

The Bulletin

Number 2, Friday 25 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](#).

NEW DATE Tuesday March 15 [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

On Tuesday 14th February, our second virtual Professional Learning day, Inclusion of students who have low vision, was held with over ninety participants from state and international schools. Unfortunately, the afternoon sessions were cancelled as SVRC lost internet connection for three days due to the updating of a school router. We apologise to all attendees and they will receive all the recordings from the day, once they are edited, in the next few weeks. We have rescheduled our Inclusion of students with vision impairments and additional disabilities until the 15th March, registrations for this day are still open.

The second virtual Community of Practice – Visiting Teacher – Vision is to be held on Tuesday 8th March. The first part of the session will be presented by Sarah Hayman on a refresher course of the SVRC Tracking System and the second part of session we welcome the author Cameron Algie who wrote the book, *'I Can See Clearly Now'* AM LI.B. SVRC and Geoff Bowen are also mentioned in this book.

'The book is a comprehensive, highly readable guide for blind and vision impaired, their sighted families and friends, professionals, service providers and employers. It shows how someone can successfully adjust to vision impairment, and dispels fears, misinformation and prejudices'.

Cameron Algie, *'I Can See Clearly Now'*, 2021

It has been wonderful to see the students returning to SSP onsite every Friday and the excited interactions between the students and teachers throughout the day. It has certainly generated lots of discussions and fostered a joy of meeting other students who have a vision impairment from across the state which can facilitate lifelong friendships. Just a reminder, that the knowledgeable and highly experienced Geoff Bowen, SVRC Psychologist, will only be working at SSP on Fridays from next week as he ventures back to working in NWVR as a School Support Officer.

SEVR VTS needs to backfill a VT-Vision position for term 2. The VT position supports schools in Rosebud, Hastings and Langwarrin areas. If you are interested, please contact the SEVR VT Manager, Cecilia Morales – E: cecilia.morales@education.vic.gov.au M: 0400 856 462

NAPLAN 2022

Students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 will sit the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) assessments again in May this year. Assessments begin on 10 May 2022 and will again comprise 4-5 papers:

- Reading (includes a Reading Magazine)
- Language Conventions
- Writing
- Numeracy (1 paper for Years 3 and 5; 2 papers for Years 7 and 9)

Class teachers often conduct practice sessions with students using copies of past NAPLAN papers. This allows students the opportunity develop an understanding of the types of questions, the layout/presentation and the ways to respond to the different types of questions. NAPLAN test papers and answers from 2012 to 2016 are available for download from the [ACARA website](#).

For students with low vision, ACARA offer several examples of papers in alternative format and the following additional information:

NAPLAN special print paper tests

Schools provide [special print paper tests](#) to visually impaired students who are unable to access NAPLAN Online and who use similar large-print resources as part of their everyday class activities. These paper tests do not simply have their font size enlarged, they are reformatted in accordance with the most up-to-date guidelines on printing for students with disability.

Special print paper tests come in the following formats for all years and domains:

- black and white
- large print – font sizes 18 and 24 on A4
- large print – font sizes 18, 24 and 36 on A3.

See below for some examples of the black-and-white and large-print tests that ACARA provides:

- [NAPLAN 2016, language conventions test, Year 3, large print](#) (PDF 152 kb)
- [NAPLAN 2016, language conventions test, Year 9, black and white](#) (PDF 465 kb)
- [NAPLAN 2016, numeracy test, Year 5, black and white](#) (PDF 2.2 mb)
- [NAPLAN 2016, reading test, Year 5, large print](#) (PDF 15.3 mb)
- [NAPLAN 2016, writing test, Year 7, large print](#) (PDF 4 mb)

Adjustments for Students with disability

ACARA also provide information regarding [adjustments for students with disability](#) including the use of assistive technology, NAPLAN Online, alternative questions, electronic PDFs, use of a scribe, extra time etc.

Requests for NAPLAN in alternative format including braille closed on 18 February.

Braille Brain Gym!

The following conundrum was shared in a recent email via OzBrI:

The Code Maintenance Committee of the Australian Braille Authority (ABA) were seeking input into the discussion of one of their "problem words" – Beethoven.

