

The Bulletin

Number 13, Friday September 3, 2021

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PD events

The 2021 [Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available on the SVRC website. Most professional learning will continue to be online. Events are now on Eventbrite.

Tuesday Oct 19 [Preparing your school for inclusion of a student who uses Braille](#)

Providing practical support for school staff preparing to welcome and include a new student who will be learning to read using Braille.

Tuesday Nov 23 [EXPO: Assistive Technology for students who are blind or partially sighted](#)

Showcasing & demonstrating assistive technologies that can promote inclusion & achievement for students who are blind or have low vision

From the Manager

Source: Kim Foley, SVRC

Over the past week Australian audiences have enjoyed watching our Paralympians achieve outstanding results as they strive to compete with participants from across the world. It has brought incredible joy and excitement during our extended lockdown in Victoria. SVRC staff have keenly followed two Australian competitors, Jaryd Clifford and Jenny Blow.

SVRC supported Jaryd with technology, alternative formats and service provision while he attended a Victorian school. Congratulations to Jaryd for winning the silver medal for the 5000 metre (T13) race. The following are excerpts from [an article on the Paralympics Australia website](#), by Margie McDonald, posted on August 28, 2021.

"I'm finally a Paralympic medallist – it ticks a pretty big box. I would be more disappointed if I didn't win but hadn't given it my all. But I did," said Clifford who finished seventh at Rio 2016.

Clifford chose to run without a sighted guide, which he used in the night-time final in Dubai. "It was a morning race here so visually I was fine. I don't think I could have run that last lap any quicker with a guide today," he said.

Clifford's courage even prompted a Tweet from Premier Daniel Andrews saying "You gave it everything and then some more. Our entire state is proud of you."

Jenny Blow supported our Support Skills Program in term one as a Goalball Instructor. With two Paralympic Games under her belt, Jenny Blow is one of the Australian goalball team's most experienced competitors. The following are excerpts from [an article on the Paralympics Australia website](#) by David Sygall, posted on August 29, 2021.

The Belles commanded attention after scoring a 4-3 win over Canada on Saturday but went a big step further with a convincing 4-1 win over RPC (Russian Paralympic Committee).

"Russia's incredible. They're a great team. But you know what, we're a great team. We deserve to be here," three-time Paralympian Jenny Blow said.

Asked how the team managed to rebound after their first round 11-1 loss to Israel, Blow said: "We just did it together. That's been our little motto for these Games – whether you win, lose, draw, whether you have a great game or your worst game, we do it as a team.

Coach Peter Corr, who has coached the Belles for a decade, was teary after the win. "There will be more people who know about goalball as a result of what we've done and, if that brings on another generation that would be great."

We hope that Jaryd and Jenny inspire future generations of students with a vision impairment to participate in sports, whether to improve health, wellbeing and social connection, or to go all the way to the Paralympics.

Learn braille or braille maths during lockdown!

Source: Marion Blaze, SVRC

Do you know that there are free, online courses available to help you learn braille? And you don't need a braille writer - a computer will do.

At [UEB Online](#), anyone can learn literary braille or mathematical braille (at three levels).

1. UEB Literacy consists of two modules that, together, address the literacy aspects of Unified English Braille. Module 1 presents lessons 1-14, and Module 2 presents lessons 15-31.
2. UEB Introductory Mathematics is presented as ten lessons that address mathematics symbols and expressions that are encountered during the primary years of schooling. It is recommended that the UEB Literacy modules are completed prior to commencing UEB Introductory Mathematics.
3. UEB Advanced Mathematics consists of ten lessons that address mathematics symbols and expressions that are encountered during the junior years of secondary schooling. The UEB Introductory Mathematics topic must be completed before commencing the UEB Advanced Mathematics topic.
4. UEB Extension Mathematics (now available) consists of ten lessons that address mathematics symbols and expressions that are encountered during the senior years of secondary schooling. Both the UEB Introductory Mathematics and UEB Advanced Mathematics topics must be completed before commencing the UEB Extension Mathematics topic.

UEB Online has been created using accessible, inclusive digital technologies that enable equal information access for all.

Visual access mode: For people with sufficient sight to access regular sized print-based information on the website,

High contrast mode: For people with low vision who wish to adjust the font size, background colour or text colour,

Non-Visual access mode: For people who wish to use a screen reader for accessing website information.

What a great lockdown project!!

Do you have an idea for an invention that could solve a problem?

