

# ***NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED***

*1900 White Sands Blvd.  
Alamogordo, New Mexico 88310  
(505) 437- 3505  
[www.nmsbvi.k12.nm.us](http://www.nmsbvi.k12.nm.us)*

## ***Student/Family Handbook***

***2006/2007***



***Dianna Jennings  
Superintendent***

***Reviewed and approved by the NMSBVI Board of Regents – July 26, 2006***

**Accredited by  
New Mexico State Department of Education  
North Central Association of Schools and Colleges**

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## **ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

	<u>Work</u>	
	<u>Ext.</u>	
Superintendent, Dianna Jennings		113
Executive Assistant, John Williams	119	
Director of Business/Finance, Retha Coburn	163	
Director of Outreach Programs, Linda Lyle	300	
Director of Plant Operations, Justin Burks	159	
Human Resources Coordinator, Veronica Hernandez	168	

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

Instructional Leader, Danette Fuller	219
Instructional Leader, Dave Nohe	
Instructional Leader, Kelly King	171
Student Services Support Coordinator, Carolyn Vick	114
Transition Services Coordinator, Darlene Gallegos	199
Teacher, Robin Bagwell	175
Teacher, Dena Curran	217
Teacher, Julie Johnson	222
Teacher, Janet Hobbs	201
Teacher, Jeff Killebrew	238
Teacher, Kelly King	171
Teacher, Laura Miyoshi	218
Teacher, Wanda Raney	151
Teacher, Lorrie Francis	221

### **Support Services**

Behavior Support Specialist, Jackie Cope	251
Mental Health Counselor, Michala Wadley	170
Inclusion, Ron Later	215
Independent Living Skills Lead, Nancy Apprill	185
Independent Living Skills, Bea Millos	186
Independent Living Skills, Pat Vigil	186
Librarian, Judy Bates	115
Library Aide, June Cady	210
Diagnostician, Kathy Bulle	131
Occupational Therapist, Joanne Habelt	166
Certified OT Assistant, Jaretta Burk	110
Orientation & Mobility Lead, Kelly Carnes	246
Orientation & Mobility, Helen Reilly	109

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

Orientation & Mobility, Ron Later	215
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Physical Therapist, Randal Martin	147
Speech Pathologist, Susan Rogalla	152
Speech Pathologist/Augmented Communication/ Assistive Technology, Alex Burks	252
School Resource Officer, Scott Murray	197
Transportation Manager, Roger Bredy	128

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	524
Sacramento South (439-4423)	123
Sacramento South Student Phone	520
	521

### **Student Health Services**

Health Services Manager, Holly Obrovac	180
Nurse, Barbara Hartwell	157
Nurse, Brenda Hunt	157
Nurse, Veronica Gilbreath	157
Nurse, Linda Corporal	157

# **BOARD OF REGENTS**

**2006-2007**

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<b>MS. CAROLINE ROUNDS</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Albuquerque, NM</b>

## 2006 – 2007 SCHOOL CALENDAR NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

<b>AUGUST</b>	Staff In-Service/ Mandatory Orientation Staff In-Service/Classroom Time Students Return to NMSBVI First Day of School - NMSBVI APS First Day of School First Weekend on Campus	August 14 August 15 August 15 August 16 August 16 August 19, 20
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	Labor Day Holiday Students Return Second Weekend on Campus No Public School First Quarter Progress Report Period Ends	September 4 September 5 September 9, 10 September 21 September 22
<b>OCTOBER</b>	Students Return – Columbus Day First Quarter Ends No Public School/Students Return	October 9 October 20 October 30
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	Veterans Day Third Weekend on Campus Thanksgiving Return Home/Dismissed 12:30 p.m. Thanksgiving Holiday Second Quarter Progress Report Period Ends Students Return/Thanksgiving Break	November 11 November 18, 19 November 21 November 22-26 November 24 November 26
<b>DECEMBER</b>	Fourth Weekend on Campus Students Return Home for Winter Break/12:30 p.m. Winter Break	December 16, 17 December 20 December 21-January 7
<b>JANUARY</b>	Students Return/Winter Break Ends School Resumes Second Quarter Ends/First Semester Ends Students Return/ Martin Luther King Day School Resumes	January 7 January 8 January 12 January 15 January 16
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	Third Quarter Progress Report Period Ends Students Return/Presidents Day Holiday School Resumes	February 16 February 19 February 20
<b>MARCH</b>	Third Quarter Ends	March 16
<b>APRIL</b>	Spring Break Begins Easter Students Return School Resumes Fourth Quarter Progress Report Period Ends	April 2-6 April 8 April 9 April 10 April 27
<b>MAY</b>	Fourth Quarter Ends Graduation / Dismissal 12:30 p.m.	May 25 May 25





## **NMSBVI SCHOOL SONG**

**by**

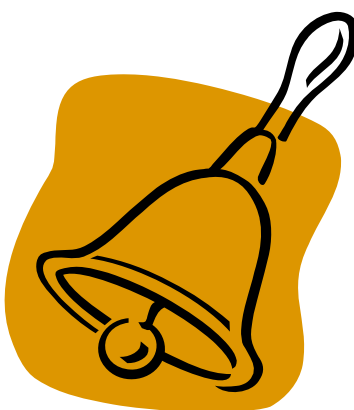
**ELIZABETH GARRETT**

There's a school in Alamo  
That we think is great,  
"Tis in fair New Mexico, called our Sunshine State."  
All our hearts beat loyally;  
Everyone is true  
To our dear old Alma Mater – Love it? Course we do!

Then cheer, then cheer,  
Of NMSBVI are we;  
With pride each son  
And daughter hails our  
Glorious Alma Mater.  
Then cheer, then cheer,  
Of NMSBVI are we;  
With a Boom! Bang! Rip! Roar! Here we come,  
Here we go;  
We're the greatest  
School in New Mexico!  
We're bound to win  
The victory, good old NMSBVI for thee.

## **NMSBVI BELL SCHEDULE**

<b>FIRST HOUR</b>	<b>8:10 – 9:10</b>
<b>SECOND HOUR</b>	<b>9:15 – 10:10</b>
<b>THIRD HOUR</b>	<b>10:15 – 11:10</b>
<b>FOURTH HOUR</b>	<b>11:15 – 12:10</b>
<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>11:30– 12:10 Younger 12:15 – 12:45 Older</b>
<b>FIFTH HOUR</b>	<b>12:50 – 1:45</b>
<b>SIXTH HOUR</b>	<b>1:50 – 2:45</b>
<b>SEVENTH HOUR</b>	<b>2:50 – 3:45</b>



## **NMSBVI MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired is to provide the training, support and resources necessary to prepare blind/visually impaired children, including those with multiple impairments, in New Mexico to participate fully in their families, community, and work force and to lead independent, productive lives.

## **NMSBVI VISION STATEMENT**

The vision of the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired is to provide leadership that will create a comprehensive program of educational services for all blind/visually impaired children, including those with multiple impairments, in New Mexico that is world class and recognized nationally as the most knowledgeable, effective and efficient educational program for blind children in the United States.

## **NMSBVI GOALS**

Identify and serve blind/visually impaired children, including those with multiple impairments, birth through age 21 through site-based, outreach and resource programs.

Provide academic and compensatory skills instruction, support and ancillary services and resources to empower every student to reach his or her potential.

Assure adequate training to meet the changing needs of the population served, promote advocacy and understand the implications of federal and state legislation for NMSBVI staff, parents and public school teachers teaching blind/visually impaired students.

Maintain accountability measures that assure compliance with federal and state laws and regulations and board of regent's policies.

Provide a safe, productive, nurturing environment for students and develop community relations that assure a public positive image of NMSBVI that will encourage enrollment.

## **CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT REPORTING**

Pursuant to Section 32-1-15 NMSA 1978, any NMSBVI staff member knowing or having reasonable suspicion that a child is abused or neglected will report the matter immediately to:

1. A local law enforcement agency;
2. State of New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department/Adult Protective Services Central Intake at 1-800-797-3260;
3. Tribal Law Enforcement or social services agencies for an Indian child/adolescent/dependent adult residing in Indian country.

## **CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT**

The School for the Blind and Visually Impaired values a safe learning environment and maintains a drug, tobacco, alcohol, and weapons free campus.

## **STUDENT REGISTRATION**

Parents are required to complete all registration materials before their child enters NMSBVI. Included in the packet of registration forms parents complete annually are forms relating to travel and various permission forms. The permission forms are used as guidelines as circumstances require. Copies of these forms are maintained in the education department and in the residential life department. Parents are asked each year to complete forms concerning their child's health and return them to NMSBVI at the beginning of the school

year. Please be aware that your child's medical history, your family physician's name, address, and phone number, any recurrent or chronic medical problems, any special diets or allergies, and a current immunizations record must be on file each year. It is difficult and at times impossible to provide your child with medical attention without this information. **Please provide Health Services with current medical insurance information.**

Communication is the key to good relations between the home and school. NMSBVI staff members make frequent calls to students' homes. **It is imperative that parents inform the school of any change in general information** (e.g., address, telephone number, student permissions, etc.). To notify the school of changes, call the education office (505-437-3505, extension 127).

### **STUDENT FILES**

Students' educational files are maintained in the Watkins Education Building. Students' health files are maintained in the Student Health Center. The custodian of these files may release information from the records only:

- ◆ With written consent of parent, guardian or adult student.
- ◆ Upon order of a court.
- ◆ As required by the Superintendent or her designee in the discharge of official duties.

All requests for records should be addressed to:

Records  
New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired  
1900 North White Sands Blvd.  
Alamogordo, NM 88310

### **PHOTOGRAPH RELEASE**

Photographs are often valuable in planning programs and in sharing information with parents, governing boards, officials, and the general public. They can be used to inform others of available services as well as to help teachers plan instruction or evaluate progress. Because they can be used so effectively to provide information, pictures and photographs are important to our program. We request permission to photograph your child with our assurance that the photographs will be used only for official school purposes. A photograph release permission form is included in the registration packet of materials completed before your child enters NMSBVI. Your signature on this form will permit us to photograph your child and publish or otherwise use the photographs, and to release the photographs to interested parties when in the best interest of the school and/or your child. An example of this might be press coverage of the annual track meet or special field trips, etc.

### **PETS**

Personal pets and/or guide dogs of resident/day students are not permitted on campus as some students have allergies, fears, etc. regarding some animals.

Animals may be permitted on campus with prior approval if the animals are part of a scheduled activity or program. It is the responsibility of the staff person supervising such an activity or program to ensure the safety of the students, sanitary conditions of the areas where animals are kept and to make a judgment on the need for veterinary examinations. Prior approval of animals on campus rests with the Superintendent.

## **VISITING CAMPUS**

Parents/relatives of students are welcome to visit NMSBVI any time that is convenient. Whenever possible, advance plans for visiting on campus should be made with the Superintendent's Office. A Visitors' Badge should be worn at all times while on campus.

Parents are encouraged to plan their visits so as not to interfere with the classroom or dormitory routine.

Parents may stay overnight in guestrooms as space is available for a charge of \$10.00 per person per night. Meals, if provided, cost \$2.00 per meal per person for breakfast, lunch and dinner served in the dining room. To schedule room reservations, contact our education office at (505) 437-3505, ext. 127.

All visitors must obtain a visitors pass from administration or dormitory. Only those visitors whose name is on the Student Update form may visit students.

