

# The Legislative Fiscal Division Presents an Agency Profile of: The Montana School for the Deaf and Blind

Contact: Rob Miller, Fiscal Analyst  
Rm. 110G, State Capitol Building  
Phone: (406) 444-1795  
E-mail: [robertmiller@mt.gov](mailto:robertmiller@mt.gov)

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Definition of Terms

## Agency Description

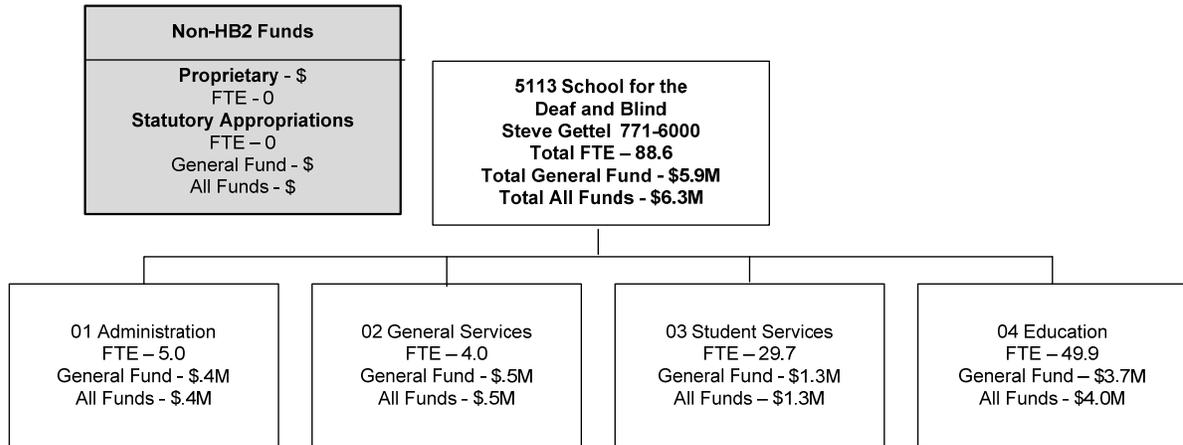
The Montana School for the Deaf and Blind (MSDB), located in Great Falls, is part of Montana's educational system, and under the policy and governance of the State Board of Public Education.

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.

In accordance with 20-8-101 through 121 MCA the legislatively assigned duties 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 for hearing or visually impaired persons in attendance at the school in consultation with county, state and federal agencies,
- Provide vocational training,
- Provide transportation expense for residential students to and from the students home.

Below is an organizational chart of the agency including full time-equivalent (FTE) numbers, general fund appropriations, statutory appropriations, proprietary funds, and total funds. The School for the Deaf and Blind does not have proprietary or statutory funding.



## How Services are Provided

The school provides services through four programs. Their functions are described below.

