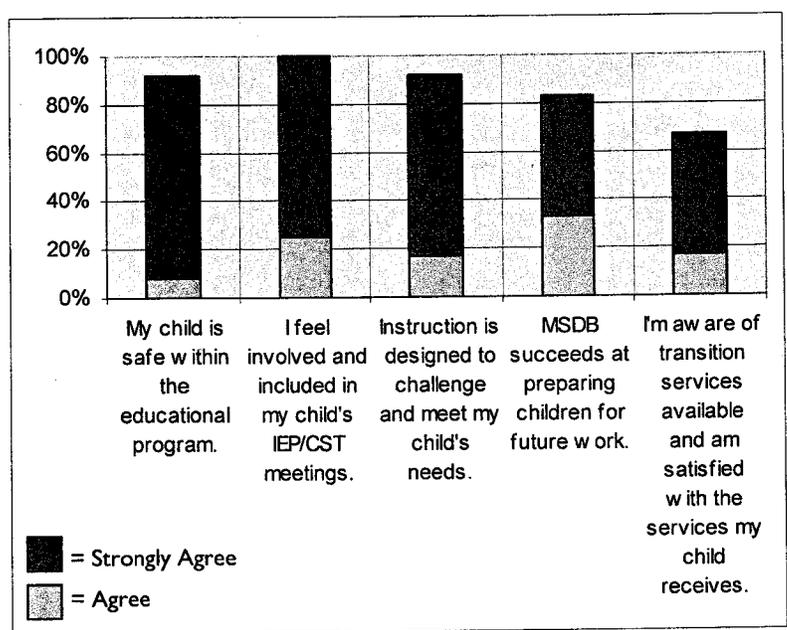


Parent Update

Spring 2009

2009 PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

23% OF MSDB PARENTS RESPONDED



Parent Suggestions for Improvement:

- More counseling with students about career choices
- More updates on student progress

Changes in the works for Fall 2009

- Timely updates on student MAP assessment results
- Regular discussion with counselors regarding individual education/career goals
- Use technology to expand social and educational connections with other sensory impaired students

From Mr. Gettel

In the fall of 2009 MSDB will begin to implement a new strategic plan which we and a number of parents and constituents have been working on over the past year. For students enrolled in our campus program here in Great Falls, one of the goals is to use the assessment information from NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). MSDB will also work collaboratively with other schools for the deaf and the blind to identify more effective strategies for teaching reading so that students will develop significantly improved literacy skills. Using the Love and Logic program to help students develop and apply improved thinking and problem solving, conflict management, and social skills is another area of focus.

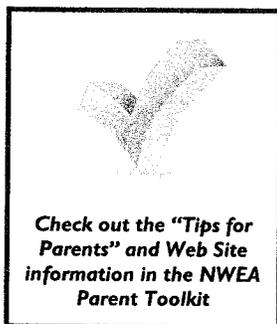
Another goal for the education program is to improve the level of support for our parents by developing mentor programs for families utilizing successful deaf or blind adults from the community. Using video technology the school is planning to provide more opportunities for networking, training and support to families and more connections with our staff.

A goal in the cottage program is to improve the quality and variety of after school and weekend activities so that our residential students have a broader and richer set of life experiences while living on campus.

We look forward to the 2009-10 school year and working smarter and harder to improve the educational outcomes of your children.

MAP testing at MSDB

This fall MSDB began testing students using the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment. MSDB joins more than 79 other schools and districts in Montana that are working with NWEA to measure and improve academic student growth. The MAP assessment involves using state-aligned computerized adaptive tests that are designed to identify the instructional level of each student and measure growth over time. The testing process is unique in that the level of questions adjusts to the student's ability as they progress through the test, thereby identifying a specific



instructional level for each student.

Results identify skills and concepts individual students have learned, identify instructional needs, and monitor growth over time. Preliminary results are available within 24 to 48 hours after the testing is completed. Tools and resources provided through NWEA assist teachers in organizing/interpreting data and provide information about instructional needs and concepts that can guide instructional decisions for individual students. Receiving timely informa-



tion and using the provided resources allows educators the opportunity to use the results of this testing process to guide classroom instruction.

