

The Legislative Fiscal Division

Presents:

Profile of...

School for the Deaf and Blind

State of Montana



Agency Profile

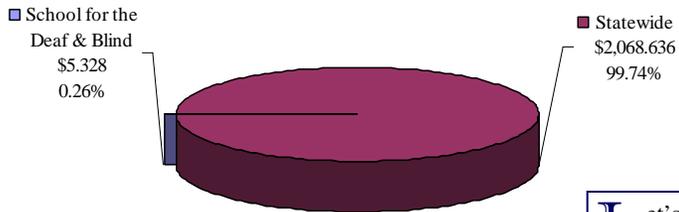
Oct. 2008

This agency profile will discuss...

- structure and funding
- primary functions and
- historical expenditures

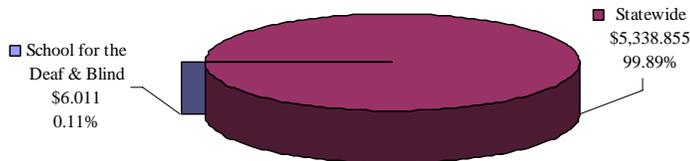
The profile also includes information on how decisionmakers can effect change in the agency's expenditures along with a listing of pertinent statistics. For an explanation of terms used in this profile, consult the "Background on the Agency Profiles" at: <http://leg.mt.gov/css/fiscal/default.asp>

General Fund Statewide Comparison FY 2008 (In Millions)



Let's begin by putting the agency's size in perspective by comparing it to state government as a whole.

Total Funds Statewide Comparison FY 2008 (In Millions)



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Section E
Education



What the Agency Does

The School for the Deaf and Blind is part of Montana's educational system. The school promotes and provides free, appropriate, and comprehensive educational opportunities statewide, for children ages birth through twenty-one who are either deaf, hard of hearing, blind, low vision, or deaf-blind. The school works to ensure these children achieve their greatest potential for independence, success and self-sufficiency toward a meaningful personal, family and community life, and a useful, productive occupational life. The school is located in Great Falls, Montana with outreach consultants located throughout the state.

In accordance with 20-8-101 through 102, MCA, legislatively assigned duties that directly effect biennia budgets are:

- Serve as a consultative resource for parents of, and for public schools enrolling hearing impaired or visually impaired children
- Establish a system for tracking these children from the time of impairment through the child's exit from intervention or educational services
- Furnish and provide an education for the hearing and visually impaired children that is commensurate with the education provided to non-handicapped children in the public schools
- Assist in locating suitable employment (10-8-116, MCA) for hearing or visually impaired persons in attendance at the school in consultation with county, state, and federal agencies and with the department of public health and human services; work with federal programs, such as social security and reemployment for those out of work; develop and offer continuing education programs of a vocational nature for the hearing and visually impaired who use the campus and facilities of the school during the summer months and other times when the school facilities are not being used by its students
- Provide transportation expenses for a residential student at MSDB to and from the student's residence



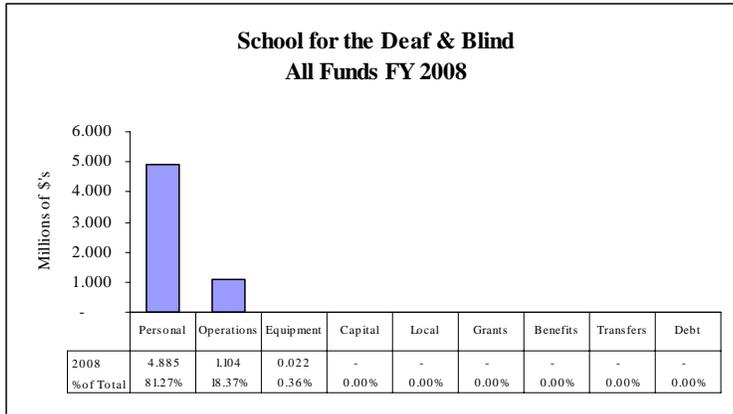


How Services Are Provided

The school provides these services through a structure consisting of four divisions with the following functions:

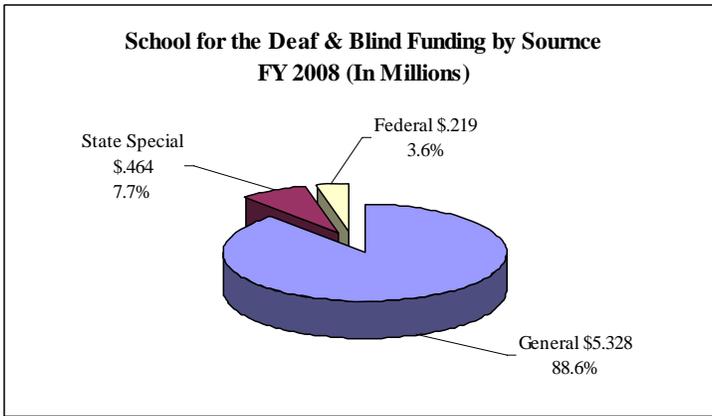
- The Administration Program provides purchasing, accounting, personnel functions, and management of the business affairs for the school.
- General Services is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the school's eight buildings and 18.5-acre campus complex.
- Student Services provides residential care for children living at the school. This area has 29.74 FTE and serves approximately 24 students. Roughly 60 percent of the students reside off campus and are referred to as "day students."
- The Education Program at the Great Falls campus provides an education for children with hearing and/or sight loss that prevents them from receiving a quality education in their local schools. Along with the specialized curriculum and instruction, interpreter/tutor or blind intervener services are provided for students taking classes in the mainstream setting. The campus program serves about 60 students. Through outreach services this program also serves visually and hearing-impaired children who remain in their local school districts by providing deaf and blind educationally based consultation and technical assistance for the students' local schools and families.

Highlights of the school's outreach services are: 1) audiological and educational assessments for children referred through the Outreach Program; 2) consultation services to local school districts and parents through the Outreach Program (92 districts were served in FY 2008); 3) home-based family training through the school's Family Advisor Program for sensory impaired infants and toddlers around the state; 4) mentoring of Braille instructors and lending of specialized educational equipment for blind student to 36 school districts throughout the state. MSDB is and Accessible Learning Center for the federal "Described and Captioned Media Program" serving as an on-site accessible media library and demonstration center; and 5) Family Learning Weekends for parents and siblings and summer skills camps for deaf and blind students.



How Services Are Funded

- General Funds - These funds are used to fund all of the General Services Program, and most of the Administration, Student Services, and Education Programs.
- State Special Funds - This is funding the school receives in:
 - Donations
 - Fees for out-of-state tuition when there are non-resident students
 - Income from the School Trust Lands funds which is used to fund part of the Education Program
- Federal funds - The school receives federal funds from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA B Grant). This grant is used to pay salaries and travel for the Outreach Program and teachers' salaries at school. The school receives funds from the federal School Lunch Program. The school also receives Medicaid reimbursements in appropriate circumstances.

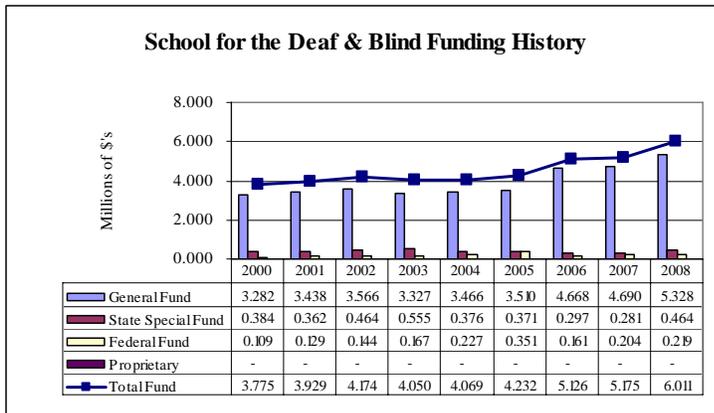


Related Data & Statistics



<i>Element</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>Significance of Data</i>
Education and Evaluations	314	364	Increase workload
Consultation Services	255	425	Increase workload and related travel costs
Weekend and Summer Programs	206	332	Increase workload
Outreach Professional Development	785	1436	Increase workload

