



**NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR THE
BLIND & VISUALLY IMPAIRED**



2024

ANNUAL REPORT

From the Superintendent...



Dear NMSBVI Family and Partners,
This report shows the breadth of services that NMSBVI provided to the children with vision impairments or blindness in the state of New Mexico during the 2023-2024 school year.

We continue to try to reach as many students with blindness or visual impairments in the state as possible. We not only have two school campuses, but we also provide statewide services through our Outreach and Birth-3 Departments. We also provide specialized materials to students around the state through the Instructional Resource Center.

NMSBVI continues to build on initiatives to provide services to students who are unable to attend at one of our campuses. We held 8 Low Vision Clinics around the state, hosted Expanded Core Curriculum Skill Booster Saturday activities, increased our summer camps, and provided Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) to students between 14 and 22 years of age.

NMSBVI also provides free or low-cost professional development for educators throughout the state. NMSBVI staff gave multiple presentations across the state and country, and hosted our Vision Bee conference. We also participated in several research projects, with some still ongoing.

NMSBVI had 46 students attending our Alamogordo Campus and 64 students attending our Albuquerque Campus. Those students participated in academic programming and the Expanded Core Curriculum along with a variety of extra-curricular activities including a fall festival, goalball sporting events, music lessons, talent shows, adaptive skiing, and more. Our goal is to provide an education that is rich with experiences and learning.

NMSBVI is grateful to our many partners and stakeholders. The funding that NMSBVI receives is used to support our two campuses as well as our many statewide programs that serve the children of New Mexico with vision impairments and blindness from birth to 22 years of age throughout the state. The support we receive assists NMSBVI in achieving our mission to be "an innovative and transformative leader and unifying entity in the field of educating students birth-high school who are blind or visually impaired". NMSBVI is a unique community filled with passionate, committed, creative experts who strive to do everything to support student success. Our students and families are an inspiration to us and play a huge part in our NMSBVI community. I am proud to be a part of this!

Heather Miller

Heather Miller, Ed.D.

23-24 NMSBVI BOARD OF REGENTS



Agnes Vallejos, President

(Los Lunas)

Gary Smethurst, Vice-President

(Albuquerque)

Robyn Holmes, Secretary

(Alamogordo)

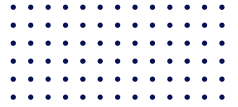
Catherine Gray, Member

(Albuquerque)

Mary Willows, Member

(Albuquerque)

MISSION



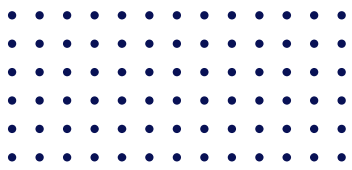
NMSBVI, an innovative and transformative leader and unifying entity in the field of educating students birth through high school who are blind or visually impaired, will identify students and promote quality education through collaborative relationships with students, families, and local/state/national partners through outstanding advocacy, training, resources, and support services, thus empowering all students who are blind or visually impaired to become independent, productive members of their communities.



GOALS

NMSBVI's Strategic Plan drives decision-making at every level. This plan was updated and revised, with new goals and objectives, through the strategic planning process in Spring of 2024; 30 participants representing 15 departments, including one parent, participated in the process. This 5-year plan centers on 5 overarching goals that support all of the initiatives of the school. Each goal has action steps and timelines to provide clarity and direction for our staff and maintain our focus on educating students with vision impairments and blindness throughout the state. The goals are:

1. We will support systems that result in sufficient numbers of highly qualified specialized staff in the field of blindness and visual impairment for the State of New Mexico.
2. We will advance systems to convey and receive information about blindness and visual impairment educational services, trends, research, etc. to all those involved or interested in serving students who are blind or visually impaired.
3. We will develop systems that support the early identification as well as successful transitions of students with blindness or visual impairment and their programming across settings.
4. We will develop and maintain local, state, and national relationships and partnerships essential to the immediate and long-term successes of each student with blindness or visual impairment.
5. NMSBVI will participate in cross-program collaboration to identify, document, share, and advance the efficacy of comprehensive practices in order to ensure that all programs are identifying, following and contributing to the best practices in educating all students with visual impairments.



THE EXPANDED CORE CURRICULUM (ECC)

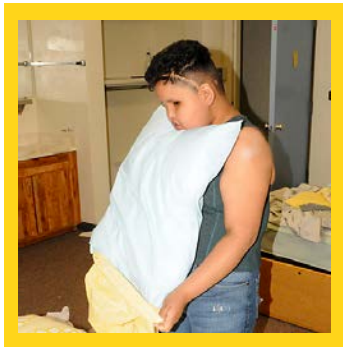


Compensatory Access:

concept development and skills to access learning environment, including literacy and communication.

Sensory Efficiency:

Learning to use all their senses to access environments and information, including functional vision



Independent Living:

to care for oneself completing tasks and functions for living, managing, and maintaining daily life (eating, dressing, hygiene, time management)



Social Interaction Skills:

to actively and appropriately participate in social situations, verbal and nonverbal social competence, social skills, and relationships.

The Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) is a disability-specific curriculum for children who are blind or visually impaired and is addressed at all ages. The ECC includes skills that are critical to a student's ability to access and participate in the core curriculum (math, language, arts, science, social studies, etc.), interact with peers, and ultimately participate in their community and workplace as an adult.

Teaching students who are visually impaired is not very complicated, but it is not intuitive, either. Students who are blind or have low vision (visually impaired), whose visual impairment is significant enough to adversely affect their education, require specialized instruction from professionals trained in understanding the impact visual impairment has on learning and development.

At the foundation of teaching students with visual impairments is addressing skills and concepts that are typically learned through observation and visual access. In

the presence of a visual impairment, incidental learning is either incomplete or nonexistent, resulting in the need for specialized instructional strategies and direct teaching through repeated, hands-on learning experiences. The skills our students need to reach their independent potential are often not adequately addressed through instruction and material adaptations in the general education curriculum, alone.

These additional skills are referred to as the **Expanded Core Curriculum** (Allman & Lewis, 2014).

Self-Determination:

empowering the student to believe in oneself, advocate for themselves, and meet their goals.



Career Education:

knowledge, behaviors, and skills to prepare students for work and careers.



Recreation & Leisure:

developing skills and interest in physical and leisure activities for choosing how to spend free time.



Orientation & Mobility:

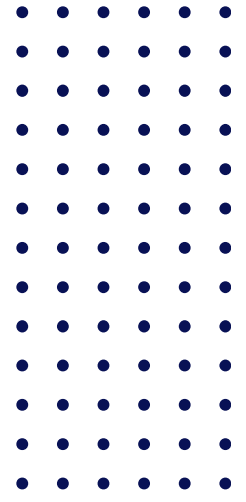
knowing how to orient and travel safely, efficiently, and independently.

