

Agency Purpose

The mission of the Minnesota State Academies (MSA) is to provide the highest level of self-sufficiency possible for deaf/hard of hearing and blind/visually impaired students in the state of Minnesota. Established in 1863, the MSA are statewide public schools that provide education and related services to student's ages 0-21, who are blind, visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, including those with multiple disabilities. The MSA are composed of two separate and unique schools – the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind (MSAB), and Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf (MSAD). Federal law mandates that services provided by the MSA meet the student's need for a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) within the least restrictive environment.

The decision to attend the MSA during the school year is made by an Individualized Educational Planning (IEP) team within the Special Education process, including the parent, the district of residence and MSA staff. Each IEP team must decide that MSA provides the most appropriate placement. Students may also attend MSA to obtain social skills or for short-term skill development. (For more information, refer to M.S. 125A.69 Admission Standards.)

Core Functions

The MSA educate enrolled and non enrolled summer program students and/or support public schools to educate students to:

- ◆ develop self-esteem, social skills, leadership skills, and specialized skills like Braille or sign language;
- ◆ complete a course of study equivalent to public schools;
- ◆ earn a living, become integrated into the community, live on their own or in supported living arrangements;
- ◆ prepare for higher education or vocational training;
- ◆ access and utilize state-of-the-art technology to prepare for employment in the 21st century; and
- ◆ acquire technology skills to access information otherwise inaccessible because of their disability.

Operations

The range of services provided by the MSA in support of the agency's mission is unique and often complex when compared to most public schools, making the Academies a necessary option for school districts. The MSA have provided educational services to deaf and blind students for more than 140 years. Historically, the MSA were the only educational options available to deaf or blind students. If students were deaf or blind it was assumed that they would attend the MSA. Today most deaf or blind students attend school in their local community. The MSA recently completed reorganization under a board-directed study that placed the agency under the leadership of one administrator with each academy led by a director who is a specialist in either hearing or visual disabilities. In addition, the board has embarked on development of a strategic plan to guide its improvement and direction for the next several years.

The MSA:

- ◆ provide services that would be prohibitively expensive or unavailable in public schools;
- ◆ provide direct and indirect educational services through a number of program options;
- ◆ provide academic year programs, which include K-12 academies, early childhood intervention, transition, and programs for students with multiple disabilities;
- ◆ provide off-campus services in support of local school districts for non-enrolled students including specialized evaluation, direct teacher services, orientation and mobility training, and consultations;
- ◆ provide on-campus services in support of local school districts for non-enrolled students including weekend parent training programs, family and teacher visitation at the Academies to review specialized resources,

At A Glance

The Minnesota State Academies (MSA) serve deaf or blind students with two schools, The Minnesota Academy for the Blind and the Minnesota Academy for the Deaf. In addition, MSA provides outreach services to school districts and educators. Outreach services serve approximately 50 students in 14 districts. Specifically, students are served as follows:

- ◆ ages 0-21 who reside in the state of Minnesota;
- ◆ in a residential setting, providing 24 hour educational services; and
- ◆ with additional disabilities, including physical and emotional needs.

short-term direct services such as basic skills testing remediation, independent living training, extended school year programming and transition programs;

- ◆ help the state meet federal statutory requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA);
- ◆ provide access to a direct communication environment, comprehensive services, additional resources and increased opportunities which meet the individual needs of students as mandated by their IEPs; and
- ◆ offer mainstream courses in conjunction with the Faribault Public Schools which provide access to broader curriculum choices, advanced coursework, opportunities to increase skill in working with interpreters, and integration with non-disabled peers.

Budget

The total budget for the MSA for the 2008-09 biennium is approximately \$27.5 million. MSA staff include approximately 200 full-time equivalent employees.

Of the total budget, the vast majority (80%) comes from direct state appropriations from the General Fund. Receipts from school districts and the Department of Education account for another 16% in the form of management aid reimbursements, tuition, and compensatory education revenue. The remainder of the budget is federal funding, employee deposits in tax shelter annuities, student deposits, and gifts. Additionally the Academies collect approximately \$1.7 million in tuition from school districts that are returned to the state's General Fund.