Expenditure History



Reasons for Expenditure Growth/Change

- General Fund – the average growth rate for general fund expenditures was 6.2 percent for the period of 2000 through 2008. Expenditures increased 33 percent between FY 2005 and 2006 due to pay plan increases, repairs and maintenance, and computer upgrades, increased salaries for teachers and professional staff and elimination of the vacancy savings rate for the school. The school also received additional funding to increase the school's outreach program and Braille instruction. FY 2008 increases are mainly due to the legislature approving an additional 4.58 FTE and increases to provide for market adjustments for licensed professional staff.
- State Special Fund – the expenditures funded by state special funds increased by 2.4 percent for the period of 2000 through 2008 primarily due to the one-time-only Montana Telecommunications Access Program (MTAP) funding that began in FY 2002 and terminated at the conclusion of FY 2005. The state special funds decreased 20 percent between FY 2005 and FY 2006 as a result. FY 2008 increases are due to increases in income from School Trust Lands.
- Federal Fund – the expenditures funded by federal funds increased by 9.1 percent for the period of 2000 through 2008 because of grants, and federal funds for school lunch programs. Increases of \$64,754 and \$176,292 in FY 2004 and FY 2005 respectively, resulted from a one-time-only federal grant from the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Act.

Agency Functions, State Purposes, & Customers Served

The agency is structured to perform certain functions in support of general state government purposes. The following lists the major functions, purpose of provision of the functions, and primary customers served.

State Purposes	Major Agency Functions	Customers
<i>Develop the full educational potential of the state's citizens</i>	Operations and maintenance of the school buildings and grounds	Entire school population
	Administration of programs and supervision of staff	General services, residential and educational program and administrative support staff
	Residential, medical and food services for the students	Students on campus
	Educational programs and services for students of MSDB	Students on campus
	Professional development for campus programs	Teachers, counselors, nurses, therapists, and cottage staff
	Consultation services	Teachers in the local school districts and families and professionals across MT

State Purposes	Major Agency Functions	Customers
	Early intervention services	Families across state
	Weekend and summer programs	Students, families, and local school districts
	Professional Development for outreach programs	Parents, local districts, early interventions and other related providers



How the Legislature Can Effect Change

In order to change expenditure levels and/or agency activity, the legislature must address one or more of the following basis elements that drive costs.

In order to change expenditure levels and/or activity, the legislature might address legislation:

- Governing the existence and definition of the School for the Deaf and Blind: funding, operation, and fees charged for services
- Governing state aid to public schools and how it relates to the School for the Deaf and Blind “commensurate with the education provided to non-handicapped children in the public schools”
- Related to off campus consultations, and transition and employability, as well as summer, weekend or vacation time programs

The legislature is less likely to control:

- Federal legislation impacting schools serving citizens with disabilities
- Initiatives or legislation responding to citizen action
- Growth in web-based or long distance education, or other changes in technology that serves this population
- The number of Montana citizens needing this service from year to year
- Economic changes related to costs of utilities, transportation, and residential services



Statewide Factors With Impact

In addition to the factors above, a number of factors common to many agencies will also impact changes in expenditures over time.

Because the School for the Deaf and Blind serves a specific population, personal service costs are the primary influence that drives expenditures. These factors include the state pay plan and benefits, recruitment and retention of highly qualified staff, workers' compensation, and unemployment insurance.

Other factors driving expenses include changes in statewide fixed costs such as inflation/deflation and the cost to maintain the school's campus complex; the cost of maintaining the residency program, and to maintain and remain current with technology.



Statutory References

The primary statutory references defining duties and responsibilities of the department are found at the following locations.

20-8-101 through 121, MCA authorizes the school and its programs
10-8-116, MCA governs assistance with employment opportunities for the sensory impaired
20-8-111, MCA contains incorporates the foundation

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided upon request. For further information, call the Legislative Fiscal Division @ 444-2986 or visit our web site @ <http://www.leg.mt.gov/css/fiscal>



50 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of \$1.36 per copy, for a total cost of \$68.00. This includes \$68.00 for printing and \$0.00 for distribution.

Legislative Fiscal Division



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