Assistive Technology:

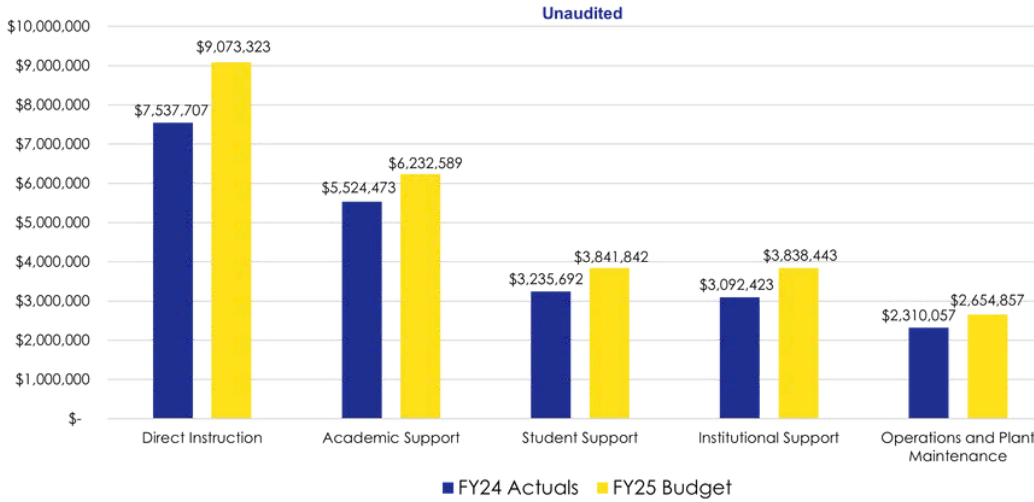
using electronic equipment and blindness-specific devices to access electronic information, print and computers.



FINANCIAL DATA

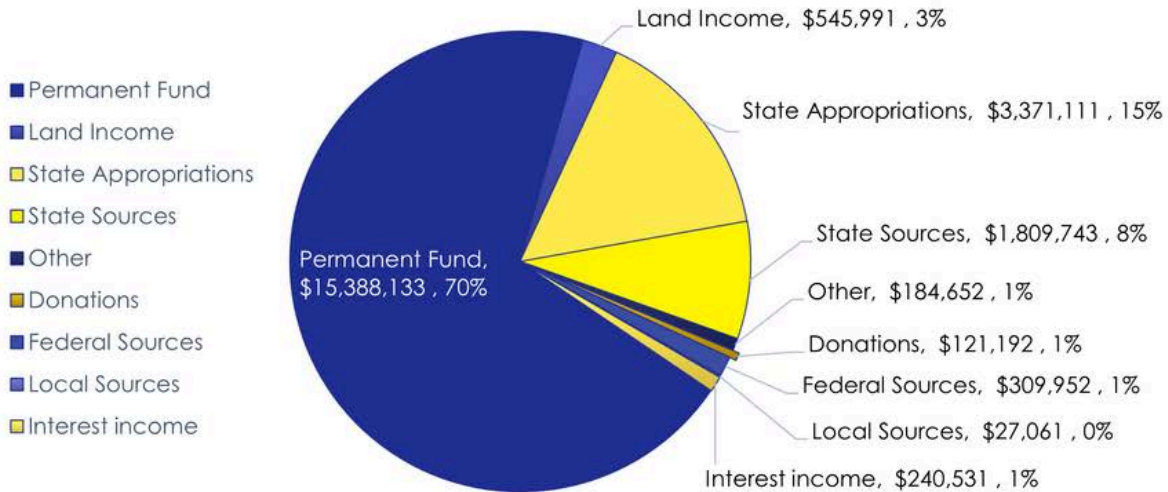


FY24 Actuals to FY25 Budget



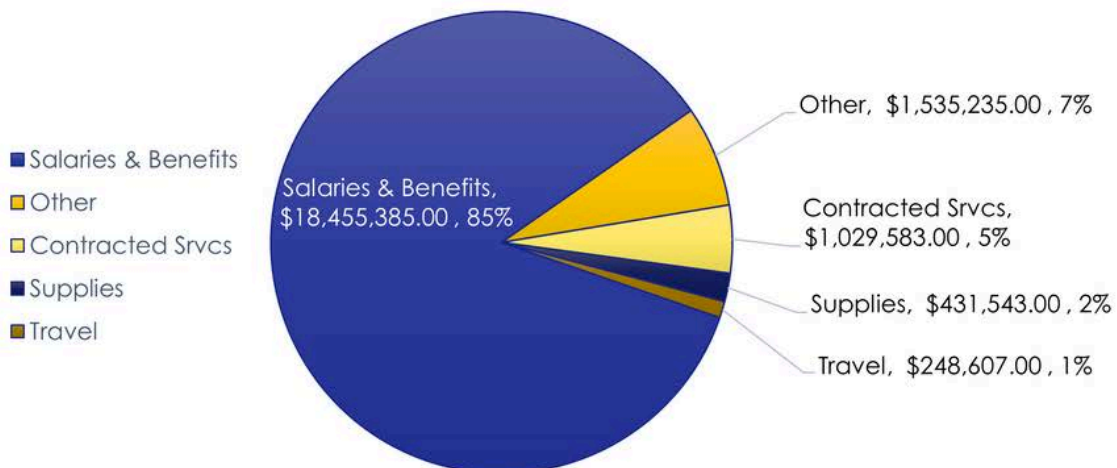
FY24 Revenue

Unaudited



FY24 Expenditures

Unaudited



PROGRAM UPDATES

Birth to Three (B-3) Program

Julie Maner, Program Coordinator

NMSBVI B-3 partners with Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) Family Infant & Toddler (FIT) Division to provide early intervention vision and O&M services to families across the state in home, community, and telehealth settings. Providers work directly with families, attend family doctor visits for support and consultation, and participate in team meetings and transition planning.

Staff & Services Provided

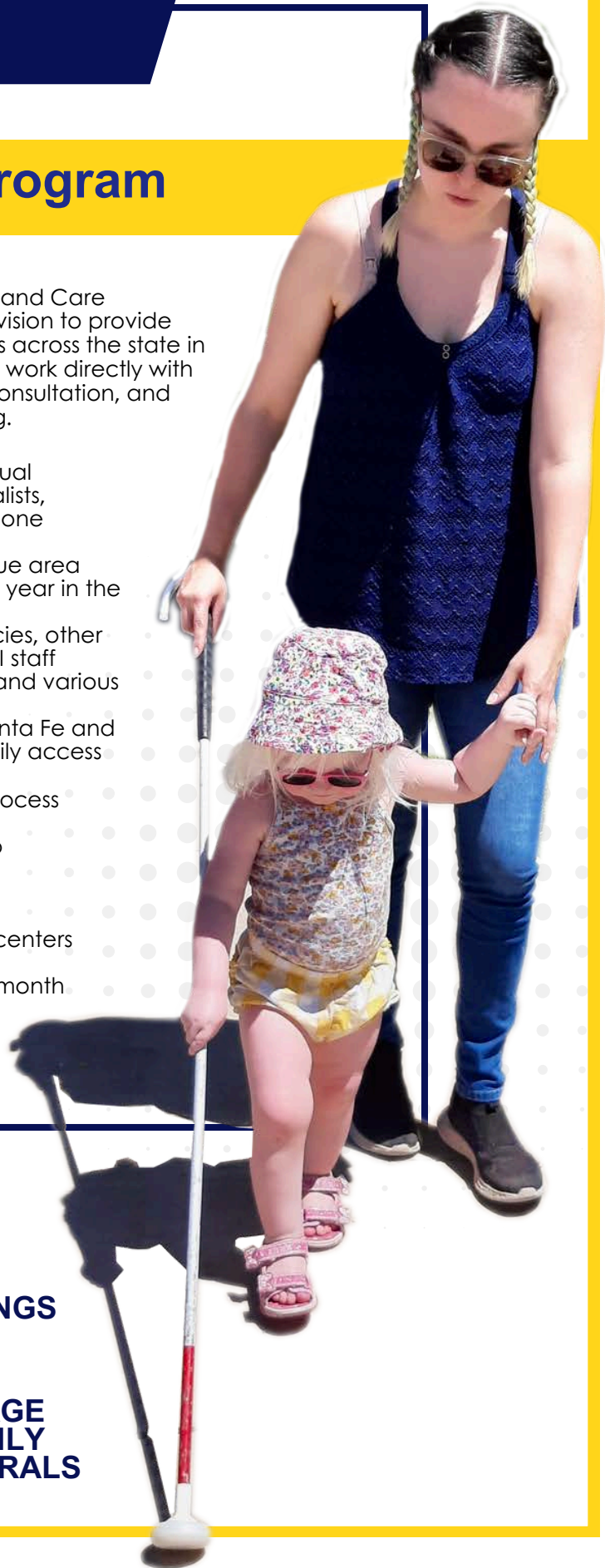
- 20 staff consisting of Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TSVIs), Developmental Vision Specialists, Orientation and Mobility Specialists (COMS), and one Administrative Assistant
- Held weekly in-person play groups for Albuquerque area families, and multiple play groups throughout the year in the Farmington area
- Provided trainings to NM Early Intervention Agencies, other providers, professional organizations, and NMSBVI staff
- Partnered with hospitals for referrals, screenings, and various training purposes
- Continued partnerships with Explora!, and The Santa Fe and Farmington Children's Museums to allow free family access during outings and lessons
- Presented on meaningful literacy and the LMA process for early childhood at GITWL in Florida
- B-3 staff member invited to present on B-3 ECC to Alabama Deafblind 2-day symposium
- Mentored students in NMSU's Visual Impairment Program and O&M program
- Provided over 590 vision screenings at childcare centers and child find events in NM
- The B-3 program received about 91 referrals per month
- The B-3 program provided ongoing services to a monthly average of 298 students statewide

