



2023 Annual Report



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

October 25, 2023

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 2022-2023 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.

One initiative that NMSBVI implemented during the 2022-2023 school year was to increase the services that we can provide to students throughout the state who do not attend one of our schools. We held 7 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 had 43 students attending our Alamogordo Campus and 66 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, strategic games club, 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 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!

Thank you and join us
in celebrating our students!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia Beecher".

Patricia Beecher, NMSBVI Superintendent

NMSBVI Board of Regents

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Our Ongoing Mission

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

Strategic Plan Summary

NMSBVI's Strategic Plan drives decision-making at every level. In place from 2019-2024, the plan centers on six 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 include:

1. Supporting systems that result in sufficient numbers of specialized staff in the field of blindness and visual impairment in the state;
2. Creating a system to convey & receive information about blindness;
3. Building, maintaining, and supporting a system of data-driven decision-making to help support the needs of the students throughout New Mexico;
4. Developing a system throughout the state that supports early identification as well as successful transition of students across programs and into adult life;
5. Developing and maintaining partnerships and resources that will be used to advance the success of each student.
6. Developing systems to document, share and advance the efficacy of NMSBVI practices for educating students with visual impairments using the core and expanded core curricula.

Celebrating 120 Years

In 1903, the NM Territorial Legislature approved funding to establish what was then known as The Institute for the Blind. The \$8,000 appropriated resulted in the first building, approximately one mile north of the fledgling community of Alamogordo, New Mexico.

Nineteen years later, \$65,000 for new buildings was raised thanks to the efforts of Superintendent R.R. Pratt, and blindness advocates, Helen Keller and Elizabeth Garrett (daughter of famous NM sheriff, Pat Garrett).

To serve children ages 3-6, a new campus in Albuquerque was established in 1974. Our network of services expanded even further in the 1990s to include a statewide Birth to Three Program. This homebased strategy has become a nationwide model for providing visual impairment services to very young children and their families. To continue meeting the needs of students, even more innovative programs and resources have been added in the 2000s to include low-vision clinics, the technology lending library, Instructional Resource Center, and a university teacher preparation program.



Historically, blind students were taught piano tuning and chair caning as potential professions. Today, our students initiate individualized career plans, with job and life skills as a central focus for goal-setting. The Expanded Core Curriculum, braille, and travel skills are also woven into instruction to ensure that students have the maximum opportunity for success and independence in their life after school.

The Expanded Core Curriculum



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

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



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

Recreation & Leisure Skills: developing skills and interest in physical and leisure activities for choosing how to spend free time.

Sensory Efficiency: learning to use all their senses to access environments and information, including functional vision.

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 incidental learning, or by 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).

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.



Orientation & Mobility: knowing how to orient and travel safely, efficiently, and independently.

Social Interaction Skills: to actively and appropriately participate in social situations, including verbal and nonverbal social skills, relationships, and social competence.