All visitors must check in with the Superintendent's Office before visiting classes, or with the education office or the Residential Life Manager for visits during non-school hours. Meals may be obtained by visitors at the cost stated above; however, advance notification is required.

## **COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE**

All students shall be expected to attend school as many days as school is in session in accordance with the Compulsory Attendance Laws found in the New Mexico Statutes Annotated 22-12-2 and 23-12-7 NMSA 1978 (Being Laws 1967, Chapter 16, Section 170 and 175 as amended).

After the Sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) unexcused absence, a letter will be sent home informing the parents/guardians that the school's records show six unexcused absences in one or more of their student's classes.

After the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) excused or unexcused absence, a letter will be sent home informing the parents/guardians that school records show ten excused or unexcused absences in one or more of their student's classes.

A student may lose credit for classes if they accumulate more than 10 absences.

A parent/teacher/administrator conference is required when a student accumulates more than 10 absences. In certain cases, the student may also be referred to juvenile court. A student passing a class with more than 10 absences must have written justification from the teacher.

### **DEFINITIONS:**

**TARDY** – Those students that are not in their appropriately assigned classroom when class is designated to begin.

**EXEMPT** – School-sponsored, official activities, or religious holidays are EXEMPT and will not be counted in the total of TEN (10) credit loss absences.

**“SCHOOL-SPONSORED”** – OR “official” activities are those monitored by school personnel and/or for which school transportation is provided, or those sanctioned and approved by the school administration.

**TRUANCY** – Absence without prior knowledge or consent of parents/guardians. In-school suspension will result upon the student's return to school the following day.

## PROCEDURES TO REPORT AN ABSENCE:

1. Parents/guardians are obligated to contact the School Office (437-3505 Ext. 127) prior to or during the absence.
2. Telephone contact is preferred, however, written notices signed by the parents/guardians will be accepted. An answering machine at the above number will accept messages. Parents/guardians should state their name, the student's name, the reason for the absence, and date(s) of the absence(s).
3. Long term or chronic illness must be verified by a physician's written statement and a parent should have on-going contact with the Superintendent for the duration of the illness.
4. Excessive absences may be referred to the agency of jurisdiction and/or community resources.
5. Third and subsequent tardies in any class per semester will be referred to the Superintendent.
6. Tardies will not be excused unless they are verified doctor/dental appointments.

## FUNDRAISERS

Any on or off-campus fundraisers by individual students or classes must be approved in advance by the Superintendent.

## DISCIPLINE POLICIES

1. School and dorm rules, as well as policies and procedures for discipline, will be clearly communicated to students.
  - a. General and special rules (staff expectations of students) will be listed and posted in each classroom and each dorm.
  - b. Rules and lists of expectations, as written, will be reviewed orally and in written form. Students should review and sign a written copy stating they understand the rules.
  - c. Policies and Procedures for Discipline will be posted.
  - d. Policies and Procedures for Discipline will be reviewed orally with students.
2. Progressive Discipline Plan
  - a. MINOR/MODERATE STUDENT INCIDENT :
    1. First Offense                      Verbal Warning
    2. Second Offense                  Written Report on Topic of Teacher's Choice
    3. Third Offense                    After School Detention

After third offense, Referral to Student Services Support Coordinator.
  - b. SEVERE/SERIOUS STUDENT INCIDENT:
    1. Parents Notified; Student Services Support Coordinator notified; Referral to Mental Health Counselor; Campus Resource Officer notified.
    2. On-Campus Community Service.
    3. 6 to 9 Day In-School or Out-of-School Suspension.
    4. Possible Recommendation for Expulsion.
    5. Possible Referral to the Juvenile Probation Office.
    6. Law Enforcement of Jurisdiction notified.

3. Discipline: Routine discipline involving minor infractions of rules or inappropriate conduct which are not serious enough to report to the supervisor or administrator can normally be handled by teaching staff, residential life assistants, or related professional staff.
4. Policy on Corporal Punishment and Aversive Therapy: Corporal punishment, under any circumstances, is forbidden. No employee shall administer aversive therapy except as provided for under New Mexico Administrative Codes and the IEP process.

## **CONDUCT**

The NMSBVI Board of Regents, Administration and Staff are deeply interested in creating the best learning atmosphere possible. We appreciate the cooperative attitude of the students.

Exceptional conduct is conduct which promotes a positive school atmosphere. This may consist of acts of kindness directed toward other students or staff, school service, or exemplary attitudes directed towards a student's present course of study. Exceptional conduct displayed by students will result in written notification to students and staff plus verbal recognition to the student body. Continued displays of exceptional conduct will result in the notification of parents, increased privileges, and nomination for various student recognition awards.

## **EIGHTEEN PLUS YEARS (ADULT STUDENTS)**

All students enrolled at NMSBVI are considered to be under the guardianship of their parent or guardian regardless of age. If an 18 year old student is emancipated from his/her parent or guardian, we recommend that the student secure an adult advocate to assist in his/her representation during IEPs and disciplinary procedures. An 18 year old may not list the school as his/her home address. Regardless of age, all students must abide by the rules of the school.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

It is important that our school atmosphere allow all of our students to pursue their education free from disruptions or distractions. Maintaining order necessitates regulations relating to school discipline. NMSBVI has established standards of conduct for students and the disciplinary process to protect members of the school community, maintain and advance its educational mission, and provide for the orderly conduct of the school's activities. Disciplinary procedures employed by the school are considered part of its educational process. In every case of misconduct, the nature and the circumstances of the violation will be considered and appropriate disciplinary actions will be administered on a less restrictive alternative basis including but not limited to time out, detention, behavior contracts, restriction of privileges, reprimand, restitution, suspension or expulsion.

School policy and rules of conduct shall be applicable to all students in any program or activity conducted by NMSBVI. Rules and procedures will be developed which govern the conduct of students on school premises or off school premises at any school-sponsored activity to protect the health and safety of individuals and property, and to ensure that a proper learning environment prevails in the classroom.

Guidelines for classroom conduct will be established by each classroom teacher. Teachers will provide these guidelines in written format to each student enrolled in their classes. These guidelines will specify requirements regarding student conduct within the class, including rules, grading procedures, and other standards established by the professionally licensed teacher. No CD players, pagers or cell phones are to be used in class throughout the education day unless directed by the classroom teacher.

## **DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS**

Following is a list of optional disciplinary actions which may be imposed. The order of the list is not sequential, but optional.

1. In-school detention
2. Removal from class or group
3. Verbal or documented warning to student
4. Faculty consultation concerning student
5. Contract or action plan
6. Activity suspension
7. Parental notification
8. Parental conferences
9. Confiscation or temporary holding of personal items
10. Probationary period
11. In-school suspension
12. Financial restitution
13. Refer to other social or educational agencies
14. Short term suspension
15. Long term suspension
16. Involve law enforcement
17. Any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate under the circumstances
18. Expulsion

## **PROHIBITED BY STATE REGULATIONS**

State Regulation No. 81.3 sets forth certain acts prohibited in all New Mexico schools. Students must refrain from these whenever they are subject to school control. The following are acts prohibited by State regulations:

1. Criminal or delinquent acts
2. Disruptive conduct
3. Refusal to identify self
4. Refusal to cooperate with school personnel.

SBE Regulation No. 81.3 is made part of this policy by reference as if set forth in full. Copies of this regulation are on file in the Student Services Support Coordinator's Office.

## **STUDENTS DUE PROCESS PROCEDURES**

Students at NMSBVI have rights. They also have the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others. If students make bad decisions and fail to do this, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with their IEP. In disciplinary cases, students are entitled to due process. This means that students:

- must be informed of accusations against them,
- must have the opportunity to accept or deny the accusations,
- must have explained to them the factual basis for the accusations, and
- must have a chance to present an alternative factual position if the accusation is denied.

## **POSSIBLE SANCTIONS**

Counseling: Meet with an appointed counselor to discuss alternative behaviors for corrective action and to devise a behavioral plan.

Discipline: This will be at the discretion of the disciplinarian to include detention, in-school suspension (1-2 days), or may result in short or long term suspension (1-10) days).



## **PROCEDURE FOR SUSPENSION**

Should any student become subject to disciplinary action or suspension, the following procedure will be used to determine consequences.

1. The multidisciplinary team consisting of members listed below shall meet within 24 hours.
  - a. The student
  - b. Members of the NMSBVI administrative staff
  - c. Others as appropriate.
2. The multidisciplinary team shall review the situation for which the student has become subject to discipline or suspension.
3. The multidisciplinary team shall make the following determinations.
  - a. Does the situation warrant suspension?
  - b. Is/was the situation related to the student's disability?
  - c. What type and length of suspension (if determined appropriate) should result?
  - d. What, if any, additional agencies (i.e. CYFD, local school district, police, etc.) shall be notified/become involved?
  - e. Which team members shall accept responsibility for each notification?

After the multidisciplinary team has come to a consensus, the student's parents/guardians shall be notified of the determination, and a written report shall be placed in the student's file.

### **SUSPENSION**

NMSBVI must provide an educational plan for students suspended for six days or more, unless the student is suspended for possession of a dangerous weapon, a controlled substance (as defined in the Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substances Act), or a firearm. Parents/guardians will be provided a copy of the educational plan and bear the responsibility of monitoring the student's educational progress until the student is re-admitted to school.

A student may be suspended (excluded from classroom instruction) by the Superintendent or his/her representative for a period of more than three (3) days but not to exceed ten (10) days.

### **EMERGENCY SUSPENSION**

The Superintendent or his/her representative may suspend a student without a hearing if reasonable cause exists to indicate:

- The physical safety of the accused student or of others is endangered.
- The school is in the midst of a violent upheaval.
- The student is causing substantial interference with the operation of the school.

The emergency suspension will terminate when it is determined that the student's presence at school will not result in a situation warranting emergency suspension.

Students who are suspended from school will be allowed to make up work missed under suspension. The homework must be turned in the day the student returns from suspension. All regularly scheduled tests must be made up within the same number of days as the suspension after the student returns. The student will receive no credit for work not made up on this time schedule.

## **MISCONDUCT**

Any student who willfully violates or fails to follow NMSBVI rules or regulations, or performs an act, which materially interferes with or is detrimental to the orderly operation of a classroom or school, a school-sponsored activity, or any other aspect of the educational process at NMSBVI, will be subject to discipline

or suspension. **Corporal punishment, which consists of spanking or striking a student, will not be used at NMSBVI.** In the case of suspension, the nature and circumstances of the violation must reasonably warrant a suspension and the length of the suspension imposed. As a general rule, no student shall be suspended unless another form of corrective action has been previously imposed upon the student as a consequence of misconduct of the same nature. If, however, the violation of school rules for student conduct constitutes "exceptional misconduct" as defined below, suspension may be imposed without prior alternative corrective action.

"Exceptional misconduct" is a violation of NMSBVI rules for student conduct, which is so serious in nature and/or serious in terms of the disruptive effect upon the operation of the school as to warrant an immediate resort to suspension.

### **UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR**

The following are specific examples of unacceptable behavior necessitating optional disciplinary action, including short or long-term suspension from school.