The B-3 program at NMSBVI continues to be innovators in providing Early Intervention Vision and O&M services

298 AVERAGE
ONGOING
CASELOADS

590+ SCREENINGS

91 AVERAGE
MONTHLY
REFERRALS



Early Childhood Program

Paul Kilman, Program Coordinator, Early Childhood Program

The Albuquerque ECP campus had 64 students from 7 districts enrolled in 10 classrooms during the school year. NMSBVI's Early Childhood Program is located in Albuquerque and teaches students from preschool through kindergarten. Classroom teachers are TSVI's or in the VIP program. Programming focuses on the unique needs of young students who are visually impaired, providing hands-on experiences and developmental instruction through a transdisciplinary team approach.

Professional Presentations:

- Presented Handwriting Research results at GITWL.
- Inservice trainings for other districts on Communication Matrix and Early Communication.
- NW Region Education Cooperative – sharing information about the services that NMSBVI provides.
- CP Parent Group - Training on Vision and Visual Needs.
- Statewide webinar - establishing communication and connection in the classroom with students who are deafblind.

Collaborations & Projects

- Held monthly planning meetings between teachers, educational assistants, and therapists; gathered and reviewed student data to inform practice.
- Our social worker worked in and out of classrooms to support families, students, and teachers with a classroom focus on turn-taking, processing and expressing feelings, and learning to gain stronger social skills to prepare for transitions.
- Provided tours and internships for UNM and NMSU students.
- Monthly Trainings for parents on a variety of topics.



ECP Family Programming

Claudia Randolph, ECP Social Worker

Monthly hybrid events were held to give current and past NMSBVI families an opportunity to meet and support each other. Families shared experiences and resources to help process and address their child's lifelong needs, grief, medical diagnosis, etc. These parent connections also assist families transitioning to a new school. Special events in the fall and spring also provide a way for families to meet each other and for students to engage in new activities, with new people, in a familiar environment.

Monthly Family Nights

- Topics: Presentations from community organizations such as Parents Reaching Out, DD Waiver Team, parent panels on transitioning to new school settings, and the Emotional Journey.
- Social worker and families worked together to obtain and build community resources with food banks, legal aide, DD waiver, Medically Fragile Waiver, Social Security, care coordination referrals, and diaper and housing support.

Fall/Spring Celebrations

- Fall Carnival: 86 participants, including 23 families came for pumpkin bowling, multi-sensory play, arts and crafts, pizza, popcorn, cake walk, dancing, a photo booth, prizes, and more!
- Spring Carnival: 110 participants joined for a beeping egg hunt, face painting, arts and crafts, a photo booth, snow cones, and community connections with Sandia Laboratory and Santa Fe Children museum.

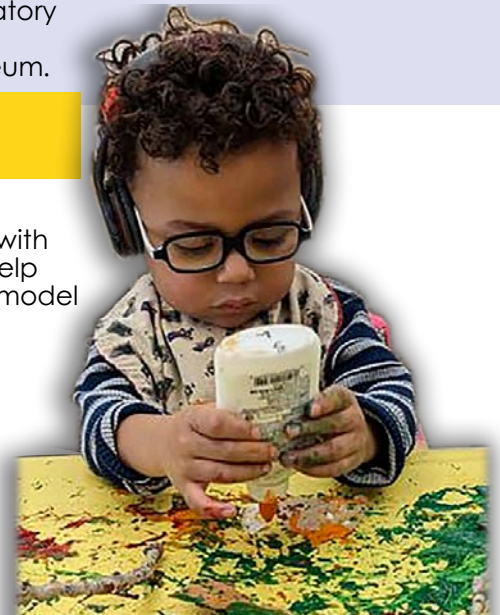
Preschool: Residential Campus

Jackie Freeman, Program Coordinator

NMSBVI Residential Campus Preschool provides programming for students with visual impairments who need more direct instruction and ECC support to help them prepare for kindergarten. Related services are provided in a push-in model so staff can reinforce strategies throughout the week.

Programming Highlights:

- Play-based learning activities and introducing school-readiness skills;
- Targeted development of communication, gross, and fine motor skills;
- Taught literacy/braille readiness and math concepts, and assistive technology;
- Weekly activities in music, physical education, and recreation activities; and
- Tactile and multi-sensory experiences through classroom, campus, and community-based learning programs.



PROGRAM UPDATES



Residential Campus

Academic Program

Maritza Morales, Principal

The Academic Program serves elementary through grade 12, providing specialized instruction in the core curriculum, braille, O&M, Assistive Technology, and other areas of the ECC. Teachers collaborate in cross-curricular planning to integrate core content in functional academic programming, post-secondary employment, and independent living skills. In addition, these students participate in Life Skills, Transition Programming, and Residential Life.



Programming Highlights

- Served 14 elementary and secondary students.
- Eclipse Event: NMSBVI students had the opportunity to go to the NM Museum of Space History to participate in the community eclipse event. NMSBVI Staff and museum staff worked together to include adaptive eclipse activities, to provide hands-on, concrete ways for our students to experience the eclipse and interact with the community.
- Functional academic and career math classes combined math curriculum and daily living skills into project-based learning centered around buying and making food. Students planned their recipes, budget, shopping, and then cooked their meals.
- Students worked on product comparison investigation in which the quality, price, and nutritional value of the food items were compared.
- The Biology, Chemistry, and Integrated Science classes used new accessible science equipment to gather, analyze, and communicate scientific data.
- Collaborative planning between our Transition Coordinator, Life Skills Staff, Assistive Technology, Braille, and the content teacher to support the students' career, independent living, and post-secondary goals.
- Worked with transition coordinator to support students taking Dual Credit courses at NMSUA.

