump, NC A&T State University
 - **Low-Hanging Fruit of Access Technology-** Yue-Ting Siu, San Francisco State University
 - **Virtual Instruction Supports After the Pandemic-** Nargiza Buranova, University of Missouri

Supporting Students with Visual Impairments When Language Might Be a Barrier

Erika Fundelius

Florida State University

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- Do you have families where the caregiver(s) request a translator for education related meetings?
- Have you heard any of the following myths, (1) student is struggling because they are not proficient in English, (2) we are not sure whether the student is struggling because they lack English proficiency or due to a learning disability, therefore let's try special education classroom for supports, or (3) English-learners should be taught English only to minimize academic struggles (Hamayan et al., 2023)?

This year's CEC-DVIDB pre-conference focuses on assisting you in your work with students who are language learners. I am a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI) and a certified orientation and mobility specialist (COMS). I am also a first-generation immigrant. I speak English as a second language. I am an English language learner and have a multilingual home. I have traveled extensively and had the privilege of interacting with people from many parts of the world. Yet beyond my personal experiences, what makes me qualified

to speak on this topic is the students I have interacted with as an educator for two decades. Still, I must disclose that I have not trained in second language acquisition or language instruction. During the session on February 24th, 2023, we will lay the foundations to have a better understanding of multilingual learners and discuss strategies to provide support for your students who speak a home language other than English.

Heterogeneity is the word for this article, as it is for almost everything we do in our profession. Based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of households where English is not the primary or first language has at least tripled. Based on the most recent U.S. statistics (2019), there are approximately 69 million people (up from 23 million in 1980) who speak a language other than English in their homes (Dietrich & Hernandez, 2022). That is nearly one in five adults. In addition, only about one in eight educators speak a language other than English as their first language, making the teacher population mostly monolingual (i.e., speaking one language) (Floden et al., 2020; Spiegelman, 2020).

The reality is that millions of students are not fluent in English, yet general access instruction is—primarily—delivered in English, except where bilingual education is offered and accepted (Li et al., 2010; Zacarian, 2011). Based on data from the National Center for Educational Statistics, the 2019/20 school year served 10.4 % or 5,115,887 English language learners (ELL; 2021, 2022). Approximately 11-12% of ELL students were dually-identified learners (i.e., those who are ELLs and have a diagnosed disability; Office of English Language Acquisition, 2021). Under the IDEA (2004), ELLs are most often diagnosed with either specific learning disability (44.69%) or speech and language impairments (18.96%; Office of English Language Acquisition, 2021). However, we have the dilemma of inadequate assessment systems that result in the overrepresentation of multilingual

students in special education (Hamayan et al., 2023). Henceforth, you likely have at least one student on your caseload who appears to lack or lacks English language proficiency.

As an English language learner, I always start by laying the groundwork for my learning. I regularly utilize this technique when I teach future TVIs at Florida State University. We begin by defining terminology that starts with dissecting words to their roots, origins, and meaning. In essence, we lay the foundation to learn a new concept by tying it to prior understanding when possible. As vision professionals, you work with a heterogenous population across ages, disabilities, placements, and for the sake of this article and upcoming presentations, languages spoken by clients. First, it is necessary to distinguish between Dual Language Learners (DLLs) and English Language Learners (ELLs). At first glance, the designations may seem to refer to an identical idea, yet they are different.

Dual Language Learners, or DLLs, are students simultaneously learning English and their home language prior to entering Kindergarten (Li et al., 2010). These are the students who we encounter while providing early intervention services to families or who may enter preschools to receive special education services. Their learning is ongoing, as they are connecting words to objects, subjects, and experiences. An English language learner or ELL has developed the foundations of at least oral communication in their home language. Li and colleagues (2010) characterize this population by the challenges of learning the ins and outs of academic English while keeping up with all their peers in content learning (e.g., reading, mathematics, and science). Students are expected to understand and learn what is being taught at grade level while simultaneously producing acceptable oral and written work in English (Li et al., 2010). Some federal precedents and laws make provisions to ensure that multilingual students

have "a meaningful opportunity to participate in public education programs," yet the implementation of such programs varies by state (Li et al., 2010; Zacarian, 2011). Therefore, we have students who are not getting adequate support to learn English, but still, we expect them to perform on grade level or to make measurable progress in their special education programs. What if they also have visual disabilities?

Imagine your student who is five years old, typically developing, visually impaired, and has never seen or met a cow. The student learned from typical children's books that the cow makes the "Moo" sound, and that milk comes from cows. The child needs to have the complex concept of what a cow "is" to have a foundation on which they will build future learning. Dr. Dutton, during one of his webinars, shared that we need to teach all children the "bananeness of a banana." I use his analogy frequently when I try to explain concept development of students with visual impairments. Students form complex conceptual mental models or gain a clear understanding when they have full sensory experiences with the subject of learning. In the case of the banana, they may have had a chance to engage with the tree (i.e., in southern states or zoos) and experience the color, smell, texture, and taste of a banana (i.e., part-to-whole learning; Allman & Lewis, 2014). If the child with a visual impairment has no word for a new concept, they will need complex, multisensory, multimodal, and repeated exposures to learn. Children learning academics in English will need similar support to bridge the languages and concepts they are attempting to learn simultaneously.

