



CA DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION
STATE
SPECIAL SCHOOLS

Braille Bites

California School for the Blind

VOLUME 6, EDITION 1

NOVEMBER 2014

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Superintendent's Message

By: Sharon Sacks

It is an honor to be **CSB's** Acting Superintendent. I look forward to the challenge and the opportunity to expand programs and services for **CSB**. In my opening remarks to the staff and to the students and their families I outlined my goals and expectations for this school year. They include:

- Increase enrollment by 5%
- Enhance communication throughout the school
- Improve the connection between the school & residential programs
- Begin the process for seeking accreditation
- Expand & maintain innovative programs to include short course programs and modified high school programs
- Increase academic and ECC performance through the development of effective curriculum & teaching strategies

While we face a tight budget, **CSB** is a vibrant educational community that provides outstanding services to enrolled students and to students with visual impairments throughout California.

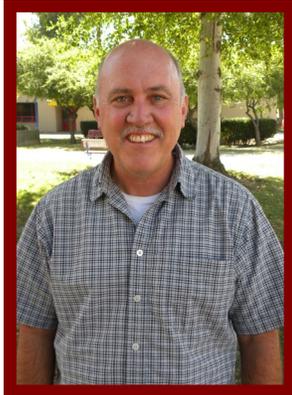
As the diverse needs of students with visual impairments including students with additional disabilities and those who are deaf-blind continue to grow, **CSB** is looking

for ways to provide programs that meet the unique educational needs of these students. We welcome your ideas and want to work with LEAs and SELPAs to support programs, and to provide placement options at **CSB**. This issue of *Braille Bites* introduces the community to new **CSB** staff & students. A variety of articles illustrate an active campus environment. Many students participated in White Cane Day activities. Other students demonstrated their artistic abilities as evidenced in their participation in the Insights Art Competition. Students from school district around the state participated in a Summer Technology Academy, while our APE program provided students with a variety of physical activities. Finally, our residential programs are involved in yoga instruction, school dances, and much more. We hope you enjoy this issue and look forward to future *Braille Bites*.

Look Who's New!!!!



Matriche Robinson
Custodian



Scott Smith
Assessment Center



Vanessa Herndon
Teacher



Thanh Chang
Low Vision Specialist



John Sendejas
Maintenance Mechanic



Alea Holman
Psychologist



Winifred Lam
Counselor



Gaby Cohen
Assessment Center



Susan Smith
Teacher



John Smith
Custodian



Kylie Breuer
O&M Specialist

APH Insights Art Exhibit

By: Minda Tayam

Congratulations to Brittany B.! Her ceramic sculpture was accepted for display in the APH Insights Art Exhibit, which was held at the annual meeting in Louisville, Kentucky earlier this October. There were over 300 entries in the 2014 competition. Pieces were selected based on “originality of concept, expressive use of medium, and artistic excellence.”



The American Printing House for the Blind has also recognized the artwork of Alissa D., whose ceramic piece, “Barn Owl” is featured in the APH 2015 calendar.

Welcome Back Dance

By: Tamera Shakir

On September 17, 2014 the **CSB** Residential Program hosted our annual Back to School dance. This year’s event was held outdoors in the school “quad”. Where our very own Paul Dominguez broadcasted the most popular tunes to hit the airwaves. He was ready, as always to provide on the spot student requests because he has thousands of tunes at his fingertips.

CSB Counselors from all dorms joined together to ensure students had a great time. Our “Grill Masters” were on hand to BBQ chicken, as well as grill hamburgers and hotdogs. Students enjoyed all of the usual side dishes that came with the main dishes as well.

CSB students dined and danced all evening. Abel D. summed it all up when he said “I really appreciate all that the counselors did for us. The decorations and food is awesome. I feel like I’m returning home.”



A.P.E. News

By: Mary Alice Ross

The **CSB** transition students have been enjoying the outdoor education hiking program at various local East Bay Regional Parks this semester.



The students have hiked at Quarry Lakes, Lake Elizabeth, Coyote Hills, Sunol regional park, Ed Levin Park in Milpitas, and many others.

A highlight this September was coastal clean-up at Marina Park near the Oakland airport. Dairion picked up a buoy! Other students picked up some trash. This was an important lesson on giving back to the community.



Yoga in San Francisco

By: Patrick Weseman

Students at the **C**alifornia **S**chool for the **B**lind are encouraged to “feel the energy and to feel their breath” every other Thursday night at the Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, which is on the second floor of the San Francisco Main Library. No, they are not training to become Jedi Masters, this is part of their training in the art of yoga.