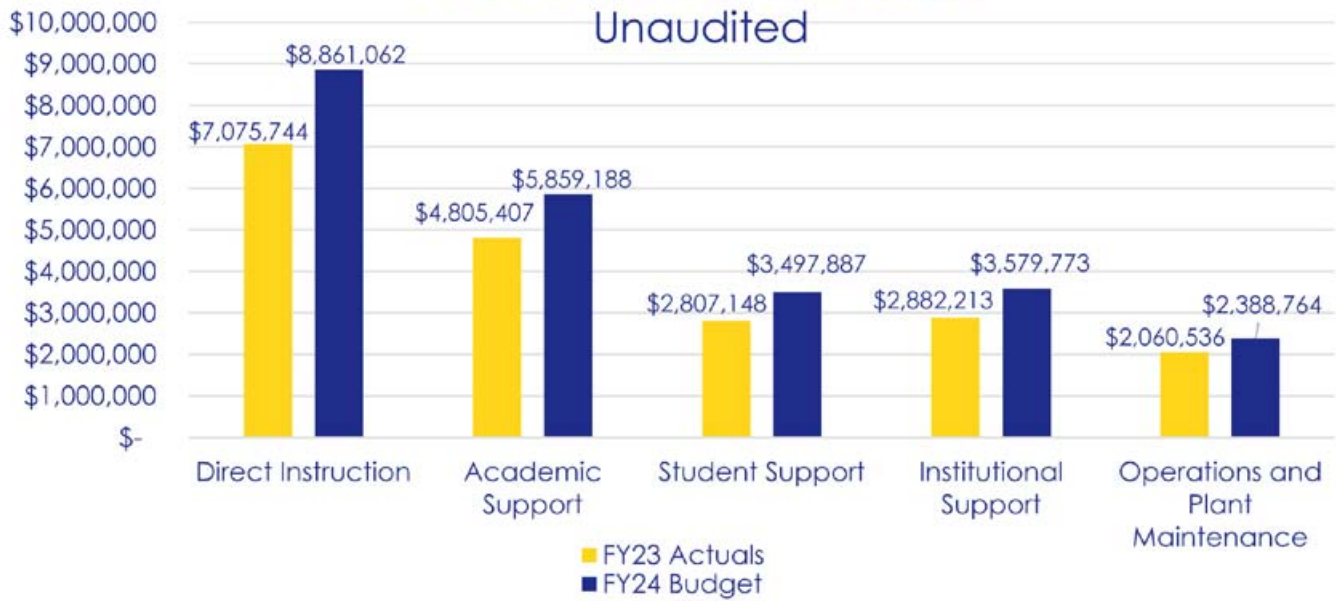


Independent Living Skills: to care for oneself, completing tasks and functions for living, managing, and maintaining daily life (eating, dressing, hygiene, time management).

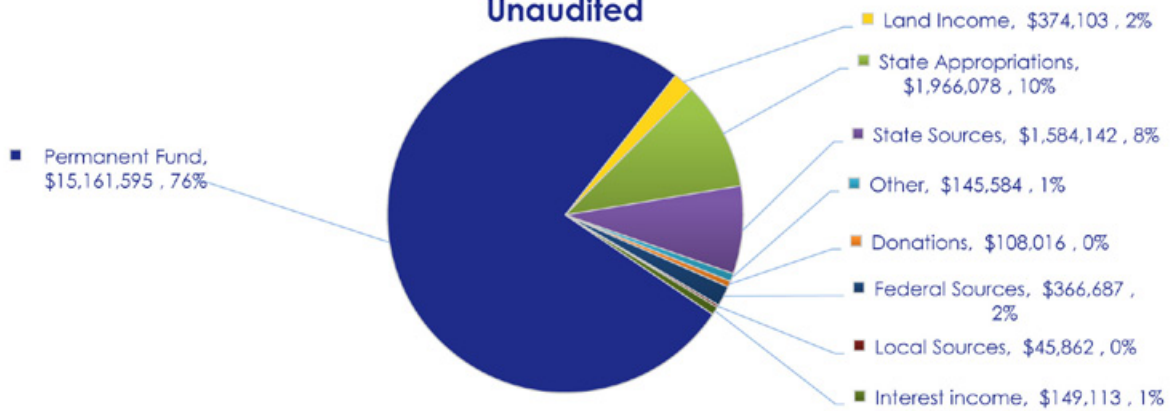
Self-Determination: empowering the student to believe in oneself, advocate for themselves, and meet their goals.