As vision professionals, we may experience challenges when we make recommendations or face obstacles when we attempt to role-release implementation of strategies. In short, colleagues do not follow our requests or guidance when we are not with our students. In the instruction of multilingual

learners with disabilities, collaboration will be ever more essential (Hamayan et al., 2023). During the webinar, we will discuss response to intervention (RtI), multi-system of supports (MTSS), universal design for learning (UDL), and the language experience approach (LEA), all of the options which you may utilize to support your students. We will also discuss the difficulties of using visuals-a prevalent strategy in language instruction- when it comes to students with visual impairments (Hamayan et al., 2023; Moore & Pérez-Méndez, 2011; Zacarian, 2011).

I hope that you will leave the session with (1) an ability to discuss the importance of being aware of one's community's superdiversity, (2) the differences between English and dual language learners and their needs, (3) share some considerations to be aware of when working with multilingual learners, (4) have an overall understanding of interventions and supports available, and lastly (5) share and recommend activities to engage with learners based on foundational approaches when working with multilingual learners.

I look forward to seeing you on Friday, February 24th, 2023!

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DVIDB is excited to present our annual pre-convention virtual workshops for 2023

Join us on February 24th

Teaching Multilingual Learners with Visual Impairments

Supporting Students with Visual Impairments when Language Might be a Barrier

9:00A.M. – 12:00P.M. ET

Erika Fundelius MA, TVI, COMS, Doctoral Candidate at Florida State University



Erika is a teacher of students with visual impairments and certified orientation and mobility specialist. She has worked in education from preschool, K-5, and special education for over two decades. Erika is a fourth-year doctoral candidate in Curriculum and Instruction, Visual disabilities at Florida State University. She is analyzing her survey data on TVIs' knowledge and understanding of self-determination to bring her dissertation to a conclusion. She is currently an instructor for FSU's visual disabilities program, and through her company Shades of Sight LLC, she provides O&M services to adult clients in Tallahassee, FL. As an immigrant to the USA, therefore an English language learner herself, she has a unique personal experience that allows her to relate to students who are culturally and/or linguistically diverse. Erika was invited to Pasto, Columbia in September 2022 to deliver a keynote and provide a workshop at a conference at the University of Narino for foreign language teachers on inclusion and strategies related to instruction of students with disabilities.

Building Language and Literacy Skills of English Learners with Visual Impairments

1:00P.M. – 4:00P.M. ET

Cheryl Kamei-Hannan, Ph.D



Cheryl Kamei-Hannan, Ph.D. is a professor and researcher at California State University, Los Angeles. A leading expert in the field of visual impairment and blindness, her research agenda focuses on language, literacy, and technology. She is co-author of *Reading Connections: Strategies for Teaching Students with Visual Impairments*, co-editor of the textbook, *Foundations of Education (3rd Ed.)*, and co-contributor to the *Assessment of Braille Literacy Skills: Unified English Braille (ABLS-UEB; 4th Ed.)*. Dr. Kamei-Hannan earned her Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) at the University of Arizona with a specialization in Visual Impairment and a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Special Education, along with credentials in Visual Impairment and Blindness and Orientation and Mobility from San Francisco State University. She has worked in the field of visual impairment and blindness for over twenty years as personnel preparation coordinator, researcher, reading specialist, middle school language arts classroom teacher, itinerant teacher, and a resource room teacher of students who are visually impaired.

Registration Link

Members – Free

Non-members - \$60

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dvidb-council-for-exceptional-children-2023-preconference-event-registration-482009542517>

Earn up to 6 ACVREP Credits

Building English Language and Literacy Skills of Students with Visual Impairments

Cheryl Kamei-Hannan

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Language is the ability to understand and convey ideas in written or spoken discourse. It includes the ability to use words, phrases, and sentences to communicate. Early language development begins at birth. Infants absorb the language spoken at home, and they often begin to speak words before their first birthday. By the age of two, young children know several words and begin stringing them into simple phrases.

While *vocabulary* gives words meaning, *syntax* provides a string of words the grammatical structure or framework for conveying ideas (Cho et al., 2019). Language components include several linguistic skills such as *phonological awareness* which is the ability to understand speech sounds and organize them into words, phrases, sentences, or longer dialogues; *semantic knowledge* or the ability to use one's vocabulary to aid in comprehension as well as analyze parts of words to construct meaning, and *syntactic knowledge* or the ability to apply knowledge of

grammatical structures to convey thoughts or comprehend ideas (Silverman et al. 2020). These linguistic skills contribute to the overall ability to communicate, and they are integrally linked to reading comprehension.

In the *Simple View of Reading*, Hoover and Tunmer (2021) define reading as the sum of language comprehension and word recognition. In this model *phonemic awareness* provides readers with the skills needed to apply the letter and sound system to decode unfamiliar words, skills of which are supported by phonological awareness. *Phonological* and *phonemic awareness* are foundational reading skills developed in early grades and connected to word recognition. As children progress through their academic career, readers encounter increasingly complex linguistic structures and challenging academic vocabulary (Cervetti et al., 2020). During reading tasks, proficient readers rely on a bridging process between decoding and language comprehension (Duke & Cartwright, 2021). Language comprehension provides meaning to what is read. Readers who have a robust *vocabulary* (lexical knowledge), strong sense of *morphology* (understanding of words and word parts), and ability to apply *grammatical rules* (use of language structures) are shown to have better comprehension than readers without these underlying foundational skills (Cervetti et al., 2020; Duke & Cartwright, 2021). Cabell and Hwang (2020) further argue that broad content knowledge (e.g. background in variety of topics

and conceptual synthesis across topics) and depth of understanding within a subject area contributes to overall reading comprehension.

