CSDB Board of Trustees

Superintendent’s Report

September 2024

# Student Enrollment

## As of August 2024

Total Number of Students Currently Served Statewide 615

Total Number of Students Served on Campus since August 2022 169

Current Campus 3-21 Enrollment 169

Students in the School for the Deaf:

Preschool 9

K-5th 22

6-8th 24

9-12th 26

Bridges to Life 14

Total 95

Students in the School for the Blind:

Preschool 2

K-5th 18

6th-8th 16

9-12th 31

Bridges to Life 7

Total 74

Day Students 122

Residential Students 47

Parent Option 14

District Option 155

Teacher/Student Ratio 1:4

CHIP (Deaf) 340

CHIP (Deafblind) 8

Blind: Birth – 3 yrs. 34

Direct Outreach 64

ELDI Programs 104

# SUPERINTENDENT

* Deafhood 101 and Allies in Deafhood Training was provided to all staff August 6 – 8. A follow-up re-framing training will be provided on October 25 with all staff together.
* Deaf and Blind Statewide Advisory Task Force groups have been identified and will begin meeting in September.
* LEAD-K efforts continue, and CSDB is working with the lobbyists to identify potential bill sponsors.
* ADA Playground Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was held August 28, 2024.
* All vacant positions on the Leadership Team have been filled, and Leadership Team meetings began on August 15. The Leadership Team meets weekly on Thursday afternoons.
* CEASD / AER accreditation teams have been established and the teams are beginning the work on the self-study.
* The VIBES Committee, in collaboration with the Superintendent, will be spotlighting different programs/departments each month this school year to recognize the hard work of our staff.

# REPORTS FROM SUPPORT SERVICES

## Human Resources

* Joseph Bloom, the Human Resources Manager, was hired on May 1.
* Administrative Assistant III for HR – Sarah Geerts, took a promotion with another agency leaving the position vacant as of May 12, 2024.
* Human Resources is waiting on results from Job Selection and Job Evaluation tests to determine the ability to begin posting classified positions per requirements of the State of Colorado (*Info regarding Employment and Status can be found in Code of Colorado Regulations 4 CCR 801-1 Chapter 4*).
* Since May 1, 2024, there have been six employee separations. Currently, there are a total of 8 vacancies for non-classified and 23 vacancies for classified positions (7 to be closed,16 *for classified*).
* Filled vacancies as of May 1, 2024, include:
* HR Manager
* Director of CIA
* Director of Outreach
* Public Relations/Communications Manager
* TVI – Preschool
* TOD – Elementary
* BTL Coordinator
* TOD – Literacy Specialist / Coach
* ASL Instructor Outreach
* TVI – Secondary Science
* Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant I (COTA)
* Classified Performance Plans are now in the stages of final evaluations, employees are beginning to complete self-reviews prior to their direct supervisors reviewing their employees. The evaluation for this period began on September 1, 2023. Final Evals are to be signed off, completed, and sent to the State by September 30.
* Current posted positions include:

School for the Blind

* Music Teacher
* TVI
* Special Education Teacher

Bridges to Life

* Teacher of the Deaf – Employability
* Transition Teacher/ EC (Deaf Programs)

Outreach

* TVI

School for the Deaf

* School Psychologist
* TOD Elementary
* TOD Elementary ASL
* TOD Secondary Math
* TOD English

## Finance

Decision Items:

On August 1, seven decision item requests were submitted to the Office of State Planning and Budgeting under the Governor’s Office.

* 1. Annual Teacher Salary Increase
  2. Assistive Technology Teacher (FTE 0.75)
  3. Orientation & Mobility Specialist (FTE 0.75)
  4. ASL Interpreter (FTE 0.75)
  5. Digital Content Accessibility (FTE 2.0)
     + ASL Translator / Media Accessibility Editor
     + Audio Describer / Blind Accessibility Specialist
  6. Deaf Events Coordinator (FTE 0.75)
  7. Preschool Coordinator (FTE 0.80)

General Fund Budget Development / Mindset:

The Governor’s Office’s goal to address a forecasted General Fund deficit is to reduce the fiscal year 2024-25 budget by approximately $300 - $500 million. This reduction is essential to balance the budget for the following year 2025-26. The current General Fund budget has created more future obligations, and the roll-off of federal dollars has put significant pressure on the General Fund. Any General Fund increases must be offset with General Fund decreases to achieve a zero-growth target for each department.

