Annual Report
2019-2020

NCECBVI
In collaboration with the Nebraska Department of Education and Educational Service Unit 4

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402-873-5513

Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired
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Background Information

Founded in 1875, the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired (NCECBVI) serves children from birth to age 21. NCECBVI’s program offers the expertise and specialized skills of the Center’s staff to students who are blind, visually impaired, and/or have multiple disabilities in residential, day, and outreach settings. Services are provided to local school districts, Educational Service Units, students, families, teachers, and other support staff.

Since 1999, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) contracts with Educational Service Unit 4 (ESU 4) to implement the state plan for vision services. NCECBVI provides statewide services under the leadership of ESU4 and partners with NDE to serve students statewide with programs and services as prescribed in the state plan.

ESU 4/NCECBVI Vision Statement
Courageously leading a dynamic revolution in education.

NCECBVI Mission Statement
To improve the learning of children who are blind or visually impaired through a commitment to communication, accountability, and leadership.

NCECBVI Belief Statements (May 2007)
We believe, as advocates for children who are blind or visually impaired, that:
- Communication is the key to effectiveness.
- Honest, accurate, and accessible communication enables quality statewide services.
- Effective partnerships between families and professionals ensure accountability.
- All children must have meaningful experiences and appropriate services.
- Local, state, and national leadership is essential in developing and providing educational best practices.

ESU 4 Mission Statement (January 2014)
Impacting student learning through communication, accountability, and leadership.

In 1997, the Nebraska Department of Education/NSVH conducted a study of vision services in Nebraska. A committee, made up of stakeholders, was selected to review current services and develop a new state plan for statewide vision services. This state plan was approved the Nebraska State Board of Education in December 1998, which created the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired (NCECBVI). In 2004, the original stakeholders were invited back to NCECBVI to review the state plan and make any revisions needed to meet current needs. The revised state plan was approved by the Nebraska State Board of Education in September 2004.
Nebraska State Plan for Vision Services

The Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired provides a variety of services for students with blindness, visual impairments, and multiple disabilities on the campus in Nebraska City as well as statewide in students’ local school districts, homes, and communities. The chart below identifies the service components of the state plan for vision services.
Instructional Materials and Technology Support

The Nebraska Instructional Resource Center (NIRC), housed at the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired, supports local education agencies in providing students statewide with instructional materials and technology support needed for their education.

The Center:
- Acts as a liaison to the American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. (APH) Federal Quota program
- Serves as a resource for materials in braille, large print, recorded items, and tactile representations
- Maintains a statewide inventory of large print and braille materials available for loan from local school districts and educational service units
- Collaborates with the Nebraska Educational Assistive Technology (NEAT) Project regarding technology loan programs and technology support

School districts are required to register both their Legally Blind and Partially Sighted students annually with the Nebraska Instructional Resource Center.

As noted on Federal Quota registration paperwork, the top etiologies for students in Nebraska are as follows: Cortical Visual Impairment, Optic Nerve Hypoplasia, Retinopathy of Prematurity, Optic Atrophy, Nystagmus, and Albinism.

Federal Quota funding from the American Printing House for the Blind is provided to each state annually for students registered as Legally Blind. In Nebraska, NCECBVI also monitors the number of students who qualify as partially sighted.

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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
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Categorization by age:
- Students ages birth-age 3: 24
- Students ages 3-5: 78
- Students ages 5-21: 726

Students were identified from 142 school districts and programs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allen Consolidated</th>
<th>Crete</th>
<th>Hemingford</th>
<th>Ogallala</th>
<th>St. Paul</th>
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<td>Osceola</td>
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<td>Elgin</td>
<td>Lakeview</td>
<td>Papillion-LaVista</td>
<td>Tekamah-Herman</td>
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<td>Laurel-Concord</td>
<td>Pawnee City</td>
<td>Thayer Central</td>
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<tr>
<td>Battle Creek</td>
<td>Elkhorn Valley</td>
<td>Lewiston</td>
<td>Plainview</td>
<td>Umo “Ho” Nation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beatrice</td>
<td>Emerson-Hubbard</td>
<td>Lexington</td>
<td>Plattssmouth</td>
<td>Valentine</td>
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<td>Exeter-Milligan</td>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>Pleasanton</td>
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<td>McCook</td>
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<td>McCool Junction</td>
<td>Ralston</td>
<td>Waverly</td>
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<td>Meridian</td>
<td>Randolph</td>
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<td>Morrill</td>
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<td>Schuyler</td>
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<td>Gering</td>
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<td>Northwest</td>
<td>St. Edward</td>
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Center-Based Programs and Residential Services

Students have the option of attending the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired for specialized services based upon the student’s educational needs as indicated by the individual education plan. Full or part-time educational placement for varying durations is available. Residential services may be provided in addition to the center-based educational program. Residential services may include independent living training, social skill training, community participation, and recreation and leisure activities.

The Center provides:
- Academic programming
- Continuation of local school district academics
- Intense training in specific skills
- Assessments and evaluations
- Collaboration with educators and parents for the student’s return to local education agency
- Transition programming for adult life
- Partnerships with local public schools to provide educational opportunities
- Specialized services for students with blindness, visual impairments, and multiple disabilities

Enrollment
The Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired provides educational programs within the center-based school setting for students with visual impairments, including those with multiple disabilities. Residential services are also offered at NCECBVI which provides a comprehensive program for students with extended training opportunities in the area of independent living skills.

16 center-based students **Indicates new student(s) to NCECBVI in the 2019-2020 school year.
11 of the center-based students received residential services.

13 school districts received these services:
- Boone Central
- Crete
- East Butler
- Falls City
- Hemingford
- Nebraska City
- Plattsmouth
- Sterling
- Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca**
- Thayer-Central
- Wakefield
- Waverly-Eagle

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Co-Enrollment with Local School District
Placement at NCECBVI is always an IEP team decision and in some situations, students may attend their local school district classes on a part-time basis and attend NCECBVI the other part of the time. NCECBVI works closely with school districts to ensure consistency between the programs.

