

# Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind

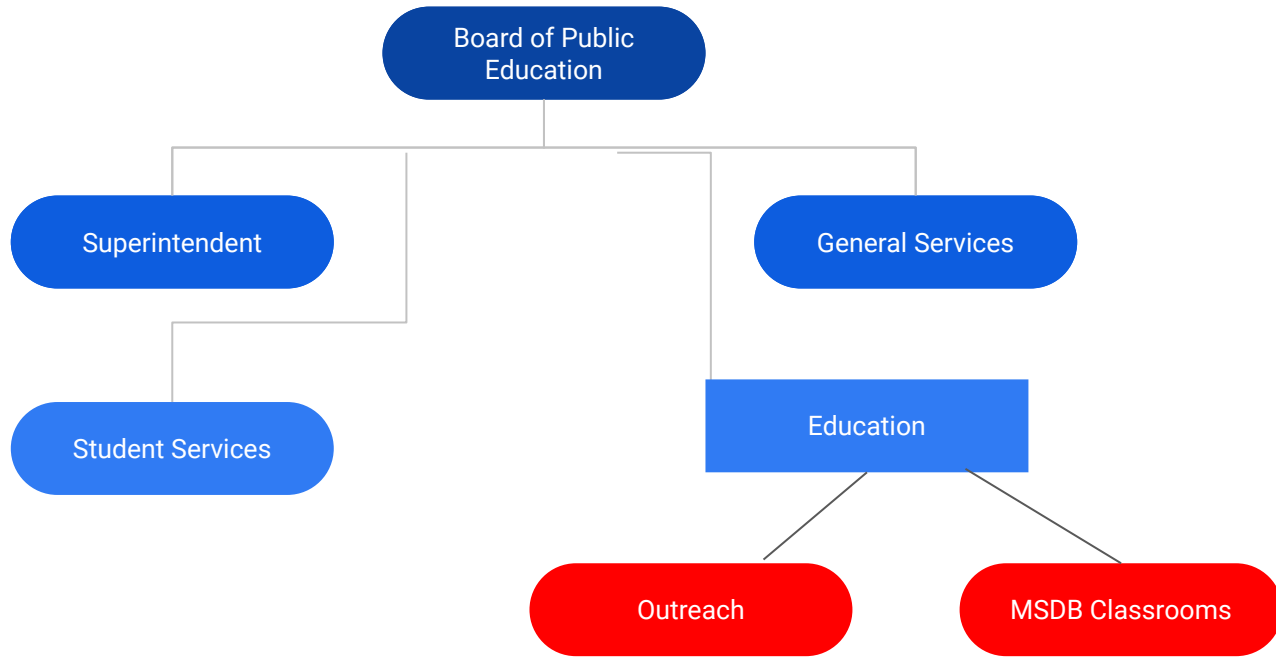
How Do Students Qualify?



# Governance of MSDB

**20-8-101. Montana school for deaf and blind -- state-supported special school.** The school for the deaf and blind, located in the city of Great Falls, is known and designated as the Montana school for the deaf and blind and must be conducted as a separate and independent unit and special school of the state of Montana under the general supervision, direction, and **control of the board of public education**. However, the transfer of that school or any change in the name of the school or in the objects or purposes of the school may not be considered or construed to impair or work any forfeiture or alteration of any rights, grants, or property made to or acquired by that school or by the state for the use and benefit of that school.

# MSDB Organizational Structure



# Funding of MSDB

State agency and funded directly by legislature.

General Appropriation	\$15,325,916
Student Travel	\$35,000
Extra Curricular Activities	\$26,938
Various Grant	IDEA, University, State

# Purpose of MSDB

MSDB will provide assistance in determining the educational needs of students identified, or suspected of having a qualifying disability of deafness, hearing or visual impairment, or deafblindness (20-8-104, MCA), and determining whether placement at MSDB is most appropriate and least restrictive in meeting those identified needs.

**20-8-102. Objects and purposes -- assistance to programs -- tracking sensory impaired children -- fee.**

The Montana school for the deaf and blind is a residential and day school for children and adolescents who are deaf or blind or whose hearing or sight is so defective that they cannot be successfully taught and are unable to receive a sufficient or proper education in the public schools of the state.

The school shall serve as a consultative resource for parents of hearing impaired and visually impaired children not yet enrolled in an educational program and for public schools of the state where hearing impaired or visually impaired children are enrolled. The school upon request shall ensure that services and programs for hearing impaired or visually impaired children are appropriate and sufficient. The school may provide assistance to the programs that the school determines is needed. The school may collect a reasonable fee for the assistance from the public school or other responsible agency receiving the assistance.

The school shall establish a system for tracking a child identified as hearing impaired or visually impaired from the time of impairment identification through the child's exit from intervention or educational services.

The object and purpose of the school are to furnish and provide, by the use of specialized methods and systems, an education for the hearing impaired and visually impaired children of this state that is commensurate with the education provided to nonhandicapped children in the public schools and that will enable children being served by the school to become independent and self-sustaining citizens.