* In other words, the budget is very tight and agencies are asked to make overall budget cuts from FY 2024-25 going into FY 2025-26 so that the state will have a balanced budget in FY 2025-26. In preparation for this tight budget year, departments were asked to suggest a 1 percent cut from their budget and provide offsets for any additional budget requests this year. The idea of an offset is basically to find cuts in places which are inefficient use of funds within the department to find money for a new request, which is a need. Per our budget analyst from the Office of State Planning and Budgeting, Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind is a unique case and not a department in itself. They do not expect any overall reductions from our annual budget. Department of Education will provide a one percent cut from their budget. However, there is still an expectation that if a new request is needed to be funded then the school finds places where funds are going unused and offset the increase.

We have been in close contact with the budget analyst from the Office of State Planning and Budgeting. Our argument is that our decision items are either statutorily or legally required to have in place due to case overload and / or accessibility for our deaf and blind / visually impaired communities.

**Vacant Accounting Position:**

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind will be looking for a payroll accountant. Please be on the lookout for the job announcement and share away with those who might be interested.

## Facilities/Information Technology

Facilities Update

* Submitted FY25-26 Capital and Controlled Maintenance Budget Requests
  + Capital Construction – West Hall Phase 1 $12,773,031
  + Controlled Maintenance
    1. Elevator Upgrade & Modernization $1,742,700
    2. Brown Hall Renovation Phase 1 $4,409,358
    3. Domestic Water Main Replacement $1,399,478
* Completed EPA-required Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) 3-Year Re-Inspection
* Developed written safety programs and completed training on Lock Out / Tag Out, Hot Work, Confined Space & Electrical Safety
* Completed asbestos abatement in abandoned utility tunnels, Steam Plant and the Gym; currently removing asbestos in the EEC utility tunnel
  + Received $406,207 from the State

IT Update

* Preparing network closets across campus upcoming fiber upgrade and installation; network speed will increase from 1GB to 10GB and internet performance will increase from 500mb to 1GB
* Completed network/cyber security assessment, evaluating recommendations

Project Update ( <https://csdb.colorado.gov/facilities-construction/active/funded-projects>):

* Completed $434,055 Vacancy Savings projects:
  + Constructed Argo Laundry Room
  + Improved Front Desk Window
  + Completed Stone ADA Improvements
  + Installed Doorbells in Palmer
  + Extend Sidewalk Gym to Pikes Peak (design)
  + Repaired Marque Sign
  + Fixed Underground Power Line
  + Ordered Gym Braille Signage
  + Fixed Jones Gate Fire Alarm Panel
  + Improved Adams Bus Lane
  + Added Badge Access for OT/PT Workroom
  + Completed Campus-Wide Asbestos Inspection
  + Completed Cyber Security Assessment
  + Secured Industrial Building windows
  + Barn chemical disposal
  + Replace steam lines from Argo to Admin (design)
  + Protected IT gear from potential steam leaks in Argo basement
  + Fixed heat in IT Office/Argo
  + Installed Football Field Fence
  + Landscape/Planted Two Trees
  + Completed Gym asbestos abatement
  + Completed Lions accessible changing table/restroom modifications
  + Completed Utility tunnel asbestos abatement
* CSDB has ten projects worth $14 million in capital funding to improve our campus
* Gym – three phases completed by Nov/Dec
  + Most of the Gym is open for use except for the Upper Gym and adjacent entries/corridors
  + Main Gym floor and Bulldog Activity Center floor have been refinished – Upper Gym and Running Track will be refinished sometime in Oct/Nov
  + AC was delayed due to logistical reasons; excavation/piping installation on the North side of the Gym will take place sometime in September – more to follow
  + Bleachers in the Upper Gym and Main Gym will be installed by the end of September
* West Hall Roof Replacement
  + Addressing landscape repairs
  + Fixing broken balcony drain
* ADA Playground
  + Wrapping up punch list items
  + Repair landscape around Stone Hall and mulch near Jones Hall
  + Reconstruct fire lane next to tennis courts
  + Ribbon Cutting Aug 28 @ 2 pm
* Argo Roof
  + Wrapping up punch list items
* Campus Security Upgrades
  + Camera installation in Adams, Argo, EEC, Gottlieb, Stone, and Security Office will be completed by the end of today
  + Camera installation in Admin will be completed by end of business Monday
  + Camera installation will begin in Brown Hall on Monday during the hours of 9 am – 3 pm and be completed by 8/30/24

# ALL SCHOOLS

## All Schools

* School started on August 12. Students and staff were excited to return.
* We will have a parent event/open house on September 5.
* The testing window opens for district assessments on September 3 and ends on September 20.
* All students are enjoying playing on and exploring the new playground.

