

Number 5, Friday, 31 March 2023

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PD events

The [2023 Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available for download on our website. See below for links to the events in Term 2 2023.

Tuesday May 9 [Inclusion of students who have vision impairments in art](#)

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

Tuesday May 23 [Teaching and learning with braille music](#)

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

Tuesday May 30 [Inclusion of students who have vision impairments in PE](#)

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

On Demand PL

All of our professional learning workshops are now available on demand where participants can access all the videos and resources at a time that suits them. You can find links through the [On Demand page](#), under Professional Learning, on our website.

Message from the Manager

Source: Kim Foley, Manager, SVRC

It has certainly been a remarkably busy and productive Term 1 at SVRC. A BIG shout out to the wonderful SVRC staff who tirelessly support all eligible students across the state who are blind or have low vision in government, Catholic and Independent schools.

Welcome to the new Assistant Principal at SVRC

The SVRC Assistant Principal role will be shared as of term two with the introduction of Jane Barker as the new Assistant Principal. As I will be on Long Service Leave until 15 May, Jane will be working in a full-time capacity to support all SVRC programs and services while I am away. I know SVRC and the Blind and Low Vision community will welcome Jane, who is a very experienced practitioner and leader in special education. Jane has previously been a Leading Teacher in a Special School, NEVR Visiting Teacher, NEVR Visiting Teacher Manager, and Senior Education Consultant at the Royal Children's Hospital. Her knowledge of inclusive practices, strategic and policy directions, student and family centred approaches, regional and central processes, health department procedures and managerial skills will make her a valuable inclusion into the SVRC organisation. Please welcome Jane next time you visit SVRC after the term one school holidays.

Space Camp

Space Camp is now officially proceeding with five very excited students. Macy, Anita, Amanda, Nathan and Bai Yang will be chaperoned by two very experienced Visiting Teachers, Hilary Frost (SWVR) and Peter Davies (NWVR), and supported by Jeni Blake (SEVR) with scholarship documentation. The organisation of Space Camp requires a massive amount of documentation for the Department of Education to approve student international travel, especially since COVID. I would like to formally thank Hilary and Peter who will be working through the school holidays to ensure the documentation is ready for departmental approval.

The dinosaurs are coming to Dot Power

Source: Marion Blaze, SVRC

Dot Power is SVRC's program for students pre-school to year 3 learning via braille. In Term 2 on May 16, we will invite all our early braille readers, their families and education support staff to a fun day reading and learning about dinosaurs. The photograph shows over 50 dinosaur models and toys that the children will explore and compare.

If you have questions about Dot Power, please contact Marion Blaze - marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au



SVRC's professional learning events in Term 2, 2023

Source: SVRC

SVRC has a whole year of professional learning events, ready to help you support students who are blind or have low vision. The full [calendar of 2023 events](#) is on our website along with program and registration details.

After a busy term 1 with several online PL events, we are switching to **on-site**, hands-on PL for term 2:

- May 9 – Inclusion of students who are blind or have low vision in art – Michael Donnelly
- May 23 – Teaching and learning with braille music – Jordie Howell
- May 30 – Inclusion of students who have vision impairments in PE – Emily White

We will record as much of these days as possible so that they can become an 'On demand' PL later in the year.

All three events will take place at Statewide Vision Resource Centre, within the grounds of Heatherwood School, 370 Springvale Road Donvale. But because Heatherwood is undergoing building works, parking must be in the lower carpark of the Manningham Doncaster Indoor Sports Centre (DISC) at 360 Springvale Road.

Please encourage staff in schools to register for these upcoming events – especially subject teachers in these disciplines. Family members can also contact Marion Blaze at marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au to receive a code to use to register free for any of these events.

Accessible Maths Series

Source: SVRC

Sharing ideas for making maths accessible. We are always open to more ideas and suggestions – please contact Marion at marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au if you want to comment or share your Maths ideas.

Accessible Maths Series Number 3 – UEB Online – You can learn braille maths!

Did you know that you can learn three levels of braille maths through [UEB Online?](#)

‘UEB’ stands for Unified English Braille. English braille used not to be a unified code around the world! The NextSense Institute in NSW has made training modules available in literary and mathematical braille. They are free, (although you can pay for a certificate on completion), open to anyone and online. You just use your computer keyboard to ‘produce’ the braille dots and work through the lessons at your own pace.

The site also has some useful resources such as cheat sheets, video tutorials and training manuals.

You can select from the following courses:

- a. [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.
- b. [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.
- c. [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 Extension Mathematics topic.
- d. [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.

New To the Library

The Last Bear by Hannah Gold

Source: amazon.com.au

Imagine making friends with a polar bear ...

There are no polar bears left on Bear Island. At least, that's what April's father tells her when his scientific research takes them to this remote Arctic outpost for six months. But one endless summer night, April meets one. He is starving, lonely and a long way from home. Determined to save him, April begins the most important journey of her life ...

This moving story will win the hearts of children the world over and show them that no one is too young or insignificant to make a difference. *The Last Bear* is a celebration of the love between a child and an animal, a battle cry for our world and an irresistible adventure with a heart as big as a bear's.

The Last Bear is suitable for readers of 8+ and is available from the SVRC alternative format library in etext.



Illustrated eBooks for your iPad

The following list of titles is now available as illustrated eBook files. eBook is a handy format in that the font size and style is adjustable and several apps can be used to read the file aloud. The illustrations have been reproduced throughout the book, adding interest and breaking up the text.