Language and Literacy and Students with Visual Impairment and Blindness

Research regarding the language skills of young children with visual impairments shows that semantic and syntactical knowledge develops with similar patterns as children who are sighted (Vervloed et al., 2014). Although a slight delay in learning vocabulary may initially occur, children with visual impairments generally acquire the same number of words in early childhood as children with vision (Dimcovic & Tobin, 1995). One observation in vocabulary use is that children with visual impairments may name things within their immediate environment or use *close-by words*, as opposed to *far-away* words or distal words that are not readily accessible to one's experiences (Linders, 1998 as cited in Vervloed et al., 2014). Names of family members and objects within the house, for example, were some of the earliest words learned by children with visual impairments in one study's findings (Brambring, 2007). Brambring's research further documented slight delays in early sound production and use of pronouns, but no delays in word acquisition, phrases, or syntax. Research regarding older children with visual impairments shows greater discrepancies in broad content vocabulary and deep word knowledge, compared with sighted peers (Vervloed et al., 2014). Furthermore, children with visual impairments may have difficulty

connecting language to their broader lived experiences or conceptual knowledge (Dominic & Tobin, 1995). Nonetheless, despite these differences, language skills are considered a strength for students with visual impairments (Pijnacker et al., 2012).

Generally speaking, literature shows that reading development for students with visual impairments is similar to students who are sighted. That is to say that the same foundational literacy skills are required of reading, regardless of the reading medium (Manuel, 2016). Phonological and phonemic awareness, fluency, and language comprehension are core skills sets, for example. However, students with visual impairments may read in braille or large print, or they may benefit from using optical aids. Compensatory skills such as visual and tactile efficiency may impact access and learning.

Braille reading research indicates that tactile reading skills develop similarly at early elementary ages, but in comparison with typical readers, students with visual impairments in later grades begin to fall behind their peers (Wall Emerson et al., 2009). Authors hypothesize that foundational skills have a heavy emphasis on phonological awareness, primarily aural in nature, which is a strength for student with visual impairments. However, in later grade levels, students who read braille may have slower reading rates than students who read print (McCarthy et al., 2009), and they may lag behind in academic vocabulary skills, which could have

an overall impact on comprehension (Vervloed et al., 2014). Because vocabulary is related to the ability to recognize words and synthesize information while reading, when students have limited vocabulary or a lack of broad conceptual knowledge, they may not recognize a word when decoding it, and they may not have background knowledge upon which to build comprehension (Cabell & Hwang, 2020).

English Learners

Knowing about the interaction between language and literacy helps teachers understand the impact of learning English on reading. While English speakers may have developed language skills that precedes and supports reading development, English learners may be applying their developing vocabulary to word recognition tasks, and they may have less familiarity with complex grammatical structures found in text (Gottardo & Mueller, 2009). Cho et al. (2019), documents that language skills had more of an effect on reading comprehension than word recognition skills for English learners. The cognitive load of applying word recognition skills while also learning the English language may be more challenging for an English learner than for a student who has an existing language foundation from which to draw, during reading tasks (Nowbakht, 2019). Another consideration for English learners in academic settings is the expansion of vocabulary from day-to-day conversation into content specific vocabulary and

concepts used in academic contexts, sometimes referred to as academic vocabulary.

Profiles of English language learners may vary. Proficiency in one's primary language may affect English language development. Some students may be dual language learners at home and be simultaneously developing vocabulary in two or more languages. Other students may have a dominant primary language and begin learning English at school. Students also may be able to converse in two or more languages, but not be able to read in either language. Yet other students may have had formal literacy education in a primary language, conversationally fluent in English, but struggling to read in English. Teachers who recognize a student's current language and literacy skillset as an asset can build upon the student's knowledge. Furthermore, teachers who draw upon students' cultural backgrounds and integrate their personal experiences may provide connections to language and literacy tasks, building deeper understanding.

English Learners and Visual Impairment and Blindness

English learners who are visually impaired have equally diverse profiles as students who are sighted. Considerations should be given to the stages of English language development and the impact of a visual impairment. Students who are beginning to learn English may take longer to process conversations. Sometimes, students translate the conversation into their primary language prior to responding.

Students also may be reluctant to speak if they lack confidence in their language ability, a stage sometimes referred to as the *silent phase*. Students with visual impairments may become still and quiet as they listen intently to the conversation. The behavior may be misinterpreted as distractibility, lack of focus, or inattentive. Being aware that a student is in the early stages of English language development may prevent misdiagnosis of learning difficulties. Furthermore, teachers who are aware of the student's English language development may provide appropriate instructional supports.