1 student attended both NCECBVI and their local district:
- Plattsmouth
Partnership with Nebraska City Public Schools
NCECBVI serves students statewide and when they attend the center-based program and live in the residential setting, it may be a long distance between Nebraska City and their local community and school. When the IEP team determines it is appropriate for the student to attend classes at a public school, Nebraska City Public Schools has provided that opportunity for students who attend NCECBVI.

1 student participated in classes at Nebraska City Public Schools from:
Boone Central

Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC)
The ECC is a framework for educational planning for students with visual impairments. It consists of nine areas: Compensatory Academics, Orientation and Mobility, Sensory Efficiency, Career Education, Independent Living Skills, Recreation and Leisure, Assistive Technology, Self Determination, and Social Interaction. The ECC is emphasized in all areas of a student’s education and services and is one of the unique and specialized features of a student attending school at NCECBVI.

NCECBVI Events/Programs
Parent-Teacher conferences were held for parents/guardians of students at NCECBVI in November. During this time, conversations about student progress and upcoming lesson plans/activities were held between teachers, related service providers, adult service agencies, and parents. Parent-Teacher conferences were also scheduled for March but had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists at NCECBVI coordinated trips to a shopping mall in Lincoln for all students in December. Prior to the shopping days, staff worked with parents to get lists of items the students could buy for family members for the holidays and carefully planned out routes in the mall for the students to be able to purchase those items. Once they returned from the mall, staff assisted students in wrapping their presents so they could go home to the families for the holidays.

On December 20, all NCECBVI students and several staff members participated in the annual Winter Program. During this program, students showcased their talents by singing, speaking, playing instruments for an audience full of family members, special guests, and staff. Following the program, everyone was invited to the dining room for a special meal prepared for the holiday celebration.

A “snow day” picnic was held in the lunchroom for residential students.

Staff and students celebrated the 100th day of school by dressing up like they were 100 years old!

A “Shamrock Dance” was held in the gym on March 12. Complete with decorations, a DJ, snacks, and photos, students and staff danced away their afternoon. Several area schools were invited to participate and planning to attend, however, as a safety precaution for coronavirus, the decision was made to have this be an NCECBVI-only event.
From the Kitchen
During the first month of the 2019-2020 school year, new ideas and items were introduced from the kitchen staff. The “Ramen Bar” was a hit in September, which included a choice of pre-measured veggies, a meat selection, and soy sauce and/or Chinese noodles for the finishing touch. One student gave it a ‘two thumbs up’ review. There were also guests in the building who provided rave reviews.

The kitchen staff also introduced the “NCEC Bowl” which was their take on the KFC Bowl. This was a big hit and had everyone asking if they could have it again the next day. The street tacos on Friday were also popular. The first time they were served they were still the talk on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of the following week.

“The Produce Man” sent some fabulous fresh produce to school for students to enjoy. While his presentation had to be postponed, the kitchen staff bagged it up and sent it home with students to enjoy with their families.

Remote Instruction During 4th Quarter
On March 16-17, the decision was made to send students home due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Instructional packets were compiled by staff and sent home for students to continue their learning for the remainder of the school year.

NCECBVI teachers created remote learning plans to provide educational enrichment activities for students enrolled in the center-based and residential programs. Educational materials, along with assistive technology devices, were mailed to students’ homes on a minimum of three separate occasions during the quarter. Teachers were in frequent contact with students, parents/guardians, and family members during this time to answer questions, support instruction, and collaboratively monitor student progress on IEP goals and objectives. Contact was made with students and families through phone calls, emails, and Zoom meetings.

For detailed information about how the COVID-19 pandemic effected 4th quarter, please refer to the ‘NCECBVI Continuity of Learning’ plan.

Transition Planning
NCECBVI has been working closely with center-based students, their families, and adult service agency providers to coordinate transition services to the location where students will attend once they graduate. The Transition Specialist, Principal, and teachers have worked hard on transition plans for graduates from the communities of Hebron, Nebraska City, and Wakefield.

Graduation Ceremony
NCECBVI’s graduation ceremony was held via Zoom on May 8. This event was held in collaboration with students’ home schools with representatives from local school districts and NCECBVI sharing stories about each graduate, viewing a slide show of photos taken during the students’ time at NCECBVI, and awarding them with certificates of participation and diplomas. Caps and gowns were mailed to students’ homes so they could wear the traditional graduation apparel during the ceremony.
Class of 2020 Graduates
NCECBVI staff aim to ensure a comfortable transition between public school and adult life. Parents, teachers, and adult service agency providers worked together to develop and implement students’ transition plans. Post-graduation plans for the class of 2020 graduates included:

Region V in Nebraska City
Integrated Life Choices, Lincoln
Integrated Life Choices, Wayne

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Parent Survey: Center-Based Program, 2019-2020

4=Excellent  3=Good  2=Fair  1=Poor
Parent Survey: Residential Program, 2019-2020

4=Excellent  3=Good  2=Fair  1=Poor


4=Excellent  3=Good  2=Fair  1=Poor
**Student and Family Support Programs**

The Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired offers a variety of support programs for students and families throughout the year.

The Center provides:

- **Skill Training**—Braille, Orientation and Mobility, Independent Living, Vocational Training, Assistive Technology, Social Skills, Transitional Living
- **Enrichment Activities**—Outdoor Education, Arts and Crafts, Music, Sports, Recreation and Leisure
- **Family Activities**—Parent Training, Sibling Training, Family Networking

**Alumni Banquet**

There was a great turnout for the annual **Alumni Banquet/Reunion** in July. The guests arrived Friday afternoon and got all settled into their rooms in the dorm. Friday evening was spent socializing and reminiscing about their times at NCECBVI. Saturday started with breakfast and coffee then a dedication ceremony for those that could not be with us this year. The guests had lunch and played BINGO in the afternoon. Saturday evening was a delicious meal with an auction following. Sunday, they had a brunch with lots of pictures and new memories being made. In all, 30 guests enjoyed the weekend festivities.

**Eastern Nebraska Transition Conference**

This fall, 6 students, 3 staff, and one parent from NCECBVI attended the Eastern Nebraska Transition Conference at Southeast Community College in Lincoln. The students spent their day attending 6 different sessions on topics to prepare them for working and living in the community. These topics included Coping Well: Skills for Work, Safety in the Community, Self-Advocacy & Self Esteem, Tech & Tips for Work, and Safe use of Social Media. They finished their day listening to speakers from the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and the Nebraska Youth Leadership Council, including an NCECBVI student who is part of NYLC. All of the students had a great day and enjoyed seeing other students and teachers from their local districts.