- a. Open or persistent defiance of authority.
- b. Physical or verbal assault upon a student(s) or school personnel.
- c. Creating or attempting to create a disturbance.
- d. Unauthorized or excessive absences from class.
- e. Willful disobedience.
- f. Profanity or vulgarity. Clothing, books or other possessions containing any form of vulgarity, profanity or obscenity.
- g. Disrespect for school property or damage to school property. In case of damage to or loss of school property, the appropriate administrator will conduct an investigation and seek appropriate restitution for the loss or damage. Parents will be informed that restitution may include payment for the item, community service or in-school suspension.
- h. Stealing, gambling, extortion, concealing and/or withholding stolen property.
- i. Hazing by any group at NMSBVI.
- j. Violations of the Dress Code.
- k. Use or possession of tobacco.
- l. Fighting, extortion, arson.
- m. Sexual harassment.
- n. Gang affiliation/behavior.
- o. Selling, possessing or using (or having used within six hours before arriving at school) a narcotic, alcohol or dangerous drug, including, but not limited to marijuana, LSD, heroin, and barbiturates: or non-narcotic intoxicants such as un-prescribed cough medicine, glue, gasoline, beer (including 3.2 beer), or any form of intoxicating liquor or alcohol and the possession of drug paraphernalia.
- p. Theft.
- q. Immoral conduct.
- r. Disruptive behavior or failure to comply with school transportation providers while on a school bus, suburban or car.
- s. Possession or use of weapons.
- t. Vandalism.
- u. Verbal or implied threats or threatening gestures by an individual or group.
- v. Excessive tardiness.

### **DISRUPTING SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION**

Continued disruptive behavior or non-compliance to reasonable requests by school personnel may result in the student not being allowed to ride in NMSBVI vehicles to and from NMSBVI. The parents/guardian would then assume the responsibility for the student's transportation.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATERIAL**

No printed material or literature may be distributed on the property of NMSBVI without prior approval and consent of the Superintendent.

## **DRESS CODE**

The Board of Regents and Administration encourages students to dress conservatively and appropriately. The following is a list of violations of the Student Dress Code:

- a. Bare feet. Shoes or appropriate footwear shall be worn at all times.
- b. See-through clothing.
- c. Bare midriffs.
- d. Inappropriate clothing, jewelry or inappropriate body marking such as tattoos.
- e. Hats worn in the building, dining room or indoors (unless for therapeutic purposes) during school functions whether on or off campus.
- f. Coats worn in the classroom. Coats are to be removed during class.
- g. Any article of clothing that graphically depicts scenes of violence, death or other gruesome, macabre, or cruel acts; any article of clothing that depicts alcohol, drugs, tobacco or sexually suggestive materials.
- h. Any clothing accessory that could be used as a weapon – such as chains, belts, studded gloves, studded bracelets, etc.
- i. Wearing pants below the waistline (sagging and dragging).
- j. Skirts or shorts may be worn; however, the length of the skirts or shorts shall not be more than four (4) inches above the knee.
- k. Students shall wear proper clothing to off-campus events which may be determined by staff conducting the event. Failure to arrive in proper attire for a field trip will result in the privilege being denied for the trip and credit (if appropriate) shall be lost.
- l. Appropriate underwear is to be worn at all times.

The Dress Code shall be reviewed and revised on a yearly basis.

## **GANG AFFILIATION/BEHAVIOR**

The Board of Regents and Administration recognizes that the presence of emerging gang-related incidents in our school can create an atmosphere of intimidation and harm. The mere presence of such conditions can be disruptive and potentially dangerous. It is, therefore, the policy of NMSBVI that gangs and gang-related behavior or incidents are prohibited.

### **Definitions:**

**Gangs** – Any assembly of three or more individuals who gather together on a continuing basis, whose purpose, NMSBVI reasonably believes, is to commit anti-social behavior or to violate school policy.

**Gang-related Behavior or Incidents** – Any behavior or event, including, but not limited to the following items, which has the effect of disrupting school activities or fosters, enhances or encourages gang activity at NMSBVI:

- a. Possession, wearing, use, distribution, or display of any sign, symbol, badge, color, or other item that is evidence of affiliation with, or membership in, a gang. Students will not be permitted to wear pants below the waistline (sagging and dragging) or wear caps, bandanas, handkerchiefs, shoestrings or any other item associated with gang-related behavior.
- b. Participation in any act, either verbal or non-verbal, to include gestures, expressions,

- handshakes, etc. that may indicate affiliation with, or membership in, a gang.
- c. Participation in any act that may further the interest in gang affiliation or gang membership.
- d. Participation in any act that may be evidence of intimidation, threats, "pay for protection," or any other behavior of potential violence.
- e. Participation in the writing, painting, or inscribing of gang-related graffiti, to include messages, symbols or signs on school premises.
- f. To assemble or congregate as a gang or members of a gang for any purpose.

## **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES**

It is a violation of school policy to sell, possess or use (or having used within six hours before arriving at school) a narcotic, alcohol or dangerous drug, including, but not limited to marijuana, LSD, heroin, and barbiturates; or non-narcotic intoxicants such as un-prescribed cough medicine, glue, gasoline, beer (including 3.2 beer), or any form of intoxicating liquor or alcohol and the possession of drug paraphernalia.

Students who violate this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action or may be subject to the filing of criminal charges depending upon the severity of the infraction. In addition, a student will be subject to disciplinary action(s), including short term suspension or long term suspension from school, when charges are filed in any state or federal court accusing the student of a criminal offense involving violence, moral turpitude, or drug-related activity occurring either on or off school premises at any time it is determined that the filing of such charges causes an adverse effect on the discipline, operation, general welfare, educational environment, or safety of the school.

Students who violate this policy may be provided the opportunity to correct unacceptable behavior while remaining in school. If behavior is not corrected students may be suspended and not permitted to return unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

These acts of unacceptable behavior will not be permitted while students are on or near school premises, riding school transportation or attending any school-sponsored activity.

Blood test and/or urine analysis may be requested and results utilized for specific purposes.

### **FIRST OFFENSE:**

The appropriate administrator will notify the parents/guardians and request an immediate conference. Law enforcement officials will be notified if the student is in possession of alcohol, illegal substances and/or drug paraphernalia. The administrator may recommend or permit the student to receive urinalysis or blood testing, at the student's expense, and provide the results to the school prior to disciplinary actions being imposed. The administrator will not be bound by the results of the urinalysis or blood tests. The student will receive one of the following disciplinary options:

- a. Parents notified.
- b. Counseling with a qualified alcohol/drug counselor or
- c. Attendance at Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous.

### **SECOND OFFENSE:**

- a. The Superintendent will notify parents/guardians and request an immediate conference. Law enforcement officials will be notified if student is in possession of alcohol, illegal substances, and/or drug paraphernalia.
- b. The student may be given a long-term suspension.

- c. During any period of long-term suspension, the student will forfeit the privilege of participating in or attending any and all extracurricular activities.

Students who distribute and/or sell alcoholic beverages, unlawful drugs, controlled substances, hallucinogens/inhalants or items that purport to be any of the foregoing to other students or persons during school time, on school premises, on school transportation or during school-sponsored activities are subject to long term suspension and will be referred to law enforcement.

### **POSSESSION OR USE OF WEAPONS**

It is the policy of NMSBVI to comply with the Gun-Free Schools Act. Any student of NMSBVI who uses or possesses a firearm or other weapon at school, at any school sponsored event, or in or upon school property, including school transportation, will be removed from school for not less than one full calendar year.

**Firearms are defined in Title 18 of the U.S. Code, Section 921, as:**

- a. Any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive
- b. The frame or receiver of such a weapon
- c. Any firearm muffler or firearm silencer
- d. Any destructive device including any explosives, incendiary or poison gas, bomb, grenade or rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces, missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce or any device similar to the above.

### **PUBLIC DISPLAY OF AFFECTION**

The following is a list of appropriate displays of affection:

- a. Hello hug, frontal that is brief in nature
- b. Side hugs while standing or sitting upright
- c. Resting head on shoulder, side by side
- d. Holding hands
- e. A brief kiss for "hello", "goodnight" or "goodbye"
- f. Occasional (casual) contact while sitting side by side
- g. Arm(s) around waist side by side

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

All students have a right to be educated in an environment free from sexual harassment by other students or adults. Students shall not engage in verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed toward another student or an adult. This prohibition applies whether the conduct is by word, gesture or any other sexual conduct, including requests for sexual favors, sexual assault or unnecessary touching.

Sexual harassment may take many forms, including but not limited to:

- a. Leering, staring, sexual flirtations or propositions.
- b. Sexual slurs, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments or sexually degrading descriptions.
- c. Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body, overly personal conversation.
- d. Sexual jokes, stories, drawings, pictures or gestures.

- e. Spreading of sexual rumors.
- f. Teasing or sexual remarks about students enrolled in a predominantly single-sex class.
- g. Touching of an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way.
- h. Limiting a student's access to educational opportunities because of gender.
- i. Basing academic and/or student activity privileges on submission to sexual conduct from students or staff.
- j. Cornering or blocking the normal movements of an individual in a sexual manner.
- k. Displaying sexually suggestive objects in the educational environment.

Any student who believes he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should report the incident to a teacher, counselor, or the Student Services Support Coordinator. Allegations of sexual harassment shall be investigated and, if substantiated, corrective or disciplinary action taken. This action may include suspension of the student and suspension or termination of the employee. NMSBVI prohibits retaliatory behavior against a student who complains or participates in the complaint process. A complaint of sexual harassment will not reflect negatively on the student's academic standing, rights or privileges.

### **STUDENT RIGHTS**

Students have a right to expect courtesy, fairness, and respect from members of the school staff and other students.

Students have the right to attend class and pursue their education under competent instructors.

Students have the right to privacy of their personal possessions unless there is reason to believe that the student is possessing or concealing materials prohibited by law or school regulation.

Students have a right to expect and have available to them clear and understandable rules of student conduct.

Students have the right to form and express their opinions on issues orally, in writing or other modes of communication without jeopardizing their relations with staff.

Students have the right to appropriate counseling for personal and educational problems. Access to consultation within a reasonable period of time must be assured.

Students have the right to be protected by legal provisions which prohibit the release of personal information to other than legally authorized persons without the consent of the parent, guardian, or eligible students.

### **STUDENT RIGHTS IN REGARD TO SEARCH**

The physical facilities of the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired are temporarily assigned to students for use by them, but are not and do not become the property of the students. Contents in desks, lockers, and rooms assigned to students are subject to inspection at any time for cleanliness, missing property, contraband, and evidence of vandalism.

Inspection and search can be conducted for the location and discovery of items such as non-prescription drugs, apparatus for the administration of controlled substances, alcoholic beverages, pornographic materials, fireworks, tobacco, weapons, explosives, poisons, and stolen property. Such items should not be brought on campus under any circumstances, and students who bring such items on campus may be subject to disciplinary action.

When a search focuses on a particular student because of a suspected rule violation, school officials will, if

circumstances permit, document in writing reasons for believing a search is justified before making the search.

If possible, student consent will be obtained, and the student will be present when the search is made. In the absence of the student, a witness will be present with a school official.

If a major reason for a search is to seek evidence of a criminal violation, school officials will report the information to law enforcement officials and allow them to conduct the search subject to standards applicable to police searches. If the police seek permission from school officials to search a student, his/her property, or his/her locker to obtain evidence for criminal prosecution, school officials will require the police to obtain a search warrant unless the search falls within one of the exceptions of the Fourth Amendment's search warrant requirements.