“I love going to yoga, it helps me to clear my mind,” says Dominic M. “It is a great program, it helps people to relax.”

“I like going because it is fun and we are working on the body,” said Jomar B., who started to attend classes at the beginning of the school year.

The **CSB** students enjoy being instructed by Ms. Yates. “She is really good at teaching us,” said Dominic.

“It is a joy to have these students here,” says Yates.

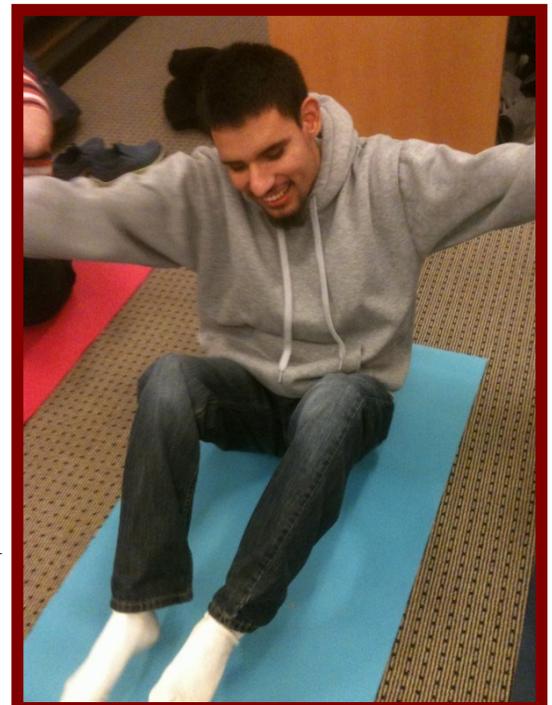
In the last two plus years over fifty percent of the students in Northridge Dorm have attended classes. Students in other dorms have attended classes as well. The class works on stretching, balancing, flexibility and spatial awareness. The students work on challenging positions such as cat, cow, downward dog and the hard-to-master boat pose. They try to coordinate their breath with the movements. An example is when they do the “cat” and “cow”, they are encouraged to go into each position using their breath as a guide.

Students with other disabilities, attend as well. Yates tells them to focus on their breath. They learn simple movements. Some are raising their arms over their heads, moving from side-to-side and feeling their breath.

The students say they love going to yoga “Because it is a great stress reliever,” says Abel D.

Relieving stress is one of Ms. Yates, goals of the program, they are always being encouraged to follow their breath and leave their worries at the door while getting a great workout.

“I like going to yoga because it is good exercise and it is very relaxing,” said Elena H., who sums up the attitudes of the students who attend the program.



White Cane Day

By: Kylie Breuer

White Cane Day 2014 was a huge success! On October 9th several students traveled to the Department of Education in Sacramento to represent **CSB** for their White Cane Day celebrations. Stuart S. and Angelica V. accepted donations for dog biscuits and brailled people's names. Julissa C. accepted donations for Lucky Touch fortune cookies and Alissa D. accepted donations for some of her art. They all got to raise money for **CSB** and see several of the items sell out fast! Outside, Brittany B. and Abel D. set up an obstacle course for those wanting to be blindfolded and experience what it is like to use a white cane. Austin W.



guided people with their eyes closed across the street to show how people with visual impairments cross streets safely. The jazz band was also there and played some great jams that everyone enjoyed! Many people in Sacramento said they loved the event and are looking forward to the school returning next year.

On Wednesday, October 15th, **CSB** students and staff arrived in the **CSB** Theater to enjoy a rendition of "We Will Rock You" by Jo Anne Tanaka's and Nanako Yamada's classes (using their canes to tap

to the beat!). Then Veronica Gunn's class sang a song they wrote about White Cane Day. Alysa Chadow's class followed by giving the audience interesting information about White Cane Day. James S. told everyone about the white cane law, Diego G. shared what materials the cane is made from, Levi B. told everyone about the history of white canes, and Kevin B. described different cane techniques. Afterwards Diego G. even told some hilarious white cane jokes! This year's National White Cane Day was made extra special because of a surprise guest: Bill Harrison, Mayor of Fremont. He read a proclamation, which was the first ever brailled proclamation in the city of Fremont! The event concluded with the audience getting their knowledge on white canes tested with trivia questions. Kylie (dressed as a white cane for the event) gave out prizes to some lucky students

who answered the questions correctly.



