



THE
WEST VIRGINIA
SCHOOLS FOR THE
DEAF AND THE BLIND

2025



About Us

Welcome to the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB)! Since 1870, the WVSDB has been a place where students who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Visually Impaired, or Deafblind are empowered to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Located in Romney, WV, we are a state-operated public school serving students from birth through age 23 across all 55 counties. Our comprehensive services include on-campus programs for elementary through high school, residential and day options, and statewide outreach through early intervention and school-age support.

MISSION

The mission of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind is to empower students who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Low Vision, or Deafblind to reach their full potential through a comprehensive array of school-based and statewide programs that support students, families, and professional partners.

VISION

Students in West Virginia who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Low Vision, or Deafblind will have access to opportunities that challenge them academically, inspire professional achievement, and support their success in socially meaningful, real-world environments.



Who We Serve

We proudly serve students across West Virginia who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Visually Impaired, or Deafblind. Our services are designed to support students with sensory differences that impact their educational performance. We work with students from birth through age 23, offering early intervention and family support for children from birth to age three, comprehensive academic and residential programs for elementary through 12th grade, and transition services focused on post-secondary education, employment, and independent living skills.

Eligibility

- **RESIDENT OF WEST VIRGINIA**
- **STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED SENSORY EXCEPTIONALITIES**

- ✓ **DEAF/HARD OF HEARING**
- ✓ **BLIND/LOW VISION**
- ✓ **DEAFBLIND**





Why Choose Us?



Choosing the WV SDB means choosing a school that understands, empowers, and celebrates the unique strengths of Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Low Vision, and Deafblind students.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION FOR EVERY LEARNER

- Specialized instruction tailored to meet the unique communication, sensory, and learning needs of each student
- Small class sizes with highly qualified teachers certified in Deaf, Visual Impairment, and Special Education, offering instruction in core academics and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs

LANGUAGE-RICH & ACCESSIBLE ENVIRONMENT

- Access to Communication, including American Sign Language (ASL), spoken English, tactile communication, and Braille
- Accessible materials and technology are designed for Low Vision or Blind users

COLLEGE, CAREER & LIFE READINESS

- Emphasis on academics, independence, self-advocacy, and transition planning from an early age
- The Academy for Career Connections (AC2) offers accessible, hands-on Career and Technical Education that builds skills, independence, and confidence beyond graduation



Residential Life

The Residential Program at the WVSDB offers students a safe, structured, and enriching living environment that supports their academic, social, and emotional growth. Designed for students who live too far to commute daily or who benefit from the additional support of a residential setting, the program extends learning beyond the classroom through the development of life skills, social interaction, emotional health support, and extracurricular engagement.



SPORTS AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) offers a variety of athletic programs designed to keep students active and healthy. Sports such as goalball, swimming, track and field, e-sports, soccer, and basketball are available to help students develop physical fitness, teamwork, and discipline. Affiliated with the Eastern Athletic Association for the Blind (EAAB) and the Eastern Schools for the Deaf Athletic Association (ESDAA), students travel across the Eastern U.S. to represent the WVSDB in regional and national competitions, fostering sportsmanship, school pride, and lasting connections with peers from other specialized schools.

CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The WVSDB is proud to offer a variety of student-led clubs that encourage creativity, collaboration, and leadership. Students can get involved in organizations such as the American Sign Language (ASL) Club, Robotics Club, Drones Club, Rocketry Club, and Girl Scouts; each providing a fun and supportive environment to explore personal interests and gain valuable life skills.



Discover WVSD B

At the WVSD B, learning is an experience shared by students, families, educators, and community partners. Our campus offers more than just academics; it's a place where students grow through unique programs, hands-on learning, and meaningful connections. Whether you're exploring enrollment, seeking collaborative opportunities, or simply curious about what we offer, WVSD B provides an environment where every learner can thrive and warmly welcomes partnerships, educators, and community members to collaborate and engage on campus.



CAMPUS VISITS

Discover our beautiful, historic campus firsthand. We welcome families, students, and Local Education Agency (LEA) teams to tour our facilities and meet the dedicated staff supporting student growth and success.

WEEKLY TRIAL OPPORTUNITIES

This school is designed to meet the needs of students, and our Week-Long Trial Program offers LEA students an immersive experience to explore academic life, residential living, and peer interactions at the WVSD B in a supportive environment before making long-term decisions.

PART-TIME ENROLLMENT

We recognize that one size doesn't fit all. Students may be eligible for part-time enrollment, giving them access to specialized instruction, resources, or events tailored to individual needs and IEP goals to support both the student and LEA.