The above safeguards will be observed unless, in exceptional cases, they interfere with school officials' affirmative duty to maintain order and discipline in the school and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the students and staff.

### **THREATS TO SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

Any threat of physical harm to school personnel, whether verbal, written, or conveyed in any manner, or assault upon school personnel will result in disciplinary action.

### **USING SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AT HOME**

Students may wish to use special equipment, books, and/or musical instruments at their homes on major vacations or during summer months. School items of this nature may be checked out by students and/or parents by signing an Equipment, Instrument, and Book Agreement (see NMSBVI Forms). A deposit may be charged. If items are lost or damaged, the cost of replacement or repair will be charged to the individual borrowing the item.

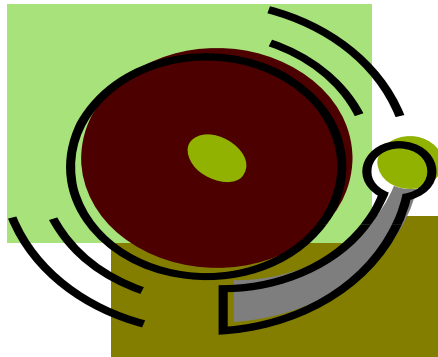
### **VANDALISM**

NMSBVI may prosecute to the full extent of the law any individual who willfully destroys, mutilates or disfigures NMSBVI school property of any kind. Students and parents will be responsible for restitution.

### **CODE OF CONDUCT**

A code of conduct form will be signed by any NMSBVI student that participates in athletic or narrative arts events. A sample of the code of conduct form is available through any coach at NMSBVI.

# ***EMERGENCY PROCEDURES***





## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

To ensure the safety and care of students and employees in the event of an emergency, written procedures have been established. These emergency procedures are a guide for students and employees to follow in an emergency evacuation.

The procedures are reviewed orally with the students and drills are practiced regularly, both during the school day and the evening hours of operation. The emergency procedures are also reviewed annually by the NMSBVI Safety Committee.

## **STUDENT BEHAVIOR IN AN EMERGENCY**

In a drill and/or actual emergency, students will follow these procedures:

### Fire:

The fire alarm is an intermittent horn/buzzer. When you hear the alarm, leave the building at the nearest exit moving at least 100 feet away from the building, respond to the roll call, move to assembly area when instructed, and remain calm. Do not return to the building you exited until you receive instructions to do so.

If you discover a fire, smoke, or intense heat and the alarm has not been sounded, you may activate the nearest fire alarm by pulling the handle on the fire alarm box in the area, or you may exit the building and report the fire to any staff person.

### Explosion and Bomb Threat:

Follow the same evacuation procedures as outlined for FIRE.

### Tornadoes and High Winds:

Fortunately, in most cases, tornadoes and windstorms can be predicted in advance, usually with at least one hour's warning. When weather conditions indicate the possibility of a severe windstorm or tornado, the Superintendent will assign a staff member to monitor weather reports and report bulletins to him/her. At the first indication that an emergency exists, the Superintendent will direct staff to move the students into sheltered areas where they will remain until the emergency has ended. Persons are not to leave shelter areas until "all clear" is indicated by people in authority.

### Procedures Without Advanced Warning:

Since greater danger exists outside the buildings than inside, all students are to remain in the building they are in and be kept away from windows and away from the windward side of the building. Interior hallways are the safest areas in severe windstorms or tornadoes.

If time permits, windows located opposite the direction of the approaching tornado or high winds should be opened to reduce pressure inside the building.

After the immediate danger has passed, NMSBVI staff will escort students from the shelter areas where roll call will be taken.

### Earthquake:

Students within buildings at the beginning of an earthquake should remain where they are, sitting or crouching below the level of desks and tables. In the absence of tables and desks, inner walls and doorways provide the safest places.

Students outside of buildings at the beginning of an earthquake should immediately move as far away as possible from buildings and other elevated objects which might fall or scatter debris.

### Lockdown Procedure:

In the case of any lockdown procedure, common sense must prevail. In any case, information will be shared with all staff as the situation progresses and all must exercise their best judgement in the situation. We have many buildings on campus with many variables. Keep in mind that the safety of the students is our first concern.

If the Superintendent determines that there is sufficient cause to believe that imminent danger is present, the on-campus supervisor shall call for lockdown of all buildings in which children receive instruction or reside.

Lockdown will be indicated by phone messages to key personnel in each building.

### Lockdown procedure:

- ◆ All staff and students shall immediately go to the nearest classroom or lockable space in the building. All classroom doors shall be closed and locked. Students and staff shall move to the corner of the room that is out of the sightline of the classroom door. If feasible, shades should be drawn.
- ◆ Quimby Gym: students and staff shall immediately go to pool area or wrestling room with closed and locked doors.
- ◆ PreVoc building: students & staff shall remain in building with closed and locked doors.
- ◆ Staff is responsible for maintaining calm and order in the area.
- ◆ If possible log-in to your e-mail system to allow for updates of information.
- ◆ Do not exit your area until told to do so by a known staff member or an identified police officer.
- ◆ Special information or special needs should be communicated to the police by dialing 9-911.

### Dormitory drills:

If an intruder comes into a dormitory after the school day is finished and the supervisor determines that there is imminent danger, the supervisor will yell "Lockdown"

- ◆ If there is an intruder, students will immediately go to their rooms, close the door, and if possible move into the closet in a sitting position.
- ◆ Students will stay in this position and will be quiet until told to come out by a known staff member or a police officer.

Whether in class or in the dormitory, in the event of a real lockdown, the Superintendent or a designee will call and inform parents.

# ***MEDICAL SERVICES***



## GENERAL INFORMATION

NMSBVI Health Services is committed to providing optimum nursing and health care to promote the physical, emotional, and social well-being of each student enrolled without regard to race, national origin, creed, color, age, sex, ability, or impairment.

Anytime a student has been exposed to a contagious disease while at home, Health Services must be notified. If the student is exposed while at NMSBVI, the family will be notified by a school nurse.

Individualized Health Care Plans (IHCPs) are developed for students in conjunction with other medical providers and parents and are designed to ensure students maintain and achieve their maximum level of health. Personal health care skills are emphasized. Provisions for educating students toward independence is an integral part of the IHCP. The New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired will use a holistic model in dealing with student health issues. Staff members shall work cooperatively so that each student learns to consider and to care for all aspects of their own health and well being as independently as possible.

The responsibility of the family to provide quality and consistent health care is recognized, and cooperative efforts between family and school staff is stressed to achieve the goals of each student's health care plan.

Only those students who can provide proof of immunizations may lawfully enroll in public schools in New Mexico. All students new to the school must provide proof of immunization at enrollment. In addition, because NMSBVI is a residential school we strongly encourage students to receive an annual FLU shot.

Proof of the following immunizations is required:

1. DPT: (Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis)
2. Polio
3. Measles: (10 day and 3 day) 2 vaccinations
4. Hepatitis B
5. Varicella (chicken pox) or documentation of having the disease.

Medical or religious exemptions will need verification at the time of enrollment. This exemption must be renewed each year prior to enrollment.

Health Services is staffed approximately 18 hours a day (6 a.m. – 12 midnight) . A consulting pediatrician visits the school once per week and is also available on call.

NMSBVI does not offer dental or general health assessments. A general medical examination is required annually prior to the start of school and an eye examination is required every three years (unless your child's condition warrants more frequent examination). Parents are expected to have these done at home during vacation periods.

School nurses and other trained staff take care of normal health care needs, treat minor illnesses and injuries, and also administer medications. NMSBVI Health Services does not have facilities for surgery or for the care of more severe types of illnesses. Students needing the services of a physician will be seen by the pediatrician at the Health Services or taken to the doctor's office. The local hospital will be used for emergencies. When a child becomes too ill to attend classes for several days, or is infected with a contagious disease, parents will be requested to take the child home at their expense.

It is more efficient to have medications at home as well as at school so that medications will not have to be sent back and forth each weekend. Parents who have children on continuing medications must send

medication refills in a timely manner.

All actions taken by NMSBVI to meet students' medical needs will follow the instructions given by the parents/guardians on the student permission form under "Medical".

If your child is diabetic or requires a special diet, NMSBVI staff will endeavor to follow the prescribed diet as well as teach the child the benefits of proper nutrition. Special diets must be prescribed by your child's physician.

In the classroom or in the dormitory, it is not uncommon for a child to contract head lice. NMSBVI has a no nit (bugs) policy. This means that if your child has head lice, he/she will be sent home for treatment and removal of all nits. If we have two or more cases of head lice in the same classroom or dormitory, parents of other children will be advised of possible exposure.

NMSBVI is a residential facility. Dormitory staff are trained to care for the children who attend school here. This care may include, but is not limited to, washing scrapes and cuts, applying Band-Aids, applying sunscreen to prevent sunburn and stopping nosebleeds. Staff are able to determine if an illness or injury requires the attention of the school nurse.

Whenever it is determined that your child should be seen by a physician, every effort will be made to inform you. Parents are also informed when their child is seriously ill, has a fever, needs a new medication or has a change of medication, or if an accident requires emergency treatment. If you are unable to be reached by the day shift nurse, the evening nurse will continue efforts to make contact. Emergency phone numbers are not used for routine calls or mild illnesses.

If your child has a contagious illness, or if the attending physician prescribes extensive bed rest for your child's condition, nursing staff will immediately begin making arrangements with you for him/her to be transported home. If your child has a fever, a contagious illness or other condition not conducive to bus travel, our weekly bus transportation will not be an option.

Parents living within 45 miles or one hour from NMSBVI are expected to take their child home when ill. Parents living greater distances from NMSBVI may be expected to take their ill child home also, but in the case of greater distances extenuating circumstances are considered (e.g. severity of illness, availability of parents, weather conditions, etc.).

**If your son or daughter is obviously ill on Sunday when it is time to return to school, please keep him/her home.** Call the Transportation Manager on the cellular phone (1-505- 430-7396) or the Health Services Manager at (1-505-430-9445) and inform them of your child's impending absence and date of his/her expected return. If you cannot reach anyone, you may call Health Services (1-800-437-3505 ext. 157) or the school office (1-800-437-3505 ext. 127). Children returning to school following an illness should be seen by the nurse before admittance to dormitory or classroom.

Children may be excused from classes to return home mid-week for medical appointments at the expense of the parent.

Parents need to relay medical information directly to Health Services, not via the dormitory, education department, or transportation department. The Health Services staff are available to discuss health care plans, appointments, or health related problems.

**Health Services' phone number is (505)- 437-3505 ext. 157. After hours, messages may be left on voice mail.**

In order for a physician or emergency medical personnel to provide safe professional treatment, it is

paramount that the medical forms and information in the Enrollment Update be readily available. With your ongoing support, the nursing staff and area medical professionals are confident that quality medical attention will be available at all times for your child.