Financial Data

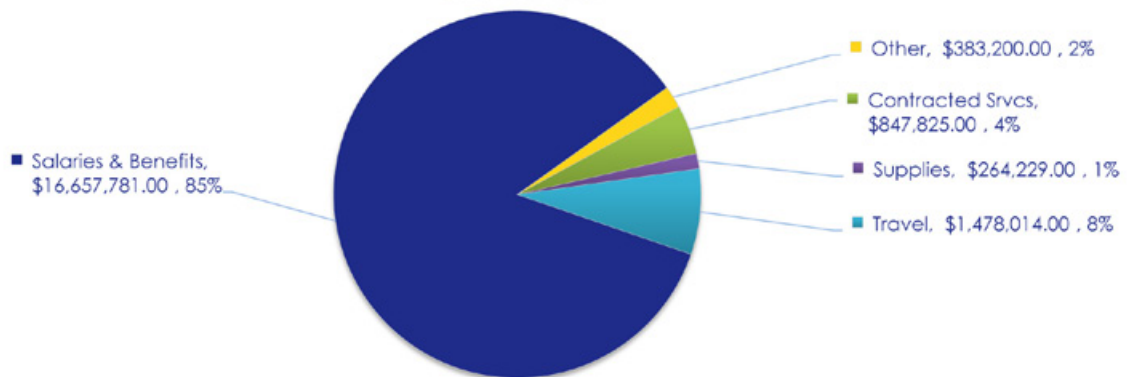
FY23 Actuals to FY24 Budget Unaudited



FY23 Revenue Unaudited



FY23 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 & Mobility Specialists (COMS), and one Administrative Assistant
- Held weekly in-person play groups for Albuquerque area families and a few play groups throughout the year in the Farmington area.
- Gave trainings to all NM Early Intervention Agencies, some professional organizations, other providers, and NMSBVI staff
- Partnered with hospitals for referrals, screening, and training purposes
- Provided over 600 vision screenings at childcare centers and child find events
- Formed partnerships with Explora! and Santa Fe and Farmington Children's Museums to allow free family access during outings and lessons.
- Mentored students in NMSU's Visual Impairment Program and O&M program

Professional Presentations

- AER International Conference: Birth to Three O&M; Birth to Three ECC; Birth to Three Literacy
- NMSBVI's Innovations Fair: Active Learning Strategies
- APH Webinar Series (3 parts) on Implementation of the CVI Companion Guide
- Invited to present on Birth to Three O&M and CVI at several university programs around the country



280 Average Ongoing Caseloads & **90** Average Monthly Referrals

Preschool: Residential Campus

(Jackie Freeman, Program Coordinator)

For local students ages 3-5 the residential campus provides preschool programming to support development in the ECC, communication, motor, math, and print/braille literacy and school-readiness skills through play-based, multi-sensory learning activities. Students also participate in music, adapted PE, recreation activities, and community-based learning.



Early Childhood Programs (ECP)

(Paul Kilman, Program Coordinator)

The Albuquerque ECP campus had 66 students from 5 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 TSVIs 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.

Collaboration & 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
- Teacher study group met regularly to discuss CVI, intervention strategies, and the CVI Companion Guide, & how to integrate ideas into the classroom.

Professional Presentations:

- Inservice trainings for other districts on Communication Matrix and Early Communication
- NM's CREC – Vision Impairments in Early Childhood
- *IS is for All* (National Conference on Implementation Science): Building a New Research Partnership

ECP Family Programming

(Claudia Randolph, ECP Social Worker)

Monthly events are held in person or virtual to give parents an opportunity to meet and support each other. Current and past NMSBVI families are invited to participate in parent night groups. Special events in the fall and spring also provide a way for families to meet each other and provide the students with opportunities to engage in new activities, with new people, in a familiar environment.

Monthly Family Nights

- Topics included: Bookshare, Q&A on adaptive equipment, parent panels on transitioning to new school settings, feeding education, book adaptations, and emotional journey.
- Social worker and families worked together to obtain and build community resources with food banks, legal aide, DD waiver, Social Security and diaper and housing support.

Fall/Spring Celebrations:

- Fall Carnival: 92 participants, including 23 families, came for pumpkin bowling, multi-sensory play, arts and crafts, cake walk, dancing, a photo booth, prizes, and more!
- Spring Carnival: 160 participants joined for a beeping egg hunt, face painting, arts and crafts, a photo booth, snow cones, and a visit from "Orbit" of the Albuquerque Isotopes!



Program Updates

Residential Campus Academic Program

(Maritza Morales, Principal)

20 students were served by the Academic Program for core content or related services like braille, O&M, or Assistive Tech. NMSBVI uses many innovative teaching techniques to address the core curriculum, as well as assistive technology and braille, from elementary through grade 12. Classroom teachers provide instruction and materials in the students' learning media (braille, print, or both), including many hands-on projects, role-playing, and experiences to make the curriculum accessible across all subjects and grades. Secondary teachers collaborate in cross-curricular planning to integrate core content in functional academic programming, post-secondary employment, and independent living goals/programming. Staff also teach the Expanded Core Curriculum throughout the day.