**ACT Testing**

NCECBVI serves as an approved proctor for the ACT test. NCECBVI staff partnered with students’ local school districts, parents, and students to complete the required paperwork for approved accommodations.

1 student participated from:
Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca

**Person-Centered Planning**

In the person-centered planning process, students with disabilities focus on themselves to build a personal profile using maps, plan for their future, and create an action plan to define next steps in the planning process. NCECBVI staff members from both the outreach department and center-based program have been trained in this process.

1 team participated from:
Fremont-Mills, Iowa
APH ArtInsights
The American Printing House for the Blind coordinates the Art InSights contest annually. This fall, 7 students from Nebraska placed and/or were recognized in this nation-wide competition. Four of the students, along with their parents, traveled to Louisville, Kentucky, to receive their honors and participate in the national art show.

4 students and their families traveled to Louisville, KY, from:
NCECBVI
South Sioux City

Cane Quest
Nebraska’s first-ever Cane Quest competition, a national event sponsored by the Braille Institute of America, was held on December 5. On this day, students from around the state participated in this orientation and mobility contest on the NCECBVI campus, with nearly all of the Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists in the state participating as well. During the contest, parents participated in an all-day workshop focusing on adapting games and activities for students who are blind or visually impaired. There were a total of 88 participants in the event including 18 students, 14 grandparents/parents, 37 staff/volunteers, 5 student helpers.

Students and parents from the following districts were in attendance:
District 145—Eagle
    Fullerton
    Gretna
    Lincoln
    NCECBVI
    Norris
    Wood River

Community Service Agency Tours
The NCECBVI Transition Specialist arranged tours in various areas in the state throughout the year, including Omaha, Lincoln, and Wayne. These tours were designed for parents and family members, and gave them the opportunity to learn more about what each program had to offer after graduation, as well as a chance to ask questions. Spending the day together also provided a beneficial networking opportunity for parents.

Nebraska Youth Leadership Council
The Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Special Education, along with Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, sponsor the Nebraska Youth Leadership Council. The NYLC was created by youth, promoting leadership and advocacy for students with disabilities. They work with youth statewide to promote disability awareness and educate others about transition services.

1 student participated from:
NCECBVI
**Nebraska Braille Challenge**

NCECBVI sponsored the 13th annual Braille Challenge on campus. Nebraska students were invited to participate and celebrate literacy, reward academic competition, and to encourage them to excel and believe in their vision for the future. This national event was sponsored by the Braille Institute of America. Students competed in various contests including spelling, reading comprehension, proofreading, and speed and accuracy. During the afternoon, students participated in interactive sessions focusing on coding and robotics, led by two teachers of the visually impaired, one from NCECBVI and one from Lincoln Public Schools.

A parent workshop titled, “Let’s Talk about Employment: Family Employment Awareness Training” was provided by Holly Schweitz, FEAT Coordinator, from the Nebraska Parent Training and Information Center. In total, there were 93 participants on campus for this year’s competition; 67 visitors, in addition to 26 individuals from NCECBVI. Not included in this number are the Nebraska City Public Schools band members who were present as the Braille Challenge contestants entered the auditorium during the opening ceremony. Prizes were given to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners in each category and all students received a certificate of participation, pictures of the contestants, and a t-shirt.

**25 students participated from 13 schools**

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<th>Ashland-Greenwood</th>
<th>Aurora</th>
<th>Blair</th>
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<th>NCECBVI</th>
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<td>Omaha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Sioux City</td>
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<td>Southwest</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waverly/Eagle District #145</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood River</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Students who have Participated in the Nebraska Regional Braille Challenge by School Year</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**National Braille Challenge**

Two Nebraska students qualified for, and participated in, the Braille Challenge National Competition which is typically held in Los Angeles, California, in June. They were from the South Sioux City and Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca school districts. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this year the contest was held remotely. Each student’s TVI made arrangements to proctor the contest in July, in each student’s hometown.

**Prom**

Prom was not held this school year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Sizzlin’ Summer Camp**

Sizzlin’ Summer Camp was not held this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Assessment and Evaluation Services

Educational assessments and evaluations are provided to assist local education agencies in order to provide educational services for students who are blind or visually impaired. These assessments may be provided in a variety of locations: in the local school district, in the student’s home and community, and/or at the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired. The assessment team also coordinates with other professionals to provide a comprehensive evaluation.

The Center may provide:
- Low Vision Clinics
- Orientation and Mobility Assessments
- Functional Vision Assessments
- Learning Media Assessments
- Transitional Living Assessments
- Daily Living Assessments
- Vocational Assessments
- Assistive Technology Assessments
- Motor Assessments
- Psychological Evaluations
- Physical Therapy Evaluations
- Occupational Therapy Evaluations
- Speech-Language Evaluations

Psychological Evaluations and Functional Vision/Learning Media Assessments

Psychological evaluations are offered on-campus at NCECBVI. Functional Vision/Learning Media Assessments and Orientation and Mobility Assessments are provided as an outreach service, completed at the student’s local district.

13 students completed a Psychological Evaluation from:
- Central Valley
- Columbus
- Hartington-Newcastle
- Ogallala
- Randolph
- Scottsbluff
- Wayne
- West Holt

9 students completed an Orientation and Mobility Assessment from:
- Central Valley
- Crete
- Falls City
- North Platte
- Oakland-Craig
- Ravenna
- Raymond Central
- Wahoo-Bishop Neumann
16 students completed a Functional Vision/Learning Media Assessment from:

- Auburn
- Bridgeport
- Chadron
- Crawford
- Gretna
- Kimball
- Mitchell
- North Platte
- Pawnee City
- Potter-Dix
- Scottsbluff
- Sidney

Categorization by age:

- Students ages birth-age 3: 0
- Students ages 3-5: 0
- Students ages 5-21: 34
Consultation Services

The Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired provides consultation, advisory, and technical assistance for students, families, educators, local education agencies, and educational service units on a statewide basis.