## MEDICATION

Any medications (including over-the-counter medicines or vitamins) received or brought from home must be immediately turned over to the school nurse. OTC (over-the-counter) medications require a standing order from your physician. These medications include, but are not limited to Tylenol, Ibuprofen, cough medicine, etc. Daily vitamins must also have a doctor's order to be given while on campus. Students may not keep medications (both prescription and non-prescription), including vitamins in the dormitory or elsewhere on campus, except in Health Services. The exceptions to this are the following:

- ◆ Asthma inhalers may be kept in the student's possession, under a physician's order
- ◆ Topical acne medication, with approval from the Health Service's nurse
- ◆ Certain topical creams or lotions with approval of the Health Services nurse

**No medication can be given, or change in medication executed, until the parent provides Health Services with a written, signed physician's order. Orders may also be FAXed to: (505) 439-4494. Medication orders must be renewed annually per State Law.**

Medication brought to Health Services must be in the original container and properly labeled with correct name and correct directions. We cannot administer medication samples unless your physician labels them according to the Board of Pharmacy regulations.

If your child is eligible for Medicaid or has other health care coverage, a copy of his/her card must be sent to Health Services where it will be on file, if needed, for medication and/or other medical services.

It is the responsibility of parents to notify Health Services when their child is to be given a new medication and secure written orders from the physician.

### **IMPORTANT!**

**If you think your child is ill, please keep him/her at home.** Children coming down with a fever, cold, or who are sneezing, coughing, or have a runny nose should remain home to protect the student.

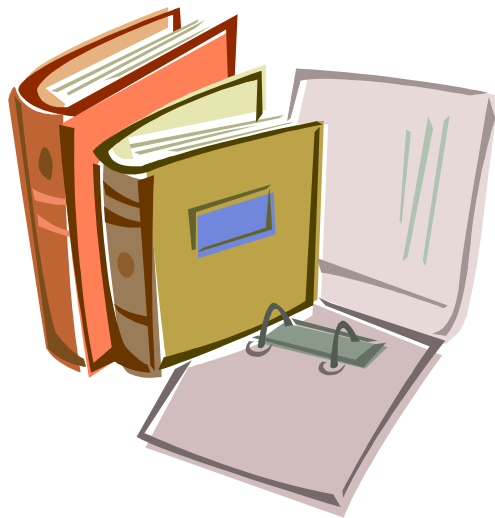
**If your child gets sick at school or arrives to school sick, you will be called to come and pick him/her up to protect the other students.**

**The Department of Health requires that you immediately notify the school if your child has received a diagnosis of a contagious disease.** Reports should be made to the Health Services (800) 437-3505, extension 157. The conditions that require notification include, but are not limited to:

Pink eye, pin worms, polio, strep throat, tuberculosis, head lice, scarletina, meningitis, measles, food poisoning, chicken pox, mumps, hepatitis, impetigo, whooping cough, etc.

**Financial responsibility for medical services other than those received from the school doctor or nurse on campus will be the responsibility of the parent.** Insurance cards must be sent to Health Services at the beginning of the school year or if insurance coverage changes. Prescriptions will be billed directly to the parents or insurance carrier by our local pharmacy. Parents are responsible to pay any co-pays related to insurance.

# ***EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM/ STUDENT SERVICES***



## **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

The New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, under the direction of the Board of Regents, is fully accredited by the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges (K-12) and the New Mexico Public Education Department and is a residential school for blind/visually impaired students, including those with multiple impairments, of school age who are residents of the State of New Mexico.

Beginning with preschool intervention, parent consultation, and continuing through the enrollment years, blind and visually impaired children receive a quality education guided by trained and experienced personnel. Educational programming is provided for students up to the age of 21, or through the age of 21 if the student's birthday occurs after the beginning of the school year.

Not all NMSBVI students are totally blind. Many have sufficient vision to use large print for reading, low vision aids, and other materials in their education.

## **SCHOOL SUPPORT**

The New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired derives the greatest portion of its support from the citizens of the state. Tuition, transportation, meals, lodging, limited medical care, and limited educational materials are provided without cost to the parents of every child who is found eligible for attendance, if the child is a resident of the State of New Mexico. Parents are required to pay for clothing, personal expenses and medical costs. A part of maturation includes the development of a responsible attitude in each child. Students are responsible for keeping necessary school supplies on hand to adequately meet the needs of their educational programs.

Other funds which are designated for specific projects may come from private or government grants. Revenue secured from such sources are set in special accounts, and persons working on these projects are paid from such accounts. The New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired encourages parents, teachers, and other interested parties to make suggestions regarding possible programs worthy of funding through alternative grants.

## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS and PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's educational records. They are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's educational records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The Student Services Support Coordinator will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2. The right to request the amendment of the student's educational records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading.

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate or misleading. They should write the Student Services Support Coordinator, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why they feel it is inaccurate or misleading.

If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their



right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception which permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board of Regents; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district (school) to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is;

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202-4605

### **TARDINESS**

Being on time is a positive life and work skill. Each teacher is expected to count student tardies in addition to student attendance at the start of each class. Each teacher will determine the consequences for repeated tardiness.

### **ELEMENTARY PROGRAM**

The elementary program is responsible for grade K - 6 education. A thematic approach is taken with as much experiential education and community-based education as possible. Reading is emphasized in all areas of instruction as a primary focus and a whole language approach to language and communications. Independent living skills, Braille and orientation and mobility are emphasized to promote independence.

### **SECONDARY PROGRAM**

The secondary program is responsible for grade 7 – 12 education and focuses on an integrated learning style with reading and language arts as a focus. This program leads to a fully accredited high school diploma which is recognized by post-secondary schools & colleges. Students participate in the NMSBVI Inclusion Program with Alamogordo Public Schools if the IEP Team makes this determination.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Students attending the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired are required to meet standards for program completion for their prescribed course of study in order to earn a diploma. The prescribed course of study includes a minimum of credits in selected courses and/or evidence that the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) has satisfactorily met the student's needs and credit requirements.

Graduation from the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired with an academic diploma requires 23 credits, with the following requirements:

### GRADE 9

English  
Math

### GRADE 10

English  
Math  
World History  
Biology

### GRADE 11

English  
Math  
U.S. History

### GRADE 12

English  
Economics / Government

In addition to the graduation requirements listed above, the following credits must be earned sometime during grades 9-12; one credit each in physical education, practical arts or fine arts, science (in addition to Biology), communicative arts and life competencies for the visually impaired (local Board of Regent's requirement). Beginning with students entering the ninth grade in 2005/06 school year, a half credit (.5) of New Mexico History will be included in the state requirements for the 23 units students have to meet in order to graduate from a New Mexico high school.

Additional elective courses which have been specifically designed for students with visual impairments or blindness and which have been approved by the NMSBVI Board of Regents include: Braille, compensatory skills, Independent Living Skills, technology lab, arts & crafts and home maintenance.

BRAILLE instruction is available as an elective or a communication skills credit at NMSBVI and has been approved by the Board of Regents for high school credit. All students attending NMSBVI will have a current Learning Media Assessment. Braille will be discussed at each student's IEP meeting. If the student's eye condition is degenerative and the student has the cognitive and tactual ability to become a Braille reader, Braille instruction will be a priority. All students, who have the cognitive and tactual ability to become Braille readers, will be required to have two semesters of Braille instruction in order to graduate from NMSBVI. Students will learn Braille tactually.

Since the program at the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired is totally individualized to meet both academic and adaptive needs of the students enrolled, movement from one class standing to another may occur at any time. Also, in order to obtain maximum benefit and skill mastery from the program, students may choose to spend from 3 to 6 years to complete their high school studies.

A maximum of four (4) units of credit by correspondence may be counted toward graduation after approval of the IEP committee. These credits may be earned only from accredited schools including Hadley School for the Blind. NMSBVI reserves the right to evaluate a correspondence course before credit is given.

## GED

NMSBVI does not administer the GED test. Various community colleges administer the test in communities throughout New Mexico. Eighteen year old students or a person 17 years of age with a permission form signed by parents/guardians & an authorized public school official, who wish to pursue this method of obtaining a diploma should contact the responsible agency in their home community or NMSU-A in Alamogordo for information concerning the GED.

## **DIPLOMAS AND CERTIFICATES**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team is responsible for determining whether the student has completed a planned program of study making him/her eligible to receive a diploma. Upon completion of a planned program of study that meets the following requirements, the student will be awarded a diploma. Students may be awarded a diploma by completing any of the following programs of study:

1. A standard program of study is based upon meeting or surpassing all requirements for graduation under the New Mexico Standards of Excellence with or without reasonable modification of delivery and assessment methods.
2. A career readiness program of study is based upon meeting the State Board of Education's Career Readiness Standards with Benchmarks as defined in the IEP with or without reasonable modifications of delivery and assessment methods.
3. An ability program of study is based upon meeting or surpassing IEP goals and objectives, with or without, reasonable modifications of delivery and assessment methods, referencing skill attainment at the student's ability level which may lead to meaningful employment.

The receipt of a diploma terminates the service eligibility of students with special education needs. All diplomas awarded by a school district must be identical in appearance, content, and effect, except that symbols or notations may be added to individual student's diplomas to reflect official honors earned by students.

A student who receives special education services may be granted a certificate when:

1. The IEP team provides documentation and justification for the use of a certificate for an individual student and a follow-up plan of action.
2. A student who receives a certificate is eligible to continue receiving special education services until receipt of a diploma or until the end of the academic year in which the student turns 22.

## **GUIDELINES FOR OVERNIGHT TRIPS**

1. Students are the singular focus of any fieldtrip.
2. Staff will provide supervision of every student at all times, despite the fact they may have reached their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
3. Students will obey all NMSBVI School Rules/Regulations for Conduct.
4. Staff will occupy adjoining hotel/motel rooms to all students to provide supervision, room checks and to ensure safety, if possible. If not possible, staff will occupy hotel/motel rooms that are in close proximity to all students. Room checks will be conducted periodically.
5. Staff will be seated with students during every phase of transportation. When using NMSBVI vehicles or rental cars, one staff will serve as the designated driver while remaining staff sit with the students.

## **HOMEWORK**

1. The purpose of assigning homework is to practice and reinforce skills learned while in the classroom.
2. The following guidelines may be used, keeping in mind the appropriate modalities of learning:

Secondary Academic: one-half hour assignment per academic class 3 times a week. This may include weekends.

Upper Elementary: 15-20 minutes, two to three times per week.

ILS Skills: As ability allows, one-half hour per day. May include such activities as (a) practice of academic skills; (b) journal writing; (c) information gathering; (d) completion of in-class projects.

3. At the end of each day, teachers should send, via voice mail to the dormitories, a list of students who did not complete their work.
4. Students will have a resource room available, Monday through Thursday from 6-8 pm.
5. Secondary academic students should register with Recordings for the Blind for additional materials.

### **STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS**

Progress reports are mailed to parents following the end of each four-week period. These reports provide parents with information on how their child is progressing in classes. Quarterly report cards are mailed to parents following each nine-week period. In addition, parents are called on the average of 9-15 times a year to be informed of their child's progress. Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are updated on a yearly basis.

Necessary equipment such as Braille writers will be checked out to students in their dormitories or at home as needed. Refundable deposits for equipment may be charged to cover the cost of damage and repair.

### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Student use of any electronic device such as cell phones, pagers, CD players, portable tape players, and walkie-talkies is prohibited during class time throughout the school day.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

The purpose of the lost and found procedure is to encourage students at the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to accept responsibility for school equipment and supplies that have been given to them to use as well as for their own materials. School and personal articles left in classrooms, hallways, sidewalks, gymnasium, etc., will be brought to the main office by staff.