Program Highlights

- English/Communication class: students researched careers and created podcasts and power point presentations on what they learned.
- Secondary student created a tactile representation of the Rose Garden for a landscaping project proposal as part of his core curriculum and transition programming
- Students prepared and taught lessons to other students using APH's Code Jumper (product to learn computer programming),
- Students worked on product comparison investigation in which the quality, price, and nutritional value of the food items were compared

- Students constructed tetrahedron kites to apply geometry concepts, then took them out to test on a windy day!
- The Renewal Energy class built and tested their own wind turbine and used solar cells to pump water.
- The Biology, Chemistry, and Integrated Science classes learned how to use new accessible science equipment to gather, analyze, and communicate scientific data
- The Astronomy class used the telescope and completed a capstone project presentation of a tour to our solar system.
- Collaborative planning between our Transition Coordinator, Life Skills Staff, Assistive Technology instructor, Braille instructor, and Content teachers to support career, independent living, and post-secondary goals.



Transition Planning/Curriculum Updates

(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. Planning involves the student & student's family to identify strengths, needs, and interests in order to develop transition goals (with action plans to meet the goals) & supports the student in working independently toward those goals.

Program Highlights

- Partnership with NM Commission for the Blind for Pre-ETS Initiatives:
 - Project Echo: completed this second year of the Entrepreneurship Club with national recognition of Honorable Mention for the product developed by students.
 - Pre-Employment Transition Services (ETS) Summer Camp: 2-week summer camp focused on building employability skills, increasing independent task initiation and task completion, and improving self-advocacy in the workplace. Students stayed in NMSBVI dorms to enhance independence and daily living skills, job shadowed in the local community, and practiced job skills in a supported setting.
- Student Landscaping Project: This project focused on creating job experience opportunities on campus for a student interested in a horticulture/landscaping career. As part of his Transition programming, he completed the Extension Office Master Gardener program and worked with NMSBVI leadership to obtain a plot of land on the NMSBVI Residential Campus to landscape. He designed a plan for the land, developed phases and budgets, presented the project, and will complete the project during the 2023-2024 school year.
- Each Friday of the 2022-2023 school year, the Transition Coordinator and the Occupational Therapist collaborated in the Functional Academics Classroom to offer specific transition related instruction to students



Intensive Support Classes (ISP)

(Jackie Freeman, Program Coordinator)

NMSBVI 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 ECC.

Programming Highlights

- provided inclusion opportunities in the public school for 5 students to help generalize skills and participate in the community
- hands-on, multi-sensory activities focused around themes such as, friendship, "What's unique about me?", safety, plant life, and recipes
- music and adapted P.E. classes provided theme-related auditory and kinesthetic input to reinforce and help generalize new skills and concepts from classroom instruction
- community-based learning highlights:
 - a trip to the Mesilla Valley Maze to pick a pumpkin out of the patch
 - 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.



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) focus 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.

Programming Highlights

- Students' career preparation focused on developing resumes, job preparation, and mock interviews, with feedback through the year
- 4 students worked at on-campus or off-campus jobs for experience and job coaching to encourage success and independence
- 1 NMSBVI student participated in our Post-Secondary Program, which is open to NM students with complete 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 setting 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 and Students Served



1,818

Students received direct service

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



109

Students on Campus

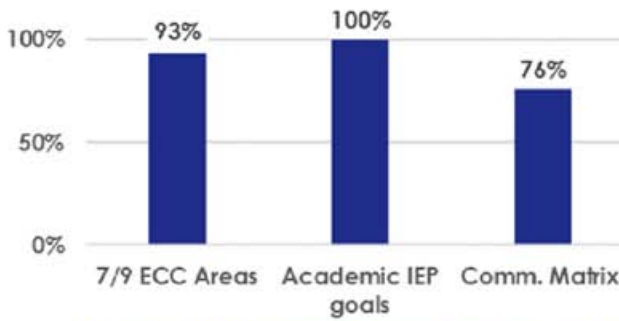
66 enrolled at ECP, Albuquerque
43 on Residential Campus, Alamogordo