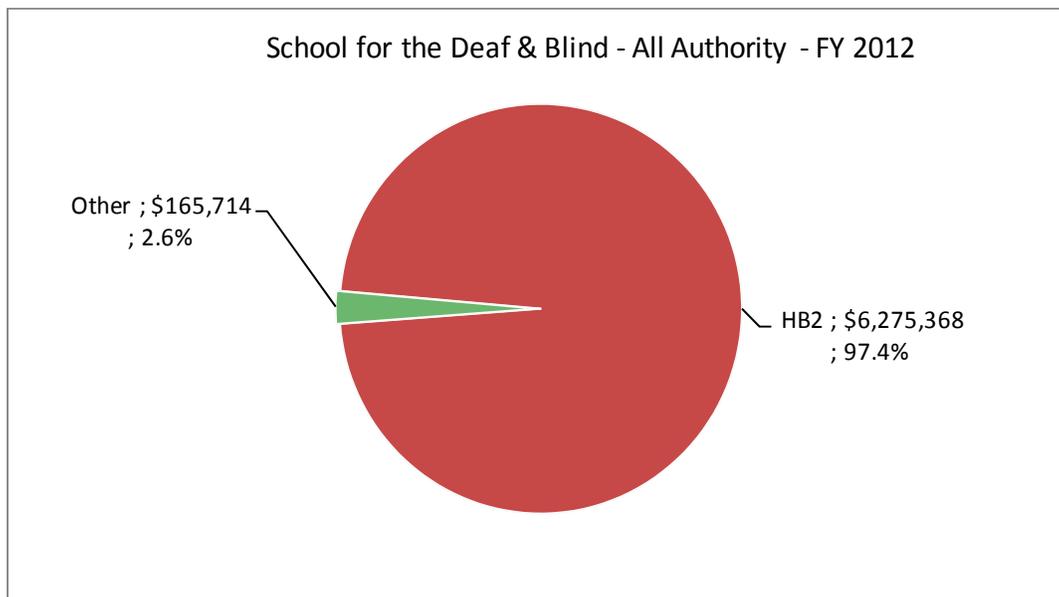
- 1) The Administration Program provides purchasing, accounting, personnel functions, and management of the business affairs for the school.
- 2) General Services is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the school's campus.
- 3) Student Services provides residential care for children living at the school including:
  - Living quarters
  - Food services
  - Around the clock supervision
  - Health services
  - Recreational opportunities
  - Transportation services
- 4) 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. There are two functional areas within the education program
  - The education program at the Great Falls Campus
    - ◇ Provides educators and aids with specialized training in the education of hearing/visually impaired children
    - ◇ Provide specialized curriculum, instruction, equipment and learning environment for students taking classes on the Great Falls campus.
    - ◇ Provide extracurricular activities comparable to the mainstream K-12 education system.

## How Services are Provided

The outreach services is a state wide program that serves visually and hearing-impaired children who remain in their local school districts by;

- Providing audio-logical and educational assessments for deaf and blind children
- Providing consultation and technical assistance to local school districts
- Providing home-based family training for sensory impaired infants and toddlers
- Lending of specialized education equipment to school districts throughout the state
- Arranging family learning weekends for parents and siblings
- Conducting summer skills camps for deaf and blind students

## Sources of Spending Authority



The above chart shows the sources of authority for the School for the Deaf and Blind. Other legislative appropriations (sometimes called cat and dog bills) are included in the above categories as appropriate. For a more detailed description of accounting terminology, please refer to the definition of terms.

The Montana School for Deaf and Blind receives funding from four sources:

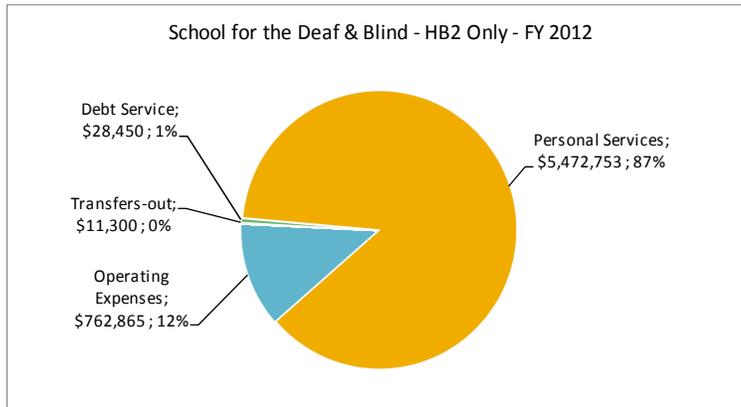
- Funding authorized by House Bill 2 (HB 2)
- State special revenue is from school trust income and Medicaid reimbursement.
- Federal funds are from E.C.I.A. Chapter I and national school lunch .

## Sources of Spending Authority, cont.

- The MSDB Foundation supplements the budget by providing 2.6% of total funding. Since 1981, the MSDB Foundation has provided funds for services and equipment not covered by state appropriations for the School. The Foundation provides ongoing support for:
  - ◊ Job training
  - ◊ Technology improvements
  - ◊ Outreach Services
  - ◊ Campus Capital improvements
  - ◊ Recreation and extracurricular activities
  - ◊ Field trips
  - ◊ Summer camps
  - ◊ Social Events for students

## Expenditures

The pie chart explains how the HB 2 authority is spent. In FY 2012 MSDB expended \$6.3 million. The MSDB provides educational services and as is typical with a service organization the major expense is personnel. The pie chart matches the agency chart found in the 2015 Budget Analysis.