# Eligible Students

- The student must be an enrolled student in a local district. The student's **local education agency (LEA) makes a written recommendation** for referral to MSDB.
- Student has a qualifying disability of deafness, hearing or visual impairment, or deafblindness.
- **The hearing or vision condition is significant enough to preclude LEA from being able to provide an appropriate education to the student. Hearing and vision must be the students main disability for placement in order to provide FAPE at MSDB.**
- The nature and scope of the student's academic, social/emotional and behavioral needs can be met by the available services and programs, at the time of referral, and more specifically the goals and objectives in the student's current IEP can be accommodated by MSDB.
- 20-8-104. Eligibility of children for admittance. In order to be eligible for services from the Montana school for the deaf and blind, a child may not yet have reached 22 years of age and must be identified as deaf, hearing impaired, or visually impaired pursuant to the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. 1414.



# Criteria for Identification

## Administrative Rules of Montana (Chapter 10.16 / Subchapter 30)

- **10.16.3013** CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENT AS HAVING DEAF-BLINDNESS
- **10.16.3014** CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENT AS HAVING DEAFNESS
- **10.16.3016** CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENT AS HAVING HEARING IMPAIRMENT
- **10.16.3020** CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENT AS HAVING SPEECH-LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT
- **10.16.3022** CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENT AS HAVING VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

## 10.61.201 ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO THE MONTANA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

- (1) The following procedures shall govern the admission of students at the Montana school for the deaf and blind:
  - (a) The parent or legal guardian must complete an application for admission.
  - (b) A medical examination form must be filed from the family doctor.
  - (c) Appropriate data and/or assessment of hearing loss or impairment of vision must accompany the application.
  - (d) The parents or guardian, with their child, must visit the school.
  - (e) Within practical limitation of time, but **not exceeding six months**, a child study (referral) team shall be called on each child admitted or considered for admission. The composition of the child study team shall follow the rules and regulations set forth by the office of the superintendent of public instruction.
  - (f) A child study team shall be called yearly for reassessment of the child's placement at the school.
  - (g) The school shall follow the mandates of Public Law 94-142 regarding admission of students.

# Letter of Reference, Now What

## File Review Among MSDB Specialists

Must have access to the following (Policy 3110)

- Eligibility for deaf, hearing or vision impairment, or deafblindness
  - Audiological evaluation
  - Eye examination
  - Communication evaluation (might be included)
- Eligibility documentation for additional disabilities, if applicable
- Other relevant health records

# Needed Documents (Submitted by Referring School)

- Current ER and current and previous **Montana** IEP including;
  - Education/psychological evaluation
  - Developmental/cognitive assessment
  - Classroom based assessments
  - Behavioral observations
  - Functional vision, braille, assistive technology or orientation and mobility assessments as necessitated by the disability
  - Hearing, speech/language, communication or as determined by the specific disability
  - Occupational/physical therapy as determined by the specific disability

# Needed Documents (Submitted by Referring School)

- Functional behavior assessment/behavior intervention plan, if applicable
- Relevant psychological assessments and/or reports from treatment specialist
- Transition plan and/or vocational evaluation, if applicable
- High school transcript, if applicable
- Attendance record
- Discipline or behavior reports
- Most recent report card
- Achievement scores
- Individual state assessments

# Referral Team Says Qualified, Now What

Based on the determination of the above criteria, a recommendation may or may not be made to conduct a 10-day observation period on the MSDB campus.

The purpose of this 10-day observation is to gather additional information, which could include assessment data, in MSDB's unique educational setting, that will provide useful information to the IEP team.

The components of 10-day observation period may include but are not limited to:

- academic achievement, developmental and/or cognitive assessments
- classroom based assessments and behavioral observation
- functional vision, braille/reading media, technology, and/or orientation mobility for visually impaired students
- audiological, speech/language (spoken and/or signed) and communication observation and/or assessments
- assistive technology when appropriate
- assessment of social, emotional and behavioral adjustment to the cottage setting if the student will be living in the residential program

# Placement and Admission

Placement and admission of students at MSDB is accomplished through the following procedures:

- At the conclusion of the observation period, a post-observation meeting is conducted with **parents/guardians, LEA, the MSDB team** and the student, if appropriate.
  - If placement at MSDB is not recommended, the LEA will continue to provide FAPE and Outreach services can be offered and/or continued.
  - If placement at MSDB is recommended, the team will determine if the current IEP will be implemented as written, will be amended, or if a new IEP needs to be developed.
- In accordance with an interagency agreement between the Office of Public Instruction and MSDB, a student may not be placed at MSDB by an IEP team without the concurrence of the MSDB administrative representative.

# Transfer to LEA

School policies regulating pupil enrollment from other elementary and secondary schools are designed to protect the educational welfare of the child and of other children enrolled at the MSDB. The transfer of students from MSDB to another educational placement shall occur pursuant to the recommendation of the IEP team which includes the parent/guardian and the LEA.



# LEA and MSDB Relationship

LEA makes the referral to MSDB

LEA is involved with the post observation 10-day meeting

If student accepted, the LEA remains a member of the students team. They attend the annual IEP and are aware of any major changes and/or any possible future decisions. This also keeps the parents in contact with the referring LEA.

If student is not accepted or parent decides MSDB not a good fit, the student and LEA would remain eligible for Outreach Services