

TAER 2017 Conference Presentations- As of January 31, 2017, topics and presenters are subject to change. Please check back mid to view the final schedule.

What's New in Short-Term Programs Sara Merritt

Texas School for the Blind's (TSBVI) Short-Term Programs department is offering new and exciting opportunities for students to receive the individualized instruction they need in academics and in the ECC. Through online learning and individualized instruction classes, teachers are serving students and collaborating with TVIs in a whole new way.

Braille and Tactile Graphics Production for Mathematics Sue Mattson

Translating math worksheets into the Nemeth code within a UEB context is addressed in this hands-on two-part session. Both sessions will use the latest versions of software. The first session will focus on braille formatting of mathematics and the second will focus on tactile graphic production.

Must attend both sessions.

The New Paradigm in Notetakers: The Playing Field has Never Been This Accessible!

Damian Pickering HIMS

We have bridged the gap between blindness-specific and mainstream programs in a single device. This notetaker capitalizes on the strength of the Polaris Office suite of programs used by millions of people worldwide on their Android tablets while maintaining unprecedented access to

blindness-specific features such as Nemeth and UEB math entry.

TSBVI Transition Programming: An Overview of the EXIT and Post Secondary Program (PSP) and the Ways that TSBVI Helps Prepare Students for a Sustainable Adult Life
Tad Doezema, Maribeth Betton, and Linda Locke

TSBVI Assistant Principal and Transition Coordinator will detail efforts to more effectively prepare students (age 14+) for adult life. These efforts include increased collaboration with all stakeholders in the Transition planning process.

PSP Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator will provide an overview of current PSP Programming and Transition Planning practices.

Supporting Tactile Learning and Nemeth Code in Math
Jeri Cleveland, Debra Sewell, Susan Osterhaus and Janet Bean

Do you support a tactile learner in math? Centered around the new publication, Nemeth At A Glance, presenters will address needs in early math development, essential evaluations, collaboration, the Nemeth rule for modified expressions, comparisons signs and spatial arrangements. Also, participants will be guided through interlining practice of Nemeth within UEB.

L. I. F. E. (Living Independently in a Functional Environment)
Addressing the ECC

Edwina Wilks, Kellee Costello and Julie Wilson

L. I. F. E. is a new, non-profit organization focused on addressing the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) needs of the children with a visual impairment in East Texas. We will share our process of becoming a non profit in Texas, past and future L. I. F. E. events, and how we plan to address the ECC needs in a rural setting.

Toes in the Sand with Rec

Heather Munro and DJ Dean

This session will be hands-on fun with beach related rec activities, such as beach volleyball, frisbee golf, building sand castles, etc. We will cover steps from teaching the game to your students through playing the game. Participants will use occluders/blindfolds during portions of this session.

UEB: Are Your Students Ready?

Sheryl Sokolosi and Whitney Gregory

Don't let the new Unified English Braille (UEB) code be a barrier to your student's success. Identify potential stumbling blocks, review tools for evaluation and explore concrete examples of the Nemeth code and UEB in a literary context.

Writing Tasks: Tools and Tips

Neva Fairchild

This hands-on session will allow participants to explore a wide variety of writing options for different levels of vision and age groups. From braille to tablets and bold line pens to iOS, you will be able to explore the world of writing from a different perspective and take away samples.

Loom Knitting For Leisure Or Work?

Neva Fairchild

This hands-on session will teach the basic stitches used in loom knitting, demonstrate casting on and off, and share resources for learning the craft through other blind loom knitters. Samples of loom knitted items will be shown. Necessary organizational skills and the social benefits of crafting will also be discussed.

A Sensible Approach for the PTVIN (Precious TVI Newbies) to the FVE/LMA

Debbie "Cricket" Cady

Are you a fairly new TVI? How do you feel about doing all of those FVE/LMAs that are in your future? Do you Find yourself Viewing the Encounter as Less than a time of Merriment and something you'd like to Avoid? Well, come take a journey with "Cricket" and let's explore some Fun and Valuable ways to Explore how you can Leave those adverse thoughts behind, so that you Might be able to end up feeling Accomplished, instead! If you have your own personal "FVE/LMA Kit", bring it along!

Leisure & Recreation ideas for MIVI and Deafblind Hillary Keys and Shelby Walker

This interactive session will include sharing of ideas for Recreation and Leisure activities for MIVI/DB population. Pictures from and information about past ECC related events for MIVI/DB hosted by Region 10 ESC's ECC Planning Committee will be a jumping off point for an interactive discussion of ways to replicate some of these activities and ways they might be scaled down for home/classroom. The audience is also encouraged to share ideas/activities that have worked for them. If time allows, we also will discuss resources that may be available in your own area and how to access them.