Personal Expense by Program	Expenditure	% of Total Expense
Education	\$2,710,101	43.2%
Student Services	\$1,200,631	19.1%
Education Outreach	\$1,049,008	16.7%
Administration	\$339,697	5.4%
General Services	\$173,312	2.8%

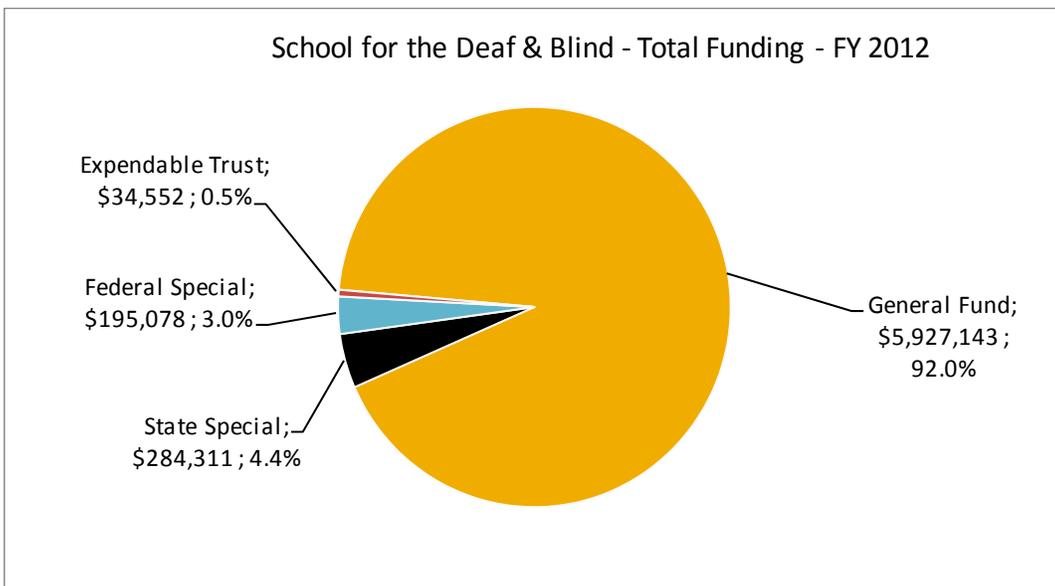
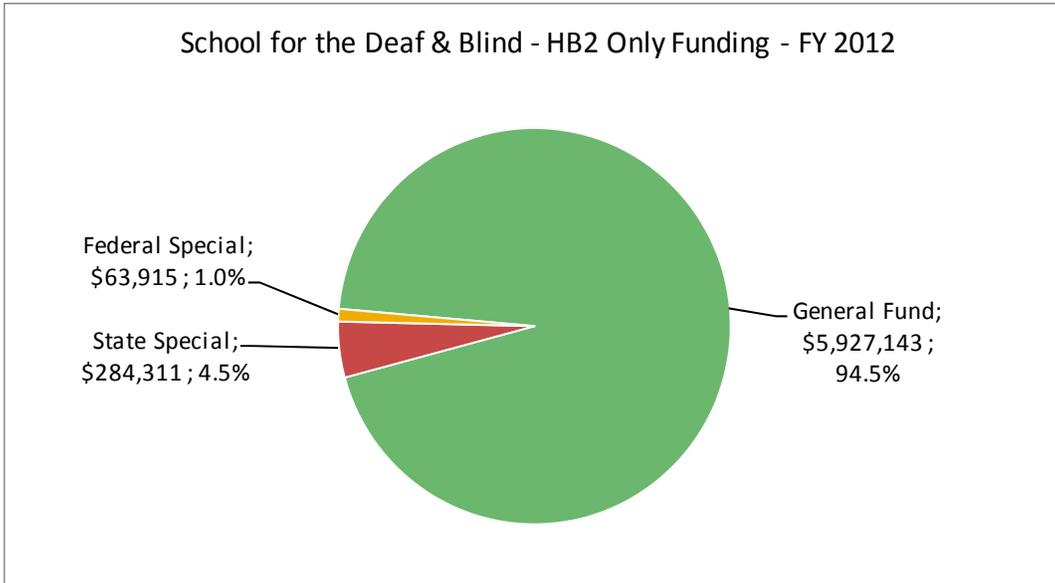
Operation Expense by Program	Expenditure	% of Total Expense
Student Services	\$264,287	4.2%
Education Outreach	\$149,836	2.4%
Education	\$126,025	2.0%
Administration	\$124,704	2.0%
General Services	\$98,013	1.6%