The Center:
- Assists local education agencies in assessing a child’s needs and makes appropriate educational recommendations
- Facilitates student-family networking
- Provides classroom, community, and/or home observations
- Provides ongoing support and information for students, parents, and educators
- Works cooperatively with parents, local school district personnel, and others to implement appropriate educational programs and services
- Participates in multi-disciplinary team, individual education planning, individual family service planning, and individual program planning meetings
- Assists with statewide initiatives

Mentoring Program
NCECBVI offers a mentoring program for teachers of the visually impaired. Mentoring can be of particular benefit to a new TVI, and/or individuals who have returned to a TVI position after recently working in another capacity, or a TVI who is in need of assistance in a particular area(s). The NCECBVI Outreach Consultant/Mentor provides support, encouragement, and assistance to the TVI to help the individual gain confidence and learn skills to effectively provide services to students with visual impairments.

3 individuals participated from:
- ESU 13
- Gering
- Scottsbluff

Transition Consultation
NCECBVI’s Transition Specialist offers consultation to students, teachers of the visually impaired, school district staff, and families. These consultations are individualized to meet the specific transition needs of the students and parents as well as the needs of the school districts and ESUs.

1 district/ESU participated from:
- Gretna

Direct Service
During the 2019-2020 school year, NCECBVI provided direct services from a teacher of the visually impaired and certified orientation and mobility specialists to several schools within the ESU 4 area. NCECBVI also contracts with two school districts in the ESU 3 area, one district in the ESU 6 area, and three school districts in the ESU 2 area to provide direct services. NCECBVI also provided direct service to students in the ESU 13 area. During the COVID-19 pandemic in 4th quarter, enrichment activities were provided to many students in these districts.
45 students received services from 22 districts:

ESU 2
Ashland-Greenwood
Oakland-Craig
Wahoo/Bishop Neumann

ESU 3
Gretna
Papillion-LaVista

ESU 4
Auburn
District OR 1: Palmyra/Bennet
Falls City
Lewiston
Pawnee City
Sterling
Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca

ESU 6
Crete
Norris
Raymond Central

ESU 13
Alliance
Banner County
Bayard
Bridgeport
Chadron
Chappell
Crawford
Creek Valley
Harrisburg
Hay Springs
Kimball
Mitchell
Potter-Dix
Scottsbluff
Sidney

ESU 16
North Platte

Categorization by age:
- Students ages birth-age 3: 1
- Students ages 3-5: 3
- Students ages 5-21: 48

NCECBVI staff participated in MDT and/or IEP/IFSP meetings in 25 districts:

Alliance
Ashland-Greenwood
Bridgeport
Chadron
Crawford
Crete
District OR-1
Falls City
Gretna
Kimball
Lewiston
Mitchell
Nebraska City
Norris
North Platte
Oakland-Craig
Papillion-LaVista
Pawnee City
Potter-Dix
Raymond Central
Scottsbluff
Sidney
Sterling
Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca
Wahoo/Bishop-Neumann
**Professional Development and Training**

The Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired provides and coordinates staff development opportunities statewide for educators, related service providers, parents, and agency personnel as needs are identified. In addition, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, in cooperation with the Nebraska Department of Education, the Kansas State School for the Blind, and the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired, offers an endorsement program for teaching the blind and visually impaired.

The Center:
- Supports the UNL Vision Endorsement Program
- Provides training for regular and special educators, related service providers, and agency personnel
- Provides training opportunities for parents, families, and caregivers
- Provides statewide staff development opportunities for teachers of the visually impaired
- Seeks funding for teachers to receive certification in orientation and mobility

The **Deaf-Blind Summer Institute** was held in July in Lincoln. The three-day training titled “Laying the Foundation for Communication Exchange: Critical Points of Understanding and Practical Strategies,” was presented by Dr. Susan Bashinski from Missouri Western State University. This professional development opportunity is sponsored by the Nebraska Deaf-Blind Project.

73 individuals participated from

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boys Town National Research Hospital</th>
<th>Nebraska Dept. of Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESU 1</td>
<td>Norfolk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESU 6</td>
<td>NE Reg. Prgm for Deaf/HoH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESU 9</td>
<td>PTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESU 10</td>
<td>Ralston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falls City</td>
<td>Scottsbluff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kearney</td>
<td>SE NE Reg. Prgm-Deaf/HoH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
<td>Waverly-Eagle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Regional Program-Deaf/Hard of Hearing</td>
<td>West Holt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munroe-Meyer</td>
<td>UNL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska Commission for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing</td>
<td>Yutan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenwood, Delaware</td>
<td>Junction City, Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milford, Delaware</td>
<td>St. Paul, Minnesota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Bluffs, Iowa</td>
<td>Aberdeen, South Dakota</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiawatha, Kansas</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In July, the NCECBVI Campus Administrator and Director of Programs were asked to meet with the team of 8 occupational therapists and a teacher liaison at **Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital** in Lincoln, to give an overview of programs and services. Discussions were held regarding the increased number of students with a diagnosis of cortical visual impairment (CVI), how services are provided to both school-age and early childhood students, educational vs. medical services, and providing resources to students with vision loss. A brief tour of the Madonna vision rehabilitation therapy room was also provided.
Thirty-five UNL students descended on NCECBVI the week of July 8 to participate in hands-on experiences associated with their graduate coursework. Students completing their first year took an assistive technology course with Robert Taylor, an assistive technology specialist from the Kansas State School for the Blind, and a Nemeth and adapted materials course with Diane Ditmars, a retired TVI from Lincoln Public Schools. Students nearing the end of their programs took an orientation and mobility course with Faye Miller, a TVI/COMS from the Oklahoma School for the Blind. Students in the program represented eight states: Colorado, Delaware, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Utah, and Wisconsin.

The CVI (Cortical Visual Impairment) Work Group supports TVIs statewide. This school year, team members participated in a CVI training offered by the Perkins School for the Blind. This led to each team member earning an ‘endorsement’ in CVI through Perkins but more importantly, for the purpose of them sharing information with colleagues statewide in spring, as they lead training in CVI assessments. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, Spring Fling 2020 was canceled.