1090

Evaluations

20 FVE/LMAs for districts
45 Low Vision Evaluations
29 AT Evaluations
996 referrals by B-3



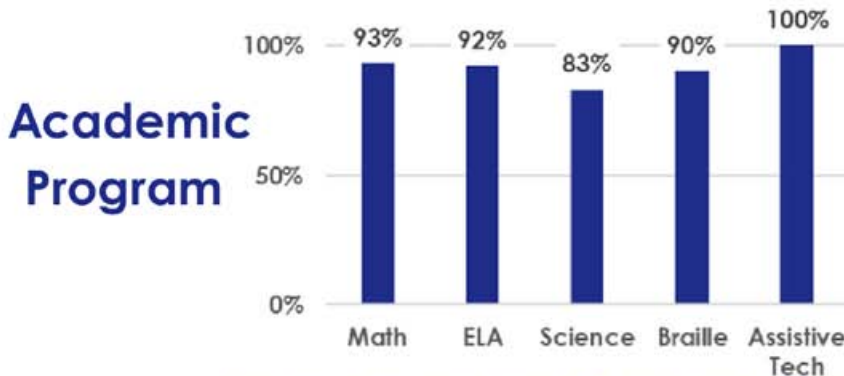
Prek/ISP Program

Goals: 80% will demonstrate growth in 7/9 ECC areas, academic (math/literacy) IEP goals, and the communication matrix.

*no skill to emerging or emerging to mastery on Matrix in 2 domains;
ECC: increasing independence in 1+ skill in area

2,444
total served

Residential Campus: Student Progress



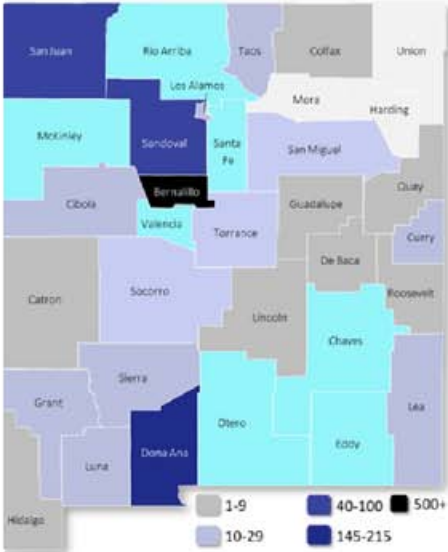
Goal: Students earning an A, B, or C in subject area



2,750

APH Items Loaned to 34 districts

From the NM-IRC
70+ APH AT devices loaned



Counties Served



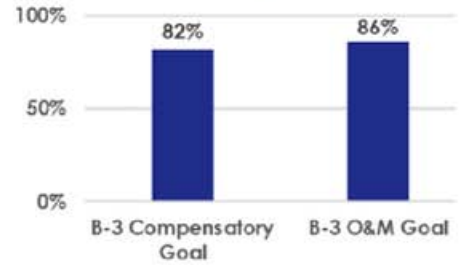
Birth to 3

613 served on caseloads

996 new referrals (91 to caseloads)

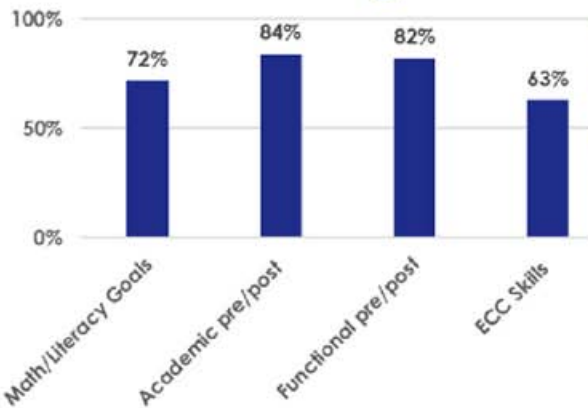
626 children screened

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)

597,959
miles driven

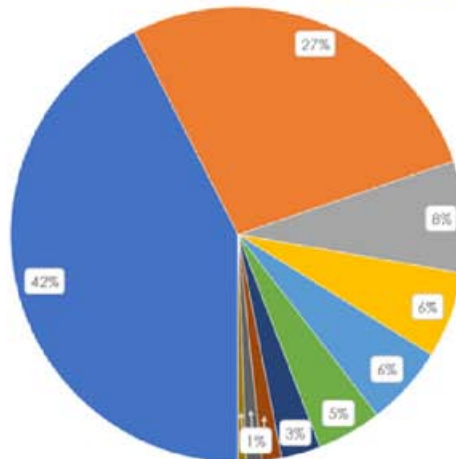


NMSU-VIP Personnel Prep

31 enrolled

18 TSVI/VI-Focus licensure
13 pursuing COMS licensure

Statewide Vision Diagnoses



- At Risk
- Neurological Visual Impairment
- Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP)
- Optic Nerve Hypoplasia (ONH)
- Ocular Motor
- Anterior Defect
- Retinal Defect
- An/microphthalmia, Enucleation
- Optic Nerve Atrophy
- Albinism

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. 36 total attendees
- Served as appointed mentors to 7 NMSU-VIP interns from 4 districts and both NMSBVI campuses.

