

# Overview of Educational Programs & Outcomes: New Mexico School for the Deaf

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# Educational Programming at NMSD

- \* NMSD provides a full range of academic services that are available to all children in New Mexico including but are not limited to the following:
  - \* Core courses from early childhood through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. This includes math, science, language arts, social studies and so forth.
  - \* Various special courses in technology, transition/job preparation, fine arts, industrial arts, and physical education.
- \* We follow the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics. We follow the NM State Standards for all other subject areas. The Early Learning Guidelines developed by the state is used to guide our instruction with our Early childhood students.

# What's Unique to NMSD

- \* All of our students have Individualized Education Programs.
  - \* Students' instructional goals are tailored by a team to continue to develop their strengths and meet their needs.
  - \* All of our students in middle and high school have individualized transition plans.
  - \* We provide a full range of related services such as audiology, speech, ASL, counseling, occupational therapy, physical therapy, play and art therapy, and a full range of evaluation services.

# What's Unique to NMMSD

- \* To address the language and academic needs of our students, we also offer the following for our students:
  - \* 5-year High School program
  - \* ASL-English Immersion Program
  - \* ASL classes and services
  - \* Intensive reading/writing focus in all of our classes
  - \* Smaller classes that allow for increased teaching/learning time.
- \* Our residential programs provide students with the opportunity to be immersed in a language that is fully accessible to them 24 hours a day.
  - \* Our residential program also follows a set program that includes an after school program as well as an independent living skills program for older students.
  - \* Full range of after school tutoring and homework support services
- \* We also provide a multitude of opportunities for children to participate on various athletic and academic teams. This includes opportunities for children to compete alongside hearing peers in New Mexico as well as Deaf/HH peers on regional and national levels.

# What's Unique to NMSD

- \* Our ASL classes are designed for both children learning ASL as a first language and children learning ASL as a second language. We strongly believe that learning at least two languages creates opportunities for increased learning, critical thinking and intellectual development.
- \* Classes provided through spoken English for those who show aptitude for learning through this mode and/or to continue to develop the spoken language abilities that the students already have. We follow a variety of models for our classes depending upon the needs of different groups/individuals.
  - \* Note that this is in addition to speech services that our students receive.

# What's Unique to NMSD

- \* Our Early Childhood students experience an internationally acclaimed Reggio Emilia program that is language-rich and explicitly supports the development of creative and critical thinking skills.
- \* Our outreach departments, the Center for Educational Training and Consultation (CECT) as well as the Early Intervention and Involvement Division (EIID) provide support for children birth through 21 years old through direct services and support to public schools. Training for staff members including interpreters who work with Deaf and hard of hearing children across the state are provided by NMSD.
- \* All of our teachers receive training on a weekly basis, have specialized knowledge in how to teach Deaf/HH students by addressing their unique needs. All are also licensed by the state or enrolled in a state-approved licensing program.

# Outcomes

- \* There are many challenges when measuring the outcomes of our students due to a host of variables:
  - \* The impact of late language learning. Many students arrive at NMSD with very low communication abilities regardless of age.
  - \* Age of enrollment into NMSD.
  - \* Many students also have additional cognitive challenges.
  - \* Tests are not always appropriate for Deaf/Hard of hearing students (Sound-based, for example- or music questions).
  - \* Small numbers of students prohibit us from making fair generalizations.
- \* Regardless of those challenges, we assess our students using a variety of measures:
  - \* SBA (State mandated).
  - \* NWEA-Measures of Academic Progress (our “District” level assessment).
  - \* Online portfolios are developed for every student that include student work samples and standards checklists.
  - \* Developmental Reading Assessment & 6 Traits Writing assessments.
  - \* Other classroom measures as appropriate for each class.

# Outcomes: ASL

(Evidence: Student Portfolios/Video Samples & Language Assessments and Checklists)

- \* 100% of our students who arrive at NMSD with no signing abilities acquire at least a conversational/social level of signing ability within one year.
- \* Based on the same evidence as well as input from teachers and interpreters, at least 70% of these students have academic language abilities enabling them to participate in their classes by the end of their first year.
  - \* Note that for those with spoken language abilities, interpreters are provided until it is determined by the team including the student that services are no longer necessary.
- \* The vast majority of the students who attend NMSD for at least five years have higher levels of general communication abilities than when compared to their peers who have attended NMSD for less than two years.

# Outcomes:

## Notes Regarding the SBA

- \* The Standards Based Assessment cannot truly assess how much students have improved if they are performing below grade level. This is why we use other measures.
- \* Students also receive no opportunities to read independently and respond to questions using the language of their preference. They receive zero ASL support during the reading assessment.
- \* Reading/Math achievement on the SBA:
  - \* 80% (Reading) and 66% (Math) of the students who achieve proficiency and/or nearing proficiency on the SBA have been attending NMSD for more than three years.
  - \* More than half of the students who do not achieve proficiency/nearing proficiency have additional cognitive challenges identified in their IEPs.
  - \* Of those who do not have identified cognitive challenges, at least 60% have been attending NMSD for less than 3 consecutive years.

# Outcomes: MAP

- \* The Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test is a computer-based test that modifies its difficulty level based on the students' responses to determine the student's current level of performance.
- \* Reading: 60% of our students demonstrate measurable improvement. (For reading, students receive no ASL support and respond only through English)
- \* Math: 67% of our students demonstrate measurable improvement.

# Outcomes: DRA

- \* The Developmental Reading Assessment is an assessment in which students read passages and answer questions in their preferred language (ASL or English). Their individual starting points are identified at the beginning of each year and then they are re-assessed to determine progress, and identify individual strengths and areas of focus.
- \* 89.7% of our students moved up in reading levels and performed better during the second testing session.

# Other Outcomes

## (Evidence: Portfolios/Student Work)

- \* Far more difficult to measure are our students' progress in social, critical thinking and creative thinking skills. Students' written work and signed samples show consistent increases in critical and creative thinking abilities.
- \* NMSD's rate of transition to post secondary programs including colleges/universities, technical schools and job placement programs are at 90% or above.
- \* Most years, NMSD's dropout rate is at 0%. Two students have dropped out over the past fifteen years.
- \* ??% of students who started attending NMSD between early childhood through the first grade???? (comment about attending college)

# We Are Never Satisfied

- \* Even though statistical data explains some of the struggles that we have with developing our students' academic skills, or with test results, we are never satisfied.
  - \* This year, we have added a formal system for supporting students through tutoring and homework support.
  - \* We have implemented the Common Core State Standards and are reviewing our materials to make sure they are current.
  - \* In keeping with the Common Core, we are increasing language arts instruction in all content areas and those teachers are receiving training and are expected to implement literacy instruction on a daily basis.