The question was, should the "th" contraction be used in Beethoven or should the "th" be uncontracted?

Background: Pre-UEB the "th" was uncontracted in British Braille but the "th" contraction was used in English Braille American Edition. Varying pronunciations for Beethoven exist across UEB countries.

Rulebook considerations:

- Groupsigns should be selected which more nearly approximate the usual pronunciation of the word (Rule 10.10.8)
- UEB contractions should be used in foreign proper names so long as this does not unduly distort pronunciation (Rule 13.2.3)
- "th" is a strong group sign so should be used unless other rules limit its use (Rule 10.4.1)
- group signs should not be used if they bridge the words that make up an unhyphenated compound word (Rule 10.11.1)
- "th" should not be used when the "h" is aspirated (Rule 10.11.2)

Further:

- the "th" contraction **is used** in words like asthma, Edith, Thomas
- the "th" contraction **is not used** in words like apartheid, parenthood, Sontheim

How would you respond to this dilemma?

New resources on the SVRC website

Here's a taste of some new resources on the [Technology Support page of the SVRC website](#)

- Accessing etext on an iPad: "Many students use an iPad to access electronic text (etext). There are many ways to do this, depending on how you are accessing the file and what kind of file it is. Most of these will involve using the Share button, the Files App, or both."
- Gmail with JAWS: "The following set of commands to use JAWS with Gmail assume that you are logged into Gmail using Google Chrome."
- Google Chrome on Windows: "These are all Windows commands and not specific to screen reader users. They are essential for efficient navigation and a foundation for good internet research skills."
- Tech and Moving Schools: "When a student moves between DET schools, the equipment on loan to them from SVRC can move as well. Below are suggestions for what to do before the student leaves the old school, and once the student starts at the new school."

Exploring the Universe

Source: [Audio Universe](#), [Tactile Universe](#) and Sarah Hayman, SVRC

Here are a few fantastic resources for anyone wanting to learn more about the solar system and astronomy.

A team from universities in the UK, Italy and Spain have created a video called [Tour of the Solar System](#). They have used sonification (turning data into sound) and audio descriptions to make the video accessible. One of the narrators is from Melbourne.

A team from The University of Portsmouth have created the [Tactile Universe website](#), which includes lesson plans with accompanying tactile designs, covering the scale and size of the solar system, and galaxies.

SVRC has some 3D prints that could be used by schools for a topic on Space:

- One of the designs from the Tactile Universe team, The Milky Way.
- The first photograph of a black hole, which is in the centre of the M87 galaxy, has been turned into a 3D model, where the height of the model represents the brightness of the light from the photo.
- A phases of the moon print which shows the 8 common phases of the moon with different textures for the visible and 'dark' parts of the moon for each phase.
- The Solar System, where all the planets and the sun are in correct relative size, with braille labels to assist with orientation. You can also [download the Solar System model](#) and print it yourself.

Have fun exploring!

Parent or carer of a child living with Usher syndrome Type 1?

Source: UsherKids Australia

We are recruiting research participants to be interviewed in a University of Melbourne study exploring parent/carer support needs.

Who can participate?

Parents or carers of a child who has Usher syndrome Type 1 and who is aged between 9 and 18 years.

What would you need to do?

Discuss your experiences and support needs in a one-hour online interview.

What is this research about?

This research is about understanding the experience of parents/carers of children with Usher syndrome in the period between birth to 5 years of age. We would like to ask parents about the experiences they had during this early period and their needs for support.

Based on the information we collate from our participating parent/carer group, we will be able to identify ways in which parents/carers can be supported more effectively.

[Click here](#) to check your eligibility and find out more or contact Associate Professor Lauren Ayton on email: layton@unimelb.edu.au

[Plain Language Statement](#), [Consent Form](#), [Recruitment Flyer](#)

And finally ...

It is Rare Disease Day on Monday Feb 28th this year. There are stories from people around the world living with a Rare Disease, including Taka, a man with Retinitis Pigmentosa. Find out more at the [Rare Disease Day website](#).