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' 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 38 ATLL devices to students, another 34 to staff for trainings, and 70 APH devices with NM-IRC
- Direct services to 4 students; indirect services to 59 (not including evaluations)
- Conducted 29 AT evaluations
- Provided 40 AT trainings
- Served 28 districts
- Began collaboration with the Southwest Center for Assistive Technology Training (CATT) to provide trainings throughout the state
- Collaborated with statewide training to bring in notable speaker on assistive technology: 14 in person and 25 Zoom; free for attendees



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

- 8 Statewide clinics: Albuquerque (4 clinics), Roswell, Las Cruces (2-day clinic), and Artesia
- Total number of students seen: 45 (26 new students and 19 returning students)
- Served students from the following districts: NMSBVI-B3, NMSBVI-ECP, NMSBVI-Main Campus, Rio Rancho Public Schools, Altura Prep Charter School, Santa Fe Public Schools, Roswell Independent Schools, Artesia Public Schools, Carlsbad Municipal Schools, Las Cruces Public Schools, Gadsden Independent Schools, Deming Public Schools, La Academia Dolores Huerta Charter School, Rio Gallinas Charter School, Cuba Independent Schools, Cimarron Municipal Schools, Clovis Municipal Schools



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 that prepares teachers of students with visual impairments (TSVIs) and certified orientation and mobility specialists (COMSs) in the state. Moreover, it is one of approximately thirty such programs in the United States and one of roughly fifty such programs in the entire world. During fiscal year 2022-2023, the NMSU VIP had the following outcomes:



- Total active enrollment was 31 students, 16 of whom were pursuing their TSVI licensure, 13 of whom were pursuing their COMS licensure, 1 of whom was completing the Visual Impairment Focus (non-licensure coursework), and 1 of whom was pursuing their Master of Arts in Special Education
- 8 TSVI and 9 COMS interns worked in 15 public school districts in New Mexico, NMSBVI, the New Mexico Commission for the Blind, and 2 out of state districts and agencies
- 5 TSVIs, 3 COMSs, and 1 VI Focus finished their visual impairment coursework
- Dr. Mason presented her research analyzing inclusivity factors in children's picture books featuring fictional characters with visual impairments at AER in Missouri and facilitated a panel discussion on best practices in the learning media assessment process at the NMAER conference in Albuquerque.
- Dr. Mason mentored 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) continues to provide materials, transcription, and textbooks to school districts and students across New Mexico. The NM-IRC 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 NMVICount website, a statewide



online database, where NM-IRC materials can also be 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 & large-print textbooks previously purchased by a school district that can be loaned to other schools at no cost.

- 4 braille transcribers produced braille textbooks, tactile graphics, and other requested materials at no cost to school districts
- Loaned APH materials to 34 districts
- NM-IRC partnered with NMSBVI's Assistive Technology Lending Library to loan assistive technology items offered by APH through Quota Funds
- Conducted school district trainings on various APH items
- Collaborated with Outreach and ID&R for statewide training topics and events

Produced
42,000+ braille pages 
2,050 tactile graphics
5,828 print/large print pages

Extracurricular Activities at NMSBVI

NMSBVI Athletics

(Jeremiah Vaughn)

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 & 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.

- NMSBVI's Goalball team travelled to Colorado and Texas to play their teams.
- NMSBVI's hosted a Goalball tournament for Homecoming: Colorado and California schools' goalball teams travelled to NMSBVI to participate in a goalball tournament. It was a nail-biting finish that ultimately brought victory to our NMSBVI Golden Bears!
 - Weekend activities focused on students from different schools socializing, building friendships, and having fun: karaoke, games and "getting to know you" activities, and everyone participated in the Alamogordo Christmas Parade by riding on the NMSBVI float.

Adaptive Ski Program

(Lori Adam)

NMSBVI partners with Ski Apache Adaptive Sports (SAAS) to provide residential campus students the opportunity to ski in individual lessons. SAAS has instructors trained in adaptive ski techniques and equipment that allows students of all abilities to participate.