8 individuals participated from
ESU 9
ESU 10
Lincoln
NCECBVI
Norfolk

The TOAST (Technology Outreach and Support Team) Work Group met in September and learned updates about the Assistive Technology Partnership from their new director. They also continued their discussion about an assistive technology lab and they held a discussion about the use of personal devices that are utilized at school. The team made plans to update their website and also reviewed the use of ‘smart devices’ for students. Throughout the year, their conversations concentrated on how to integrate assistive technology with the restructuring of Low Vision Clinics for the upcoming school year.

5 individuals participated from
Assistive Technology Partnership
ESU 4
ESU 10
Lincoln
NCECBVI

In October, the NCECBVI Transition Specialist provided an in-service for teachers of the visually impaired in Lincoln Public Schools. Topics discussed included Indicator 13 transition requirements and how they connect their services to post-secondary and annual goals. They also discussed how the ECC screening and assessment can be used for a transition assessment, work experience, how so many O&M activities relate to transition, they discussed the possibility of summer work experiences for students, especially in regard to support from the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
Regional Conversations to Discuss Best Practices for Students with Vision Impairments are held to provide an opportunity for professional development, for all TVIs across Nebraska, through conversation guided by an agenda as well as the needs of the group. Teachers of the visually impaired come together from the region to share ideas and resources for best practices for teaching students with visual impairments, problem-solve, discuss pertinent topics in the area of visual impairments, and learn about upcoming professional development opportunities. Meetings are held typically held two times each school year; once in the fall and again in the spring and facilitated by the NCECBVI Outreach Department staff members. This school year, Regional Conversations were held in the fall via Zoom and were unable to be held in the spring, due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln area</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast area</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Nebraska</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Nebraska</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omaha area</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The NCECBVI Director of Programs and Principal attended the annual American Printing House (APH) for the Blind conference in Louisville, Kentucky, in October. As part of their roles as Ex-Officio Trustees, both attended required sessions focusing on the Federal Quota program. They attended several other sessions regarding APH products and networked with other professionals in the field of blindness and visual impairments. Dr. Tanya Armstrong received the Council of Schools for the Blind Leadership Award at their annual banquet.

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) annually selects a small number of educators in the field to serve as an APH Scholar and attend the annual meeting in Louisville, Kentucky. Barbara Johnson, Teacher of the Visually Impaired for Lincoln Public Schools, received this honor and attended the annual meeting and training sessions in October.

This year’s annual Fall Foliage statewide conference focused on early childhood. Megan Mogan from the Arizona Deaf-Blind Project presented “Tactile Strategies for Early Communicators: Practical Ideas for Interactive Daily Routines.” Following the workshop, 100% of participants reported they had gained either moderate or high knowledge/skills in the area of early communication. Dorinda Rife, an independent consultant, gave a presentation about Babies Count, a national registry of infants and toddlers who are blind or visually impaired; Nebraska will be implementing this program during the 2019-2020 school year. Finally, Teresa Coonts from the Nebraska Department of Education provided an update of various happenings throughout the state. One participant stated, “It’s always helpful to have updates directly from an NDE representative.”

29 individuals participated from:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Agency/Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
<td>NCBVI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESU 3</td>
<td>NCECBVI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESU 5</td>
<td>Nebraska Department of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESU 8</td>
<td>Ogallala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESU 9</td>
<td>Private Provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESU 10</td>
<td>University of Nebraska-Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hastings</td>
<td>Wood River</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lincoln</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
In October, NCECBVI staff spent an entire day focusing on individual needs of students who attend the center-based and residential programs. They looked at information specific to communication, occupational and physical therapy needs, IEP goals, behavior plans, and more. Teachers, paraeducators, residential staff, and administrators participated.

Also in October, the center-based and residential staff participated in a workshop learning how to use Verbal Behavior strategies to teach language and basic learning skills to students. This was led by Deb Rauner, Behavior Specialist and her assistant, Paula Daharsh. The verbal behavior strategies staff worked on included learning about verbal operants, prompting/shaping, pairing, and reinforcement. NCECBVI staff also learned how to use errorless teaching to work on target skills and how to do an error correction when students make a mistake. Following the workshop, 79% of participants said they had moderate knowledge/skill in the area of verbal behavior strategies and 21% felt they had high knowledge.

The NCECBVI Transition Specialist is an active participant in the ESU 4 Transition Coalition Self-Study. There are several opportunities for professionals to partner each month, to meet as a group either in person or via Zoom to discuss topics pertinent to transition. Members of the group put together presentations for the ESU 4 area Engaging Educators Conference in February.

Now in its fourth year, the Midwest Outreach Forum was held at NCECBVI in November, with representatives from Iowa and Nebraska in attendance. Topics discussed at this year’s meeting included: Braille Challenge, Low Vision Clinics, Cortical Visual Impairment, Early Childhood, Technology, Transition and more.

In November, the NCECBVI Director of Programs and Principal attended the Tri-State Law conference held in Omaha. In addition to learning about legal decisions/court cases over the last year, they attended sessions focusing on transition, IEP compliance, and mental health.

The NCECBVI Transition Specialist participated in the Transition Practitioners meeting on November 20. This group is made up of transition specialists and special education teachers statewide, sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education. This meeting focused on the upcoming statewide Transition Conference which will be held in Kearney in February.

In November, Donna Hultman, NCECBVI Outreach Consultant, presented a “CVI 101” workshop to JP Lord teaching staff in Omaha Public Schools. Twelve teachers were in attendance. Donna shared many materials, including those that were teacher-made and those available from the Nebraska Instructional Resource Center. She was able to present them with a list of students in their school registered as legally blind through the Federal Quota Census and hence, eligible to receive materials from NIRC.