### **EXPANDED CORE CURRICULUM**

The expanded core curriculum produces a concept of the blind or visually impaired person in the community. It is difficult to imagine that a congenitally blind or visually impaired person could be entirely at ease and at home within the social, recreational, and vocational structure of the general community without mastering the elements of the expanded core curriculum. What is known about congenitally blind and visually impaired students is that, unless skills such as orientation and mobility, social interaction, and independent living are learned, these students are at high risk for lonely, isolated, unproductive lives. Accomplishments and joys such as shopping, dining, attending and participating in recreational activities are a right, not a privilege, for blind and visually impaired persons. Responsibilities such as banking, taking care of health needs, and using public and private services are a part of a full life for all persons, including those who are blind or visually impaired. Adoption and implementation of a core curriculum for blind and visually impaired students, including those with additional disabilities, will assure students of the opportunity to function well and completely in the general community.

The Expanded Core Curriculum includes:

### Compensatory or Functional Academic Skills, Including Communication Modes

Compensatory and functional skills include such learning experiences as concept development, spatial understanding, study and organizational skills, speaking and listening skills, and adaptations necessary for accessing all areas of the existing core curriculum. Communication needs will vary, depending on degree of functional vision, effects of additional disabilities, and the task to be done. Children may use Braille, large print, print with the use of optical devices, regular print, tactile symbols, a calendar system, sign language, and/or recorded materials to communicate.

### Social Interaction Skills

Almost all social skills used by sighted children and adults have been learned by visually observing the environment and other persons, and behaving in socially appropriate ways based on that information. Social interaction skills are not learned casually and incidentally by blind and visually impaired individuals as they are by sighted persons. Social skills must be carefully, consciously, and sequentially taught to blind and visually impaired students. Instruction in social interaction skills becomes a part of the expanded core curriculum as a need so fundamental that it can often mean the difference between social isolation and a satisfying and fulfilling life as an adult.

### Recreation and Leisure Skills

Physical education in the form of team games and athletics are the usual way in which physical fitness needs are met for sighted students. Many of the activities in physical education are excellent and appropriate for visually impaired students. In addition, however, these students need to develop activities in recreation and leisure that they can enjoy throughout their adult lives. Most often sighted persons select their recreation and leisure activity repertoire by visually observing activities and choosing those in which they wish to participate. The teaching of recreation and leisure skills to blind and visually impaired students must be planned and deliberately taught, and should focus on the development of life-long skills.

### Career Education

There is a need for general vocational education, as offered in the traditional core curriculum, as well as the need for career education offered specifically for blind and visually impaired students. Many of the skills and knowledge offered to all students through vocational education can be of value to blind and visually impaired students. They will not be sufficient, however, to prepare students for adult life, since such instruction assumes a basic knowledge of the world of work based on prior visual experiences. Career education in an expanded core curriculum will provide the visually impaired learner of all ages with the opportunity to learn first-hand the work done by the bank teller, the gardener, the social worker, the artist, etc. It will provide the student opportunities to explore strengths and interests in a systematic, well-planned manner. Once more, the disadvantage facing the visually impaired learner is the lack of information about work and jobs that the sighted student acquires by observation.

Because unemployment and underemployment have been the leading problem facing adult visually impaired persons in the United States, this portion of the expanded core curriculum is vital to students, and should be part of the expanded curriculum for even the youngest of these individuals.

## Technology

Technology is a tool to unlock learning and expand the horizons of students. It is not, in reality, a curriculum area. However, it is added to the expanded core curriculum because technology occupies a special place in the education of blind and visually impaired students. Technology can be a great equalizer. For the Braille user, it allows the student to provide feedback to teachers by first producing material in Braille for personal use, and then in print for the teacher, classmates, and parents. It gives blind persons the capability of storing and retrieving information. It brings the gift of a library under the fingertips of the visually impaired person. Technology enhances communication and learning, as well as expands the world of blind and visually impaired persons in many significant ways. Thus, technology is a tool to master, and is essential as a part of the expanded core curriculum.

## Visual Efficiency Skills

The visual acuity of children diagnosed as being visually impaired varies greatly. Through the use of thorough, systematic training, most students with remaining functional vision can be taught to better and more efficiently utilize their remaining vision. The responsibility for performing a functional vision assessment, planning appropriate learning activities for effective visual utilization, and instructing students in using their functional vision in effective and efficient ways is clearly an area of the expanded core curriculum.

## Independent Living Skills (ILS)

Based upon IEP team determinations the students will have the opportunity to participate in activities of Independent living. Opportunities for learning specific living skills and personal independence are provided to students ages 5 to 21 through courses in Independent Living Skills and experience in residential dormitories. Independent living skills, leisure, recreational and vocational skills provide the focus for these students. Students are involved in activities of independent living throughout the day whether it is dressing or vocational endeavors.

Areas of emphasis include the following:

- ◆ Personal grooming and hygiene, including daily bathing, care of teeth, and proper use of cosmetics and personal items.
- ◆ Clothing care, including folding and hanging clothes, orderliness in drawers and wardrobes, selection of appropriate clothing, laundry, and minor clothing repairs.
- ◆ General room-care, including making and changing beds, mopping floors, dusting.
- ◆ Foods and kitchen skills, including shopping and food preparation, menu planning, and personal eating skills.
- ◆ Use and care of personal possessions and school property.
- ◆ Earning and spending money for goods.
- ◆ Personal management and organization.

Secondary education students have the opportunity to enter a simulated, supervised Apartment Living Experience in the dormitory. Students will be provided additional opportunities to refine their Independent Living Skills (ILS) through a cottage program. Students must have successfully completed the apartment living experience before being considered for the Independent Cottage Living Program. The IEP Team will determine participation, goals and objectives. Each student will be provided only one cottage experience.

### Orientation and Mobility (Independent Travel)

Independent movement is critical for all children with visual impairments and physical impairments. Orientation and mobility skills should begin to be developed in infancy starting with basic body awareness and movement, and continuing into adulthood as the individual masters skills that permit him/her to navigate the world efficiently, effectively, safely, and gracefully.

Students and staff members are expected to travel with the greatest possible degree of independence, assuming responsibility for their personal safety while on campus or while engaged in school-sponsored activities off-campus.

All students will undergo an Orientation & Mobility assessment upon arrival at NMSBVI, and annually thereafter.

- a. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team will consider current and future orientation/mobility assessments, as well as cognitive, psychological, orthopedic, neurological, and other assessments in determining which students need to use a mobility device to safely navigate the constantly changing obstacles, elevations, textures, and lighting conditions that will be encountered both on and off campus.
- b. Orientation & Mobility goals will be determined during the IEP process. However, specific goals will be determined in consideration of the following precepts:
  - (1) Orientation & Mobility training will be provided so as to achieve maximum safety and independence in all environments and under all lighting conditions typically encountered on and off-campus.
  - (2) Orientation & Mobility training will be provided with the expectation that students are responsible for their own personal safety at all times, both on and off-campus.
  - (3) Orientation & Mobility training will be provided with an emphasis on comprehensive skill building/problem solving in preference to route memorization.
  - (4) The ultimate goal of Orientation & Mobility training is to train students to function, to the highest degree possible, as fully independent, self-sufficient individuals, capable of navigating their environment independently, with safety, skill, confidence, and grace.
  - (5) Students determined to need a mobility device for independent travel will do so as follows:
    - (a) Students are required to use their canes on campus at all times with the exception of the dormitory room.
    - (b) Sighted guide is not considered to be independent mobility, and shall be used only in rare circumstances, such as emergency medical situations, adverse weather conditions, construction areas, high noise environments, and the like. In such circumstances, sighted guide will be used as a supplement to the mobility device, not as a substitute for the mobility device.

A student's first cane is provided at no cost. Replacement canes will be given as needed, provided that the Orientation and Mobility Instructor/staff member involved feels that damage to their original cane was caused by normal wear and tear from proper usage. If neglect/abuse of property is suspected, the involved student(s) will be required to pay for the replacement cane. Payment may be in the form of money or community service.

#### Mobility Cards:

Students who have demonstrated the necessary mobility skills and maturity have the opportunity to earn a mobility card delineating their level of independence. Current mobility card applications will be kept in the Orientation & Mobility instructors' offices. Mobility cards are a privilege and not a license to leave campus upon demand. Staff have the right and responsibility to withhold permission to leave campus when appropriate. Only the Student Services Support Coordinator or the student's mobility instructor shall authorize revocation of mobility cards for disciplinary purposes.

### **LIBRARY**

Students are encouraged to use and enjoy the NMSBVI Library, which maintains a collection of learning materials that support the school's curriculum. The collection also includes basic reference tools and selections of general interest. Materials are available in a variety of formats, including regular print, Braille, large print, audio recordings, filmstrips, video and CD-ROM. Assistive devices (such as the Kurzweil Personal Reader, closed-circuit television enlargement systems and speech access software and hardware for computers) are also available. Library hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on scheduled school days. Additional access to the library during evening hours must be arranged ahead of time with the librarian and must be supervised by authorized NMSBVI staff. Students are allowed to check out up to 5 books.

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers will be issued to students enrolled in school. The school is not responsible for valuables or books that disappear from lockers. Sharing lockers is not permitted. School personnel have the authority to inspect any locker and its contents at any time.

Should a student choose to use a lock on their assigned locker, the student must supply either a duplicate key or the combination, whichever is appropriate, to the School Office.

### **MANDT SYSTEM**

The Mandt System for managing student behavior has been approved by the Board of Regents for use by staff at NMSBVI. Mandt is a systematic training program designed to help staff reduce the potential for verbal and physical abuse to themselves as well as co-workers and students. The system encourages and teaches the use of a graded system of 10 alternatives ranging from philosophy and attitude (least restrictive) to special physical interaction (most restrictive). The system is based upon the principle that all people have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.

Training is provided on a regular schedule for either initial certification or re-certification. Instructors are NMSBVI personnel who have gone through the certification process as trainers in the system. Annual re-certification is required.

### **TEXTBOOK SELECTION POLICY**

The selection of suitable textbooks, other learning materials, instructional materials and library materials will be made through an Educational Materials Selection Committee. The committee will be composed of educators. The members will include a chairman and educational staff representatives directly involved in the specific subject area.



### **TRANSCRIPTS OF CREDITS**

In order to be considered official, transcripts of credits must be received or sent by mail. Hand carried transcripts will be accepted from representatives of a referring school. All transcripts requested by schools and colleges will be sent free of charge. Seniors who wish to have a final eighth semester transcript sent to a college must file a request for this transcript with the School Office.

### **TRANSITION SERVICES**

Transition Services are provided by a Transition Coordinator. At age 14 each student, often together with the parent/guardian, is asked to begin thinking of post-school goals in the areas of education, vocation, residential, community involvement, and leisure activities. These goals are then taken into consideration in curriculum planning, scheduling of related services, and needed outside agency networking. Together, these areas will contribute toward an individualized transition plan for each student that is designed to relevantly link education and services with future goals.

# ***RESIDENTIAL SERVICES***



## GOAL STATEMENT

The goal of Residential Life is to provide an environment that encourages each student to reach his/her potential and to strive for independence. Students will grow in social awareness, self-confidence, and learn to appreciate creative leisure.