Contact

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Dollars in Thousands

	Current		Forecast Base		Biennium 2008-09
	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	
<u>Direct Appropriations by Fund</u>					
General					
Current Appropriation	10,966	10,966	10,966	10,966	21,932
Forecast Base	10,966	10,966	10,966	10,966	21,932
Change		0	0	0	0
% Biennial Change from 2006-07					0%
 <u>Expenditures by Fund</u>					
Direct Appropriations					
General	10,846	11,087	10,966	10,966	21,932
Statutory Appropriations					
General	555	489	453	453	906
Misc Special Revenue	1,658	1,932	1,932	1,933	3,865
Federal	235	234	234	234	468
Miscellaneous Agency	250	318	318	318	636
Gift	26	33	33	33	66
Total	13,570	14,093	13,936	13,937	27,873
 <u>Expenditures by Category</u>					
Total Compensation	11,258	11,897	11,819	11,799	23,618
Other Operating Expenses	2,072	1,933	1,860	1,881	3,741
Capital Outlay & Real Property	7	0	0	0	0
Payments To Individuals	69	63	57	57	114
Other Financial Transactions	164	200	200	200	400
Total	13,570	14,093	13,936	13,937	27,873
 <u>Expenditures by Program</u>					
Resendtl Academies/Deaf&Blind	13,570	14,093	13,936	13,937	27,873
Total	13,570	14,093	13,936	13,937	27,873
 <u>Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)</u>					
	202.7	214.5	211.3	206.1	

Program Description

The Minnesota State Academies (Academies) provide educational opportunities to deaf/hard of hearing and blind/visually impaired students ages 0-21 when the student's local school district of residence cannot meet the educational needs of the student. A student may also attend the Academies to obtain social skills or for targeted short-term skill development. Federal law mandates that placement at the Academies be determined by the individual education planning team, including the parent, school district of residence, and Academies staff.

Services Provided

The Academies operate two separate campuses located approximately one mile apart from each other in Faribault, Minnesota: the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf (MSAD) and the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind (MSAB). The Academies are governed by a seven member board which is appointed by the governor. Support services, such as buildings and grounds maintenance, personnel, finance, food service, and health services are operated to support both MSAB and MSAD. The two academies share a common mission to educate students who are blind/visually impaired or deaf/hard of hearing. Blind students rely on auditory information and deaf students rely on visual information. Teachers at MSAB and MSAD require specialized training and licensure in their respective disability areas. Thus, teachers at one school cannot automatically teach in the other school.

MSAD

MSAD provides direct instruction by licensed teachers fluent in American Sign Language to deaf/hard of hearing students. Instruction and classroom environments are designed to include necessary adaptations unique to deaf/hard of hearing learners. MSAD is a 24-hour, language-rich environment, where American Sign Language and English are utilized to foster effective communication in a community with a critical mass of similar age, language peers. Mainstream opportunities are available within the local public schools to allow students to interact with their hearing peers. Other educational opportunities include core academics, transition programming, work study experience, functional life skill development, specialized behavioral programming, and specific instructional strategies designed to meet the needs of multi-handicapped learners. All student support services are provided by professional staff licensed and trained to work with deaf/hard of hearing students. Approximately 75% of all academy staff members are deaf or hard of hearing, providing students with successful role models. Recreational and competitive activities provide students with opportunities to develop self-confidence, self-esteem, leadership, self-advocacy skills, knowledge and competence to apply to their future roles as productive citizens.