In addition to recognizing the varying language profiles, it is important to understand the impact of vision on language acquisition. English learners with VI may have strong listening skills which may promote language learning. But broad knowledge may be less developed due to limited experiences upon which expansion occurs. For some students, who are emerging English language learners, conversational speech may be accompanied by non-verbal cues such as gestures or facial expressions. These cues may not be easily accessible to a student with a visual impairment. Similarly, emergent English learners may use pictures to support word translations such as naming an object in both languages. Students with visual impairments may have limited access to pictures. Tactile graphics or objects may be used as an alternative to images. However, as students progress academically, graphic diagrams such as charts, graphs, maps, tables, and figures

become increasingly complex. Additional support may be required to help students comprehend the graphic images. Vision allows one to comprehend several concepts simultaneously (Vervloed et al., 2014). Complex graphics aid readers in synthesizing information (Guo et al., 2020). While tactile graphics may provide accessibility, the images may not be completely equivalent. Additional explanation as well as strategies for interpreting the image may support comprehension.

Assessment of Language and Literacy Skills

Comprehensive assessment of language and literacy skills is essential to providing appropriate instruction. Proper functional vision, learning media, and access technology evaluations are critical to decision making. Identifying the most efficient means of access can assist in decisions regarding literacy tools.

Evaluating oral language, reading, and writing skills will help identify an individual's strengths as well as skills which could benefit from further development. Diagnostic assessment may be used to intentionally pinpoint literacy strengths and weaknesses. Collaboration with literacy coaches and English language specialists also may help with appropriate assessment practices and interpretation of results.

Strategies and Learning Supports

Several language-based strategies and learning supports may be useful when teaching English learners who are students with visual impairments. Language-

based strategies are those which make speech more comprehensible to someone learning English. Learning supports may be put in place to augment language development. These strategies and supports include:

- Self-monitor speech and consider reducing the complexity of speech, slowing the speech rate, increasing response time, paraphrasing or rephrasing sentences, defining unfamiliar words, clarifying figures of speech or idiomatic sayings, and/or using precise descriptors (Kamei-Hannan & Ricci, 2015).
- Bring awareness to multiple meanings of words and sentence structures (Logan & Kieffer, 2022).
- Promote morphological awareness by explicitly pointing out word parts including word roots, prefixes, suffixes, and bring attention to how similarities between word parts can help with comprehension (Logan & Kieffer, 2022).
- Discuss how syntax impacts comprehension, such as how a question and a sentence may have the same words but in a different order, with different punctuation and voice inflection (Silverman et al., 2020).

- Encourage vocabulary development that is connected to background and/or prior knowledge and that actively applies word use during discussion and other literacy activities, as opposed to recalling definitions (Cabell & Hwang, 2020).
- Provide multi-sensory supports (e.g. visual, auditory, tactual sensory experiences) and using sensory experiences to promote language skills (Kamei-Hannan et al., 2020).
- Provide experiential learning opportunities that increases depth of understanding as well as connections to prior knowledge (Cabell & Hwang, 2020). Experiences should be interactive, to facilitate the use of language, and they should provide multi-modal representations of the same concept (Guo et al., 2020).
- Allow opportunities for interaction and conversation with peers to develop academic vocabulary and that supports development of broad content knowledge (Logan & Kieffer, 2022).
- Preview learning material to identify unfamiliar vocabulary and conceptual knowledge which can be pre-taught before introducing it in text (Kamei-Hannan & Ricci, 2015).

In summary, teachers can support reading and writing by having a thorough understanding of language and literacy development of students with visual impairments and aligning instructional supports to meet students' learning needs.

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Virginia M. Sowell Student of the Year Award Cameron Smith

Nominated by Kathleen Stanfa



Cameron is a 2022 graduate from Arizona State University's inaugural cohort of teachers of students with visual impairments, with a Bachelor of Arts in Education in Special Education- Visual Impairments. She is currently a graduate student at the University of Tennessee- Chattanooga in Music Studies. She is interested in the arts and education and how music can be used to enhance learning for students with visual impairments and blindness.

Cameron has worked as a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI) since 2020. She currently works for NorthStar Educational and Therapeutic Services as a TVI, case manager, and a lead science coordinator. In addition, Cameron serves as the student member on the board for the Division on Visual Impairments and Blindness.

Congratulations, Cameron, DVIDB'S Student of Year Award Winner!



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Deborah D. Hatton Outstanding Dissertation of the Year Award Adam Graves

Nominated by Rona Pogrund



Adam has been working with students who are blind, visually impaired and deafblind since 2003. Over the years he has served as a classroom assistant, special education teacher, teacher of students with visual impairments and is currently employed as an educational consultant for the Texas Deafblind Project.

Adam graduated with his Ph.D. from Texas Tech University in the Spring of 2022. His dissertation, “A Critical Theory Analysis of Educational Experiences of College Students Who are Congenitally Deafblind” was a qualitative study that delved into the factors impacting college students who are born deafblind from their perspective and their family’s perspective. His dissertation is unique because he examined an understudied population of individuals. He examined the social and educational experiences of individuals born deafblind in the college setting, their prior educational experiences in their K-12 academic settings, and the supports and services they were currently receiving at their college. He used qualitative methodology and a Critical DeafBlind Theory for his research.

Adam’s research has the potential to have long-term impacts on the field of deafblindness, specifically regarding the rights and experiences of college students who are congenitally deafblind.

Congratulations, Dr. Graves, DVIDB’s Dissertation of the Year Award Winner!

VIDBE-Q 2023 Convention Issue



The intended purpose of the Spring 2023 convention issue is to provide manuscripts aimed at practitioners about presenter contributions to the CEC 2023 program and work related to the field of visual impairments and deafblindness. This issue will allow those who were unable to attend your session to know more about your work.