One of the NCECBVI Outreach Consultants attended the Getting in Touch with Literacy conference in Seattle this fall. This national, biennial conference is for professionals in the field of blindness and visual impairment and is one of the largest gatherings for professional development for teachers serving this population.
In November, a Braillist workshop was held at NCECBVI focusing on the braille math code, Nemeth 101. Kyle DeJute from the National Braille Association was the presenter. In addition to Nebraska, participants from the neighboring states of Iowa and Kansas were also in attendance. Following the workshop, 92% of participants said they had moderate or high knowledge and skills in the area of Nemeth.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>28 individuals participated from:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashland-Greenwood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bellevue</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESU 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESU 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fremont</td>
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<td>Fullerton</td>
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<td>Lincoln</td>
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<td>Millard</td>
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<td>Omaha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood River</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ankeny, IA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heartland AEA 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>IA Educational Services for the B/VI</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenbush SE KS Service Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sumner Co. Educ. Services, KS</td>
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<tr>
<td>USD 260</td>
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<tr>
<td>USD 457</td>
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<tr>
<td>USD 465</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private Provider</td>
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Nebraska Orientation and Mobility Specialists met in early November to finalize plans for the state’s first-ever Cane Quest competition. On this day, O&M specialists learned about the individual stations for the competition, practiced scoring students according to provided rubrics, and walked the route for contest. Cane Quest is an O&M competition coordinated by the Braille Institute of America.

The NIRC Advisory committee met in December and addressed a number of topics including: Federal Quota, getting more materials into the hands of students, providing more catalogs for general education teachers to support their instruction, data collection, new APH products, packaging of items, ways to support new TVIs, and reviewing the process of sourcing books.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 individuals participated from</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESU 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESU 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Falls City</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hastings</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCECBVI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Sioux City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Nebraska-Lincoln/Private Provider</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the NCECBVI Orientation and Mobility Specialists participated in an online workshop, “Creative O&M Strategies to Increase your Students’ Independence in Rural Areas.”

One of the NCECBVI center-based teachers attended the ATIA (Assistive Technology Industry Association) conference in January. Sessions he attended focused on a robot system for students with autism, 3D support for students with disabilities, the American Printing House for the blind new devices, playground experiences for students with complex communication needs, music-centered AT, coding, switches, literacy, and more. This teacher also presented a poster session which had more than 500 viewers and 49 scans, in addition to in-person conversations and numerous handouts disseminated.
NCECBVI supported their Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialists to participate in the online **International O&M Symposium**. They viewed several sessions, including those focused on O&M instructional strategies, fall prevention, a comparison between apps, and more.

The NCECBVI administrative team met for a full day of planning in mid-January. Program data was reviewed and discussions were held about the current State Plan, future goals, and service delivery models.

NCECBVI continues a **positive partnership with the Nebraska Commission for the Blind** by meeting quarterly during the school year. In February, NCECBVI administrators and the Transition Specialist met with NCBVI staff to discuss several ways to continue to partner in supporting transition-age students and their families.

In February, the NCECBVI Transition Specialist presented a session at the **Nebraska Transition Conference** in Kearney, in partnership with the Transition Coordinator at the Nebraska Commission for the Blind.

All of the staff from ESU 4 area schools were invited to participate in the **Engaging Educators Conference** at Peru State College in mid-February. There were a variety of sessions for individuals to attend throughout the day. This is an annual professional development conference coordinated by the Teaching and Learning Team at ESU 4.

Several NCECBVI staff members participated in **ObjectivED Zoom training** during the year. ObjectivED supports distance learning to help students practice their skills in the Expanded Core Curriculum including games for orientation and mobility, braille, and assistive technology.

In February, the NCECBVI Campus Administrator and Director of Programs met with the **Millard Public Schools** teachers of the visually impaired, orientation and mobility specialist, and administrator. The group discussed upcoming opportunities for students, families, and staff, in addition to answering questions about the Federal Quota program, assessments, and transition activities.

NCECBVI staff and administrators participated in **SRS (IEP) training** in February. The ESUCC Communications Specialist led the training for teachers and related service providers.

In early March, the NCECBVI Campus Administrator and Director of Programs met with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln professors in both the TVI and O&M programs. They discussed current students, professional development opportunities, and ways to partner in the upcoming 2020-2021 school year.

One of the NCECBVI Orientation and Mobility Specialists co-presented a Zoom session with the Orientation and Mobility professor from UNL in early March, to interested staff from North Platte Public Schools and the ESU 16 area. The purpose of the session was to provide information about this related service and hopefully spark an interest in others to earn their certification in O&M.
NCECBVI’s Go-To Crew, along with the ESU 4 Administrative Team, have spent time preparing for the Cognia accreditation review scheduled for this fall. Data has been collected and analyzed, program priorities have been identified, and the overall continuous improvement process has been reviewed.

NCECBVI paraeducators and residential assistants participated in the Nebraska Statewide Autism Conference held via Zoom on April 2-3.

NCECBVI’s paraeducators, residential assistants, Food Service Coordinator, and Residential Services Coordinator were provided “homework packets” to engage them in professional learning while working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in March. Materials were individualized based on staff needs and interests. Completed work was submitted each week and detailed feedback was provided from the administrative team.

The NCECBVI Physical Therapist provided a training to staff via Zoom focusing on the needs of NCECBVI students. In preparation for the training, she encouraged staff to view the webinar, “Ready Bodies Learning Minds.” The training also reviewed tips on transfers, body mechanics, orthotics, getting in and out of vehicles, sensory breaks, and the importance of documentation of all therapy activities.

The Principal and NCECBVI School Nurse presented a Zoom session to all staff about the specialized needs of NCECBVI students. Medical information was shared about individual students in addition to their learning needs. This session provided an in-depth look at each student’s background and allowed staff to learn more about every student’s unique circumstances.

The Campus Administrator held frequent Zoom meetings with the entire NCECBVI staff. During 4th quarter. Information was shared that was learned at other meetings and trainings regarding COVID-19, work schedules and expectations of staff, communication with districts, students, and families, IEP compliance, providing educational materials/activities for students, and more. Topics/agenda items were shared about information that was pertinent at that time.

Statewide Zoom meetings were held for teachers of the visually impaired on a regular basis during 4th quarter. Conversations were held regarding instruction in this time of remote learning, strategies for working with students and families using technology, ideas were shared for progress monitoring, and more. These sessions were well attended and provided TVIs opportunities for networking.

O&M Instructors met regularly via Zoom during 4th quarter. While similar to the statewide Zoom meetings for TVIs, their conversations focused specifically on strategies for orientation and mobility. Creative ideas were shared and O&M instructors actively engaged in discussions about how to serve students remotely.

