

Number 1, Friday 11 February 2022

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PD events

The [2022 Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available on the SVRC website. Most PL will continue to be held online, but some are planned to be onsite. Please encourage school staff to [register for PD through our website](#).

Tuesday Feb 15 [Inclusion of students who have low vision](#)

Practical strategies for classroom teachers and ES staff to promote inclusion and achievement for their students who have low vision.

Tuesday Feb 22 [Inclusion of students with vision impairments and additional disabilities](#)

Providing practical strategies that teachers and ES staff can use to support students with a vision impairment and additional disabilities.

Wednesday May 4 [Teaching and learning with braille music](#)

Providing practical strategies for music teachers to promote inclusion and achievement for students who are blind.

Wednesday May 11 [Inclusion of students who have vision impairments in art](#)

Practical strategies teachers can use in art classes to promote inclusion and achievement for students who are blind or partially sighted.

Tuesday June 7 [Inclusion of students who have vision impairments in PE](#)

Providing ideas and practical strategies to support the inclusion of students who are blind or partially sighted in physical education.

Message from the Manager

Source: Kim Foley, SVRC

Welcome back from the holiday break and I hope this message finds you and your family well. SVRC staff are now working onsite and we will be open from 8.30 am - 4.30 pm from Monday to Friday. To support current safety measures and productivity levels, not all staff will be onsite at the same time. If you require an onsite meeting with a SVRC staff member please phone or email ahead of time so they can be available on the day. SVRC staff are available either onsite, phone, email and/or ZOOM on their working days.

The SVRC Transcription Team have been diligently working through the school holidays to ensure the school requests for alternative formats are delivered as required. Six hundred and seventy-nine requests were received at the end of the year and four hundred and seventy-eight have been completed. However, we have lost the wonderful support and skills of Emma Hall, Ange McDonnell and Eva Lewis-Col from our Transcription Team. Further, Zhi Jin is currently on extended leave from her position at SVRC.

We will endeavour to fill the vacancies as quickly as we can, however, we will be hampered by the limited number of Braille Transcribers in the world and the length of time and effort it takes to acquire the skills to be a fantastic Braille Transcriber.

Please be on the lookout for potential Braille Transcribers in your travels in schools and in your community and recommend these people to us. The Braille Transcriber is a focused (even pedantic) human who sets high personal standards. Their work is accurate. They have a head for codes and an eye for detail. They may have a background or interest in Music or STEM subjects. Their braille might already be terrific or they might be keen to learn.

We look forward to welcoming students to the first Support Skills Program onsite today. The staff and students are excited at the prospect of working with each other in person. SVRC staff have delivered the SSP over the last two years via ZOOM. It has been extraordinary to observe the level of commitment and resilience of the SVRC teaching staff, students and parents who on a weekly basis ensured the program continued throughout various restrictions and lockdowns.

On Tuesday, our first virtual Professional Learning day was held. Fifty-nine participants attended to learn about Inclusion of students who are blind, including Visiting Teachers-Vision and school staff working in primary and secondary settings from the Department of Education and Catholic Education.

On Thursday afternoon, the first virtual Community of Practice for Visiting Teacher-Vision was held. The topic was VCE and Special Considerations presented by Joanne Muscat, Project Manager – Special Provision – Assessment and Reporting from Victoria Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCCA). Two students, Thanh Autran and Sana Ezedyer, who are now studying at university, spoke of their experiences in preparing for VCE and exams and the strategies they found useful. It was an insightful opportunity to learn from firsthand accounts on what can assist in successfully supporting students with a vision impairment.

Inclusion of students who have low vision

Providing practical strategies for classroom teachers and ES staff to promote inclusion and achievement for their students who have low vision, from Foundation to Year 12.

Tuesday 15 February 2022 from 9:30am to 3:30pm

(Log in from 9:10am)

Online workshop

Cost \$33.00

[Registration via Eventbrite](#)

Zoom link will be provided the day before the event

PROGRAM

- Welcome and overview
- Seeing with low vision – simulations and perspectives
- Strategies to support the student with low vision in the classroom
- Technology for success at school
- iPad and VoiceOver
- Orientation and mobility
- Individual, social and family perspectives
- Let's hear it from a student

Online registration is essential

For further details: phone 03 9841 0242 or email svrc@education.vic.gov.au

Inclusion of students with vision impairments and additional disabilities

Providing practical strategies for classroom teachers and ES staff to promote inclusion and achievement for their students with vision impairments and additional disabilities, in junior or senior levels.

Tuesday 22 February 2022 from 9.30am to 3.30pm

(Log in from 9.10am)

Cost \$33.00

[Registration via Eventbrite](#)

Zoom link will be provided the day before the event

PROGRAM

- Welcome and acknowledgements
- What is vision impairment and how do we assess it?
- Simulations of vision impairments
- Strategies to support students in the classroom
- Cortical, optical, total vision impairment: what do these mean for educators?
- Adapting sports equipment
- Orientation and mobility

Online registration is essential

For further details: phone 03 9841 0242 or email svrc@education.vic.gov.au

Dot Power in 2022

Dot Power is a day-long immersive teaching program for eligible children from preschool to year 3 whose primary reading medium is braille. Based on the [Expanded Core Curriculum](#), Dot Power is designed to encourage students to get as much braille under their fingers as possible in one day.

