

Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind



Why is MSDB Essential?

- The purpose of MSDB is to promote and provide free and appropriate educational and social-emotional growth opportunities to all children who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, and deafblind in the state of Montana.
- We envision that our students will become independent and self-sufficient; engaging in a meaningful personal, family and community life; and enjoying a useful, productive occupational life to their highest potential.
- We believe all children can become life-long learners by experiencing a well-rounded education including sensory specific communication opportunities and tools to fully access the curriculum and their environment.
- MSDB provides services to eligible student's 18-months through age 21. Our on-campus educational program, located in Great Falls, provides accessible education for students in addition to focused enrichment promoting language, access and academic opportunities for all students.

What makes MSDB Special?

- Many of our students have limited access to language or visual information due to their hearing or vision levels. Unfortunately, most public schools do not have qualified instructional staff that are capable of teaching content while meeting the language needs of the student.
 - 10 Teachers that are fluent in sign language (Many are Teachers of the Deaf)
 - 5 Para professionals that are fluent in sign language
 - 4 Teachers that are fluent in Braille (Many are Teachers of the Visually Impaired)
 - 2 Para professionals that hold National Braille certification
 - 7 Specialists that can communicate and articulate information with students (OT, PT, Speech, Behavior Specialist, OM, School Psychologist, Audiologist, Principal)
- MSDB Campus provides an environment that promotes language, access to information and is an essential hub for all students to learn incidental skills through expanded core curriculum within classrooms and campus activities.

Our cottage staff help our students apply and learn more skills in the residential setting.

- Our students support team away from home. Consists of counselors, food service, health service, as well as life attendants that fill the roles of parents with our students in the program.
- Roughly 85% of the staff that are with students in the cottage are fluent with sign language.
- Many school districts are not equipped to work with students at all levels of deafness and/or blindness. Consultants provide assistance to schools and families depending on the need.
 - Outreach Consultants serve children based on need.
 - Minimal Service – Supports such as training provided for the child only (1-3 times a year) Approximately, 261 students.
 - Light Service – Supports such as training provided for the family, school, and child (3-6 times a year) Approximately, 238 students.
 - Moderate Service – All of the light service category plus the services such as Family Learning Weekends, videoconferencing, and small groups are encouraged (Monthly) Approximately, 136 students.
 - Intensive Service – All of moderate but includes intensive training and extensive adaptations in multiple specialized areas. Training can be for community-based programs as well. (Bi-Monthly) Approximately, 115 students.
 - Consultants are trained Teachers of the Visually Impaired, Teachers of the Deaf, or Speech Language Pathologists.



MSDB OTO Budget Requests for 2022 – 2023

1. Transportation of Students

Our students travel home once per month for a total of nine times a year. Per MCA 20-8-121, MSDB is to provide transportation via air operator, contract with parent, and/or by a transportation certified by the public service commission.

Biennium	Total Cost	OTO Funding	General Fund	Carrier
12/13	\$40,494.25	\$	\$40,494.25	Greyhound Commercial Bus
14/15	\$78,227.94	\$	\$78,227.94	Big Sky Bus Lines
16/17	\$65,792.01	\$30,000	\$35,792.01	Big Sky Bus Lines
18/19	\$49,133.32	\$30,000	\$19,133.32	Helena Towncar
20/21	\$47,111.04	\$30,000	\$17,111.04	Helena Towncar
22/23	\$49,291.02	\$35,000	\$14,291.02	Helena Towncar (2022)

- The total cost is an average for the two years of the biennium.
- We do not have a contract signed with any contractor for 2023 but expect an increase with any proposal.
- 2017 consisted of one less route of travel and brought the cost down by \$15,739.44
- Our ask is that we receive the OTO Funding of \$35,000 for both 2022 and 2023

2. New Phone System

In 2019, it was indicated that the phone system was obsolete. When we have troubles with the current phone system, Band-Aids are put on our system to limp by. This is a result of not being able to replace components of our system with new hardware.

- The initial cost for the implemented phone system is \$78,005.
- The ongoing cost for the phone system is \$28,005.
- We currently pay about \$700 per year for our current system. We pay for long distance.
- Our ask is that we receive the OTO Funding of \$78,005 in 2022 and \$28,005 in 2023.

3. Extra-Curricular Funding

Our students are encouraged to participate in many different types of extra-curricular. We coop with Great Falls High School and East Middle School to allow our students to participate on sports teams. We have several internal clubs that are available for our students. With many of students that participate in extra-curricular activities, MSDB will supply an interpreter to help communicate language between our students

Year	Stipend Cost	Interpreter Cost	OTO Funding	General Fund	Total Cost
2020	\$16,550	\$10,388	\$26,938	\$9,369.42	\$36,307.42
2019	\$19,300	\$14,476	\$33,776	\$4,107.32	\$37,883.32

- We have a large number of students at the middle school level wanting to participate in sports that will require interpreters.
- Due to COVID, we will most likely be returning some of the current years OTO funding.
- Our ask is that we receive the OTO Funding of \$26,938 for both 2022 and 2023.

For updated information, Please see our legislative page at <https://www.msdbmustangs.org/about-us/legislative-update/>