Guidelines:

- 3-5 pages
- Tables, images and/or figures should have a text description
- References (APA 7th Edition)
- APA formatting (7th Edition)
- 12 point, Times New Roman font
- Author information for title: Name, affiliation, highest degree earned, and email address
- Please identify target audience
- Provide tips or strategies

Email your manuscript submission
to Kathleen.Farrand@asu.edu.

Deadline for submission: April 1, 2023

Teacher of the Year Award Cecelia Peirano

Nominated by Karen Koehler and Kathleen M. Farrand



Cecelia, better known to her friends and colleagues as Ceil, is a National Board Certified teacher at the Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB), where she has taught for 45 years. She teaches students in grades kindergarten through sixth grade using braille and tactile graphics to teach diverse students. Ceil is passionate about providing students with the highest quality services and is an advocate for students with visual impairments. She is a master teacher, skilled in working with both students and adults. Additionally, she mentors new teachers,

sharing her knowledge of compensatory skills and the importance of making the curriculum accessible to all students. Ceil serves as the Elementary Coordinator and Program Coordinator for the Resident Educator program at OSSB.

Her expertise in the areas of specially designed instruction, braille instruction, STEM instruction, and curricular adaptations and modifications make her the “go to” instructor at OSSB for new and seasoned teachers, alike. For more than 15 years, she has also provided summer instruction during the OSSB summer camps. She makes these summer camps both fun and educational for children across Ohio and has helped many children become more proficient in braille and math. She also has shared her knowledge and expertise by supporting future TVIs who are completing their practicum hours during the summer camps. Her mentorship has supported numerous practicing TVIs in the state of Ohio. In addition, she has partnered with multiple faculty researchers to support the inclusion of evidence-based practices and research during the summer camps she has led, to inform her own teaching and support her students.

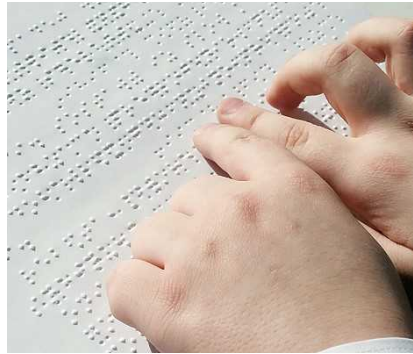
Ceil has served as an adjunct faculty for the TVI program at The Ohio State University and is currently teaching a Braille Instructional Practices course for the TVI Consortium program in Ohio. She has won numerous awards during her teaching career including: the J. Kenneth Cozier Memorial Award for her exemplary service in the field of visual impairments; the Judy Cernkovich

Excellence in Education Award for excellence in teaching and leadership in the field of visual impairments and in 2020 she was recognized as the District 6 Ohio Teacher of the Year. She also has contributed her expertise with others through conferences.

Ceil's passion for the education of students with visually impairments constantly shines through in everything she does. Congratulations, Cecelia Peirano, DVIDB's Teacher of the Year Award Winner!

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Exemplary Advocate Award Suzanne Dinwiddie

Nominated by Danna M. Conn & Rachel Schles



Suzanne entered the field of vision in 1975. Currently, Suzanne serves as the educational consultant for the Tennessee DeafBlind Project (TNDB). Suzanne is a certified teacher of students who are blind or visually impaired, an early childhood assessment specialist and a certified orientation and mobility instructor. She is a reoccurring guest lecturer at Vanderbilt University for the departments of Visual Impairments/Blindness, Early Childhood Special Education, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Students with Complex Profiles, and Orientation and Mobility classes.

Suzanne conducts regional, statewide and national trainings regarding best practices in early intervention, assessments, literacy for children with complex learning/medical needs, Deaf-Blindness and orientation and mobility strategies for individuals with dual sensory loss and/or physical limitations.

Suzanne has been instrumental in providing high quality and evidenced-based Technical Assistance across the state of TN. Suzanne demonstrates an extraordinary commitment to her work in the fields of visual impairment and deaf-blindness. Through her role she has designed innovative ideas and strategies to support the unique learning needs of children with dual sensory loss. She has developed a variety of active learning spaces for children with limited mobility and communication that are now being utilized by families, teachers and providers across the state. These supports and strategies have significantly promoted the quality of life for individuals with deaf-blindness along with the families and professionals that work with them.

In addition to Suzanne's work through the Tennessee Deafblind Project, she has annually contributed her time to statewide professional development. She has provided two-hour workshops specifically around assessment and/or instructional strategies for students with CVI and/or complex disabilities. Her sessions are routinely among the highest attended sessions.

Congratulations, Suzanne, DVIDB's Exemplary Advocate Award Winner!



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- [CareerConnect](#): for job seekers
- [Transition Hub](#): for school-age youth planning for graduation and life after college
- [ConnectCalendar](#): for people and organizations to find and share info about upcoming events in the field of blindness and visual impairment
- **Information & Referral Hotline (800-232-5463)**: for answers to questions related to visual impairment and blindness

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APH Press is a scholarly press which publishes informative, well-researched, and innovative texts which enable people who are blind and visually impaired, their families, and the professionals who support them, to maximize their potential in society. [Learn more about APH Press](#), visit the [APH Press resource page](#), and [download the Press Catalog](#).