Dot Power focuses on braille literacy (reading and writing), tactile graphicacy (using the sense of touch to interpret tactual diagrams), concept development and communication skills. Each program is a collaboration between the teaching staff of the SVRC, visiting teachers, school personnel and families, so they best meet the individual needs of the students who will be attending.

A typical day may include the use of braille and voice output technology, real objects and their tactual representations, peer tutoring, art, games, singing and more. Each day features a varying theme, and include such things as a postman delivering letters, pizza-making, the Paralympics and braille music. Students participate in group activities, while 1:1 assistance is provided as required. Have a look at our website and you can even [hear clips of the children singing!](#)

Dot Power runs in Terms 2, 3 and 4 each year and in 2022, we are intending to run it at SVRC on the following dates:

Term 2: May 17 & May 31

Term 3: August 9 & August 30

Term 4: October 25

Q + A: Microscopes

Question: I have a student who has low vision and is studying Biology and Chemistry this year. What would you recommend as a microscope?

Answer: A microscope with a camera is a great option. A trinocular microscope allows the user (teacher or student) to use both eye pieces and the camera at the same time. Images can be viewed on screen or captured and shared with the student who can then use their enlarging software to further enlarge the image. One supplier to consider is <https://microscopes.com.au/>

Community of Practice for Visiting Teachers (Vision) 2022

The C of P was established as a regular online forum for Visiting Teachers to network and share professional learning. Sessions are on Zoom at 3pm and alternate between Tuesdays and Thursdays during school terms. The following dates are for C of P meetings with topics set for Term 1, 2022.

Term 1

- Thursday February 10 – VCE – Special provision and preparing for exams
- Tuesday March 8 – Cameron Algie, author of 'I can see clearly now' & SVRC Tracking System
- Thursday March 31 – Ozzie Dots and learning to read via braille

Term 2

- Tuesday May 10
- Thursday May 26
- Tuesday June 14

Term 3

- Thursday July 21
- Thursday August 25
- Tuesday September 13

Term 4

- Thursday October 27
- Tuesday November 15
- Thursday December 8

URGENT – NAPLAN in alternative formats

Source: Thank you to Wendy Morley for this information

Schools need to organise alternate format ASAP for students doing NAPLAN.

Go to NAPLAN test admin site:

[Pages - NAPLAN Test Administration website \(vcaa.vic.edu.au\)](http://vcaa.vic.edu.au)

From **Friday 28 January** to **Friday 18 February 2022**, schools are required to:

- **order tests in alternative formats.**

With the challenges of the start of year it could be easily overlooked.

Many VI 3/5/7/9 students may use online testing so it is not an issue, but for braille users and younger students, alternative formats may be required.

This is a separate item to Special Provisions and minimal level of documentation support is required. It is just about information and support for schools to know what to request. Students outside of VT level of service are also eligible and this may work well if the test is paper based.

Come and Play Goalball

Source: Victorian Goalball Association

Do you want to have fun, make new friends and build new skills? If you said yes, then come and try Goalball. It's fun, social and active!

What's Goalball? It's a team Paralympic sport designed specifically for people who are blind or who have low vision, but enjoyed by all members of the community. You may have even spotted Goalball at the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games where our Aussie Belles (Australian Women's Team) made history after reaching the quarter finals.

Do you want to know more? Why not come and join us at our Come & Try day, where you can experience what it's like to play goalball. No prior experience is required, we'll teach you.

When: Saturday March 19th, 2022 at 11:45 am – 12:45 pm

Where: Scotch College Junior School Gym, Gate 7, Corner of Glenferrie Rd & Callantina Rd, Hawthorn

Transport: Short walk from Kooyong Railway Station or accessible via tram from Glenferrie Railway Station. There is also parking available onsite.

Registrations: All attendees must register prior to attending. To register contact us by emailing info@goalball.org.au.

Goalball is hungry work, so we will be providing a BBQ lunch from 12:45 pm. It's a great chance to meet our members. It's all FREE.

If you decide that Goalball is the sport for you, then ask about registering for our fortnightly U15s Program (Junior Program) \$80.00 or weekly Social Comp (Seniors) \$180.00. Become a member on the day and you can even stay and play in our afternoon one day competition.

To find out more about Goalball, you can email us at info@goalball.org.au or follow us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/vic.goalball>

And finally ...

A new audio based game called [The Vale: Shadow of the Crown](#) has recently been released. Here's a taster of the story

"As your elder brother takes his place on the throne ... you are made warden of a small keep on the outskirts of the kingdom. Blind from birth and sheltered for much of your childhood, you welcome your exile as a chance for a little adventure.

En route to the borderlands, your caravan is attacked by the vanguard of a huge invading army sweeping eastward toward the capital. You escape but find yourself alone in hostile lands. With the aid of a local shepherd, you must survive the long, dark, dangerous valley that leads home ... A journey that will reveal startling truths about your land, your people and your own family."