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



Girl Scouts

(Lori Adam)

Girl Scouts met weekly for fun activities, badge earning, and social interactions. NMSBVI's girls Scouts sold cookies throughout the community and each girl completed a "journey," which is a multi-session project to investigate interests and use skills to make a difference in the community.

- The Troop voted to use cookie sales to attend camp with other local troops at Aspendale Retreat in Cloudcroft, NM
- Left over cookies were donated to a homeless shelter
- Joined local troops at White Sands for the Sunset Stroll and the scouts were sworn in as White Sands Junior Dunes Rangers
- The Troop began working with the Alamogordo Zoo to develop QR codes to increase accessibility for blind and VI individuals

Strategy Game Night

(Mary Vaughn)

NMSBVI had volunteers join staff and the residential program to teach students how to play chess, and also learn different ways to adapt the game for tactile and low vision students. Making time for a game night, is not only about making great memories but also for creating opportunities for learning many important goals! In targeting the ECC area of Recreation and Leisure, learning to play Chess teaches so many concepts such as problem solving, memory, and socialization with peers in a fun setting.

Parent Braille Class

(Laura Miyoshi)

NMSBVI offered another braille course to parents that was open to any parents in the state, not just NMSBVI parents.

- The course covered eleven of the National Library of Congress Lessons and heavily practiced braille reading skills
- 10 parents initially participated and a few continued throughout the year

ECC Skill Booster Saturdays

(Mary Vaughn, Julie Johnson, Kitty Edstrand)

NMSBVI Statewide Training partners and collaborates 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: at the NMSBVI Residential campus focused on introduction to adapted sports for students, families, and district staff.
- December: at NMSU, Las Cruces, consisted of holiday activities that focused on socialization and independent living skills
- April: in Farmington focused Orientation & Mobility, Career Education with embedded Self-Determination and for students, their families, and district staff.
- May: in Albuquerque repeated April's focus on Orientation & Mobility, Career Education with embedded Self-Determination and Daily Living Skills.

Summer Camp

(Ron Later)

- **Alamogordo Secondary Camp and NASA Trip: 13 students, 7 days**

Before launching for NASA, students from around the state participated in on-campus space science and life skills activities such as impact of sun activity on daily life, the Cloudcroft Braille Trail, meal planning & prep, technology, and PE. After a 1 ½ day drive to NASA in Houston, students experienced a full-size shuttle, toured exhibits like the Apollo control room & a launch site, made rubber-band rockets and listened to mission control/astronaut communication. A trip to the beach before heading home made this a trip of a lifetime!

- **O&M Trip: 6 students, 3 days, and 3 cities!**

This public transportation-focused trip took students from Albuquerque to Arizona on planes, trains, buses, and ride-share. Along the way, students navigated unfamiliar airports, stations, streets, intersections, and independently located restaurants and hotels, where they checked in, and managed their tickets, keys, and luggage. They came home more capable & confident for independent travel!

- **ECP Camp for ECP Students:**

10 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 plenty of outdoor water play.

- **Satellite Camp in Farmington: 7 students, 5 days**

A mix of NMSBVI & non NMSBVI students from Farmington, Kirtland, Aztec, & Gallup focused on meal-planning & preparation, grocery shopping, technology skills, arts & crafts, and other physical activities.

- **Albuquerque Elementary Camp: 12 students, 5 days**

Several new & returning students joined in Albuquerque for elementary/middle school camp where they focused on math, technology, O&M, socialization, shopping and preparing meals and snacks.



Community Partnerships, Grants, & Research

Community 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 2022-2023 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.



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.



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.



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

NMSBVI began participating in the 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.



ECP-UNM Partnership:

UNM-ECP Partnership: Jessica Matney, ECP-ILT, and Kitty Edstrand, ID&R Coordinator, began a building formal partnership with UNM Professor Cathy Binger in an effort to develop a mutually-beneficially relationship in which we work to bridge the gap between research and practice. This partnership hopes to use Implementation Science or similar approaches to conduct research on-site that better supports the students, teachers, and better outcomes for all.

12 presentations/webinars
delivered on national platforms during 2022-2023!