APH's mission is empowering people who are blind or visually impaired by providing accessible and innovative products, materials, and services for lifelong success. To learn more about APH and our products and services, [visit APH.org](#) today.

Distinguished Service Award Craig Meador

Nominated by Emily Coleman and Pam Parker



Craig has devoted his life's work on serving students who are blind, low vision, and deafblind. As a teacher, he always championed students. Then, as an administrator, he supported and encouraged staff. Now, as President of the American Printing House (APH) he is guiding changes in services, products, and funding. Craig became President/CEO of APH in January of 2016. To better meet

the needs of the field, he is leading efforts that have created a substantial growth phase. This has included the expansion of partnerships and the creation of an online learning portal called “The Hive.”

Craig promotes the work of professional organizations, like DVIDB, and encourages new professionals to connect with people in the field. He knows the value of mentoring, collaborating, and supporting others. Craig’s service to the field as an educator, administrator, advocate, and through his work at APH has had and continues to have positive ripple effects on the field and every individual he meets.

Congratulations, Craig, DVIDB’s Distinguished Service Award Winner!



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University of Kentucky Visual Impairment Program

Donna Brostek Lee

University of Kentucky

donna.b.lee@uky.edu

The University of Kentucky (UK) Visual Impairment Program is the only program in the Commonwealth of Kentucky that trains visual impairment professionals. Started in 2013, with a graduate certification program to train teachers of the visually impaired, the program now boasts two master's degree programs: Teacher Preparation Program in Visual Impairments and Orientation and Mobility (O&M). The program is comprised of three full-time clinical faculty members: Drs. Donna Brostek Lee, Justin Kaiser, and Amanda Lannan.

The original faculty consisted of Dr. Lee and Gerald Abner (now retired). In 2012, when they started at the University of Kentucky, they were charged with designing a program to address the critical shortages of teachers of the visually impaired (TVIs) in the Commonwealth. With support from the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), the result was a hybrid certification program

utilizing online evening classes and in-person weekends and summers at the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB) in Louisville. Since its inception, the program has grown to offer a master's degree with TVI certification, as well as a master's degree in O&M. Currently the program is in its tenth cohort of TVI students and third cohort of O&M students.

Both programs operate using a cohort model offering a flexible program for working professionals. They were designed to meet the needs of those located in Kentucky and its surrounding region. The TVI program sequence starts each fall and runs for two years, which includes one intensive summer. Students take two classes a semester consisting of evening classes online and one to two weekends a semester in-person at either KSB or at the University of Kentucky campus in Lexington. During their summer, students meet for approximately two weeks in-person, in addition to participating for a week in one of the numerous summer programs affiliated with the Visual Impairment Program. Cohorts in the TVI program typically consist of 12-15 students.

The O&M program is designed to train up to 12 students per a cohort. New cohorts start in the fall on even years. Like its TVI counterpart, classes are online in the evenings, however due to the need for more hands-on instruction, students meet two to three weekends a semester. They also have one intensive summer of blindfold training consisting of approximately three nonconsecutive weeks. Classes

in the O&M program run for two years, however depending on the type of internship students elect to complete, completion of the program varies between two to three years.

The Visual Impairment Program has proudly certified/graduated over 100 TVIs since its first students were admitted in 2013 and 16 O&M specialists. The program has maintained strong enrollment and is deeply invested in programs that support services for those who are blind and visually impaired in Kentucky. Students in both the TVI and O&M programs work with the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB), Visually Impaired Preschool Services (VIPS), the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), and the Kentucky DeafBlind Program.

Highlights from the Visual Impairment Program include collaboration with OVR on the DeafBlind ECC Week and PATH programs. The Kentucky DeafBlind Project offers their ECC Week each summer to young adults who are DeafBlind between the ages of 14-21. This is a "team effort" with additional support from Eastern Kentucky University's Teacher Preparation Program in Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) and contracted professionals to focus on the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) and job readiness skills. Students are invited with their families to gather for a week of activities that promote independence, opportunities to connect other young adults who are DeafBlind, develop self-advocacy and communication skills, and have fun. Each summer ECC Week is hosted in a

different city in Kentucky, providing new experiences and learning about the many great places to explore across the state.

Plans to Achieve Transition (PATH) is focused on independence for post-secondary success. PATH runs for a week on the University of Kentucky campus allowing teenagers who are blind and visually impaired to come stay in the dorms in Lexington and learn the skills necessary to achieve independence after high school graduation. PATH staff, OVR counselors, university faculty, along with UK TVI practicum students and O&M interns, provide engagement in a wide variety of activities such as career exploration, advanced O&M skills, independent living, and opportunities to participate in age-appropriate social outings. Most recently PATH has added two weekend retreats during the school year to provide a better continuum of services year-round.

In addition to ECC Week and PATH, University of Kentucky TVI and O&M students have the opportunity to engage in many summer programs at KSB, VIPS, Lion's Camp Crescendo, and Jefferson County Public Schools. Most recently, several students will head out Colorado as part of the Extreme Mobility (XMO) Camp to take part in winter sports and activities. Being an active partner in services for the blind and visually impaired, and collaborating with other agencies in and around Kentucky, has been the key to the program's success.