MSAB

The educational process at MSAB is provided in an environment where a specialized curriculum, related support services and appropriate adaptations and modifications are available to all students. Unlike sighted children, blind and visually impaired children cannot access information in the same manner as their sighted peers. Thus the direct teaching of the skills necessary to overcome the loss of vision is critical. The curriculum taught at MSAB focuses on helping a blind/visually impaired child become a self-sufficient adult. The areas of curriculum instruction offered at MSAB include the following:

- ◆ development of skills to access the curriculum, including Braille, large print and or print with the use of optical devices;
- ◆ orientation and mobility skills for independent travel;
- ◆ independent living skills;
- ◆ career education;

Program at a Glance

- ◆ Minnesota State Academies served deaf or blind students in 2005 – 2006 as follows:

Student Type	MSAD	MSAB
Day	83	16
Residential	51	33
Total Enrolled	134	49
Outreach	5	50
Summer	96	45
Total Served	235	144

- ◆ **46%** of MSAD students and **75%** of MSAB students present multiple disabilities including: learning disabilities, physical disabilities, emotional behavior disorders, communication disorders, autism spectrum disorders, cognitive disabilities, and dual sensory impairments (deaf-blind).

- ◆ technology; and
- ◆ specialized expanded core curriculum to address the unique needs of blind children.

An example of this instruction is a summer transition program that focuses on functional skill development and is offered in conjunction with local schools and vocational rehabilitation assistance at MSAB.

Historical Perspective

The decision to enroll at the Academies is not an easy one for parents and/or school districts to make. Research indicates that if there is early identification of deafness or blindness, with timely and adequate specialized services by appropriately trained teachers, students can develop the tools to be successful, responsible, independent citizens. However, if students do not receive appropriate educational opportunities, the potential for future success and independence is diminished. In addition, the social-emotional needs of deaf/hard of hearing or blind/visually impaired students are unique and real. However, children with disabilities also have the same social-emotional needs as their non-disabled peers and have the right to:

- ◆ form an identity;
- ◆ have a peer group;
- ◆ participate in activities;
- ◆ develop their maximum potential;
- ◆ share life experiences; and
- ◆ feel good about who they are.

Determining the least restrictive environment for an individual student must be made on a case-by-case basis. The guiding principle in placement decisions should be matching the educational needs of the student with an appropriate school program that provides meaningful challenges, realistic expectations, maximum opportunities for achievement, and the development of healthy self-esteem.

Some students who attend the Academies are able to participate in regular public school classes within the local public schools in Faribault, while also taking courses at the Academies. This opportunity provides students with the experience of being a participant in a class with non-disabled peers. Deaf students acquire skills in working with an interpreter and note-taker, while blind students learn to negotiate a sighted environment that is not specifically designed to meet their learning style.

The Academies provide support for teacher preparation programs. Student teachers work under the guidance of MSAD licensed professionals. Currently, there are no teacher preparation programs for teachers of the visually impaired in the state of Minnesota. As the current staff at MSAB reaches the age of retirement, it will become exceedingly difficult to find licensed teachers of the visually impaired. We are working with professionals in the state, as well as those in the region and across the country, to brainstorm solutions to this staffing dilemma.

Key Measures

Graduation Success Rates

- ⇒ From the years 1998 through 2003, 43% of MSAD students have attended a four-year college upon graduation. In addition, 23% continued their education with a two-year post-secondary program. Of the remaining graduates, 10% entered the workforce; 5% entered a Department of Rehabilitation Service (DRS) related vocational program; 11% continued a high school transition program; and only 8% were left waiting for DRS services or considered unknown.
- ⇒ Eight MSAB students graduated in 2006, 38% of the students are in a workforce center, 38% returned for continuing education, 13% of the students entered an adult rehab program, and 11% returned to their home.

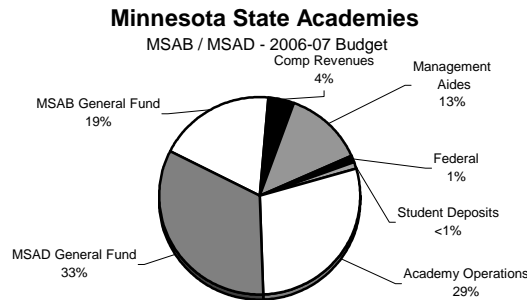
Basic Skills Tests (BST)

	Basic Skills Tests Passage Rates		
	Reading	Writing	Math
MSAD			
2002	22%	40%	33%
2006	60%	40%	54%
MSAB			
2006	63%	100%	33%

- ◆ Due to secondary disabilities not all students attending the Academies are eligible to take the Basic Skills Tests, particularly at MSAB were 40% of students were ineligible to take the tests and took an alternative test.
- ◆ The Basic Skills Tests are not normed for blind/visually impaired students. The math test in particular presents challenges for blind/visually impaired students as some questions are presented using graphs or diagrams.