Origin Energy are running their Little Big Ideas competition. You could win up to \$10,000! Go to the [competition website](#) for more information:

VCE accessible calculator considerations: for Yr 10 students with VI, their teachers and parents

Source: Charlie Roberts, Visiting Teacher (Vision)

In the summary of the 2020 Review of the Disability Standards for Education, it states that information for students with disability and their families should be provided at relevant points in a student's life.

Students with VI and their parents, along with Visiting Teachers & Maths teachers, would benefit by being aware of the calculator accessibility issues that students with VI may well face in senior Maths. Year 10 is the time to make informed choices around calculator use.

Images of CAS ClassPad Calculator and the Orion TI-84 Plus calculator are below.



Victoria is the only Australian state to prescribe the use of Computer Algebra System (CAS) calculators in VCE Maths, which are currently less accessible than graphics and scientific calculators (used by the other states & territories).

All available choices of CAS calculator/software for students who use a screen reader or braille, currently come with pros and cons. We need to consider the next environment of the student when advising on an accessible calculator.

Talking Graphing calculators

Talking graphing calculators are a more useable and accessible option than CAS. They can be approved by VCAA, under special provisions application, as they are of no advantage over the approved CAS calculators.

Special examination arrangements [Pages- Special examination arrangements for VCE external assessments \(vcaa.vic.edu.au\)](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au)

Disadvantages i) they are a disadvantage to CAS for completing algebraic questions ii) graphic calculator examples are not in VCE Maths texts. iii) current students have identified some shortcomings: Financial solve not available and limited history recall.

When advising a student about calculator options, consider:

- observing how the student operates in their Maths class
- discussing homework operation if assistance is needed.

- using the same or most similar accessible calculator to that being used in the class means that the teachers and peers have more chance to assist.
- Be aware of what supports will be available for students using an alternative to that used by the class.
- some students prefer a hand-held unit and some prefer their braille note taker device. Others prefer using the iPhone calculator or an app over another piece of specialised equipment.
- the benefit of a calculator that can be independently operated for homework and post-secondary education.
- if you have a Yr. 10 student, be familiar with the approved calculator list for Year 12 exams and begin trialling & practising with the proposed senior calculator in Year 10. VCAA approved technology [Pages – Approved technology \(vcaa.vic.edu.au\)](http://vcaa.vic.edu.au)
- consult your curriculum authority of the need for the proposed accessible Yr.11 and 12 calculator and seek approval for exam use at the earliest opportunity.

Accessibility adjustments

The disability standards for education mandates reasonable adjustments for independent participation on the same basis as peers.

Students using Large print can trial CAS calculator emulators or apps, to see if they can access the calculator through enlargement on a computer screen or iPad, without screen reader assistance.

Images of the Texas Instruments emulator software and app are below.



The most commonly adopted CAS calculator adjustment to date, for users of screen readers or braille, is for the student to instruct a reader/scribe to operate the TI CAS Nspire or Casio Algebra or ClassPad series calculator and announce the answer.

Advantage: i) using the same calculator as your teacher & peers. ii) calculator examples are provided in your text book.

Disadvantage: i) lack of independence, ii) relies on the abilities, speed and accuracy of the reader/scribe iii) the student must wait for home assistance to do their Maths homework calculations.

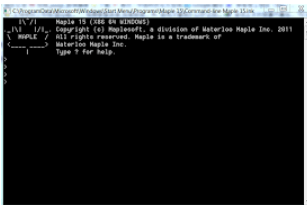
Independent operation of accessible CAS software

Relies on operating in the command line.

Advantage: independence

Disadvantages: i) computer maths entry ii) the 3 VCAA approved software packages don't have accessible graphics. iii) only handheld CAS calculator examples are in VCE Maths texts.

Image of Maple command line is below.



Google Docs Accessibility Upgrade!

Source: [Paths to Technology](#), written by Diane Brauner

Classrooms often use inline suggestions when participating in group assignments that require sharing a Google Document. In addition, teachers frequently make inline editing comments within a student's document. These interactive experiences are improving for users who rely on a screen reader or who use a braille display! With these upgrades, students will now hear detailed suggestion information inline with the rest of the text, such as information that has been added or deleted and the author of the suggestion.

This exciting new update has begun and the full release is expected to be completed by the end of August 2021. Users will need to activate the new features as they are turned off by default.

Go to Tools -> Accessibility settings -> Turn on Braille Support

Stay tuned as more information becomes available!