In addition, NWEA provides a variety of on-going professional development that builds on teachers' understanding of assessment data and allows for collaboration and the sharing of resources. MSDB staff participated in several training sessions last fall to build their understanding of the MAP assessment and to expand their knowledge and use of assessment data.

MAP tidbits

- Computerized testing at MSDB occurs 3 times a year (Fall, Winter, & Spring)
- Information from the assessment is used to tailor instruction to individual student needs
- Testing shows student progress over time
- Lexile Scores allow teachers to select books that are at appropriate levels for the students
- Subject areas assessed: Reading & Math
- DesCartes learning continuum provides an outline of specific skills and concepts students are developing

Education,
Communication,
&
Independence for Life

Fall 2008
Report Card

Montana School for the Deaf & Blind

**Education,
Communication,
and Independence
for Life**



How you can support your child

- ◆ Realize that you, the parent, are your child's number one teacher
- ◆ Have frequent conversations with your child about their day and your day
- ◆ Discuss everyday activities and give your child opportunities to engage in those activities with you
- ◆ Participate in school sponsored activities
- ◆ Check out the MSDB website at www.msdb.mt.gov
- ◆ Call the school if you have questions

CONTACT NUMBERS

Principal—Diane Moog, 771-6038
Supervising Teachers:
D/HH Dept.—Kim Schwabe, 771-6017
VI Dept.—Carol Clayton-Bye, 771-6083
For Testing Questions contact
Chris Gutschenritter—771-6006

Montana School
for the Deaf &
Blind
3911 Central Ave
Great Falls, MT
59405



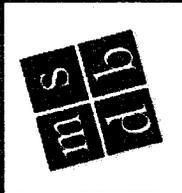
Phone: 406-771-6000
Fax: 406-771-6164

How MSDB supports your child

- ◆ Cottage Homework Connection
- ◆ Credit Recovery Program
- ◆ Inclusion Support
- ◆ Professional Development for Teachers
- ◆ School Counselor & Behavior Specialist
- ◆ Orientation and Mobility (O & M) in the school and residential setting
- ◆ Opportunities for students to apply skills learned in "real life" situations



Education, Communication and Independence for Life



Dear Parents,

The No Child Left Behind Act requires schools to notify parents when they do not fully meet the state targets set for adequate yearly progress. MSDB assesses all students with the same test used in every public school and reports data to the OPI on all other data collection points such as graduation rates and suspensions.

I would like to provide you with a "report card" on the status of our school improvement efforts. MSDB does meet all targets with the exception of those related to the annual criterion referenced testing.

Though some students are proficient in the areas of math and reading over two thirds of our students tested typically score in the novice to nearing proficient range. For many of our students the disabilities of deafness and blindness are enormous

barriers to developing language, communication and math skills at the same rate as their hearing or sighted peers.



NCLB Testing

It is important to remember that the NCLB requires that students be tested at grade level regardless of whether they understand or have received instruction at grade level. Test results are not a coincidence when you take into consideration that more than two thirds of our students are more than two grade levels behind in reading and math.



and math.

- ◆ CRT testing involves students in grades 3-8 and 10
- ◆ Areas tested include mathematics, reading and science. Math and reading are used to determine adequate Annual Yearly Progress (AYP).
- ◆ Based on IEPs, some mainstreamed MSDB students are tested in the Great Falls Public Schools and scores are reported with that school population

Student Achievement

In spite of the obstacles for our students the teachers continue to use research based strategies and engage in on-going professional training to improve instruction for our students. It is our responsibility to improve learning and to work together to assure that all our students succeed. As



you see in our report card there are many other measures of school progress and measures of student

success. Our students are very successful and are able to develop proficiencies in areas that will allow them to become independent adults.

- ◆ MSDB has a 100% graduation rate
- ◆ 100% of Visually Impaired students are utilizing assistive technology to gain independence throughout their day
- ◆ 78% of 2009 Seniors are participating in work experience programming
- ◆ 100% of Visually Impaired students are engaged in the expanded core curriculum and using Student Performance Indicators (SPI)
- ◆ 53% of MSDB students participate in inclusion activities with Great Falls Public Schools
- ◆ For specific achievement information about your child please contact the principal.



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