Afterwards, many students showed off their moves at the dance in Town Square as well as enjoyed some delicious smoothies. There was also an obstacle course in the gym. Everything was a big hit! Lastly, congratulations to Jenna C., Melanie V., Billy L., and Shelby T. for winning the cane decorating contest! We are looking forward to see what next year's White Cane Day has in store!

Business Services Focus On: Security

By: Melanie Allen

The security guards here at California School for the Blind (**CSB**) are part of Business Services but serve all three Fremont Campuses including **CSB**, California School for the Deaf (CSD) and Diagnostic Center Northern California (DCN). The security team includes Larry Cammons, Aniefiok Gaully, Javed Qureshi, Patrick Latchison, and Dion Salcedo.

Many people see the security team driving around in their black and white security carts (complete with flashing lights on top) or monitoring bus arrivals each weekend to insure all students are safely arriving on the campus. Their contributions are an important part of **CSB**, CSD and DCN.

Each security guard works a set schedule which includes weekends and holidays. They are on campus daily from 4:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m. as well as 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekends and holidays. They work to help make sure our campus is protected when no one else is around. They interact with the California Highway Patrol when issues arise.

As a safety precaution there may be times when our security guards who are unfamiliar with all of our staff, students and visitors will request identification. They do this in an effort make sure access to our campus is limited to people who should be here and reduce the risk of unwanted visitors on our campus. If you are asked for identification please do not be offended as they are just doing their jobs and take opportunity to introduce yourself to the guards so they will know you in the future.

Security changed uniforms last year going from full khaki uniforms to gray and black uniforms. Many staff members have commented on how nice and professional our guards look in their new uniforms. Security can be reached at (510) 714-7795 or (510) 714-9058.



Pictured left to right: Larry Cammons, Aniefiok Gaully, Javed Qureshi, Patrick Latchison and Dion Salcedo

CSB Education Foundation

By: Sharon Sacks

The **C**alifornia **S**chool for the **B**lind Education Foundation is alive and well!!

The purpose of the foundation is to provide funds to support educational programs at **CSB**. The funds can be used to help support training and education for professionals. Funds are also available to help student-based programs. The foundation is in need of board members. We encourage **CSB** families, friends of **CSB**, professionals, retired personnel, or **CSB** alumni to volunteer. Thus far the Foundation has raised over \$15,000. Please support **CSBEF** by giving generously.

Thank you for your willingness to support **CSBEF**.



Learning the INS and OUTS of Baseball

By: Mary Alice Ross

In honor of the SF Giants baseball World Series play offs, some of the classes are participating in a 9 inning baseball game adapted with a beep baseball and using a batting "T".

Of course the students are also learning the 7th inning stretch song... "Take me out to the ball game"



Technology at CSB

By: Adrian Amandi

The technology era is here. No more waiting for tomorrow, or next year, or when computers are capable of doing something wonderful. They can do wonderful things now and our students on campus and throughout California are doing many of these wonderful things.

To gain access to technology our students learn to use multiple forms of access software and hardware including screen reader and magnification programs, braille note-takers, book readers, and many more devices. In fact, our team supports almost 400 pieces of assistive technology hardware on campus in addition to 125 student computers. This is in addition to the nearly 65 different software programs that are used to meet the individual and multiple needs of the students at our school. All of these items were purchased for specific IEP defined needs and continue to be used on campus.

Our staff members are working to integrate technology into our school curriculum and are helping to identify student needs and improve their skills. Our goal is for students to use technology to complete their schoolwork and everyday life tasks. Due to the many levels of visual impairment and additional disabilities, our students use many different tools to accomplish this goal.



JAWS, ZoomText, KeySoft, MAGic, Kurzweil, and Duxbury are just a few of the products we teach. If you do not recognize one of these try asking Google or even Siri (if you have the pleasure of her company).

In addition to teaching on campus and supporting students and teachers, we offer training, assessments, and consultation to educational teams throughout California. We just completed a training day for educators on Smarter Balance Assessment with over 65 teachers and administrators in attendance. We also had a ½ day hands on training for families and students focusing on using Windows without a mouse. We will be offering more trainings throughout the year which will be posted on the **CSB** website at www.csb-cde.ca.gov.

NEW STUDENTS AT CSB



Michael G.



Frank B.



An N.