## INTRODUCTION

Students attending the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired who do not live in Otero County, reside in dormitory settings provided on campus. A kitchen, living room, bathroom, and laundry room are located in each dormitory. Students are provided a room with a bed, dresser space, closet, bulletin board, and desk. Students most often have a private room to themselves. Residents are encouraged to bring items from home to place in their rooms to make them more personal. Many residents bring tape players, stereos, recorders, radios, etc. Each dormitory has a computer, television, braille, electronic equipment, and a supply of toys and games for residents to use. Students residing on campus are evaluated as to their skills and performance in techniques of independent living.

Communications between parents and dormitory staff or teachers may be initiated through student notebooks or by monthly telephone calls to review the child's progress and solicit parental input. Parent involvement and input is always welcomed and encouraged in relation to any phase of programming for the student.

## COMMON QUESTIONS ASKED BY PARENTS

### **"How often does my child come home?"**

Your child is scheduled to go home all but 4 weekends and for the holidays (see school calendar). Transportation is provided by NMSBVI to designated stops near your home area. If your child is needed at home, the child may be excused from school, but the transportation must be arranged by the parent.

### **"How much do the services my child receives cost?"**

There is no cost to students or their families for instructional and residential services if the custodial parent(s) live within the state of New Mexico.

Families provide for their child's clothing, medical care, personal needs, recreational spending, and special fees. Some scholarships are available to students in need.

### **"May my child bring personal stereos, games, or toys?"**

We encourage students to bring some of their favorite toys to play with and share with other students. Many students bring tape players, radios, stuffed toys, and games. Advance permission is required for students to bring stereo equipment, computers, TVs, and video game players (i.e. PlayStation, Xbox, etc.)

### **"When am I allowed to visit my child at school?"**

We are always pleased to have parents visit the school and dormitories. Please inform the Superintendent's Office of your intention to visit during school hours, or the Residential Life Manager when visiting dormitories. **It is imperative that you notify the appropriate staff person if you plan to take your child from school or from a dormitory area.** This helps the school assure the safety and protection of your child.

### **"May friends and relatives visit my child at school?"**

We encourage visitors to come and see your child. Permission must be granted (or denied) by the parent and is included in our initial application form. We would appreciate advance notice when visitors are coming. Some rooms are available on campus for guests who wish to remain overnight. Cost of the rooms is \$10.00 per night per person. To arrange for a room, call (505) 437-3505 ext. 127.

**"What type of medical care will my child receive?"**

The school is staffed by registered nurses five days a week. The nurses take care of normal health needs. In extreme emergencies, NMSBVI uses a local hospital emergency room. In less immediate situations, the student may be taken to a doctor's office. Any action taken will follow parental instructions as given on the student's Medical Permission form. Routine dental and health care must be arranged through your own family physician. Mental health counseling is available from the Mental Health Counselor.

**"Whom can I talk with about my child's progress?"**

Residential life assistants, school nurses, teachers, the Student Services Support Coordinator, Residential Life Manager, and the Superintendent are always willing to discuss with you matters relating to your child. To encourage close home/school ties, yearly conferences are scheduled for the parents of all children. However, please feel free to call or stop at school any time you have questions.

***For more information about NMSBVI, visit our website at [www.nmsbvi.k12.nm.us](http://www.nmsbvi.k12.nm.us)***

<b>BANNED MATERIALS</b>
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In order to promote an environment which encourages positive growth and self-esteem for all students, NMSBVI has banned a number of materials from campus. The banned materials include, but are not limited to, the following: alcohol, drug paraphernalia, drugs, fireworks, guns, knives, pornography, and music tapes/CDs, DVD's, videos, posters, and graffiti which promotes racism, violence, suicide, drugs, etc.

If you have questions regarding any banned material, or if you are not sure whether or not the material is allowable, please check with the Student Services Support Coordinator.

<b>BIKE RIDING</b>
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NMSBVI has bikes available for student use in the recreation department. Most areas of the campus are safe for bike riding, and the following rules apply:

1. Student must pass the approved bike safety program.
2. A helmet must be worn at all times.

<b>BUYING, SELLING, BORROWING, OR LENDING</b>
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Students should not borrow, lend, buy, sell, or give any personally owned items to others. We need parent support and cooperation in this area. Parents are urged to question their child regarding possessions or items brought home on the weekend when they are not fully aware of how the child came into possession of the item. Anytime you have a question, please call the dormitory and ask for confirmation of a transaction.

<b>CHECKING IN/OUT WITH STAFF</b>
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All students are expected to check in and out with dormitory staff when leaving their dormitory areas, whether going to class, going off campus or to recreational activities. Residential life assistants may deny permission to leave the dormitory if chores or homework have not been completed. Hours of independent off-campus privileges vary according to the age and abilities of the student and are limited to daylight hours unless night travel is approved by the orientation and mobility staff.

Mobility card applications will be kept on file in the Orientation & Mobility Office. "Mobility Cards" are a privilege and not a license to leave campus upon demand. Mobility Cards are only issued to students who have or are currently receiving Orientation and Mobility instruction.

## CHURCH ACTIVITIES

The New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired does not favor any religious viewpoint. This in no way restricts your child from taking part in religious activities **off campus**. Parents requesting their child attend specific church activities, prayer meetings, Bible study, etc., must provide NMSBVI with information regarding the day, time, and transportation arrangements.

## CLOTHING/DRESS

Students travel about campus to attend classes and need appropriate gear for inclement weather. It is suggested that enough clothing be left at home so the student does not have to take clothes home on the weekend.

**We restrict the wearing of clothing with graffiti promoting death, alcohol, drugs, suicide, violence, etc.** "Fashion statements" such as frayed and torn jeans are not allowed.

Every article of clothing (including socks) and personal items must be appropriately marked regardless of your child's age. Clothing should be marked with a permanently printed name tag which should be sewn on (pressed on labels are soon lost).

Local day students should have their name on coats, hats, swim suit, cane and backpack.

The following is a suggested clothing list for residential students. Please send enough clothing to meet the individual needs of your child.

5 matched school outfits	1 sweater or jacket
1 dress outfit	1 bathrobe
7 complete sets of underwear	1 winter coat
2 pairs of shoes/ socks	1 swimsuit

### Suggested personal items:

Cane	Backpack	School supplies
Cosmetics	Shampoo	Tissues
Toothpaste	Nail clippers	Hair brush
Toothbrush	Sanitary supplies	Comb
Deodorant	Electric Razor	Pull Ups
Diapers	Towels	

Students may wish to duplicate some items to keep in their PE locker.

If your child is not toilet-trained, please send an ample supply of clothing. This applies to both residential and day students.

## CURFEW

The dorm curfew is 10 p.m. for all students 14 and older and 8:30 p.m. for students 13 and younger. Most on-campus activities are completed by 8:30 p.m. If a resident is off campus shopping, dining, attending a concert or sporting event, etc., a later curfew is allowed. Residents must check with their dormitory staff to find out the rules regarding curfew.

## **DAY STUDENTS**

Students who live within 45 miles or one hour from the school may reside at home and are day students. Transportation for the school day is provided. Arrival and departure at NMSBVI will coincide with the school day as closely as possible. Parents wishing to enroll their child as a resident student may request residential placement through the IEP program plan as part of the need for more intensive residential experiences.

The Superintendent has designated the Residential Life Manager to approve individual day students to stay overnight in the dormitory if the request meets the following criteria:

- ◆ Student desires to take part in a school-sponsored program that necessitates staying overnight for logistical reasons.
- ◆ The parents give written permission for the overnight stay; and
- ◆ Telephone contact at least 48 hours in advance.

Day students are welcome to participate in afternoon/evening activities. They will be assigned to a residential life assistant, while on campus and will follow all school rules and regulations when they are on campus or under the jurisdiction of the school. Transportation to and from NMSBVI for these functions will be provided by the family and should coincide with the scheduled activity.

## **E-MAIL**

Students are expected to use NMSBVI property appropriately at all times. When using the school's computers, the students should refrain from the use of profanity and vulgar language.

## **GATHERING PLACE PRIOR TO SCHOOL**

Following breakfast students will gather in the Recreation Center before departing for their inclusion classes or the opening of the Watkins Education Center. Students will not return to the dormitories.

## **HARASSMENT**

Harassment by one student against another is taken seriously by staff and is dealt with severely. Harassment involving verbal threats, sexual references, inappropriate touching, and physical attacks, is not tolerated. Any student who experiences such harassment should immediately report it to appropriate staff.

## **HATS**

All hats are to be removed when entering a building. They are not to be worn in the classroom unless there is a stipulation to this effect in a student's IEP.

## **MAIL**

Student mail will be directed to the student and must be opened by the student. When a reader is needed, the person reading the mail is chosen by the student. This could be a staff person, friend, or peer. Staff members selected to act as readers will not disclose the contents of the mail to others. It is suggested that mail for younger students, or for those unable to open their own mail, be addressed to a staff member or reader.

## **MEALS AND SNACKS**

Every effort is made to provide nutritious meals. Breakfast, lunch and dinner are served cafeteria style or family style in the main dining room. There are no meal charges for students. Students are required to be present for every meal unless ill or excused.

It is necessary to notify the staff one day in advance when planning to be away from the dormitory at a meal time or if a guest has been invited to dinner.

Kitchens are available for use by the students in each dormitory. They are encouraged to prepare their own snacks and may be required to participate in the cooking program. NO FOOD will be allowed or kept in the students' dorm rooms.

### **MUSIC/TAPES/VIDEOS/DVD's/CD's**

Attempting to promote an environment which encourages positive growth and self-esteem, especially with small children present, NMSBVI believes certain forms of music and entertainment are not appropriate. Resident's who bring these types of materials that are considered to promote alcohol, drugs, suicide, death, violence, racism, etc., will be required to take them home. Parents are asked to screen these materials prior to students bringing them to school. Material on campus found to be questionable will be referred to a committee made up of students and staff for a final determination. **PLEASE LABEL ALL MATERIALS OF THIS TYPE WITH THE STUDENT'S NAME.**

### **ON-CAMPUS TRAVEL**

Students are not permitted to walk the outer perimeter of the school after dark for safety reasons. Walking the inner perimeter of the school is acceptable.

### **OFF-CAMPUS TRAVEL**

Students are encouraged to use their mobility skills when traveling off campus, shopping, or attending meetings or recreational events. Students must first be approved for such travel by the mobility instructor, have general parent approval, and have approval of their residential life assistant for the specific trip. While the student is off campus, he/she is expected to behave in a manner which is consistent with school rules and policies.

### **PERSONAL POSSESSIONS**

To the extent possible, personal possessions will be secured in the resident's room, storage area, or closet and will be accessible only to that resident. Staff or others will not intrude into these areas, or confiscate the resident's personal items, except in cases when during a routine room search illegal drugs or banned materials are found in the resident's possession, in which case the incident will be documented and materials confiscated. Whenever possible, room searches will be conducted with the resident present. Serial numbers and model numbers of electronic devices will be recorded and kept in the resident's file to help in identification in the event the items are lost or stolen.

Children who are too young to assume responsibility for personal items, such as watches, radios, electronic devices, jewelry, etc. should consider not bringing those items to school.

### **RECREATION PROGRAM**

The purpose of the recreation program is to develop lifelong leisure skills and interests through a wide variety of activities made available at NMSBVI and in the community of Alamogordo. Recreation programs are a part of the total student program and are offered to all students enrolled at NMSBVI. Whenever possible, students are encouraged to integrate into recreational activities within the community. Examples include scouts, church activities, athletic events, concerts, and city recreational programs. Transportation is provided when necessary for students who participate.

