



New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

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About

Founded in 1903 and in 1906 the first campus was built in Alamogordo.

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.”

Population

Children birth to 22 years, who have diagnosed visual impairment or are considered to be at risk for receiving VI diagnosis



Location and Facilities

- Residential and day campuses in Alamogordo and Albuquerque.
- Services statewide
- Buildings are acoustically designed
- Tactile cues on walls and doors
- Small playhouses, sensory “rooms”
- Kitchen to make from scratch lunches

Age-Group	Services (brief list)	Location
Early Intervention (Birth to 3 yrs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Functional Vision Evaluations • Consultations and referrals • Direct services to the child and family (IFSP) • Information about blindness/visual impairment • Orientation and Mobility Evaluations and Services • Support in Transitions and for parents 	Provided in home or community state-wide
Early Childhood Program (3-6 yrs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy (print and Braille), math, concept development, socialization, and all aspects of the expanded core curriculum for blindness • Classroom instruction from Teachers of the Visually Impaired • Orientation and Mobility instruction • Physical, occupational, and Speech-Language Therapy; social work; nursing; audiology • Transportation 	Day Program offered at the Alamogordo and Albuquerque campuses
School Age (6-22 yrs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic, career and ability option programs • Day programming and Residential programming • Inclusion program: opportunity to take classes in local public schools • Orientation and mobility instruction and assistive technology; • Braille instruction and all other components of blindness/VI education • Physical, occupational, speech therapies, nursing and nutrition, and counseling • Assessment related to vision specific needs; 3-year re-evaluations • Music instruction including private lessons • Transportation to and from school each weekend and holiday • Other Special Programs 	Residential Program in Alamogordo Day Program: Albuquerque

Application process

- Free access to children with visual impairments
- Early Intervention: Anyone can refer for services with family permission
- Functional Vision Evaluation to determine services
- For ECP in Albuquerque: must have IEP with APS school district and registration packet
- Can start attending after turning 3 years old.
- No waitlist as of Fall 2020
- For the school age: evaluate the need for intensive instruction in skills related to VI.
- Summer and short-term programs
- Many children transition to public school after 1st or kinder and receive support through IEP

Impact from COVID

- School is virtual as much as possible.
- Children are missing out on incidental learning opportunities due to the virtual platform.
- Teacher have had to be extra creative-send stuff home
- Try to have events like for Halloween they had a slideshow of everyone’s costumes.
- When safer, they have a few kids come in once or twice a week for those who need it most.
- Parents of children with intensive healthcare needs (G-tube, etc) find it difficult to work.

Classroom Structure:

- 9 classrooms in the Albuquerque location
- Teacher, 2 Teacher Assistants, 1 Occupational Therapist in the class
- 3 OT, 3 SLP, 2 PT overall
- 2 Orientation and Mobility Specialists
- 1 Social Worker and 1 Nurse
- Many others



Collaborations

- NM Family, Infant, Toddler Program
- Department of Health
- Navajo Nation
- Families and community-Toys for Tots, Coats for kids

Funding

- Land-grant school
- Federal and state funding
- NMSBVI Foundation: non profit 501(c)(3) organization

Contact info

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