Transition Programming

Holly Bird, Transition Coordinator

NMSBVI's Transition programming focuses on preparing students for transition from high school life to adult life. Formal Transition Services begin when students turn 14 and continue through graduation from high school. Transition Services include focused planning with the student and student's family to identify strengths, needs, and interests in order to develop transition goals (with action plans to meet the goals) and supports the student in working independently toward those goals.

Highlights for the year:

- Student Sensory Garden: Supported a student in designing and building a sensory garden on campus. This project began from the student's interest in landscaping and seeking job experience.
- Partnership with NM Commission for the Blind for Pre-ETS Initiatives: Pre-Employment Transition Services (ETS) Summer Camp: 2-week summer camp focused on building employability skills, increasing independence, task initiation and task completion, and improving self-advocacy for the workplace.

- Students stayed at NMSBVI dorms to enhance independence and daily living skills, job shadowed in the local community, and practiced job skills in a supported setting. The jobs we focused on this year were automobile detailing services, mail/packaging services, and landscaping.
- Student Internship at the Santa Fe Roundhouse: supported a high school student interning at the State Capital in Santa Fe during legislative session. He attended committee meetings and met various lobbyists and legislatures. He met the governor and secretary of education and was a guest on a local radio show to discuss his experiences.
- Collaborated on building options for English and Math career curricula/scope and sequence for students following the Modified and Ability graduation pathways.
- Participated in NDEAM: Celebrating Accomplishments and Building an Inclusive Tomorrow: Increasing Access and Equity for Individuals who are Blind and Deafblind.
- Participated on the POSB Transition Program Collaboration.
- Supported students in attending online APH webinars used to improve notetaking and organization.

Intensive Support Classes (ISP)

Jackie Freeman, Program Coordinator

The Intensive Support Program (ISP) provides differentiated instruction for students with multiple impairments, including visual impairment, in all grades. Developmentally appropriate programming focuses on functional academics, communication, fine and gross motor skills, and the Expanded Core Curriculum.

Programming Highlights

- Provided inclusion opportunities in the public school for 7 students to help generalize skills and participate in the community.
- Used themes such as friendship, safety, plant life, and cooking to provide hands-on, multi-sensory activities to support academic, job readiness, and functional skills.
- Music and adapted P.E. classes provided auditory and kinesthetic input to reinforce and help generalize new skills and concepts from classroom instruction.

Community-Based Learning Highlights:

- Went to Mesilla Valley Maze to pick a pumpkin straight out of the pumpkin patch.
- Took a trip to a minor league baseball game to gain real-life experience of the sport and scoring that had been taught in PE and classrooms.
- Runyan Ranch came to provide hands-on experiences with a variety of real domestic and exotic animals the students could touch, feel, and feed.



Life Skills Program

Jackie Freeman, Program Coordinator

Life Skills is a robust program for residential, day, and short-term students ages 14 and older. Programming is designed around the 9 areas of the ECC and the 16 career clusters (such as agriculture/food, finance, STEAM, business, manufacturing, and health sciences), focusing on independence and skills for adult life. Ongoing programming includes: student rotations in apartment living dorms; learning machine and hand sewing; woodworking projects from design to material choice, cutting and sanding with power tools, and assembly; and growing plants in the greenhouse that are incorporated into sales and career education.

Educational Programming

- Students' career preparation focused on developing resumes, job preparation, mock interviews, on-campus jobs, and interviews with professionals working in their career field of interest.
- 4 NMSBVI students participated in our Post-Secondary Program, which is open to NM students with completed high school credits who want to develop and practice independent living, employment, community access, and college-success skills.



Residential Life

Jackie Freeman, Program Coordinator

Residential Life provides before and after school programming for students in grades 3-12 who live on campus during the school week. Dorms provide safe, calm settings for after-school activities and homework support, as well as apartment/cottage living placement to prepare students for living on their own after high school. Staff collaborate with Life Skills to embed ECC skills into individual routines. Recreation and leisure activities include our on-campus bowling alley, riding tandem bikes, pottery, crafts, games and community-based learning experiences. Residential Life also hosts Prom for all students.

OUTCOMES & STUDENTS SERVED



1,649

Students received direct service

direct service/caseload, ECC Sat/Summer Camps, referrals, and evaluations



113

Students on Campus

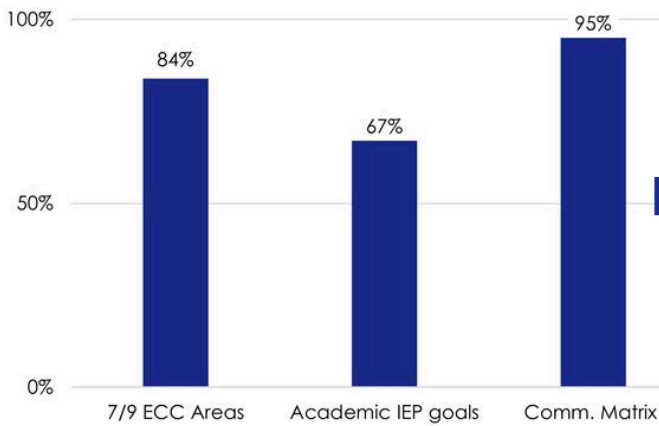
64 enrolled at ECP, Albuquerque
49 on Residential Campus, Alamogordo



1023

Evaluations

15 FVE/LMAs for districts
25 Low Vision Evaluations
33 AT Evaluations
950 B-3 referrals



Prek/ISP/FAC Programs

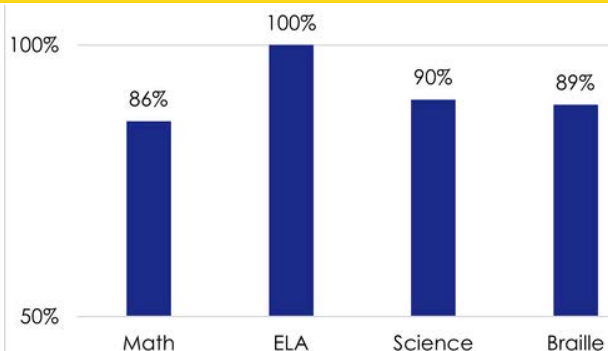
Goals: 80% will show growth in 7/9 ECC areas, academic (math/literacy) IEP goals; and go from no skill to emerging or emerging to mastery in 2 domains of Communication Matrix

