



The OAS Update

February 2025

Welcome to our first ever monthly update for all things Outreach Access Services (OAS). We provide a comprehensive range of statewide services to support educators of blind and low vision learners. As our field continues to grow, we remain committed to providing diverse, accessible support to educators across the state, free of charge.

Upcoming Events:

It's an exciting time for professional development with many upcoming opportunities throughout the state.

- **Focus Forums**

- Tuesday, February 4th at 8:00 am and Thursday, February 6th at 3:00 pm: **What's New with the 7th Edition of the Oregon Project**
 - [Register here for the Tuesday, February 4th at 8:00 am session](#)
 - [Register here for the Thursday, February 6th at 3:00 pm session](#)
- Tuesday, February 25th at 8:00 am and Thursday, February 27th at 12:00 pm: **Serving Blind and Low Vision Learners at Home**
 - [Register here for the February 25th at 8:00 am session](#)
 - [Register here for the February 27th at 12:00 pm session](#)



- **Beyond the Bee** - a STEM event designed for blind and low vision students and their families. The interactive session will combine abacus and mental math activities with hands-on STEM exploration, helping students build confidence and skills in mathematics and science.
 - Vancouver – 3/1/25
 - Spokane – 3/22/25
 - Bellingham – 4/27/25
 - [Register for Beyond the Bee](#)

- **National Federation of the Blind of Washington 2025 State Convention – Vancouver, WA, February 27th-March 2nd.**
 - Krista Bulger and Lee Chandler will present a session of Beyond the Bee, a STEM event designed specifically for blind and low vision students and their families.
 - [Register for the NFB of Washington 2025 State Convention](#)

- **PNWAER Conference – Vancouver, WA – March 13th-14th.**
 - OAS team members will be presenting six sessions at our annual conference, including:
 - Beyond the Bee: Math Activities and Games
 - Tactile Literacy for Unique Learners
 - Preparing for your WA State UEB Certification
 - Washington State Testing Accommodations for Low Vision Learners
 - Technology Ergonomics for Blind and Low Vision Learners
 - Eyes on AI 2025
 - [Register for the 2025 PNWAER Conference](#)

- **Blind/Low Vision Round-ups** – Regional gatherings of vision professionals that focus on resources, collaboration, and training.
 - Spokane: 3/21 @ Joya Child and Family Center, 8:30-12:00
 - Snohomish: 4/28 @ Snohomish School District, 12:30-4:00
 - Wenatchee: 5/9 @ NCESD, 8:30-12:00
 - [Register for a Round-up](#)



Access Technology Requests

The OAS Access Tech team has provided consultation to over 40 school districts for their technology needs so far this year. Let us help you with your questions – we support all brands and types of AT for blind and low vision learners.

- [Access technology assistance request form](#)

Teacher-to-Teacher Collaboration

Looking to connect with another vision professional? Need a second opinion? Have a question? Request Teacher-to-Teacher Collaboration time with an OAS team member. Our team is ready to help with dozens of years of combined experience in a diverse array of specialties.

- [Request form for teacher-to-teacher collaboration](#)

Mentorship & Grant Program

If you're new to the field, new to Washington, or are looking to join the fascinating world of teaching blind and low vision learners, we are here for you. We offer direct support, resources, and even grant funding.

- **2025 Grants – apply now!** Our 2025 application window is live until April 1st. If you're a currently certified Washington State teacher with a graduate degree, this is your big chance to join our fabulous and fast-growing field of teaching blind and low vision learners. Our grant program provides both tuition and mentorship. It is a partnership with the [Stephen F. Austin University Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments training program](#). This 21-credit hour program can earn you an endorsement in as little as one year.
- [Apply for the SFASU Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments Program](#)
- [Questions? contact Joe Dluogo at the Mentorship & Grant Program](#)



What is the OAS Team Excited About This Month?

- **Colleen Johnson (TBLVL/COMS - Vancouver):** [Spanish Speaking Support Group for Families – With Conchita!](#) I'm so excited that Conchita Hernandez from the Maryland School for the Blind is leading a family support group for our Spanish speaking families. Conchita has helped our OAS team understand and support the needs of our Blind/Low Vision English learners. I am rooting for the success of this endeavor.
- **Lee Chandler (TBLVL/Technology - Yakima):** I'm excited about the progress of our 3D printed projects. I've been testing out some new models that will really enhance our students' learning experiences. For instance, we've printed a topography map of the state of Washington, allowing students to feel the Cascade Mountain range. I've also been working on a new braille training cell (thanks Andrea for finding the design)!

I'd like to extend an invitation to other teachers: if you have ideas for 3D printed items that you use or would like to try with your students, please send me an email: lee.chandler@wssb.wa.gov! I'm always looking for new ideas to expand our library of tactile learning tools. Whether it's math concepts, scientific models, or historical artifacts, I'd love to hear your thoughts and potentially collaborate on new designs. Stay tuned for more information about this project coming soon!