Special Events

Grants

NMSBVI would like to thank the following for their support through grants:

- **Lineberry Foundation Grant**
- **Nusenda Community Awards**
- **Rotary del Sol (Albuquerque)**

Research Projects

Implementation of CVI Companion Guide:

Representatives from the ECP and B-3 continue to meet monthly with the authors of the CVI Companion Guide (Lueck, Chen, & Hartmann, 2021) to discuss and brainstorm strategies for implementation. Kitty Edstrand (NMSBVI ID&R Coordinator), and Liz Hartmann (Professor at LaSalle University) are working on a qualitative study to learn more about how parents/families understand CVI, the role of the EI provider, and family outcomes. NMSBVI staff presented this work with the authors at the Council for Exceptional Children Pre-Conference and multiple webinars that are nationally and internationally available online.

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.



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 25, 2023.
- 12 students participated, and we had a great turn out of family members also

Innovations Fair

- Staff presented new and creative projects or practices during our live virtual event in May.
- recorded presentations are preserved on our YouTube channel for ongoing training and professional development (www.youtube.com/nmsbvi)

White Cane Safety Day Celebration

- the Alamogordo Campus and Commission for the Blind celebrated with a White Cane Walk around campus, student speeches, and snacks on October 12
- the ECP Campus celebrated with a parade, obstacle course, and cane decorating on October 20



Construction on the Alamogordo Campus

(Patricia Beecher, Superintendent)

Current and future projects seek capital outlay funding for both NMSBVI campuses through partnership with the Public School Capital Outlay Council (PSCOC) and the Higher Education Department (HED).

Garrett Dormitory

- Demolition of the previous Garrett Dormitory occurred in October 2021
- Replaces an older structure named in memory of former teacher and Regent, Elizabeth Garrett (1885-1947), who became blind in childhood
- Garrett was the daughter of famed sheriff Pat Garrett, a friend of Helen Keller, lifelong advocate for the blind, and talented musician renowned for writing New Mexico's official state song, "O Fair New Mexico" as well as NMSBVI's official school song
- The new dorm represents educational housing and opportunities to develop independent living skills, two benefits in which Garrett strongly believed. Students are preparing to move into the new Garrett Dorm in November, 2023.



Paul & Lois Tapia Building (built 1918)

- One of 4 buildings designated a historic landmark on the National and State Historical Record
- Construction is beginning in November, 2023.
- Collaboration with NM Historical Preservation Department for replacement of in-kind windows (preserves history, improves efficiency and security)



New Playground

- A new playground is under construction and is scheduled for completion in December, 2023. The new playground space 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. The space will have plenty of shade for the students.

Residential Cottage:

- provides a setting for secondary students to practice independent living skills
- 2022 General Obligation (GO) Bond will fund this project
- project is fully designed and "shovel ready"

Superintendent's Residence

- Provides housing on campus for the superintendent and family.
- Provides meeting space for special guests, students, and staff
- Project is fully designed and "shovel ready"



Saying Goodbye

CONGRATULATIONS

to our 18 Preschool Graduates from the Early Childhood Program in Albuquerque!

NMSBVI Staff Retirements

Thank you for your many years of service!

- **Kelly Carnes**
Orientation & Mobility Instructor, 8/9/1999 - 11/30/2022
- **Lourdes Cruz**
Developmental Specialist, 7/1/2010 - 7/31/2022
- **Todd Gower**
Capital Projects Facilitator, Maintenance Technician
11/12/2007 - 5/31/2023
- **Julie Guthart**
Life Skills Assistant, Education Assistant, 8/15/2005 - 6/30/2023
- **Margie Macias**
Institutional Support Director, 3/20/1989 - 7/31/2023
- **Douglas Shoemaker**
Plant Operations Manager, 4/11/2005 - 7/31/2023



Thank You!

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

NMSBVI is a Top Workplace Again...

7 YEARS IN A ROW!

**TOP
WORK
PLACES**

2017-2023

AlbuquerqueJournal

This year, we are once again proud recipients of an Albuquerque Journal Top Workplaces 2023 award, for the 7th year in a row! This award is based on employee responses to a third-party workplace survey. We placed #4 in the midsize workplace category!). Many thanks to the staff who completed the survey, as well as the students and families that make NMSBVI such a great place to work! It is our continuing honor to serve students across the state of New Mexico!

To request a copy of this publication in Braille,
please contact Sharon Hilton,
NMSBVI Braille Production Department:
email SHilton@nmsbvi.k12.nm.us



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