NCECBVI’s administrators participated in numerous trainings and meetings regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. The specific trainings are noted in the “Positive Partnerships” section at the end of this report.
NCECBVI outreach staff participated in trainings during 4\textsuperscript{th} quarter including the following: O&M for Wheelchair Users with Visual Impairments and Blindness, Maximizing Engagement with Students with Visual Impairments, ObjectivED, and a session focused on driving with low vision.

On May 4, the Campus Administrator and Director of Programs participated in a meeting with Creighton ophthalmology students and their professor via Zoom. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss their involvement in future low vision clinics.

NCECBVI’s Go-To Crew, along with the ESU 4 Leadership Team, participated in a 2-day Data Retreat via Zoom in May. On day one, teams reviewed and analyzed data from the current school year. On the second day, teams created action plans and identified priority programs for the upcoming school year. Time was also spent preparing for the Cognia accreditation review scheduled for this fall.

NCECBVI’s annual Spring Fling conference was not held due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The annual all-ESU 4 professional development day was not held this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

![Statewide Conferences/Workshops](chart.png)

During the 2019-2020 school year, NCECBVI collected data about how many teachers of the visually impaired and braillists are currently in Nebraska and of those, how many participated in an NCECBVI-sponsored activity, whether on-campus or off-campus.

- Of the 70 active TVIs, 65 participated in at least one activity with NCECBVI, equaling 93%.
- Of the 21 active braillists, 12 participated in at least one activity with NCECBVI, equaling 57%.
NCECBVI serves as the fiscal agent for the **Nebraska Deaf Blind Grant**. In addition to the annual Deaf-Blind Summer Institute held in July 2019, the Family Engagement Coordinator participated in online meetings and trainings, the CHARGE liaison attended the national CHARGE conference, and the Project Director and Project Coordinator met regularly to discuss grant year activities.

Throughout the year, the Project Director and Project Coordinator participated in monthly planning meetings with several other states to prepare for the Midwest Transition Institute which was scheduled to be held in Michigan in the summer of 2020. In preparation for hosting the Midwest Transition Institute in Nebraska/Iowa in the summer of 2021, Nebraska Project staff have met with Iowa Project staff at the Iowa School for the Deaf, where the conference will be held, and via Zoom. Additionally, Deaf-Blind Project staff have participated in Deaf-Blind Interagency meetings with the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Helen Keller National Center, and the Assistive Technology Partnership.

During the school year, the Project Director and Project Coordinator joined Zoom consultation sessions with teams from Lincoln Public Schools and Kearney Public Schools as they have been supported by Dr. Susan Bashinski from Missouri Western University, as follow-up from last summer’s Deaf-Blind Institute. The decision was made in March to cancel this year’s MTI in lieu of the COVID-19 pandemic. Project Staff planned for the annual Deaf-Blind Institute to be held via Zoom this July, rather than in-person as originally planned, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
Other Notes of Interest

Positive Partnerships with Schools Locally, Statewide, and Nationwide
NCECBVI has strong relationships with school districts. Examples of partnerships during 2019-2020 include:

- One of the NCECBVI O&M Specialists helped to teach a UNL O&M class in the summer of 2019.
- NCECBVI partnered with Nebraska City Public Schools and Nebraska City Lourdes Catholic Schools to implement a city-wide safety communication plan.
- The NCECBVI News is shared with local school districts, families, and staff twice each month. Included in this newsletter is a ‘student spotlight,’ updates from each class, and information from the residential program.
- In Papillion-LaVista, one of the O&M Specialists provided 1:1 training for an elementary teacher about the Expanded Core Curriculum.
- As part of a combined transition service and orientation and mobility lesson, the O&M specialists at NCECBVI have taken outreach students on lessons at local colleges, to prepare them for their experiences in post-secondary education.
- In Papillion-LaVista, one of the O&M specialists at NCECBVI consulted a teacher about ECC topics that were a priority in one student’s classroom, in addition to orientation and mobility, including use of utensils when eating in the lunchroom using just one hand.
- In Falls City, one of NCECBVI’s O&M specialists gave a presentation about White Cane Day to a group of 6th graders.
- One of the O&M specialists helped staff in Oakland-Craig to create a tactile schedule for a student.
- NCECBVI is a member of the Council of Schools for the Blind (COSB), supporting schools for the blind throughout the U.S. The annual COSB meeting was held in Louisville, Kentucky, in October.
- NCECBVI joined other educators and students from around the state in late January, for Nebraska’s annual “I Love Public Schools” day.
- T4:12 was held with students from Nebraska City Lourdes Catholic Schools when they joined NCECBVI students and staff to participate in bowling and student technology activities. In February, students came together to play BINGO.
- NCECBVI residential students began bowling in 3rd quarter. Four students from Nebraska City Public Schools helped with the bowling league for 6 weeks, by assisting students and setting up pins.
- Following his participation in Cane Quest (held in December), a Gretna Public Schools student chose to write a story about his experience and shared it with his teacher of the visually impaired from NCECBVI.
- Two 8th grade students from Nebraska City Middle School chose to do their history project about the evolution of schools for the blind. These students toured the school, talked with students, and borrowed items for their presentations including canes, a vision simulator kit, braille items, braille cards, and braille books.
- In support of one NCECBVI student’s measurable post-secondary goal to be a radio announcer or DJ, Nebraska City High School and Blair Community Schools partnered to provide him the experience of announcing the rosters for the boys and girls’ basketball games.
- One Nebraska City High School student chose to write a speech for his communications class. He used materials from NCECBVI to write his presentation. His focus was on the importance of braille despite all of the technology options now available.
In collaboration with Nebraska City Public Schools and Nebraska City Lourdes Catholic Schools, NCECBVI students and staff participated in “One Book, One Community” by reading the book *Wishtree* by Katherine Applegate. The book was read aloud to students, they answered questions, and were entered into weekly drawings.

NCECBVI students and staff participated in “The Lied’s Night of Broadway” at Nebraska City High School in January. The matinee performance featured undergraduate and graduate students from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. In addition, the UNL group shared information about musical talents, auditions, and what performing in front of an audience was like.