Other Expense by Program	Expenditure	% of Total Expense
General Services	\$39,750	0.6%

# Funding

The following charts show the agency's HB 2 funding authority by fund type and all sources of its total funding authority.



## How the 2013 Legislature Can Effect Change

In order to change expenditure levels and/or agency activity, the legislature must address one or more of the following basic 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:

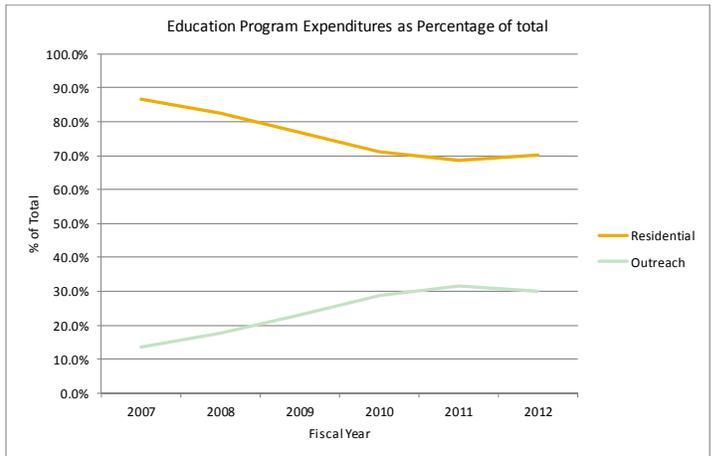
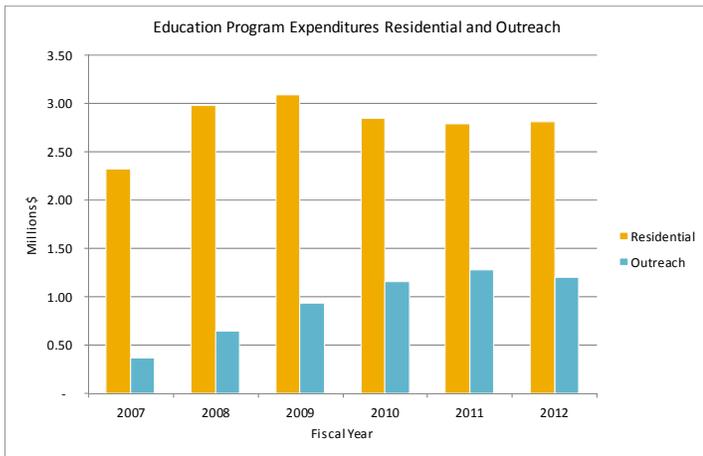
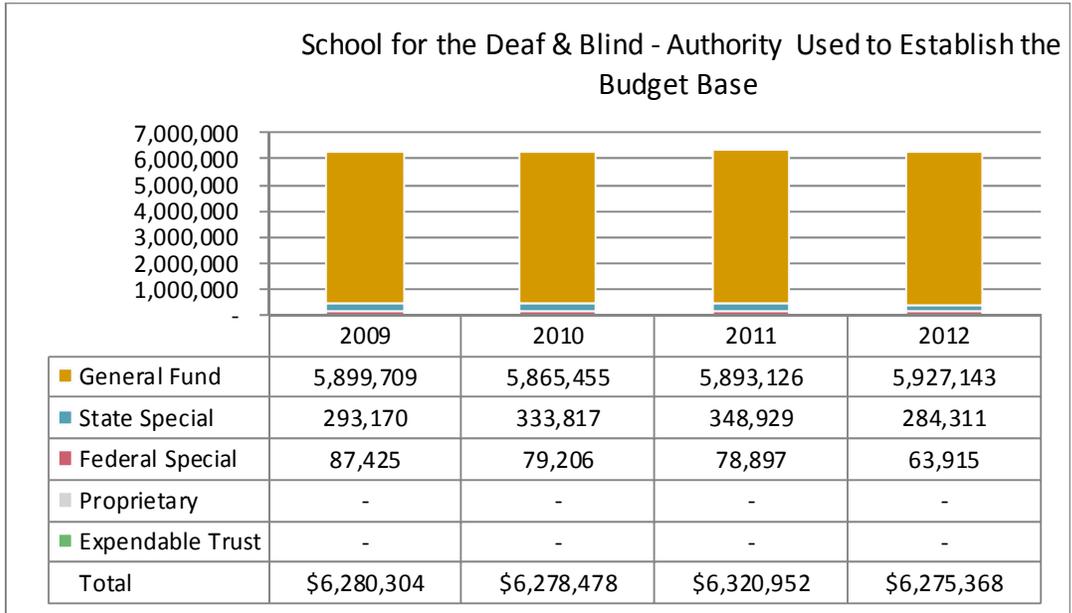
- Federal legislation impacting schools serving citizens with disabilities
- Initiatives or legislation responding to citizen action
- Growth in web-based or long distance education, or other changes in technology that serves this population
- The number of Montana citizens needing this service from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

