



MONTANA SCHOOL *for the Deaf & the Blind*

3911 CENTRAL AVENUE
Great Falls, Montana 59405
406.771.6000
406.771.6164 FAX
406.205.0016
VIDEOPHONE
www.msdbmustangs.org

TO: Interim Education Budget Committee Members
FROM: Paul Furthmyre, Superintendent
DATE: June 8, 2024

RE: Organization Chart / FTE / Staff Count

Chair Bedey and Members of the IEBC:

For a long time, the staff at MSDB have been given a percentage FTE based on the number of days that they work. I understand the logic behind this when compared to other state agencies. However, we view them as full time employees at MSDB. They work for the entire calendar year as set by the Board of Public Education when they adopt the yearly school calendar.

The MSDB Business Manager and I recently sat down with Nancy Hall. During that conversation we showed her how many current staff we have open, how many openings we have, and presented ideas on how to better represent the staff to OBPP and legislature. I will explain that conversation in more detail below.

If someone was to look at our current FTE, they would see that MSDB has a current FTE of 88.51. However, that might be the sum of the FTE percentages used to calculate that number but it does not represent the 114 employees that work full-time during the calendar year. Currently, the programs at MSDB look like the following:

Program 1: Administration	5 FTE (All work year round regardless of BPE adopted Calendar – full time) 5 Employees Assigned to Program 1
Program 2: General Services	4.57 FTE (All work year round – full time) 5 Employees Assigned to Program 2
Program 3: Student Services	25.76 FTE (Work BPE Adopted Calendar) 33 Employees Assigned to Program 3
Program 4: Education	49.60 FTE (Work BPE Adopted Calendar) 71 Employees Assigned to Program 4

This difference in FTE numbers compared to employees creates some confusion. For example, when special funding is provided to MSDB; most of the time that funding is calculated on our FTE. An example of this was when state staff received a one-time payment with ESSER money from the state. As you know at most Interim Education Budget Committee meetings, the legislative budget analysis will state we have a certain amount of openings and then I will present and contradict that number. It comes down to how others use the FTE.

Other examples of how FTE is not reflected correctly is how are interpreters and paraprofessionals are set up in our system. They have all been under one position number. For example, if someone was to look at our FTE for interpreters; they would see that we have 6.09 interpreters on campus. In reality we have eight

Interpreters that serve our students. The Interpreters and Paraprofessionals currently reflect 9.77 FTE but in reality a total of 18 staff members fill those positions. Deaf Mentors, Family Advisors, Substitutes, and Lifeguards all have FTE greater than one. This adds 3.58 FTE to MSDBs FTE count with many staff members.

We are currently working with OBPP on taking the aggregated Interpreter and Paraprofessional positions and assigning each staff to a unique position number. This again will help with transparency. This will impact our total staff count by 4. We have known that we were over staffed in the paraprofessional position as a result of using FTE percentages. However, MSDB feels that we need to get our Staff Count and FTE to match to move forward. The table below indicates the current and proposed numbers with Interpreters and paraprofessionals.

Current Position Number	Current Assigned FTE	Name of Current Position	Proposed Position Number	Proposed 1 FTE	Proposed Position Name
51398013	6.09	Board of Education - Prof	51307001	1	Interpreter
		Board of Education - Prof	51307002	1	Interpreter
		Board of Education - Prof	51307003	1	Interpreter
		Board of Education - Prof	51307004	1	Interpreter
		Board of Education - Prof	51307005	1	Interpreter
		Board of Education - Prof	51307006	1	Interpreter
		Board of Education - Prof	51307007	1	Interpreter
		Board of Education - Prof	51307008	1	Interpreter
51398300	3.68	Teacher - MSDB	51308001	1	Para Educator
		Teacher - MSDB	Overstaff Para Position		
		Teacher - MSDB	Overstaff Para Position		
		Teacher - MSDB	51308002	1	Para Educator
		Teacher - MSDB	51308003	1	Para Educator
		Teacher - MSDB	51308004	1	Para Educator
		Teacher - MSDB	Overstaff Para Position		
		Teacher - MSDB	Overstaff Para Position		
		Teacher - MSDB	51308005	1	Para Educator
		Teacher - MSDB	51308006	1	Para Educator

MSDB understands that FTE is how the community sees how big government is. Adding extra FTE is not always looked at in a positive light. However, we would like for it to be considered that every staff member at MSDB be made 1 FTE. This would be a 25.07 FTE difference. However, the school would still employ 110 staff after creating position numbers for the interpreters and paraprofessionals. The salaries and days worked by these staff members would stay the same.

In summary, adding 25.07 FTE looks like a big increase to our staff population. In reality, it does nothing to our staffing pattern or plans. It would reflect a total of 110 FTE staff at MSDB. The 3.58 FTE would remain

due to substitutes, lifeguards, deaf mentors, and family advisors. However, the staff count would stay the same at 110. The staff count of 110 reflected as 110 FTE will not change the personnel funding at MSDB. It will simply make the number of employees more transparent.

Please see the table below for a visual of our numbers. You can see Programs 1-4 current FTE compared to if all were placed at one. This also illustrates that the total staff count would stay the same. We are looking at moving some positions into different programs which is why some maybe showing a difference. It is our hope that we look at the Total line.

	Current FTE	If all 1 FTE	Staff Count Old	Staff Count New
Program 1	5.00	6	5	6
Program 2	4.57	5	5	5
Program 3	25.76	33	33	33
Program 4	49.60	66	71	66
Program 3 Extra	0.92	0.92		
Program 4 Extra	2.66	2.66		
Total	88.51	113.58	114	110