



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF  
BUDGET AND PROGRAM PLANNING

## Fiscal Note 2009 Biennium

<b>Bill #</b>	HB0354	<b>Title:</b>	Expand services for deaf children in schools
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<b>Primary Sponsor:</b>	Caferro, Mary	<b>Status:</b>	As Introduced
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|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Significant Local Gov Impact     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Needs to be included in HB 2  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Technical Concerns   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Included in the Executive Budget | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Significant Long-Term Impacts | <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated Revenue Form Attached |

### FISCAL SUMMARY

	<u>FY 2008 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2009 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2010 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2011 Difference</u>
<b>Expenditures:</b>				
General Fund	\$390,765	\$370,046	\$379,297	\$388,780
<b>Revenue:</b>				
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Net Impact-General Fund Balance:</b>	<u>(\$390,765)</u>	<u>(\$370,046)</u>	<u>(\$379,297)</u>	<u>(\$388,780)</u>

**Description of fiscal impact:** House Bill 354 expands the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind outreach services to deaf and hard of hearing students by 4.62 FTE and requires school districts to meet certain standards in the development and provision of services to deaf or hard of hearing students enrolled in local school districts.

### FISCAL ANALYSIS

**Assumptions:**

**Montana School for the Deaf and Blind**

1. HB 354 authorizes an expansion of the MSDB Outreach Program serving deaf and hard of hearing students attending school in their local school district by six individuals.
2. The standard individual consult currently working for MSDB is based on each consultant working a 200 day contract or 0.77 FTE. Six new outreach individuals would be equivalent to 4.62 FTE.
3. One-time start-up costs of \$21,204 for computers, phones, phone hook-ups, desks, and file cabinets are included in FY 2008 total operating costs.

4. The lease vehicle costs (6 vehicles, 4-door sedans) are based on Motor Pool rates for FY 2008 and FY 2009. It is estimated each vehicle would travel 25,000 miles annually.

	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>	<b>FY 2009</b>
<b>FTE</b>		4.62		4.62
<b>Personal Services</b>		\$289,704		\$289,704
<b>Operating Costs:</b>				
<b>Supplies</b>	\$7,200		\$7,200	
<b>Postage/Mailing</b>	\$1,200		\$1,200	
<b>Phone/Internet</b>	\$17,640		\$17,640	
<b>Travel</b>	\$10,950		\$10,950	
<b>Lease Vehicle (6)</b>	\$42,867		\$43,352	
<b>One-Time Cost</b>	\$21,204			
<b>Total Operating</b>		\$101,061		\$80,342
<b>Total</b>		<u>\$390,765</u>		<u>\$370,046</u>

5. All personal services and operating costs will increase 2.5% per year in the 2011 biennium.

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6. Hearing impairment or deafness is the dominant disability of 198 students in Montana. It is estimated that 175 of these students receive their instruction from a teacher who has not completed a course of study as a teacher of the deaf from an accredited college or university.
7. Standards for sign language interpreters will include an assessment of their skills in interpreting. The most commonly used test to assess the skills of sign language interpreters cost \$250 for test administration. There are 37.6 FTE sign language interpreters employed in Montana quality K-12 public schools. Approximately 50 sign language interpreters will take the test. Testing costs will be paid for by the individual sign language interpreter.

	<u>FY 2008 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2009 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2010 Difference</u>	<u>FY 2011 Difference</u>
<b><u>Fiscal Impact:</u></b>				
Montana School for the Deaf and Blind				
FTE	4.62	4.62	4.62	4.62
<b><u>Expenditures:</u></b>				
Personal Services	\$289,704	\$289,704	\$296,947	\$304,370
Operating Expenses	\$101,061	\$80,342	\$82,351	\$84,409
<b>TOTAL Expenditures</b>	<b>\$390,765</b>	<b>\$370,046</b>	<b>\$379,297</b>	<b>\$388,780</b>
<b><u>Funding of Expenditures:</u></b>				
General Fund (01)	\$390,765	\$370,046	\$379,297	\$388,780
<b><u>Revenues:</u></b>				
General Fund (01)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b><u>Net Impact to Fund Balance (Revenue minus Funding of Expenditures):</u></b>				
General Fund (01)	(\$390,765)	(\$370,046)	(\$379,297)	(\$388,780)

**Long-Range Impacts:**

**Montana School for the Deaf and Blind**

1. Section 1, HB 354 establishes qualifications for individuals that provide recommendations to “evaluation teams” and “individualized education program teams”. Typically, staff that serve on these teams are either employees of the local district or employees of the MSDB. The provision for personnel preparation in Sections 1 and 3 establish hiring criteria for the positions appropriated in this bill as well as existing positions within the MSDB outreach program assigned to provide services to deaf and hard of hearing children. There are no programs for the preparation of teachers of the deaf in the State of Montana. MSDB cannot assume or guarantee that these positions can be filled by staff members who have met the preparation requirements stipulated in the bill.
2. Section 2, HB 354 requires the “board” establish standards to ensure that sign language interpreters and personnel who provide instruction using sign language are appropriately trained and supervised. The State of Montana does not offer training programs for educational interpreters.
3. The anticipated number of school age students referred to MSDB’s outreach program for the services stipulated in Section 1 of the bill is anticipated to increase from 101 in FY 2007 to 147 in FY 2008.
4. The goal of MSDB’s 5 year plan of improvement is to establish consultant caseloads at 25 children. With the addition of 6 consultants the projected number of students requiring services stipulated in Section 1, caseloads would average 26 children.

**Office of Public Instruction**

5. Additional training, supervision, and recruitment costs for local school districts to employ sign language interpreters, if any, are unknown and will depend on the standards to be adopted by the Board of Public Education.
6. Additional training, supervision, and recruitment costs for local school districts to employ teachers who provide direct instruction using sign language are unknown and will depend on the standards to be adopted by the Board of Public Education.
7. The addition of MSDB outreach workers provided in HB 354 for children with deafness or hearing impairments will provide additional expertise to the special education evaluation and program planning

process in local school districts. This could result in an expansion of educational programs and interpreter services. Additional costs to local districts, if any, are unknown.

**Technical Notes:**

**Montana School for the Deaf and Blind**

1. The Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education approved general fund of \$227,663 in FY 2008 and \$221,509 in FY 2009 to expand the MSDB’s Outreach Program serving deaf and hard of hearing students enrolled in local quality K-12 districts. This expansion, as approved by the joint subcommittee, authorized the addition of four new consultants (4 X .77 FTE = 3.08 FTE) for the 2009 biennium. This decision package is included in HB 2.
2. Recruitment of teachers that meet the hiring criteria set forth in this bill is difficult for the following reasons:
  - There are no degree or nondegree programs in the area of education of the deaf at any university or college in Montana.
  - Costs for completion of a program of study, which are available regionally, range from \$12,000 at the University of Northern Colorado, Greeley, to \$40,000 at Western Oregon University.
  - Salaries paid to teachers and consultants at MSDB are not competitive regionally or within the local market. The entry level for a teacher with the training required in HB 354 is:
 

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind	\$28,080
Utah School for the Deaf	\$31,063
South Dakota School for the Deaf	\$33,320
Washington School for the Deaf	\$37,626
California School for the Deaf - Riverside	\$45,624
3. Examples of costs for completion of interpreter training programs, available regionally, are \$28,320 at the University of Colorado, DO-IT Center (Distance Opportunities for Interpreter Training) of which \$20,000 can be subsidized through an Office of Special Education and Programs, U.S. Department of Education grant, or \$16,000 at Idaho State University.

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*Sponsor’s Initials*

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*Date*

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*Budget Director’s Initials*

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