SUMMER ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Our vibrant summer programming helps students stay connected and continue learning in fun and focused ways:

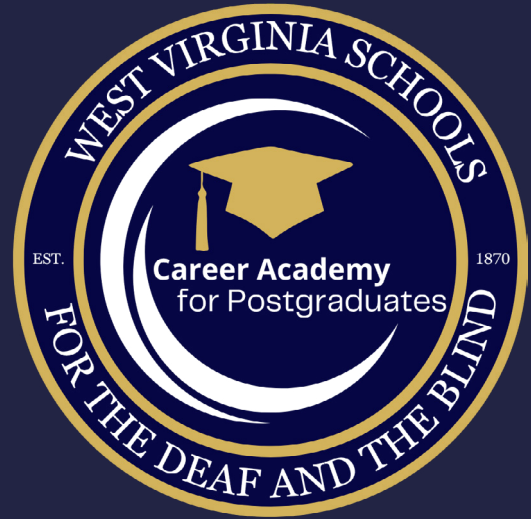
- Summer Camps – Engaging, hands-on experiences that build confidence, friendships, and practical skills.
- Summer Classes - Academic enrichment and specialized instruction, including:
 - American Sign Language (ASL) classes
 - Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH) Driver's Education

SIGNATURE EVENTS & EXPERIENCES

WVSD B is proud to host a variety of special events and programs throughout the year that enrich learning and foster independence, including:

- Cane Quest/Braille Challenge in collaboration with CVRP
- Discovery P.O.I.N.T. – A unique program designed to prepare students for real-world success through career exploration, independence-building, and skill development, with a strong focus on resumé building, job readiness, and the essential skills needed to thrive in today's workforce
- FAFSA/College Prep Weekend – In collaboration with state partners, this weekend helps high school juniors and seniors navigate the path to higher education, with support for parents included
- Hunter Safety Certification in collaboration with the WV DNR





Career Academy for Postgraduates

The Career Academy for Postgraduates program (CAP) at the WVSDb is a comprehensive transition program for West Virginia residents who have completed high school on a standard diploma and are preparing for the next stage of life. This program is designed for young adults between the ages of 18 and 23 who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Low Vision, or are Deafblind. The CAP program offers flexible pathways, including educational and vocational tracks. Students receive individualized support in career readiness, independent living, and academic development, while gaining real-world experience through job training and community engagement.

EDUCATIONAL PATHWAY

Participants in the Educational Pathway may be dually enrolled in a postsecondary institution, either online or locally, or planning to enroll the following year.

VOCATIONAL PATHWAY

Participants in the Vocational Pathway aim to transition directly into the workforce without pursuing a formal education or training program.





WVSDB Outreach

The WVSDB Outreach is proud to extend its mission beyond our campus through a comprehensive Outreach Program that serves students, families, and educators across the state. Through the WVSDB Outreach, we provide support for children from birth to age 21 who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Low Vision, or Deafblind, regardless of their school placement. Our Outreach Coordinators work with local schools to provide direct instruction, professional development, consultation, and resources. Low-incidence services include audiology, assistive technology, early intervention, literacy, psychological support, transition planning, the Lending Library, and statewide training. These services support students, their families, and educators across West Virginia.

TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Workshops and technical assistance for general educators, speech-language pathologists, special education teams, and administrators

DIRECT SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

- WVSDB Outreach may provide direct services in a student's home county on a case-by-case basis. DHH and VI Coordinators can offer instruction in Braille, ASL, assistive technology, and ECC skills as needed

COUNTY & COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

- Joint planning with districts for student placement, evaluations, or consultation services



Testimonials and Success Stories



"I'VE NEVER FELT MORE SUPPORTED."

"The teamwork between my family and the WVSDB Outreach was amazing. Together, we developed an educational plan that works for my daughter, and I finally feel like we're all on the same page."

— Parent of a Deaf Student

"I'M SO GRATEFUL FOR THE LIFE SKILLS TRAINING I RECEIVED."

"The hands-on life skills opportunities taught me everything from budgeting to doing laundry. It's given me the confidence to live on my own after graduation."

— Discovery P.O.I.N.T. Student

"WVSDB PROVIDED ME WITH THE SKILLS I NEEDED TO ENTER THE WORKFORCE EARLY."

"Through internships and part-time jobs at local businesses, I gained real-world experience that made me feel ready for my first full-time job. WVSDB's partnerships with businesses in the community helped me develop work skills and self-confidence that will last a lifetime."

— Graduate, WVSDB

"HOME AWAY FROM HOME AT WVSDB"

"Living on campus has been one of the best parts of my experience at WVSDB. In the residential program, I've made great friends, learned how to be more independent, and had the chance to try new things every day. It feels like a second home where I can grow, have fun, and just be myself."

— Residential Student, WVSDB

"A VITAL PARTNER IN DELIVERING QUALITY SERVICES"

"As the Director of Special Programs in our small county, I have had the privilege of working closely with the WVSBD Outreach. Their invaluable services for our low-incidence population have been a game-changer. From comprehensive evaluations to dedicated mentoring and providing essential resources and moral support, their contributions have been instrumental. Without their unwavering support, we would not have been able to deliver the high-quality services that we have. Their commitment and expertise have truly made a difference in our community."

— Kimberly Kehrer, Special Education Director



Contact Us!

W. CLAYTON BURCH
SUPERINTENDENT

MELANIE HESSE
DEAN OF STUDENTS

DR. CHRISTINE LEWIS
DIRECTOR OF RESIDENTIAL LIFE

MARY ANNE CLENDENIN
DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH

RACHEL LANHAM
TRANSITION COORDINATOR