Vacancy in NWMR

A Vacancy exists for a Visiting Teacher – Vision based in Hume Moreland but working across Hume Moreland/NE Melbourne areas in NWMR.

Teachers experienced in curriculum development, differentiated curriculum and inclusion strategies will have the background to build on for this role. Strong Professional Learning is available to support the development of skills in teaching vision impaired students.

Please contact Gayle Skinner Mob 0477 719 392, or gayle.skinner@education.vic.gov.au to discuss this motivating and exciting role.

Master of inclusive education initiative

Source: DET Schools Update

Masters places are available for teachers to complete postgraduate study in inclusive education. Find out who is eligible and how to apply. The next round of opportunities is now open and will close on Monday 27 September (12 pm) 2021. Undertaking a postgraduate study in inclusive education will help teachers assist their schools to:

- plan for and support students with a disability and diverse educational needs
- use evidence-based, contemporary approaches to planning.

See the [Inclusive Education Scholarship website](#) for more information

Mission: AstroAccess

Source: Spevi Email List

Mission: AstroAccess will launch a group of disabled scientists, veterans, students, athletes, and artists on a historic parabolic flight with the Zero Gravity Corporation, as the first step in a progression toward flying a diverse range of people to space. The first parabolic flight mission will fly on ZERO-G on October 17, 2021, with the ultimate goal of flying one or more team members to space in the coming years.

The "AstroAccess Ambassadors" will experience weightlessness and carry out lunar gravity, Martian gravity, and zero gravity observations and experiments investigating how the physical environment aboard space vessels should be modified so that all astronauts and explorers, regardless of disability on Earth, can live, work, and thrive in space.

... In an emergency in space, the first system to go offline can be the lighting. Making space systems accessible to blind astronauts would allow all crew members to operate in emergency lighting conditions through tactile and auditory systems. When seconds count, this added functionality could mean the difference between life and death.

... Due to differences in the vestibular system, some deaf individuals are immune or resistant to motion sickness. NASA has known this since the 1950s, when 11 deaf men known as the "[Gallaudet 11](#)" participated in extensive research to help shape the future of human space exploration. During these experiments, NASA proved that deaf space flight participants would be more adaptable to the foreign gravitational environments, and yet there has never been a deaf astronaut. Hearing crew members would also benefit from being fluent in sign language as this would allow for non-verbal communication in any emergency situation that results in auditory anomalies.

Universal design not only facilitates inclusion, it inherently results in new system redundancies and functionalities that would improve safety measures for all crewmembers. For the inaugural flight in 2021, the mission will focus on basic operational tasks that will a) demonstrate the abilities of disabled crew members to work effectively in a microgravity environment and b) investigate minor changes that could be made to this environment in order to promote greater accessibility in the future. [SciAccess](#) is an international program, led by Anna Voelker, dedicated to advancing disability inclusion in STEM. To read more about this exciting initiative, please visit [astroaccess.org](#).

Intro to Yoga

Source: Leap into Dance email list

Saturday's 10am starting August 28, 2021 for the next 4 weeks we are offering a FREE introduction to Yoga for kids and teens. [Register here](#)

Yoga classes with Dani are created to be fun and accessible with games, songs and stories to invite students to be curious explorers of their own bodies and experiences.

Class are 45 mins and include mindful movement, breath and relaxation. The class material will be repeated each week with a changing focus on the following:

- Week 1 – Focus on poses and movement
- Week 2 – Focus on breathing
- Week 3 – Focus on body sensation
- Week 4 – Focus on relaxation

Parents are encouraged to join in with their children.

Yoga is a non competitive movement practice that engages the body and senses to:

- develop better coordination
- increase concentration
- decrease stress and anxiety
- increase confidence

Yoga also allows children to develop body awareness and self-regulation. Whether students experience BIG emotions or reduced emotions, students can learn practical skills to help them in everyday life that can be a regular part of their therapy.

Dani is a qualified yoga teacher with 10 years teaching experience with a personal practice of 20 years. Dani is a qualified Disability Support Worker and supports students in Leap into Dance classes and has a background in movement through dance.

And finally ...

Here at SVRC we had a small book week celebration last week. Here are some of the quiz questions to test your knowledge.

1. What came first, the book or movie of Jurassic Park?
2. Can you guess the book from these emojis: 🦖🐉
3. Is this line from The Famous Five by Enid Blyton or The House at Pooh Corner by A.A. Milne? "You can't help respecting anybody who can spell TUESDAY, even if he doesn't spell it right."

Answers in the next Bulletin