

NEW MEXICO TRISTAR ACADEMY

Program Overview

TriStar Academy (www.nmtristaracademy.com) is a proud member of the New Mexico Course Consortium (NMCC) and houses Santa Rosa, Fort Sumner, and Vaughn school districts. These districts are located in Guadalupe and De Baca counties, which have a largely rural, Hispanic population with some students spending over an hour on a school bus traveling to school every day. Serving a broad demographic of students including K-12 and return-to-school 12+ students, the academy strives to provide individualized learning plans for each student that include a full array of core curriculum as well as CTE and elective courses. Highly qualified, licensed educators provide engaging, goal-focused coursework in a variety of formats: online, hybrid, modified, and in-person with both synchronous and asynchronous options. Each student is also paired with an academic coach that provides weekly instructional coaching and assists with career-focused goal planning and prep. Students also have access to tutoring services, a family liaison, and opportunities to participate in student engagement and extension activities throughout the school year.

Many of the students that TriStar originally aimed to serve were those whose health conditions and concerns prevented them from attending in-person for longer periods of time. As TriStar Academy progressed through program development, a much wider demographic of students has been served. These students are motivated to utilize a different learning approach for a variety of reasons:

- Return to school 12+
- Students with health issues and concerns
- Credit recovery
- Employed students
- At-risk students (workforce solutions)
- Rural students who require excessive travel
- Students residing in an LEA without access to elective course options

Our Approach

With a heavy focus on addressing each individual student's needs and interests, TriStar works to build on skills and interests with career readiness in mind. Whether students intend to join the workforce or continue their studies after high school, TriStar's heavy focus on CTE programs serves both students who struggle in traditional learning settings and high-achieving and CTE-interested students through a number of specific career pathways. Middle and High School students are served through core curriculum, power/structures/technical system pathways, robotics, animal science, veterinary technology, business and audiovisual pathway options.

While aiming to make high school real, TriStar also serves a 12+ population of students who are returning to school to secure their high school diplomas. With specific coursework and academic coaching, TriStar was able to graduate a class of 12+ seniors in 2022 who originally left school without graduating. Moving forward, TriStar Academy looks forward to serving return-to-school 12+ students, those with health issues and concerns, credit recovery students, those who are employed or at-risk as well as rural students, and those who reside in LEAs without access to elective and CTE course options.

Each course option provides programs to students through highly qualified, licensed instructors. Students attend weekly meetings with an assigned academic advisor who provides enrichment opportunities for students as well as weekly evaluation of coursework and grades. Academic advisors serve students and families by providing further learning opportunities and customization to better serve students in preparing for future success. Students also have access to daily math tutoring and services provided by a family liaison, who deals directly with families to assist with enrollment, coursework, and equipment while ensuring students and families stay connected with all happenings within their home LEA.

Year One by Numbers

We are incredibly proud of the individualized, goal-focused education provided to students during our first year through the NMCC grant:

- Under the original NMVCC RFA, TriStar Academy requested and received funding to support the development of academy programs including core, elective, and CTE courses. CTE and elective courses are offered statewide to other LEAs through MOUs.
- This funding supported increased instructional staff, and offset additional costs for technology and program administration/oversight, teacher training, and additional staff hours for tutoring.
- With this funding, TriStar Academy has served 133 students enrolled in Santa Rosa, Fort Sumner, and Vaughn school districts during SY 21-22, starting and growing the program from ground zero in this first year.
- TriStar Academy options allow students and families customized learning experiences with exceptional educational support and engagement while remaining connected to their home LEA.
- TriStar Academy graduated its first class of students, which included return-to-school 12+, at-risk, displaced, and fully employed students.

What's Next?

Moving forward, TriStar Academy is looking to continue to address each individual child's needs and interests while building skills to enter the workforce and higher educational institutions. TriStar Academy aims to make high school real with hands-on learning opportunities partnered with coursework. Additionally, while servicing 12+ populations of students, TriStar has discovered the need to find students who have left the school system without graduating. With TriStar's original design, a group of students resulting from COVID was serviced. Now, TriStar will partner with additional consortium partners to better address an additional demographic of high-achieving and CTE-interested students that home districts do not have the resources to provide the ideal services for these students.

2022 TriStar Students Say:

"I was young, and I made bad choices. I walked out of school as a junior and now I'm back to graduate with TriStar 31 years later." -12+ TriStar Student and 2022 Graduate

"My dad withdrew me from school, and I was not going to finish over half of credit of English. I went to the Marine recruiter, and they would not take me back without a diploma. TriStar helped me to finish my high school career, attend basic and I will be walking with my class in my United States Marine Corp uniform." -Senior TriStar 2022 Graduate

"My vocational class has given me a reason to attend class. I'm learning about what I want to do later in life and working on plans for the nail salon that I want to have after I graduate." -Middle School TriStar Student