## School for the Deaf

* We welcomed nine new students to the School for the Deaf. Four students transferred from our pre-school to our kindergarten class.
* We have 76 students currently enrolled in the K-12 Deaf program this year.
* We welcomed two brand new staff this year: one is our new Secondary Math Teacher, and one is our new K-1 Teacher.
* Students attended our first new Friday schedule which includes a whole staff and student department meeting with the principal called Bulldog Huddle, Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), a fun enrichment class, a class period dedicated to IEP Goals, Social-Emotional Learning class, and a period focused on test preparation and study skills.

## School for the Blind

* We welcomed six new students to the School for the Blind so far this semester.
* We have 64 students enrolled in the K-12th program this year. Ten of these students are staying in the dorms. This is an increase from last school year.
* Secondary students participated in two days of school orientation, which included revising their schedules, PRIDE Expectations, Emergency Procedures, All About Me Activities, Get to Know You Games, Team Building, and a CSDB campus Scavenger Hunt.
* Students participated in our first Fun Friday schedule on Friday, August 16.This included case manager check-ins, Independent Living Skill instruction, Social Emotional Learning groups, Tactile Sensory, and Self-Determination.

## Bridges to Life

* We welcomed five new students and three CSDB seniors from last year to our BtL program
* We have 21 students currently enrolled in the BtL program.
* Students are working on their career interests to determine possible work experience placements.
* Students are touring the Democratic and Republican party headquarters in Colorado Springs to explore each party’s platform.
* Students are also being educated about their voting rights and the process of voter registration.

# STUDENT SERVICES

* Kids are happy to be back at school.  They are sharing fun details from summer vacations and reconnecting with friends. Related service providers have gotten started with their direct services with their students.
* The students in the primary grades are getting their first-day picture taken in speech services, reviewing the rules/expectations for their services, decorating their "money folders" for the reward system in the speech room, and they are also learning about their current goals and what they will be working on this year.
* Orientation and Mobility services with returning students have resumed and our Orientation and Mobility Specialists are also busy orienting our new students to campus and assessing their orientation and mobility skills.
* In physical therapy, our PT has taken several students to the new playground to help them learn how to access and explore the new playground equipment.  Helping one student learn to climb a vertical rung ladder with assistance to slide down a large tunnel slide for the first time was very rewarding.
* Four CSDB nurses attended the National Association of School Nurses for the Deaf Conference at Gallaudet at the end of July. They were able to network with deaf school nurses from 20 different states and will be collaborating with them to develop health information formats to educate students and parents.  They returned energized with ideas on incorporating health literacy into our daily practices and special events at CSDB.
* Student Health has been working with parents and health care providers to gather health information and medication orders. They have approximately 100 care plans/meal modifications/health information sheets and are updating and educating staff on student needs.  They have already trained Gottlieb’s Staff, Adam’s Staff, BTL Staff, and Dorm Staff on student’s emergency medications, care plans, health information sheets and meal modifications.  Currently, they are evaluating and training appropriate BTL students on self-administering their medications in the dorms.
* Operation School Bell (OSB) is finally on a roll for the first time since the COVID pandemic. In previous years Operation School Bell provides clothing items for students in need.   The OSB will have the students and their families shop at a community center.  This is a pilot program that OSB recently implemented to gauge its success.  Only selected districts and schools will have the opportunity to participate in the OSB pilot program.  Fortunately, CSDB was chosen to participate in this pilot program, and we have five student slots.
* This summer, four students from the School for the Blind attended Enchanted Hills camp in California. This is such a rich experience for our students and one of our students has created a partnership with them for her senior capstone project!
* CSDB was awarded a Mini-Grant ($8000) to put towards our continued work of making our website accessible for all.
* CSDB is now using Safety Care as our non-violent crisis management program for de-escalating students if needed.  All staff with direct services for students have participated in the training and are ready to utilize these skills with students.