It is hard to believe that the University of Kentucky Visual Impairment Program is wrapping up its tenth year! Although the numbers support its success, the true measure of its impact is seeing the passion for providing quality services to children who are blind and visually impaired in the eyes of its graduates.

Learn more about our programs:

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Kentucky School for the Blind

Paula Penrod

Kentucky School For the Blind

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The following article is adapted from an article written by Paula Penrod to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the Kentucky School for the Blind (KSB). It appeared in the *Kentucky Teacher* publication (May 9, 2017) and can be found in its entirety at: <https://www.kentuckyteacher.org/leadership/guest-columns/2017/05/kentucky-school-for-the-blind-celebrating-175-years-of-service/>

Set back from Frankfort Avenue in the Clifton neighborhood, KSB's peaceful, green campus belies the school's significance and importance to the students, families and the 120 Kentucky counties it serves. The Kentucky School for the Blind's commitment to children who are blind or visually impaired has been unwavering since its founding. Its staff does whatever it takes to provide students with the educational access and opportunities they need to succeed once they make their way into the world as adults.

Figure 1

Student Art from the Kentucky School for the Blind

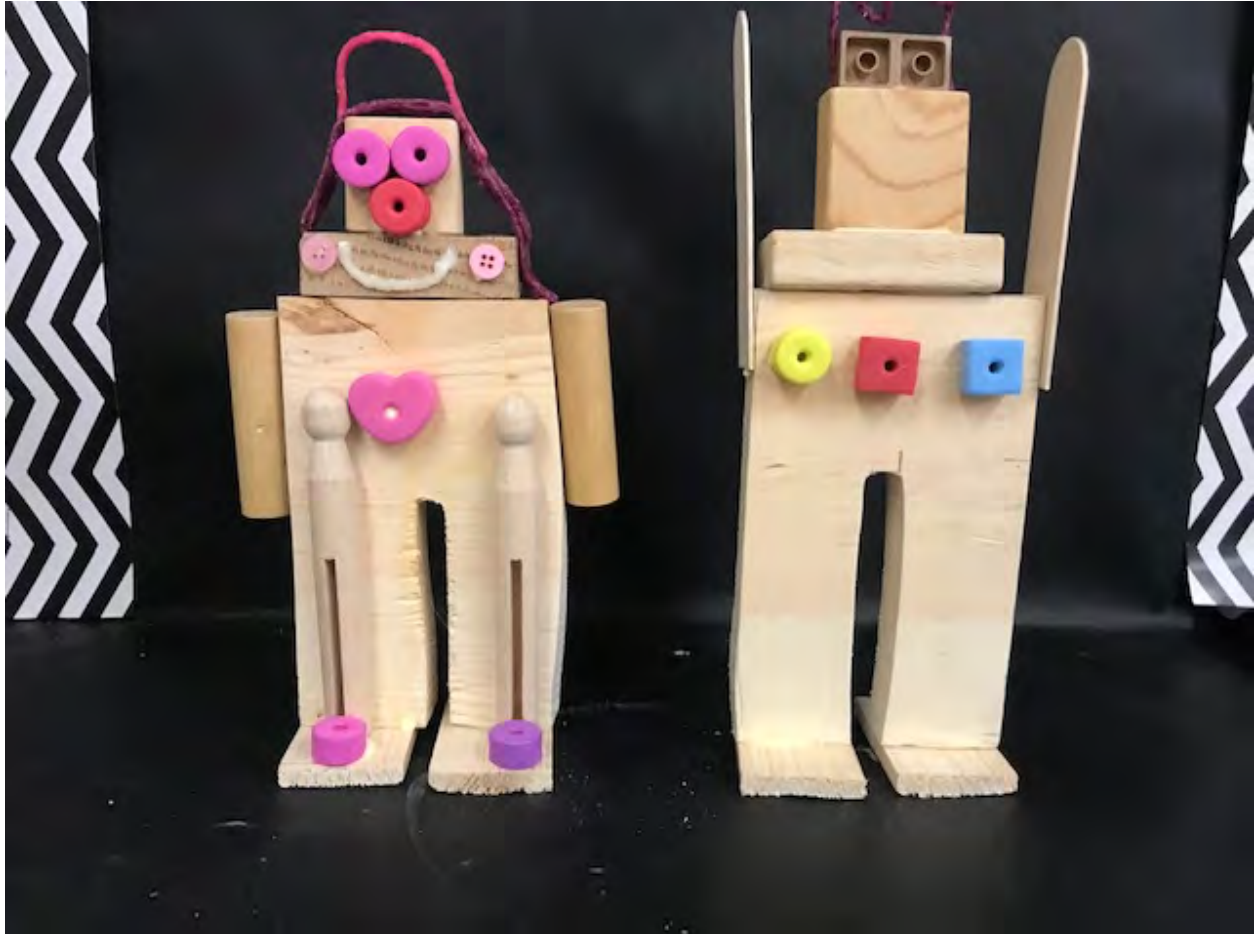


Image description: Two wood created figures, representing people stand side by side in front of a black background. The figure on the left has a heart on the front, pink circles for eyes, a pink circle for a nose, a white pipe cleaner for a mouth, and a pink pipe cleaner for hair. The figure on the right has a yellow circle and a red and blue square displayed on the front, and what appears to be a large rectangle with two circles for eyes.