2,239

total served

Residential Campus: Student Progress

Academic Program

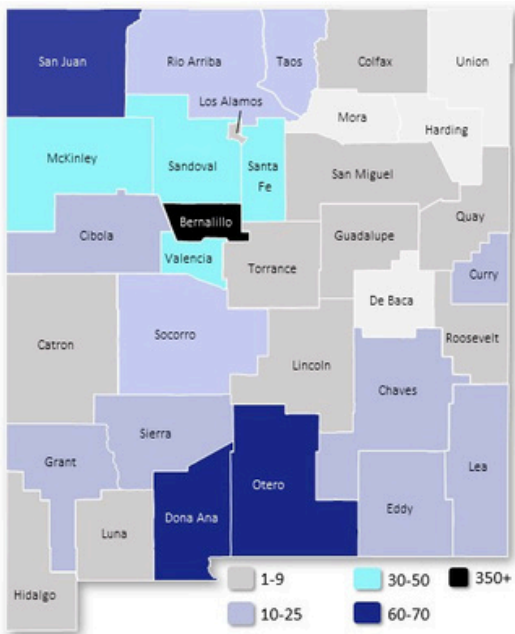


Goal: Students earning an A, B, or C in subject area



2400+

APH Items Loaned to 36 districts
From the NM-IRC
60+ APH AT devices loaned



Counties Served

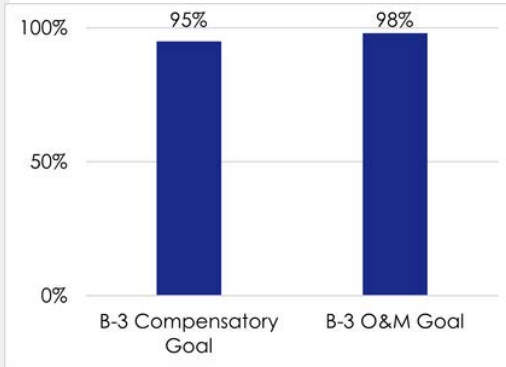


Birth to 3

625 served on caseloads

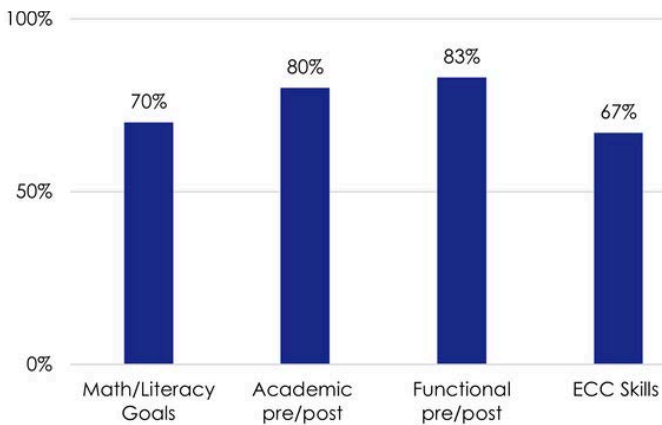
1095 new referrals
(145 to caseloads)
590 children screened

B-3 Program



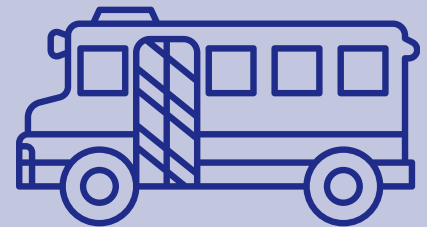
Goals: 80% will show progress using the compensatory section of the Oregon Project Skills Inventory and 80% will make progress using the Birth-6 O&M Skills Inventory.

Early Childhood Program: Student Progress



Goals: 80% will meet all math/literacy IEP goals, make moderate+ growth on pre/post assessment in academic and functional math/literacy skills, and increase ECC skills (based on ECC checklist or ECC IEP goals).

667,084
miles driven

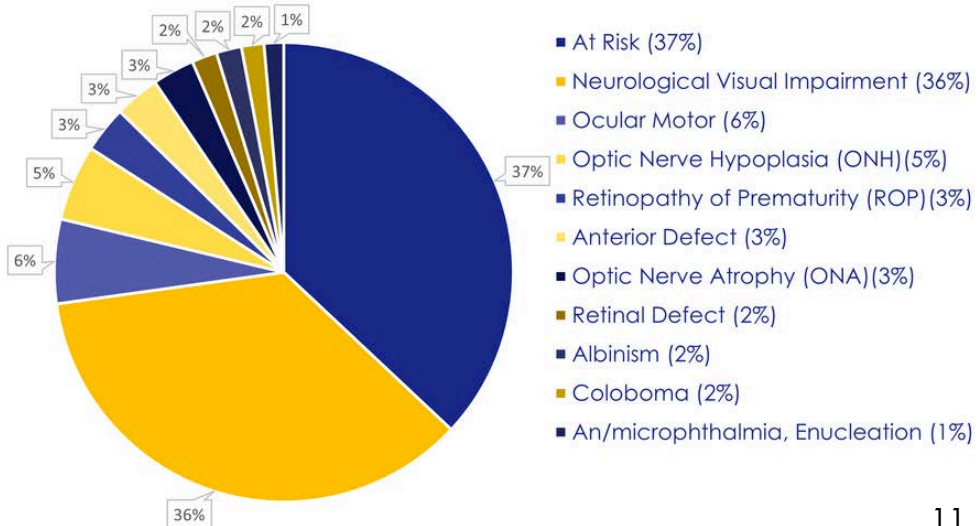


NMSU-VIP Personnel Prep

28 enrolled

- 14 TSVI/VI-Focus licensure
- 9 pursuing COMS licensure
- 4 pursuing MA; 1 pursuing Ph.D. in Special Education

Statewide Vision Diagnoses



PROGRAM UPDATES

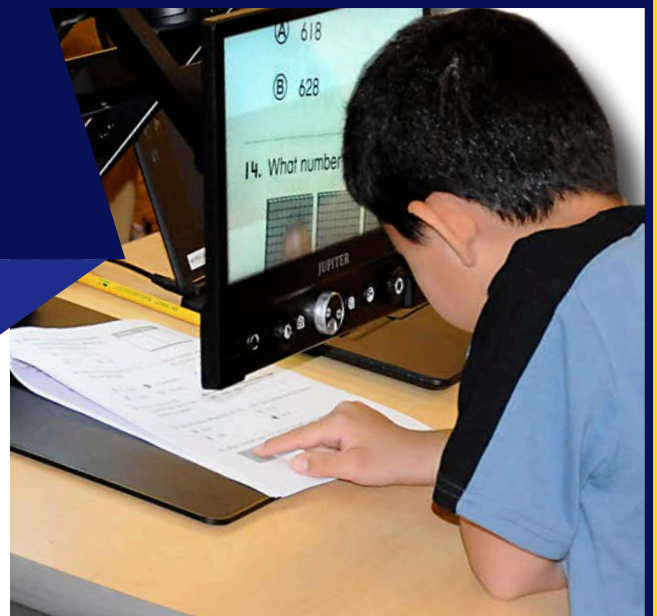
Outreach Department

Julie Johnson, Outreach Program Coordinator

NMSBVI Outreach Department conducts Functional Vision Evaluations and Learning Media Assessments for districts without a TSVI, and partners with some districts to provide direct services. Outreach staff also mentor NMSU-VIP TSVI interns while they work with students in their home school district. The Access to Learning Low Vision Clinic (LVC) and Assistive Technology Lending Library are also coordinated and staffed through this department.

Outreach Programming

- 9 TSVIs worked to support interns and districts across the state
- Held virtual and in-person Learning Circles for the different regions of the state; these were available to any TSVI for free professional development and collaboration.
- Served as appointed mentors to 8 NMSU-VIP TSVI interns from 4 districts and both NMSBVI campuses.



Low Vision Clinics

Margaret Hidalgo, LVC Coordinator

The Access to Learning Low Vision Clinic (LVC) provides a specialized examination by a low vision specialist to determine the student's level of functioning and provide detailed reports of doctor's findings and recommendations for low vision devices or eyeglass prescriptions. In collaboration with the ATLL, these evaluations also include assistive technology. The LVC is held at various sites throughout the state and supports the doctor's time, travel and materials. The LVC coordinator works with Outreach and the student's TSVI, O&M, and parents for follow-up training and questions.