1. *Accidentally Awesome* by Adam Wallace
2. *Bike Daredevils (Boyz Rule!)* – Felice Arena
3. *Dinosaurs (A Look Around)* by Dan Duffee
4. *Don't Let the Pigeon Stay Up Late* by Mo Willems
5. *E-boy* by Anh Do
6. *Gorilla Suit, The* by Victor Kelleher
7. *Hot Dog #1* by Anh Do
8. *Joe's Boat (Aussie Nibbles)* by Raewyn Caisley
9. *Let the Games Begin (The Undys #1)* by Michael Wagner
10. *Littlest Pirate, The (Aussie Nibbles)* by Sherryl Clark
11. *Magic Violin, The (Aussie Nibbles)* by Victor Kelleher
12. *Matilda* by Roald Dahl
13. *Monster Hole, The (Aussie Nibbles)* by Mary Small
14. *Quidditch Through the Ages (Harry Potter)* by JK Rowling
15. *Romeo and Juliet - The Most Excellent and Lamentable Tragedy* retold and illustrated by Margaret Early
16. *Zac's Freaky Frogs (Zac Power)* by HI Larry

You'll find the request form on the [SVRC website](http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au) – and if you have a suggestion for another suitable title, please be in touch!

Q&A: Large Print or Etext

Source: SVRC

Question: Could I have War and Peace in large print?

Answer: I note that your student is in Year 12, however, you may wish to consider etext for a book of this size and complexity. The large print of this book would be approximately 10 volumes in length, making it heavy to carry and/or difficult to ensure that the correct volume is at hand.

Using the etext version has the following advantages over the large print:

- can be used over a variety of platforms (laptop, desktop, iPad/iPhone, other tablet etc)
- loaded to the student's device, it is always available, and in a single file
- allows readers to view at a suitable font size and style
- offers the choice to be read as text on the screen or have the text read aloud
- allows readers to search and find a particular page/chapter/section/word etc – try CTRL+F for fun results
- can be navigated quickly and easily using the heading structure
- offers the ability to copy and paste quotes into essays
- offers the ability to highlight particular text and make notes
- allows readers to select a word and look up the meaning using the on-board computer dictionary/thesaurus

Cadbury Easter egg hunt for vision-impaired kids - Sunday 2 April

Source: Alt/shift/

We would love to know if you have anyone within your network who might like to attend an event we are hosting with Cadbury this **Sunday 2 April**.

We run the PR for Cadbury and working on its current Easter campaign, hosting an Easter egg hunt for blind or vision impaired children.

We were originally hosting the event in Sydney but have had to move to Melbourne, thus the late notice on this one but would love to see if anyone in your networks along with their family and friends, might like to join us?

The Easter egg hunt is at Royal Park in Melbourne, near the Royal Children's Hospital, aiming **to kick off around 8AM and finishing at about 10.30AM** – the kids would be wearing beacons to locate the Easter Eggs which emit sound the closer they get and thus are able to find.

We would ideally be looking for **kids aged 3 – 13 to take part**, especially as an age range that really enjoy the magic of Easter.

As mentioned, this event is not a public event, but we will be capturing imagery and vision of the hunt to share with various media outlets.

Please contact Selin at selina@altshift.com.au or on 0451282911 if you are keen to take part.

Diaries of the Cosmos

Source: Universe Unplugged via [Perkins School for the Blind](#)

How do we know what stars are made of? Who figured out what happens inside stars? How do we know Dark Matter exists? Delve into the "hows" of astronomical discovery, meet the people behind the science, and explore the universe yourself through [Diaries of the Cosmos](#), an audio series showcasing stories of scientists and discovery.

Each story explores a particular astrophysical discovery, and is linked to various NASA missions and initiatives. These stories showcase both the science and the scientists behind the discovery. We give special attention to the lived experiences of scientists, and to the process of science they follow. In each installment, hear about the featured scientists, enjoy a discussion with astronomers, and interact with the science yourself.

National Braille Music Camp 2023

Source: Australian Braille Authority

The National Braille Music Camp is a fantastic opportunity for braille readers to learn, improve, share, transcribe and teach braille music. It is held at Frensham School, Mittagong, New South Wales over a week, usually in June each year.

Each evening, a mini concert is held. It's a wonderful opportunity for children to connect musically with friends and perform individually or in groups. The final concert for the week is a performance for the public. Families can travel up to Mittagong and enjoy the performance. Local music lovers look forward to coming each year and hearing beautiful harmonies made by our senior and junior choirs, and individual and small group performances that we have been rehearsing all week. Musical children enjoy the excellent accommodation and delicious meals provided at the Frensham Girls Boarding School, and make friends for life! Many students go back again and again and become tutors.

This year the 34th camp will be held at Frensham Girls School, Mittagong NSW from Saturday 29 June to Saturday 6 July.

Victorian students fly to Sydney and get a bus to Mittagong. We need to hear from interested students, so that travel arrangements can be made and bookings for flights will allow the team to travel together.

If you have questions pertaining to travel arrangements please feel free to email Jordie Howell: Jordina.howell@gmail.com

Or ring Jordie: home: 9878 9053 or mobile: 0402 308 484.

Further information can be obtained from: Roma Dix at romad@westnet.com.au

And finally ...

The phrase "it's all fun and games until someone loses an eye" comes from Ancient Rome, as the only rule for their bloody wrestling matches was "no eye gouging".