## Major Cost Drivers

Elements	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	Significance of Data
Students served at Great Falls Campus							Slowly declining enrollment, little to no impact to workload
Education Program Deaf	51	38	34	33	39	35	
Education Program Blind	19	20	19	18	20	26	
Transition Students	0	4	2	4	6	6	
Total Campus Program Students	<u>70</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>65</u>	<u>67</u>	
Students served through outreach							Increasing number of students receiving services within local school district, increasing workload.
Outreach Services - D/HH	100	142	141	188	207	247	
Outreach Services - VI Students	212	242	229	236	241	271	
Ooutreach Services - Deaf/Blind Students	6	5	8	10	10	11	
Total Outreach Services Students	<u>318</u>	<u>389</u>	<u>378</u>	<u>434</u>	<u>458</u>	<u>529</u>	

# Funding/Expenditure History

Overall expenditures for the school have varied little in the last four years. The education program typically accounts for two thirds of total spending. Within the education program there has been a shift from campus based services to services provided statewide through the outreach initiatives. Student enrollment in the residential program has varied little since 2007 while students served through the outreach have grown at an annualized rate of 10.7%. As a result, within the education program the outreach expenditures have increased each year as a percentage of total spending.



## Major Legislative Changes in the Last Ten Years

- The 2011 Legislature statutorily exempted the imposition of vacancy savings on the MSDB for budgeting purposes (17-7-162, MCA).
- The 2005 Legislature increased general fund appropriations by \$150,000 to address repair and maintenance issues on the campus, and eliminated \$276,200 of vacancy savings to allow MSDB to address recruitment and retention issues with staff.
- The 2005 Legislature passed House Bill 438, which required MSDB to provide outreach and Braille services to blind or visually impaired children. MSDB received \$440,000. It established a Braille electronic equipment loan program and used the funds to purchase equipment and hire 4.0 FTE as outreach consultants.
- The 2002 Legislature (special session) passed SB 37, which allowed MSDB to use Montana Telecommunications Access Program (MTAP) funds for specialized equipment and telecommunications services for persons with disabilities. It also allowed MTAP funds to be used for hearing related intervention services for infants.

For further information, you may wish to contact the agency at:

School for the Deaf and Blind

3911 Central Ave.

Great Falls, MT 59405

Phone: (406) 771-6000

Webpage: <http://www.msdb.mt.gov/>