Program Highlights

- 9 Statewide clinics: 7 single day clinics and 1 two-day clinic.
- Total number of students seen: 48 (29 new students and 19 returning students).
- Served students from the following districts: Santa Fe Public Schools, Rehoboth Private School, NMSBVI-ECP, B-3, NMSBVI Residential Campus, Lovington Municipal Schools, Alamogordo Public Schools, Las Cruces Public Schools, Gadsden Independent School District, Silver Consolidated Schools, Deming Public Schools, Albuquerque Public Schools, Bloomfield Public Schools, Artesia Public Schools, Hobbs Municipal Schools, Eunice Municipal Schools, Clovis Municipal Schools, Corrales International School, ACE Charter School, Rio Rancho Public School, Socorro Independent school, and Bureau of Indian Education Schools.

Assistive Technology Lending Library

Marlisa Jacobs & Fatima Portugal, Assistive Technology Consultants

The Assistive Technology Lending Library (ATLL) is a statewide program that loans specialized equipment, and offers training, consult, and evaluations to students who are visually impaired across the state of NM. Through two full-time AT consultants, the ATLL works directly with students and educational teams to identify appropriate assistive technology devices, software options, and applications, including the use of switches and head-tracking technology, to expand communication and access for students. The ATLL works closely with other Outreach staff and school district TSVIs to evaluate or consult on functional vision evaluations and to provide direct service or consult on specific devices.

Program Highlights

- Loaned a total of 93 devices to students, and another 95 devices to staff for trainings.
- Direct services to 13 students; indirect services to 52 (not including evaluations).
- Conducted 37 AT evaluations.
- Provided 42 AT trainings.
- Served 23 districts.
- Collaborated with the Southwest Center for Assistive Technology Training (CATT) to provide trainings throughout the state.
- Collaborated with the NM Commission for the Blind and the New Mexico Library for the Blind and Print Disabled to introduce e-Readers and refreshable braille displays to TSVIs throughout the state
- Introduced new innovative devices, such as the Monarch (a multiline braille device that renders tactile graphics integrated with braille), to TSVIs and students throughout the state.

Personnel Prep: New Mexico State University Visual Impairment Program (NMSU-VIP)

Loana Mason, Ed.D., COMS, Visual Impairment Program Coordinator

The VIP is the result of a two-decade formal partnership between New Mexico State University and NMSBVI. It is the only personnel preparation program in the state that prepares teachers of students with visual impairments (TSVIs) and certified orientation and mobility specialists (COMSs). Moreover, it is one of thirty-something such programs in the United States and one of fifty-something such programs in the entire world. During fiscal year 2023-2024, the NMSU VIP had the following outcomes:

- Total enrollment was 28 students: 12 of whom were pursuing their TSVI licensure, 9 of whom were pursuing their COMS licensure, 2 of whom were completing the VI Focus (non-licensure) coursework, 4 of whom were pursuing their MA in Special Education, and 1 who was pursuing a doctorate in curriculum and instruction.
- 4 prospective COMS, 1 MA in SPED student, and 1 Ph.D. student finished their programs of study.
- Interns worked in 9 different public-school districts in New Mexico, NMSBVI, and the New Mexico Commission for the Blind.
- The NMSU VIP received full accreditation from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP).
- Dr. Mason presented her research analyzing inclusivity factors in children's picture books featuring fictional characters with visual impairments at the GITWL Conference in Florida.
- Dr. Mason continued to mentor a McNair Scholar—an undergraduate honors student interested in conducting research in visual impairment in preparation for pursuing a master's degree and doctoral degree in this field.



Instructional Resource Center (NM-IRC)

Mary Vaughn, Program Coordinator

The Instructional Resource Center (NM-IRC) provides specialized and adapted materials, to school districts and students across New Mexico. The NM-IRC also provides APH materials through the Federal Quota Fund program, which provides states funding for qualifying APH materials based on eligible students in the state. Students are registered for APH and managed through the NMVI Count website, a statewide online database, where NM-IRC materials are also ordered. The NM-IRC also provides textbook transcription services to districts through the braille production team, as well as the NM Repository, which is a library of braille and large-print textbooks previously purchased by a school district that can be loaned to other schools at no cost.

- 2439 APH materials loaned to 36 districts.
- 158 braille writers were repaired.
- Partnered with NMSBVI's Assistive Technology Lending Library to loan assistive technology items offered by APH through Quota Funds.
- Partnered with Center for Assistive Technology and Training (CATT) Program to provide a Joy Player Workshop with Stacey Chambers.
- Conducted school district trainings on various APH items.
- Collaborated with Outreach and ID&R for statewide training topics and events.



2,069 PRINT/LARGE
PRINT PAGES

32,000+ BRAILLE PAGES

416 TACTILE
GRAPHICS

SPECIAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Young Athletes' Program, ECP

Laura Lewis, Maggie McConville, & Sherri Erler

The NMSBVI ECP PT team coordinated with team members from the Special Olympics, to pilot a 6-week, (2 day/week) Young Athlete's Program (YAP). This program originally focused on building foundational gross motor skills for students with special needs, so we piloted it with students with visual impairments in an effort to determine needed accommodations and instructional strategies

specific to visual impairment, that could increase accessibility for all students with this program. Additional goals were to prepare students for school-based physical education, creating fun ways for students to participate (even if using adaptive equipment), and building confidence in students' individual abilities.

We were able to document progress in a wide variety of physical skills, including, rolling, reaching, throwing, catching, bouncing, kicking, batting, reaching, navigating stairs, stepping, stomping, sitting, kneeling, creeping/crawling, walking, running, jumping and racing. Through piloting this program,



we were able to refine instructional techniques by clarifying consistency with directions and various cues.

For 2024-25, the program will expand to two, 9-week sessions covering 6 lessons, and ending in fun-filled "Field Days." The PT team will collaborate with teachers and related service providers to promote and reinforce more specific skills and concepts from the classroom curriculum, gross and fine motor skills, speech and communication, and orientation and mobility.

THE INCREDI-BALL



Make48, Secondary

Jeff Killebrew

In Spring, 2024, Make48, a national invention competition and docuseries, hosted a first of its kind competition for schools for the blind. Hosted at the Kansas State School for the Blind, three NMSBVI secondary students traveled to participate in this special Make48 event to compete against 5 other schools. Taking the first letter of their first names, they called themselves Team MMA.

Make48 gave teams a "It's Gym-Tastic" theme where they had 48 hours to develop a school gym related idea, design a working prototype, build it with the help of their team coaches and tool techs, write up a sales sheet, produce a 1-minute commercial of their product, and then present it to a panel of judges. Teams used a variety of tools, materials, makerspaces and expert "Tool Techs." Team MMA developed the "Incredi-Ball"--a device that automatically sorts different sized balls commonly found in school gyms. They garnered much attention from the staff and judges, but unfortunately did not take home the first-place prize. Nonetheless, they did come home with a greater knowledge and appreciation for the process of developing and pitching new ideas. The docuseries will air fall 2024 and can be accessed later on YouTube.

Staff and students were so inspired, a weekly "Makers" club will take place for 24-25.



NMSBVI Athletics

The benefits of student athletics are numerous, including improvement in general health, motor skill acquisition, communication, and teamwork. The athletic program at NMSBVI brings the benefits of student athletics, along with access to sports and social inclusion for students who are blind and visually impaired. NMSBVI provides exposure to a variety of accessible sports including blind soccer, beep baseball, tandem running, and the most popular team sport, goalball.