KSB is more than a school though; it is a community that advocates for those it serves and has served. It stands as a testament to the past and future contributions of men and women who are blind and visually impaired, and the belief that while visual deficits may pose challenges they do not define, nor do they squelch possibilities and dreams. Its alumni and supporters – among the school’s staunchest ambassadors – readily share that belief. As KSB alumnus and teacher Brian Mullins so eloquently puts it: “Without KSB I would not be a college graduate, I would not be employed, I would not be a homeowner, I would not be a coach, I would not be much of anything, and I probably would not be alive today.”

The school is so much a part of the fabric of Louisville, it is easy to drive by its stone-walled campus and not recognize its immense historical and educational significance. In his book, *A History of Education in Kentucky* (2011), William Ellis credits Kentucky as one of the first states to provide education for the blind. KSB was, in fact, the third state-supported school for the blind in the United States.

The school’s founder and president of the Louisville Collegiate Institute, Bryce McLellan Patten, along with his brother, Otis, began teaching a class of six blind students in the summer of 1839. In early 1841, in an effort to attain funding for a school for the blind, Otis Patten presented an exhibition of his blind students’ skills before the Kentucky General Assembly. The brothers’ request for funding proved unsuccessful that session, but they remained undeterred. A year later, they

invited Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, founder and director of the Perkins School for the Blind in Massachusetts, and his students to Kentucky to make a presentation to state lawmakers. Howe and his students proved convincing, and on Feb. 5, 1842, the Kentucky Institution for the Blind was chartered with an appropriation of \$10,000.

The school opened on May 9, 1842, in a rental home on Sixth Street between Chestnut and Walnut streets in downtown Louisville. After outgrowing several buildings in the area, a permanent school home was built on Broadway Avenue in 1845. The building burned in 1851 and the decision was made to move the school out of the city. A tract of land known as the Frankfort Turnpike Road (now Frankfort Avenue) was purchased and a new school built on it in 1855. In 1967, that building was razed to make way for a modern facility that would better serve students with visual impairments.

Other historical and educational highlights from the school's history include:

After the Battle of Perryville, the Federal army medical director ordered the school to vacate in October 1862 and the building was used as a hospital during the Civil War. Under pressure by school trustees, the War Department forced hospital personnel out and students returned on March 17, 1863. The American Printing House for the Blind (chartered in 1858) began operating in the basement of the

school and the first book was printed in 1869. Superintendent Bryce Patten served as superintendent of both the school and the printing house.

The Colored School for the Blind, built on Haldeman Avenue adjacent to the Kentucky Institution for the Blind, opened in October 1884. That school merged with KSB in 1955. In 1910, the Kentucky Institution for the Blind formed Boy Scout Troop 10. Still active today, it is the first troop in U.S. serving students with disabilities. In 1916, the name of the school changed to Kentucky School for the Blind. In 1917, former KSB student Gladys Knight graduated from the University of Louisville, the first blind person in Kentucky to do so. KSB aligned curriculum to meet state requirements in 1931 and issued Kentucky high school diplomas for the first time to 15 graduates in 1933.

In 1946, Superintendent Paul J. Langan negotiated with public schools to allow KSB students to attend high school during their junior and senior years with sighted students. In 1950, boys went to Male High School and girls attended Halleck Hall (now duPont Manual High School). In 1953, the Louisville Downtown Lions Club provided a Christmas Party and dinner for KSB students, a tradition that continues today.

Will D. Evans, a KSB alumnus, was hired as teacher in 1967 and served as Superintendent from 1974-95. Under his leadership, KSB experienced a five-building, 20-year development on campus. The school established its Low Vision

Program in 1990, providing low vision evaluations statewide for Kentucky students with visual impairments. The Short-Term Program for students who are blind and visually impaired was established in 1993, allowing students to attend KSB 1-12 weeks a year for specialized instruction while staying enrolled in their home school district. In 1994, the schools began offering Gateways to Independence Professional Development Training to Kentucky teachers of the visually impaired. In 1996, the Kentucky Legislature designated KSB as the statewide educational resource center on blindness. In 1996, KSB revamped Outreach Services and placed consultants in regional sites to support proficient student performance by assisting local school districts in reducing barriers to learning associated with a vision loss.

KSB established the Insight Post-Secondary Preparation Program in 2006. Held during the summer at Morehead State University, this program provides high school students who are blind and visually impaired with an opportunity to experience what it is like to enter and navigate in a post-secondary setting.

Today, KSB enrolls 70 plus on-campus students, and provides outreach to more than 1,600 blind and visually impaired students in the Commonwealth. While on campus, students are taught the same core curriculum as their sighted peers and receive instruction in the expanded curriculum on such topics as travel, independent living, visual efficiency skills and more. The school also provides

Braille and large-type textbooks, assistive and adaptive technology, specialized educational aids, low vision services, and assistance to all of Kentucky's 173 school districts.

From its beginnings, KSB's mission has been to help all Kentucky students who are blind and visually impaired to develop their talents, their skills and their attitudes to become confident, competent and independent adults. That work and commitment has been its bedrock for 175 years and continues today. Students, teachers, alumni, parents and supporters have a lot to be proud of, but so, too, do the citizens of Louisville and Kentucky. KSB's tradition and the Commonwealth's commitment to providing a world-class education to all students so they can reach their goals and be engaged citizens endures. That is a feat worth celebrating and a commitment worth keeping for years to come.



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