How Refreshable Braille Displays Affect Computer Skills Sharon Nichols

Will a refreshable braille display help my student? This session will demonstrate how refreshable braille displays allow students tactile reinforcement to complement aural skills. Braille displays paired with a screen reading program build tactile reading literacy!

Using an Active Learning Approach with Learners with Significant Challenges Charlotte Cushman and Kate Hurst

Find out what Active Learning is all about! This approach, which was created by Dr. Lilli Nielsen, is designed to support learners with the most significant multiple disabilities to actively engage in the world around them. Learn how to select materials and equipment, and explore the Active Learning Space website.

APB: Aidan's Path to Braille (or...an Alternate Path to Braille)
Ann Adkins and Sherry Airhart

Join us for an exciting session that will encourage you to "think outside the box" and explore new ways to provide braille and prebraille instruction to students. TVI Sherry Airhart will share her innovative materials and strategies that have helped Aidan learn many of the literacy skills he will need on his "path to braille". You will be energized and amazed at how a non-traditional approach to instruction can make all the difference in a child's life.

Issues and Solutions in Serving Students with Multiple Impairments

Kate Hurst and Hillary Keys

There are many issues for the VI professional associated with serving students with visual impairment and multiple disabilities including deafblindness. This highly interactive session will focus on identifying these issues and exploring potential solutions. If you are interested in ways to improve services for these individuals, please join us for this session. If you belong to Division 3 you don't want to miss it.

Customized Employment-We Can Do It!

Lynne McAlister and Eva Thompson-Lavigne

This session will share the customized employment process and show examples of how customized employment strategies have led to successful employment for students who traditionally may not have found it. This session will include video and pictures of students in all phases of the customized process as well as parent perspective. Learn more about how customized employment can work for you!

Visual Art for the Visually Impaired

Scott Baltisberger

Blind and visually impaired students are often discouraged or excluded from participating in fine arts classes. This session will provide information and discussion regarding benefits of and barriers to more full and meaningful inclusion as well as possible ways to address these issues.

Connecting Low-Vision Students to Classroom Coursework with Prodigy Connect 12

Jim Sullivan HumanWare

Connecting to course content, classroom activities and learning management tools is essential in enabling low-vision student to compete with their sighted peers. This session will explore various ways Prodigy Connect 12 empowers low-vision students to complete reading assignments, access cloud based materials, make classroom observations and submit written assignments.

Using Braille and Speech to Access Google Classroom

Peter Tucic HumanWare

Google Classroom is used widely by schools as a platform to create, distribute and grade assignments. Access to Classroom with braille has been limited thus far. This presentation will highlight how students can use braille and the BrailleNote Touch to complete math and language arts assignments within Google Classroom.

Reinforcing Math Concepts While Teaching Nemeth Code to Students in Grades PK-3

Tina Herzberg and Susan Osterhaus

Come and join us to learn fun and easy ways to use games, manipulatives, and free materials to reinforce math concepts while teaching Nemeth Code to students in grades PK-3.

Fun Ways to Teach ECC Concepts

Kathie Preece

Finding time to teach Expanded Core Curriculum Skills to students of all ages and abilities can be daunting. However, there are many ways to use one lesson to teach academic skills, life skills and ECC skills. All ages and abilities can use these activities that are simple to plan for, require few materials and are engaging and fun for students and instructors.

Practice Session Using the VISSIT to Determine Service Intensity

Rona Pogrund and Shannon Darst

The Visual Impairment Scale of Service Intensity (VISSIT) is a tool developed to help TVIs determine the appropriate type and amount of service for a student with a visual impairment based on needs identified in the evaluation. Attendees will have hands-on experience in completing a VISSIT on a case-study student.

Collaboration: It's a Game Changer!

Elizabeth Eagan, Deborah Kucaj and Elizabeth Soto

With the abolishment of DARS, how do you maintain successful relationship with HHSC, TWS, and school districts? From referral to services, how you can work together to meet the needs of the student.

The Facelift of Beep Baseball

Andrew Bernet

Beep Baseball has had many changes implemented into the game since it was introduced in the 1970's. Learn what the game has evolved into and how it can be used to touch on all areas of the ECC. Included are drills and adaptations which can be used for different disabilities.