Hadley School for the Blind Offers Classes for Families

The Hadley School for the Blind is correspondence school that provides a variety of courses for students who are blind or visually impaired throughout the U.S. and other countries throughout the world. There are many interesting classes for families including Braille instruction, Understanding Visual Impairments, Parenting the Child with Visual Impairments, and many more.

Hadley also offers courses for students in Nemeth code, Preparation for College & Careers, Gardening, & Music Braille just to mention a few . All of these courses are free for participants. In addition, Hadley offers a High School Diploma Program. Many **CSB** students are enrolled in the Hadley High School Program.

For more information about Hadley School for the Blind, please visit their webpage at: <http://www.hadley.edu/>

Holly Hody's class had quite the surprise on a Thursday in October! The students were invited out to our school's front parking lot to meet a very special visitor to the campus. Who was it? It was Frankie the pot-bellied pig! Frankie lives with his family, Bonnie and Jim Morgan in the city of Vallejo. He is a beautiful solid black, four year old house pig. Yes, that's right! Frankie shares Bonnie and Jim's home and is the best pet ever. Pot-bellied pigs are extremely smart and very clean animals.

The students got to pet Frankie and touch his very rough skin and hair, touch his long skinny tail and check out his hooves. The students also had the opportunity to ask Bonnie and Jim questions about Frankie and discovered that he is a vegetarian, sleeps on a big dog bed in their bedroom and loves to go on walks on his leash.

Frankie is also a therapy pig and visits hospitals on a regular basis.

Frankie was sent on his way with a big box of fruit and vegetables for the road. The students will be working with Annie Foyle to make Frankie a special tied fleece blanket for him to take home when he visits again.



Pot-bellied pigs are pretty cool.



What you should know about Nemeth

By: Alysa Chadow

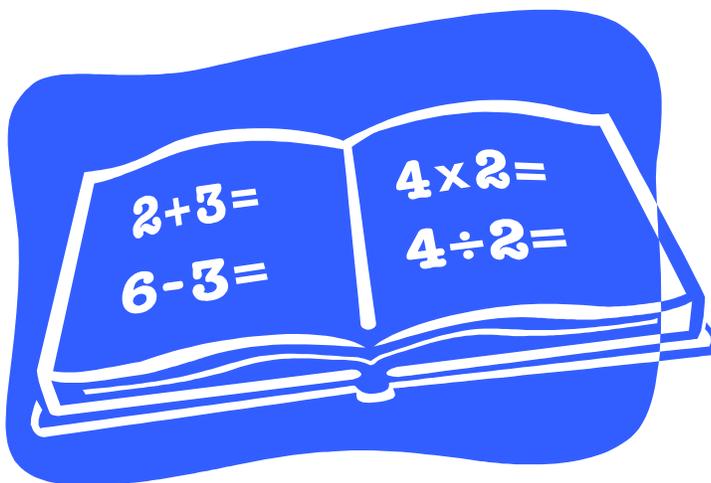
The implementation of the UEB (Unified English Braille) code is going to be quite the challenge for the blind community, but there are two codes that will remain the same - music and Nemeth.

We're all familiar with Abraham Nemeth's story, and many of us (including this writer) were lucky enough to meet him. His code, which covers mathematics from the basics to algorithms, is a work of genius for its simplicity. All you have to do is think about the symbols used in Literary Braille in a whole new way.

To get started, numbers still use the number sign in front of them (except in particular situations), which are now called numeric indicators, and they are in the bottom half of the braille cell. Dot 6, which capitalizes sentences and proper nouns in Literary Braille, is used as a comma in Nemeth. Sentences used within Nemeth (unless you want them to be strictly literary) are not capitalized as a result. The period remains the same-dots 2, 5, and 6.

Speaking of periods, since the numbers in Nemeth are now on the same level with them, a punctuation indicator (dots 4, 5, and 6) now has to be inserted between the number and the punctuation mark. Otherwise, periods, question marks, and exclamation points can be mistaken for 4, 8, and 6 respectively.

That's enough for now...hopefully there will be more to come. Happy math learning!



WHAT'S COMING UP AT CSB?

November: 19th - Picture Make Up Day
24th - 28th - Thanksgiving Break

December: 10th - Winter Concert Matinee 1:30 pm
11th - Winter Concert 7:30 pm
22nd - January 3 - Winter Break

January: 15th - 16th - Staff Development - No School
19th - Martin Luther King Jr Holiday



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