# STUDENT LIFE

## Athletics

* Volleyball season is underway. We have ten home games this year to make up for not having any home games last year.
* Special Olympics Bowling starts in September; date still to be determined
* Goalball Season starts September 3.

## Afterschool Programs

* Afterschool program activities start on September 3rd – Girls on the Run, Flag Football, and Deaf GEBC (Great Escape Bible Club) Church.

## Dorm Activities

* Vibes Baseball: CSDB staff, community members, and students will attend a Vibes Baseball game on 8-28-24; tickets are $2.00. Contact Max Wilding to get your ticket.
* Movie night
* Trivia Night
* Off-campus shopping
* Bike Safety lesson
* Memorial Park Fitness Trail
* Olympic Bingo game
* Cup Stacking competition
* Emotions/feelings workshop

## Residential Overview

* We have five vacancies in the Residential program right now.
* Three vacancies working with students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing
  + two working with students who are blind or visually impaired
  + We have subs filling the vacant positions currently.
* Our enrollment numbers have grown compared to last year, and we have opened a new Deaf middle school dorm this school year.
  + Our current enrollment is up 18% compared to this time last school year for a total of 47 students in the dorm.
  + 15 BtL students
  + 5 middle school students
  + 4 elementary students
  + 6 Deaf HS Boys
  + 6 Deaf HS Girls
  + 9 Blind HS mix of girls and boys
  + 2 Blind Middle school students.
* Supporting the School for the Blind in after-school assistive technology trainings, three days a week.

# OUTREACH

## Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC)

### **Statewide Student Registration Database & Federal Quota Census Count**

The CIMC ran updated database reports on July 1, 2024, the first day of the new state fiscal year, and emailed them to each district-designated CIMC contact person as their school district started the year. CIMC has started hosting one-on-one video meetings with new district personnel to review the registration process and CIMC services available to their districts from the Colorado Department of Education funded CIMC.

### **First Friday and Southern Region TVI/DVR Meetings**

* CIMC staff will host statewide “First Friday” meetings on September 6, October 8 (third Friday), November 1, December 6, January 10 (second Friday), February 14 (second Friday), March 7, April 4, May 2, and June 6. The times and Zoom links will be disseminated to CIMC’s statewide email distribution lists before each meeting.
* The Southern Region TVI-DVR meeting group decided to meet 5 times during the 24-25 school year and rotate hosting opportunities. Dates and times are to be determined. (1) September 2024 hosted by CSDB and CIMC. (2) November 2024 host to be determined (tentatively El Paso County District 20, Air Academy school district. (3) January 2025 hosted by El Paso County District 49, Falcon school district. (4) February 2025 host to be determined. (5) May 2025 hosted by the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR).

## **CSDB Outreach: 2025 Metro Denver Braille Challenge Contest**

CIMC staff are planning the 2025 Metro Denver Braille Challenge. The in-person event, in partnership with the Colorado Center for the Blind (CCB) in Littleton, Colorado is scheduled for February 7, 2025 (in case of a cancellation, an alternate test date is scheduled for Friday, February 28, 2025). TVIs and students unable to travel to the CCB location can proctor contests in-district and mail completed tests to the CIMC for scoring.

## **CSDB Outreach: CDE-CSDB Low Vision Evaluation Clinic**

CIMC will host the CDE-CSDB Low Vision Evaluation Clinic for the Southern Colorado region on Friday, October 11, 2024, in the Jones Hall, second-floor low vision/conference room. Six students from administrative units across Southern Colorado will receive 90-minute low vision evaluations from the clinic team which includes CDE administrative assistant Roberta Curtis, Dr. Kara Hanson from UC Heath Sue Anschutz-Rodgers Eye Center, and Jim Olson, CSDB Outreach. Each student is accompanied by their teacher of students with visual impairment (TVI) and parent(s).

## American Sign Language Team

The ASL (American Sign Language) team has hired an ASL instructor. Welcome Kaela Mangiaracina to CSDB and the Outreach Team.

All 3 of us will take an online workshop on September 11 to learn a new generation of slang. We want to make sure that we are on top of signs.

## **Community ASL Classes**

We offer six ASL classes: three on Tuesday and three on Thursday. Community classes are held in the evening. The Outreach team is partnering with the ASL specialists in Gottlieb to support parent classes for students attending CSDB. We are looking for an ASL instructor to teach classes in the Denver area and hopefully can start in September.