Accreditation

⇒ Accreditation is being sought by MSAD through the CEASD (Conference of Educators and Administrators Serving the Deaf) organization. Accreditation is already in place through the North Central Association's school improvement cycle.



Contact

For additional information contact:

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400 South East 6th Avenue
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MINN STATE ACADEMIES

Program: RESENDTL ACADEMIES/DEAF&BLIND

Program Summary

Dollars in Thousands

	Current		Forecast Base		Biennium 2008-09
	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>					
Direct Appropriations					
General	10,846	11,087	10,966	10,966	21,932
Statutory Appropriations					
General	555	489	453	453	906
Misc Special Revenue	1,658	1,932	1,932	1,933	3,865
Federal	235	234	234	234	468
Miscellaneous Agency	250	318	318	318	636
Gift	26	33	33	33	66
Total	13,570	14,093	13,936	13,937	27,873
<u>Expenditures by Category</u>					
Total Compensation	11,258	11,897	11,819	11,799	23,618
Other Operating Expenses	2,072	1,933	1,860	1,881	3,741
Capital Outlay & Real Property	7	0	0	0	0
Payments To Individuals	69	63	57	57	114
Other Financial Transactions	164	200	200	200	400
Total	13,570	14,093	13,936	13,937	27,873
<u>Expenditures by Activity</u>					
Academy Operations	4,119	4,390	4,316	4,418	8,734
Academy For The Deaf	5,839	5,900	5,878	5,799	11,677
Academy For The Blind	3,612	3,803	3,742	3,720	7,462
Total	13,570	14,093	13,936	13,937	27,873
Full-Time Equivalents (FTE)	202.7	214.5	211.3	206.1	

MINN STATE ACADEMIES

Program: RESENDTL ACADEMIES/DEAF&BLIND

Activity: ACADEMY OPERATIONS

Narrative

Activity Description

Academy Operations exists to provide support services necessary for the Minnesota State Academies (Academies) educational program to run effectively and efficiently.

Population Served

Academy Operations serves approximately 200 students enrolled on campus as well as 200 staff.

Services Provided

Academy Operations includes the following functions: buildings and grounds, personnel, business office, nutrition, and health services, and fixed costs such as electricity, gas, steam, water and sewage, telephones and t-1 line. Services provided include the following:

- ◆ meeting the health and safety needs of the students;
- ◆ maintaining and preserving the campuses and the physical plant, including historic buildings, in a manner which assures a safe environment for both students and staff;
- ◆ providing personnel management, human resource needs, contract negotiation and administration;
- ◆ providing financial management, including payroll, purchasing, accounts payable and receivable, and budgeting;
- ◆ providing health services for students as directed by doctors including, medications, treatments, tube feeding, treating minor injuries, maintaining health records, health screening services and referrals; and
- ◆ providing food services for breakfast, lunch, and dinner to meet the nutritional needs of students following specialized diets or food preparation.

Historical Perspective

Prior to 1975, each school had a full complement of support services. In an effort to economize resources and reduce duplication, the two schools have combined the support departments listed above. Demands on the maintenance department have increased due to recent capital bonding projects. The department has effectively handled these demands without additional cost by postponing other work and having staff handle the increased demands.

In the previous biennium the Academies added 20,000 square feet to the main building at the Minnesota State Academy for the Blind (MSAB) campus consisting of educational classrooms, physical therapy areas, and office space. At the Minnesota State Academy for the Deaf (MSAD) campus, 9,000 square feet was recently renovated and brought back into service as educational classrooms, living skills training areas, and office space for the resource centers. Both of these projects have increased the demand on heating, cooling, electricity, and janitorial services.