One of the NCECBVI orientation and mobility specialists worked closely with teachers of the visually impaired at Papillion-LaVista Community Schools to provide opportunities for students in the community to further their skills in the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC). They participated in lessons at the bank, laundromat, and the mall. They have also practiced using GPS skills to go to lunch and read the menu using assistive technology.

The NCECBVI orientation and mobility specialist who works with Papillion-LaVista Community Schools coordinated a student meeting with one of their physical therapists as part of a transition activity for a student who is interested in being a PT for their career.

One of the NCECBVI orientation and mobility specialists prepared lessons for students who are interested in attending the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. These transition activities were planned for students in Falls City Public Schools and Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Public Schools.

The Principal was in frequent communication with all local school districts of students served by NCECBVI throughout the COVID-19 pandemic in 4th quarter, to ensure appropriate support for instruction, special education compliance including progress monitoring, and to make initial plans for students to return to school in the upcoming school year.

NCECBVI’s Campus Administrator participated in weekly Zoom meetings with ESU 4 area superintendents during the COVID-19 pandemic in 4th quarter.

The Campus Administrator participated in weekly Zoom meetings with the ESU 4 Leadership Team during 4th quarter.

The Campus Administrator joined “Here4U” Zoom meetings for staff in the ESU 4 area during 4th quarter, facilitated by the Teaching and Learning Team at ESU 4.

The Campus Administrator, Director of Programs, and Principal participated in regular meetings regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on schools. Those included various Zoom meetings with the Nebraska Department of Education (including Launch Nebraska), NCSA, NASES regions statewide, NDE/Governor joint meetings, webinars from KSB Law, CASE webinars, and ESPD Zoom meetings, EOT Trainings arranged by the American Printing House for the Blind, and Zoom meetings presented by the ESU 4 Special Education Director.

The NCECBVI Campus Administrator and Director of Programs participated in the Future Ready Conference in June, presented by the Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska ESUs, NSEA, Nebraska Digital Learning Association, and the Nebraska School Librarians Association.

Positive Partnerships with Community

NCECBVI is proud of the collaboration with businesses in the community, to provide hands-on experiences to practice job skills. During the 2020-2021 school year, Nebraska City businesses who provided job sites for students included: Valentino’s, Cellular One, Ace Hardware, Ambassador Care Center, First Class Flowers, and B-103 Big Apple Radio.
In October, a group of Girl Scouts from Lincoln visited the NCECBVI campus for a tour and to learn about adapting camps for students with disabilities. Following the tour, the students and troop leader joined NCECBVI students and staff for lunch.

In October, some NCECBVI staff members participated in a goal ball tournament in Lincoln. They provided giveaways to other participants as a way to educate others about programs and services offered at NCECBVI.

The annual NCECBVI Walk-a-thon was held in November, where several parents/guardians and special visitors were in attendance. This year’s event was very special to the NCECBVI family as it also served as a Celebration of Life for teacher Liz Schomerus, who lost her battle with cancer in August.

The Nebraska City Eagles hosted NCECBVI students for the annual Christmas party. Students had a visit from Santa Claus and each received a gift for the holidays.

A group of NCECBVI students took part in the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired event they called the “Center Safari.” On this day, students and staff toured NCBVI and learned about the programs and services they offer.

The Campus Administrator is a member of the Nebraska City Rotary Club.

NCECBVI hosted an open house to thank the Wirth Foundation for funding emergency radios for all three school systems in the Nebraska City community (NCECBVI, Nebraska City Public Schools, and Lourdes Central Catholic Schools). Information was shared regarding how they are used and how they have already assisted in emergency situations. The Nebraska City Community Schools Safety Committee meets regularly and includes school administrators, first responders, law enforcement, county emergency management and hospital representatives.

An NCECBVI student did a presentation at a PEO Meeting (Philanthropic Educational Organization) in February. This is an international women’s organization. The Nebraska City chapter learned more about the programs and services offered at NCECBVI from this student’s perspective.

Students who participate in the residential program at NCECBVI attended a production at the Brownville Theater. The format for the performance educated students about old time radio shows.

The ARC of Nebraska City hosted a dance for the residential students at NCECBVI.

NCECBVI’s Campus Administrator actively participated in meetings with the area Health Department, to keep up-to-date with the number of cases of individuals in the region testing positive with coronavirus. Additionally, the Health Department provided guidance for planning to re-open school in the 2020-2021 school year.

The Nebraska City Board of Public Health met weekly during 4th quarter and the Campus Administrator participated in those Zoom meetings.

Other

- One of the O&M Specialists earned her Certified Low Vision Therapist certification in the summer of 2019.
- NCECBVI’s school psychologist is in the process of developing/writing an assessment for students with multiple disabilities including those with sensory impairments. This will be available to use with students of all ages. Completion is expected in another 2-3 years.
Vision Stakeholder Team
The Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired and the Nebraska Department of Education gather input on a regular basis regarding the programs and services for children with visual impairments in Nebraska through the Vision Stakeholder Team. This team is comprised of parents, consumers, school administrators, teachers, and other interested agencies and organization representatives in Nebraska. The Vision Stakeholder Team meets at NCECBVI one time per school year.

This year, the Vision Stakeholder Team met in January. This advisory group discussed what was new at NCECBVI then analyzed data from the annual report, which is based on the Nebraska State Plan for Vision Services. Input was given on all NCECBVI programs and services.

24 individuals participated from
Assistive Technology Partnership
Boys Town National Research Hospital
Centennial Public Schools
Crete Public Schools
ESU 4
ESU 7
McCook Public Schools
Millard Public Schools
Nebraska Federation of the Blind
NCECBVI
Nebraska City Public Schools
Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Nebraska Department of Education
Omaha Public Schools
Outlook Nebraska
Papillion-LaVista Community Schools
Region V Services
Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca Public Schools
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

2019-2020 NCECBVI Theme
“You are a Star: Isn’t it amazing how a blanket of stars can light up a night sky? Side-by-side they twinkle together to create a beautiful work of art. When we shine together we light up the world to make an unforgettable difference. Thank you for shining with us.”

Ideas related to this theme were implemented into staff meetings, building decorations, and various activities with students.