### **OFF CAMPUS RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

Many recreational activities extend beyond the campus in the form of shopping trips, picnicking, concerts, fairs, theater, and athletic events. Although the recreation program and travel are provided at no cost to the student, entrance fees to off-campus events may be (1) paid by the school, (2) paid by the student, (3) paid

with the student and school sharing the costs. Students are alerted to special events well in advance and are encouraged to make their own plans, when possible, as part of their program in gaining independence. Students are encouraged to follow through in attending as planned.

## **SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Between students:**

The relationship between students should be one of mutual respect for one another. Wholesome boy/girl relationships are a part of the NMSBVI environment since classes, meals, recreation, and most activities are co-educational. Students who are involved in off campus organizations or who attend Alamogordo Public Schools and develop friendships are encouraged to invite friends on campus with permission from their dormitory staff.

Relationships between boys and girls are closely monitored by staff, and parents are kept informed when the social relationship progresses into a more intimate relationship.

### **Between student and staff:**

The relationship between a staff member and a student should be a professional one of mutual respect for one another. It is not appropriate for a student to have a staff member's telephone number or address. If a student needs to speak with a staff member, the student should make an appointment at school at a time convenient for both. Staff should likewise refrain from contacting students outside of school. Any questions or concerns a staff member may have about a student should be directed to the Director of Student Support Services.

## **STUDENT ACCOUNTS**

Student accounts for allowances and personal needs are established in the business office to ensure against loss or theft of student money. The school encourages the use of the student account and is not responsible for loss or theft of student money that is not on deposit. Student accounts are established to enable the student to learn the skill of budgeting his/her money to meet personal needs. Parents may specify a weekly amount for the child to spend.

It is recommended that you deposit \$25 in the student's spending account. Checks for deposit into a student's account should be made payable to NMSBVI Student Account. Checks sent to your child and not for deposit in the student account should be made payable to your child; however, cashing such a check is sometimes difficult unless your child has picture identification.

## **SNACK BAR (Bears Den)**

A store/snack bar is located in the recreation center and is open during recreation hours. Operated by NMSBVI students under the supervision of residential staff, the store offers for sale the following items: soft drinks, candy, popcorn, ice cream, pens, pencils, paper, toothpaste, batteries, blank cassettes, etc. Because of the nature of the food sold, students are expected to use discretion in the amount consumed.

## **STUDENT USE OF TELEPHONE**

Residents are permitted to make and receive telephone calls using the telephone in their dormitories. NMSBVI provides a (800) 437- 3505 number for parents to maintain communication throughout the week. OFFICE PHONES are for business use & brief calls. STUDENT PHONES are for student & staff use. The student phones are available for student use at any time the dormitory is open. Because all the dormitory students use these phones, calls will be limited to 20 minutes. Telephone calls will be allowed after 9 p.m. if from parents, or immediate family and the relationship is verified by the dorm staff. After 10 p.m. parents cannot use the 1-800 number. They are given direct numbers to the dorms through the answering machine. There is a 20 minute limit on phone calls unless the student has homework, dorm duties or living skill



chores that haven't been completed. The 20 minute time can be reduced. In addition:

1. Residents having two parents living in different locations may call both parents weekly.
2. Residents may request privacy during phone use.

## TATOOS

NMSBVI will not tolerate obscene or inappropriate tattoos.

## TRANSPORTATION

### **Bus/Suburban**

The NMSBVI bus is accompanied by two adult NMSBVI staff who have pertinent information on students and emergency procedures. Students leave campus for home at 12:30 p.m. on Friday, and return to the school Sunday evening.

When picking up your child on Fridays, please allow an extra minute or two to give the bus driver time to relay any messages he/she might have for you. Students being picked up by parents from campus, must first check out with the education or the residential staff.

On Sundays, please give all messages, money, medications, etc., to the bus driver on duty. The driver will forward the items to the dormitory, school department, nurse, or wherever you indicate.

All luggage should be clearly labeled with student's name and home address. The NMSBVI buses are used for trips other than transporting our students and if baggage is clearly labeled it can be quickly returned when found. We encourage a manageable bag (backpack) for carry-on when traveling.

NMSBVI cannot be held responsible for lost items. Please notify us immediately if luggage is missing so we can trace it through the proper channels. Letting us know in advance when your child is bringing a special item back will prompt an immediate search if the item does not arrive.

Telephone calls will be made to students' homes when a decision is made to postpone or cancel transportation to or from school because of adverse weather conditions.

**Please read the Medical Services section of this handbook for information regarding our procedure to follow when your child is ill and unable to return on Sunday.**

If the student must return home during the middle of the week for a medical appointment, family event, early vacation, etc., the parent will share the responsibility of transporting the student home, if possible.

### **Plane Travel**

Students traveling by plane must be at the airport one hour prior to scheduled departure. Students should not be left at the airport unattended as sometimes flights are cancelled due to weather conditions or mechanical problems.

In the event that your child is not picked up at the airline gate within ten minutes after the scheduled time of arrival, and after the airline personnel have made attempts to reach the parent, the airline will contact the police to come and pick up your child. Your child will then be placed into the care of Children, Youth and Family Department (CYFD) until arrangements are made to release your child into your custody. If this action needs to be taken and results in additional costs to NMSBVI, the parents may be asked to make restitution.

For the safety of students, parents or designated persons will be asked to show identification when picking up the child.

Please keep luggage at a minimum. A carry-on backpack is preferred. If larger baggage is checked, please notify us in advance, as we have no extra room in the vehicle transporting students.

If your child is ill and cannot return to NMSBVI as scheduled on Sunday, please contact our Transportation Manager, at (505) 430-7396, and leave a message on his voice mail.

New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired Transportation Department  
Phone (505) 437-3505 Ext. 195.

## **DAY STUDENTS**

Day student transportation is arranged through the NMSBVI Transportation Manager.

Some general rules include:

- ◆ Have your child ready ten minutes ahead of the scheduled pickup time.
- ◆ In the afternoon, please be home for the bus.
- ◆ Call NMSBVI immediately when you change your address or phone number. In the event of an emergency, it is essential that we have a number where you can be reached. Please let us know two weeks in advance of your move.
- ◆ Parents who bring their child to school or take them home must notify NMSBVI of this fact, so that the driver can be contacted.

## **RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS**

All students will be transported to their home area weekly via bus, suburban, plane, or other arranged mode of travel. Parents or guardians are responsible for arranging adult supervision on Friday's and Sunday's to wait with their child until they are picked up. On Friday's the bus will wait no longer than 10 minutes before taking your child and continuing on to the next stop. On Sunday's the suburban or bus will again wait no longer than 10 minutes. It is the responsibility of the parent to be at the designated stop ten minutes prior to the scheduled time. **Important!** In the event that your child is not picked up at the designated pick up point within ten minutes after the scheduled time of arrival, other arrangements may be made to deliver your child to you which results in additional transportation costs. Parents will be responsible for these additional costs.

## **VISITING AMONG NMSBVI STUDENTS ONLY**

If your child plans to visit another student during the week or weekend, or if another student is visiting your home, transportation by NMSBVI will only be provided if it has been approved by the Student Services Support Coordinator. NMSBVI will not accept responsibility for such visits.

Parents of the visiting student should know the family of the student their child will be visiting, and the type of home environment before granting permission.

Letters of permission from both sets of parents of the students involved must be received in the office of the Student Services Support Coordinator two days in advance of the scheduled visit. The letters of permission must contain: date of the visit, names of both students, and name of person providing the transportation if other than NMSBVI staff.

Parental permission via the telephone will not be accepted. FAX transmission is acceptable as written permission. Send to Student Services Support Coordinator FAX# (505) 439-4454. Permission for multiple, open-ended visits will not be accepted. Separate permission must be given for specific dates.

NMSBVI school administrators reserve the right to deny the permission based on known circumstances and credible information.

Permission will not be granted to students to stay overnight with a staff person regardless of parental permission. Students will not be allowed to visit staff homes except for designated and planned field trips. Exceptions can be given only by the Superintendent.

Parents should understand that NMSBVI will not assume responsibility for students once they have signed out and left campus.

### **TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, AND DRUGS**

Because of the potential injury to health, as well as the legal implications for students under age, the use of tobacco, alcohol, and/or illicit drugs is prohibited.

NMSBVI maintains a smoke-free environment. State law prohibits smoking on public school grounds. The following disciplinary actions will be taken when a student is caught smoking.

First Offense: Warning; parent notified; referral to Health Services for counseling regarding the effects of smoking.

Second Offense: Parents notified. If student has an off-campus mobility card, he/she will be restricted to campus for seven school days. If student does not have an off-campus mobility card, he/she will be campused four school days.

Third Offense: Referral to Superintendent.

### **VISITORS TO NMSBVI CAMPUS**

The NMSBVI campus is a closed campus from 9:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. It is necessary to exercise some controls on visitations to the campus by friends from the Alamogordo area. Visitors must have a purpose for being on campus. Residents are encouraged to invite their friends with a purpose in mind (e.g., staying for dinner, staying overnight, recreation center for crafts, gym for swimming, and library for studying). Residents should also make plans one day in advance when possible.

Parents and family members are also considered visitors, but fewer restrictions apply.

All visitors must secure a visitors pass. After hours, visitor passes may be obtained from your child's assigned dormitory.

# **N.M.S.B.V.I. FORMS**

## RELEASE FORM ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

I hereby release the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and any of its employees from the obligation of transportation for my child on the following dates.

Date regular transportation is to be cancelled: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Travel Plan: Public transportation \_\_\_\_\_ Private Car \_\_\_\_\_

Time and date child will leave campus: \_\_\_\_\_.

If by public transportation - Mode of travel: Bus \_\_\_\_\_ Plane \_\_\_\_\_

Ticket attached? \_\_\_\_\_

If by private transportation - Person picking up child \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

If problems with transportation, parent can be reached at \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Time and date child will return to campus: \_\_\_\_\_

*I understand that NMSBVI will not be responsible for supervision of my child after he/she leaves the campus.*

*I understand that on all other weekends, my child will be transported via scheduled means.*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Parent*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Student name*

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

# **NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED**

## **STUDENT/FAMILY HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the parent/guardian of  
\_\_\_\_\_ have reviewed the  
Student/Family Handbook. My student and I understand the  
contents and agree to comply with all the stated NMSBVI policies  
and practices, rules and regulations for the school year 2006 –  
2007.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Parent/Guardian**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Student**

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please sign and return to the Education Office, Vera Woolf.**

# NEW MEXICO SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

## EQUIPMENT, INSTRUMENT, AND BOOK AGREEMENT

In an attempt to help New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired students assume more responsibility for their own actions, NMSBVI is implementing the following agreement:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to the following:  
(student's name)

1. I will assume financial responsibility for any damage to the equipment/ instrument/books checked out to me.
2. I will assume financial responsibility for the replacement value of lost item(s). (Replacement value will be determined by acquiring three estimates on item(s) lost, damaged, or stolen.)

ALL general maintenance of the equipment/instrument/books will be the responsibility of the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Teacher

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

NAME AND NUMBER OF ITEM: \_\_\_\_\_

If applicable:

Deposit in amount of \_\_\_\_\_ received.

Staff Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Deposit returned.

Student Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

cc: Parent/Guardian  
Student File