Key Measures

- ⇒ Periodic reviews by external agencies validate quality and ensure standards are successfully met. These include: legislative audits, Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) standards, health standards, food inspection, and Department of Education reviews.
- ⇒ Staff members are licensed appropriately as required by their position descriptions.
- ⇒ Documentation of services is available as appropriate for each department as established by statute, rules and state/agency policies.
- ⇒ Review and consideration of student, parent, and staff driven evaluations of services.

MINN STATE ACADEMIES

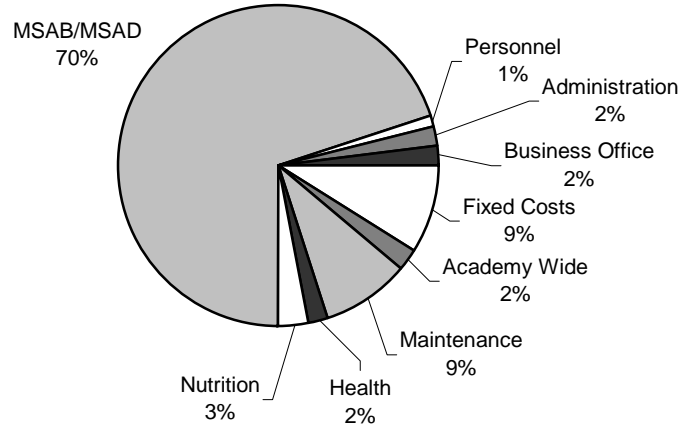
Program: RESENDTL ACADEMIES/DEAF&BLIND

Activity: ACADEMY OPERATIONS

Narrative

Activity Funding

**Minnesota State Academies
Academy Operations - 2006-2007 Budget**



Contact

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MINN STATE ACADEMIES

Program: RESENDTL ACADEMIES/DEAF&BLIND

Activity: ACADEMY OPERATIONS

Budget Activity Summary

<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>					
	Current		Forecast Base		Biennium 2008-09
	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009	
<u>Expenditures by Fund</u>					
Direct Appropriations					
General	3,781	3,944	3,870	3,971	7,841
Statutory Appropriations					
Misc Special Revenue	32	76	76	77	153
Federal	93	95	95	95	190
Miscellaneous Agency	213	275	275	275	550
Total	4,119	4,390	4,316	4,418	8,734
<u>Expenditures by Category</u>					
Total Compensation	2,736	2,836	2,843	2,926	5,769
Other Operating Expenses	1,205	1,348	1,273	1,292	2,565
Capital Outlay & Real Property	7	0	0	0	0
Payments To Individuals	7	6	0	0	0
Other Financial Transactions	164	200	200	200	400
Total	4,119	4,390	4,316	4,418	8,734
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	47.6	46.8	45.1	45.1	

MINN STATE ACADEMIES

Agency Revenue Summary

Dollars in Thousands

	Actual FY2006	Budgeted FY2007	Current Law		Biennium 2008-09
			FY2008	FY2009	
<u>Non Dedicated Revenue:</u>					
Grants:					
General	879	0	0	0	0
Total Non-Dedicated Receipts	879	0	0	0	0
<u>Dedicated Receipts:</u>					
Grants:					
General	352	381	381	381	762
Misc Special Revenue	1,364	1,627	1,627	1,628	3,255
Federal	236	233	233	233	466
Other Revenues:					
Misc Special Revenue	194	252	252	252	504
Miscellaneous Agency	239	275	275	275	550
Gift	36	34	34	34	68
Other Sources:					
Misc Special Revenue	42	42	42	42	84
Miscellaneous Agency	40	43	43	43	86
Total Dedicated Receipts	2,503	2,887	2,887	2,888	5,775
Agency Total Revenue	3,382	2,887	2,887	2,888	5,775