Innovations Fair

Staff presented new and creative projects or practices. Recorded presentations were shared via Padlet to allow viewers to ask questions and leave comments. <https://padlet.com/NMSBVI/nmsbvi-innovations-fair-2024-sslgsrg0kkd78zh3>



Adaptive Ski Program

Lori Adam, Occupational Therapist

NMSBVI partnered with All Season Adaptive Sports (ASAS) to provide residential campus students the opportunity to ski in individual lessons. ASAS has instructors trained in adaptive ski techniques and equipment that allows students of all abilities to participate.

- 18 students from our ISP, elementary, FAC, and secondary programs were able to participate



Student Sensory Garden Project



This project started with a student's vocational interest, and culminated in a new sensory garden on campus. As part of transition programming, NMSBVI departments and the community came together to provide a full landscaping work experience that expanded to other students, too.



From start to finish, the student led the design, material procurement, construction, and final touches of this space.

He even became a Master Gardener and learned the complications of plumbing for the fountain feature!

HOLLOMAN'S
BIG GIVE Casa
AUTO GROUP



Plants and elements were chosen for their sensory qualities. Throughout the process, he presented his ideas and needs, received community donations and support, and was a recipient of Casa Auto Group and Holloman AFB's "Big Give," which lent helping hands to putting major pieces together.

We are so proud of the space that was created, the dedication of our grounds and maintenance staff to support and teach, and of course all the features the current and future students get to enjoy!

COMMUNITY & STATEWIDE EVENTS

White Cane Day

Kelly Carnes, COMS

On October 12, 2023 the New Mexico Commission for the Blind and NMSBVI combined to have a White Cane Safety Day Celebration. They met in front of the dining hall at NMSBVI and then proceeded to walk the perimeter of campus. Their white canes and friendships were on full display as they walked along White Sands Blvd. carrying 2 banners promoting white cane day. After the walk, everyone met in the Rose Garden for snacks, fellowship, and a ceremony with speakers and entertainment. NMSBVI Superintendent Beecher began with the opening welcome remarks. Speakers from the NM Commission for the Blind, Jamie Simpson and Jedi Moerke, also welcomed the audience and read the traditional Governor's Proclamation of White Cane Day. The keynote speaker was NMSBVI Life Skills teacher, Craig Cooper, who was followed by the the talented NMSBVI choir.

Summer Camp

Jenilee Charley, Camp Coordinator

- **STEM Camp, Alamogordo: 10 students, 6 days**
The STEM Camp was a collaboration between NASA, San Jose University, and The Ohio State University to bring science, technology, engineering, and math to NMSBVI. The students first worked with teachers to build a toy with a 3D printer, before picking an item they would like to build, such as an iPad stand, a white cane keychain, a fidget toy, or a book marker. This expanded through the week as students learned astronomy with 3D printed items that made learning about the stars, galaxies, and planets more accessible. This collaboration also allowed students opportunities to directly ask and learn from specialists and scientists. In the evenings, students went on different field trips, such as to White Sands and the Space Museum.
- **ECC Camp, Alamogordo: 15 students, 6 days**
We focused on all nine areas of the ECC, providing activities to increase independence and confidence. Students worked in small groups with same-age peers to work with a TSVI or COMS on targeted skills. Students budgeted and planned their meals, went shopping, worked with O&M and low vision devices, and created their lunch meals. They also made group snacks that were shared in the dorms. Students also went on fields trips to Braille Trail in Cloudcroft, a Movie Night, and local parks.
- **ECP Camp for ECP Students: 9 students, 4 days each week**
Generalizing skills and providing social engagement was the goal for our younger students. Camp activities incorporated routine change, introduction of new adult staff, and lots of sensory and outdoor water play!



Braille Challenge

Julie Johnson, Outreach Coordinator

Braille Challenge is a one-of-a-kind competition developed by the National Braille Institute to motivate students to practice and hone braille literacy skills. Held in the U.S. And Canada, regionals take place between January and March to qualify for nationals. The NMSBVI Outreach Department plans and hosts the NM Regional Event.

- Open to any NM student who is learning or using braille as their reading media.
- Regional event was held in Alamogordo on February 24, 2024.
- 15 students participated, and we also had a great turn out of family members.

State Wide Training

Mary Vaughn, Julie Johnson, Kitty Edstrand

ECC Skill Booster Saturdays

NMSBVI Statewide Training partners with district TSVI's to provide Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) activities to non-NMSBVI students from around the state who are homeschooled or enrolled in a charter/public/private school in their local school district.

- September: Farmington, focused on introduction to adapted sports for students, families, and districts staff.
- December: Albuquerque, consisted of holiday activities that focused on socialization and independent living skills; created tactile art with a local artist.
- May: Albuquerque, at Explora! Children's Museum as part of IMLS partnership, focused on self-determination, socialization, and O&M.



Vision Bee Conference

- Held Vision Bee in January in both Albuquerque and Alamogordo featuring Dr. Karen Wolffe. Open to any parents and professionals working with students who are blind/visually impaired. The topic was Career Education Across the Lifespan.
- 167 total participants: 82 in Albuquerque, 31 in Alamogordo, and 54 on zoom.



PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS



NMSBVI continues to work with other organizations and partners in-state, nationally, and even internationally to serve our students and mission. Several collaborative projects were initiated or continued through the 2023-2024 school year, as well as our continued partnership with NMSU personnel prep for training teachers of students with visual impairments and certified orientation and mobility specialists. We also continued to receive funding support from community partners, donors, and other state programs. We are thankful for the continued support from The Navajo Nation, who funds two developmental vision specialists, the Land Grant Permanent Fund and support from the NM Land office, the current state legislatures who have funded capital projects for our Alamogordo Campus, and the NMSBVI Foundation, which also provides funding support for unmet needs of the school. Working towards our mission and serving students throughout the state would not be possible without this financial support.



ECP-UNM Partnership:

Jessica Matney, ECP-ILT, and Kitty Edstrand, ID&R Coordinator, continued their partnership with UNM Professor Cathy Binger. During the year, they met regularly to re-analyze data from an intervention study focused on increasing intentional communication. This informed plans to continue developing and researching effective interventions for this population, which is an aim of this partnership. We plan to use Implementation Science approaches to conduct research on-site that better supports the students, teachers, and better outcomes for all. We also co-authored a chapter in an Implementation Science textbook, sharing our partnership building experiences; the book will be released fall of 2024.



UNM and Naked Heart Foundation:

Jessica Matney, SLP and ILT for the ECP, has continued to work with the Naked Heart Foundation and UNM OT/PT/SLP and neurology departments to consult with the rehabilitation hospital in Tula, Russia. This group provides evidenced-based practices for children with cerebral palsy. Jessica and Cathy Binger, UNM Professor, collaborate to address early communication and AAC, as well as the possible impact of visual impairments on access to early communication. This collaboration is done through virtual presentations, case studies, and multidisciplinary staffings with the Tula team.



Explora IMLS-BLVI Partnership:

NMSBVI was invited to partner with Explora! on a 2-year International Museum & Library Studies grant they received specifically to increase the accessibility of the museum for children and adults who are visually impaired. As a partner, NMSBVI has worked with Explora's grant director to recruit and arrange multiple focus groups with staff and students, coordinate field trips/site visits and participate in processes evaluating Explora's website, exhibits, and floor plans for optimal accessibility. This project has strengthened our partnership with Explora! and they invited NMSBVI to present with them on this project at a national children's museum conference in May, 2025.