## **Immersion for Professionals**

Our next Immersion for Professionals will be October 11, 2024. Registration will be open in September.

## **Colorado Digital Learning Solutions (CDLS) - Online ASL Courses for Middle and High School Students**

We currently support two levels of courses: 1A, and 2A. Dana Baldiviez is the CDE-licensed Adjunct Instructor overseeing all CDLS classes. As of now, the total participants for the first semester are 30 students. The registration is still open until September 20th.

## **ASL Classes for CSDB Staff**

We will have classes for staff starting after Labor Day weekend.

## Itinerant Services

The itinerant teams, Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Teachers of the Deaf, are finalizing contracts and working on schedules to serve children preschool through high school in their local school districts all over the state.

## Early Education Team

**Blind/Low Vision Early Intervention**

**Itinerant Teachers of the Visually Impaired in Outreach programs also work through contracts with the southern local early intervention brokers to provide services to babies birth to age three who are blind or low vision. There were many referrals over the summer, which has our staff serving thirty-four babies between Pikes Peak, Pueblo, through Woodland Park to Divide, Hartsel and Bailey.**

## **Little Language Learners**

The Little Language Learners Toddler Program will kick off the year on August 27 with an Open House. This year, there will be two weekly classes. Tuesday classes will be full parent engagement with two teachers for classroom activities. Thursday classes will split parents for an ASL Class while children stay with a teacher and para to reinforce activities from Tuesday.

## **CHIP Coordinators**

**CHIP Coordinators have been busy all summer connecting with new referrals and families receiving services for their children. There has been continued work on finalizing the name change to CHIP Coordinator and finalizing the mission and vision statements to distribute to CSDB staff, families and stakeholders. CHIP Coordinators supported Summers in the Park events in Colorado Springs, Northern Colorado and Adams County this summer to facilitate family connections. There was representation from our group at the Summer Institute for the Blind conference as well. Coordinators continue to meet with and collaborate with the local school districts who have students who are DHH transitioning into their districts in the coming school year.**

**Current families receiving direct support through CHIP – 340**

**New referrals over the summer (June1-Aug 21) - 28**

## **Early Education ASL**

**Our Early Education American Sign Language Lead continues to support sign language services on the IFSP and meet with local programs to be able to better support them to provide this service to families. We have two instructors who are waiting to be trained in the curriculum.**

## **Colorado Shared Reading Project**

The CSRP team continued services throughout the summer for families across the state. We are working with one new Language and Literacy Instructor to help meet the growing needs of the families for services. Our team is preparing for the first consultation meeting for instructors this fall.

## **Early Literacy (EL) Events**

Our Early Literacy Event team is planning the yearly schedule for regional community events, with the first one scheduled for September first at Sunflower Farm in Longmont. We will continue to offer events in a variety of regions across the state, and virtually this year.

## **Ascent Program**

The Ascent Program is currently on hold due to staff changes with Colorado Early Hearing Detection and Intervention. Once a director is hired, contracts can be set up to continue collaborating for the Ascent Program.

## Early Education Center

The EEC is thrilled to join the Outreach team this year and focus on collaboration and transition. We are excited to welcome Michelle Boyer as our BVI preschool teacher. She moved here to join our CSDB team. The past two weeks, the EEC staff have partaken in many trainings to fulfill our licensure requirements. Our August classroom themes are Colorado animals and camping. We will have a “camping trip” in the classrooms later this month. On Thursday, August 22, parents had the opportunity to join us for our first monthly family event “Snack with My Adult”. Families were invited to join us for afternoon snack and playtime to see the classroom and allow the students to show off their classroom.

# MEDIA

Gazette – “Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind's first deaf superintendent shares goals going forward”

Super in 60 Seconds videos – distributed on social media and via email

* Construction Projects Update
* Returning Staff
* Back to School

Other Videos

* Superintendent Spangler: New School Year Welcome
* Outreach: My Little Thief (ASL Storytime)
* “Threads of Connection” – student performance at the Fine Arts Center, accessibility added

### Website Data – *July 16 – August 15, 2024*

### Pageviews/Month 18,414

### Social Media – *July 26 – August 21, 2024*

Facebook

Reach 72,296

New fans 237

Total followers 10,797

Instagram reach 893

Total followers 641

Twitter

Total followers 402

YouTube

Views/Hours 6,300/ 329.5

New subscribers 56

Subscribers 6,163