What's new from APH
Sue Enoch

New materials available within the last year from the American Printing House for the Blind will be shown and demonstrated so participants can have some hands-on familiarity with them. An attempt will be made to have teachers who are currently using or field-testing these materials to share their evaluation.

Extreme Home Makeover – VI Edition
Cindy Bachofer and Kathi Garza

Every student dreams of what “my place will look like when I’m on my own”. This presentation will cover general principles for setting up a functional and aesthetically pleasing living space. The focus includes adaptations for low vision as well as strategies for managing typical tasks within the home.

Uncovering the Hidden Population in Low Vision: A 5-year look at a student-parent program on driving with low vision and its multiple benefits

Cindy Bachofer

Driving is a teenager's dream and having low vision may get in the way of that dream. TSBVI developed a student-parent program focusing on this topic and discovered unexpected benefits in bringing this population together. The presenter gives an overview of the program model, participant feedback, and range of benefits.

O&M for Older Adults

Nora Griffin-Shirley and Anita Page

An interactive presentation where 30 participants simulate visual impairment and the aging condition. Challenges and instructional strategies for teaching O&M to older adults with visual impairments will be discussed.

The Whole is Greater Than the Sum of Its Parts: Integrating Family Systems Models in the Provision of Educational and Counseling Services for Students who are Blind and Visually Impaired

Janice Moran

This presentation offers professionals a holistic and systemic approach to service provision for students who are blind and visually impaired. We will explore how to further integrate family systems in such a way that students' independence and individuality are not compromised, but become more enhanced.

Reading Options for Students with Visual Impairments

Renee Toy

Come learn about the vast array of reading options now available for large print, audio and braille. Organizations such as Bookshare, Texas Talking Book Program, BARD, and Learning Ally will be covered as well as hands on opportunities to explore the variety of assistive technologies that work with these services.

Bookshare: A Free & Easy Solution for Students with Reading Barriers

Jeanie Bell

Presentation will highlight Bookshare while showing various technology tools that provide access. Bookshare is a free resource for students and can be accessed through computers, iPads/iPods, Android Devices, Braille Devices, etc. Students with visual impairments can have access to over 500,000 books including texts, literary works, books for pleasure, and other resources.

Teacher Preparation in Assistive Technology Competencies

Dr. Beth Jones and Belinda Rudinger

Lack of training in assistive technology for teachers has been cited as a primary obstacle in the successful use of AT by students with disabilities. This presentation will review a research study conducted at the AT Lab at Texas A&M University at Commerce with pre-service teachers regarding AT competencies.

Autonomous Vehicles they're coming! Implications for safety, ethics, policy and pedestrians with visual impairment

JoAnne Chalom

Technology and features of autonomous vehicles (AV), intelligent transportation systems (ITS) and connected vehicles (CV) become more mainstream many issues arise, especially for individuals with visual impairments. How will all three components impact strategies pedestrians who are blind? The answers are being contemplated, but the discussion must start before all parts are fully engaged.

NOAH SchoolKit: A resource for educators and families of students with albinism

Kathi Garza and Chrissy Cowan

The National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation (NOAH) has a website dedicated to providing rich information and resources for students, families, and educators affected by albinism. The SchoolKit is a new tool divided into sections that include documents parents and educators can use as a springboard to collaborate on visual needs within the home, school, and community.

CHARGE Syndrome....Our Son, His Story Amanda Bowdin

Amanda Bowdoin who is a Visually Impaired Teacher is also a mother of JD who has CHARGE Syndrome. You will learn about what is CHARGE and how it impacts parents and siblings. She will also talk about the Medical side that plays a part and the Education. The last 20 minutes her daughter, Olivia who is JD twin will be speaking about how she communicates to JD and how having a brother with CHARGE has helped her and educate others.

ECC: How to use ECC outside the classroom Amanda Bowdin

Amanda Bowdoin's son JD who has CHARGE Syndrome is now a Triathlete, Swimmer and participates in events outside the classroom and outside in the community. He is able to use his Ipad for communication as he is now a safety patrol at school and greets his friends through the Ipad and using his ASL signs. Amanda wants to share how VI's can take back with them ideas to share with students teacher's and parents that will target the areas of the ECC.

How Technology Can Enhance Spatial Cognition Chris Tabb

What can be done to prevent challenges with spatial cognition? Are there tools that can be used to facilitate greater awareness of one's current travel environment? We will connect resources that are presently available as well as technologies that are just on the cusp of development.