NM Commission for the Blind: We continue to partner with the commission to provide a variety of transition (14+ years) programming, as well as statewide training planning and NMSU internship opportunities

With our transition coordinator, Holly Bird, NMSBVI and the Commission continue to collaborate and brainstorm together to continue and expand pre-employment training services (Pre-ETS) across the state. Additional partnership activities included White Cane Day celebrations, Project ECHO, and Pre-ETS summer camp.



NM-Universal Design for Learning (NM-UDL) Initiative:

NMSBVI continued participation in NM-Universal Design for Learning (NM-UDL) initiative. NM-UDL is focused on working with districts and educators across the state to implement a "Universal Design for Learning framework that creates expert learners and gives access to all." Both campuses received training and support directly from the NM-UDL team. The ECP focused on incorporating various apps and technologies NM-UDL has provided, such as using Nearpod, that provides interactive media presentation through iPads that students are able to access during the lesson. NM-UDL also helped us register all students and train staff on Bookshare, and adapting and implementing grade-level curricula across developmental levels and modes of presentation.

Thank you NMSBVI Foundation!

NMSBVI would like to thank the NMSBVI Foundation for their support with supplementary funding for the many student programs, projects, equipment, and services that NMSBVI provides. The NMSBVI Foundation is a non-profit group that works directly with NMSBVI to ensure that there is sustainable funding for the unmet needs of the school.



NMSBVI FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Justin Burks,
Facilities & Capital Projects Coordinator

In partnership with the Public School Capital Outlay Council (PSCOC) and the NM Higher Education Department (HED), NMSBVI continues to make needed improvements to our buildings and grounds.



New Playground

The new playground on the Alamogordo campus was completed in January 2024 and provides activities for all ages and ability levels, from preschool through high school. The space has climbing and play structures for our smallest students, accessible structures for our students with physical disabilities, and also provides sitting areas for high school students to gather and socialize.

Paul & Lois Tapia Building (built 1918)

Renovations to this historic building include a new roof system, HVAC, lighting and electrical, new restrooms and plumbing, and updated finishes throughout. The project is nearing completion as we await the arrival of custom fabricated steel window frames to identically match the appearance of the original windows installed back in 1918.



Residential Cottage:

Construction of the new cottage has begun. Underground utilities have been installed, with concrete work and framing to begin in the coming weeks. When completed next summer, this space will provide a setting for secondary students to practice independent living skills.

Maintenance Roof and Fencing Project

The Maintenance shop areas will be receiving some needed attention with the installation of new roofing. In addition, the storage yard area will be updated with new paving and a secure fence to protect the machinery and equipment. This project is expected to begin in the fall of 2024.

Superintendent's Residence

The NMSBVI Board of Regents have made the decision to save and renovate the existing Superintendent's Residence. Originally constructed in 1946, the Superintendent's Residence has been a prominent, landmark structure in Alamogordo for generations. It will now be updated with modern components, systems and amenities which will preserve this beautiful building for generations to come.

Demolition of Sacramento Dormitory

Sacramento Dormitory provided many decades of service and memories to NMSBVI. With all of this building's systems and structural components exceeding their life cycle, it was no longer cost effective to continue operation of the dormitory. The last building brick will be hauled away in October, 2024. The site will be restored with new grass sod, a sidewalk, and outdoor lighting.

Early Childhood Program (ECP) Expansion

With continuing increases in enrollment at the NMSBVI ECP in Albuquerque, it has become necessary to expand the campus and facilities. Design of the expansion project includes a new bus lane, infrastructure improvements and additional parking, as well as a new multipurpose cafeteria space. With the successful passage of General Obligation Bond 3, construction is expected to begin in May of 2025.

SAYING GOODBYE



Congratulations!
To our 20 ECP
and 4 Alamogordo
Preschool Graduates



Alamogordo Senior Graduates:

Aydin Begay

Hector Armenta-Marrufo

Mary Nix

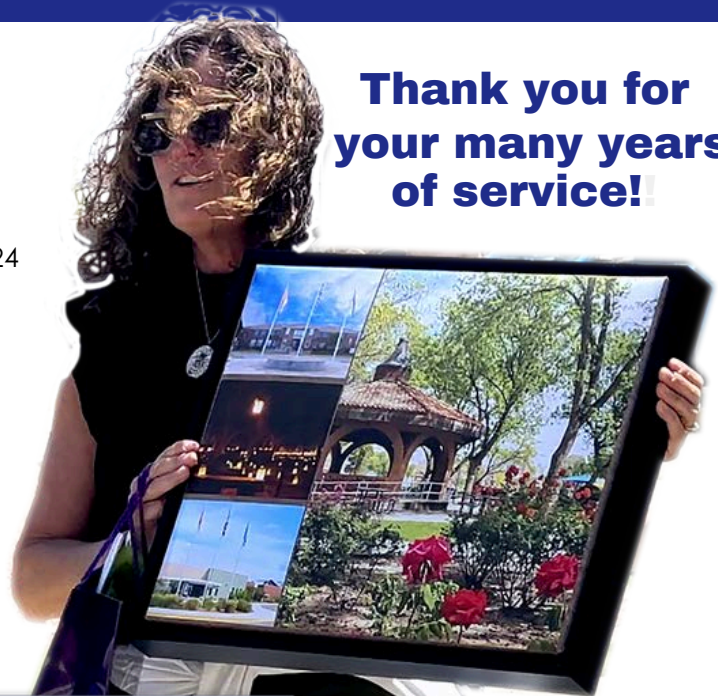
Angel Sanchez

Thristan Tucker

NMSBVI Staff Retirements

- **Patricia Beecher**
Superintendent, 8/16/2004 - 6/30/2024
- **Holly Bird**
Transition Services Coordinator, 11/26/2018 - 4/30/2024
- **Rhonda Daly**
Developmental Vision Specialist, 7/26/1999 - 6/30/2024
- **Angela Harris**
Administrative Assistant - Outreach, 7/1/2016 - 3/31/2024
- **Michele Joyner**
Math Instructor, 8/10/2017 - 6/30/2024
- **Ron Later**
Orientation & Mobility Instructor, 8/9/1999 - 4/30/2024
- **Beverly Naylor**
Braille Transcriber/Inclusion, 8/10/2007 - 6/30/2024
- **Delia Pedregon**
Housekeeper, 10/26/2016 - 12/31/2023
- **Jackie Quintana**
Education Assistant, 8/7/2000 - 10/31/2023
- **Pita Quintana**
Education Assistant, 8/10/2007 - 6/30/2024

**Thank you for
your many years
of service!**



**TOP
WORK
PLACES
2017-2024**

ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL



NMSBVI is a 2024 Top Workplace!
8 Years Running

**Named an employer
of choice because
our employees
said so.**


For the 8th Year in a row, NMSBVI is once again the proud recipient of an Albuquerque Journal Top Workplaces Award. This award is based on employee responses to a third-party workplace survey. We placed #4 in the midsize workplace category and were nationally recognized as a USA Today Top Workplace


THANK YOU!

NMSBVI extends the sincerest of gratitude to all of our staff, students, families, and supporters!



**NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR THE
BLIND & VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

 1900 N. White Sands Blvd.
Alamogordo, NM 88310

 1-800-437-3505

 <http://www.nmsbvi.k12.nm.us>

