



State of Montana

Montana School for the Deaf and Blind

2012 Agency Biennial IT Report **Fiscal Year 2011-2012**

August 2012

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind is charged by statute with the responsibility to provide educational services to Montana's sensory impaired students. The school accomplishes this mission through the provision of educational services at its campus in Great Falls. The school also provides consultation services through its Outreach Program to local school districts that have sensory impaired children enrolled.

This summary addresses the progress made in completing the technology initiatives contained in the schools' FY 2010 Technology Plan for installation of a distance learning circuit, updating the schools' website, and other on-going technology and connectivity needs.

Distance Learning Circuit

A T1 circuit was installed to provide distance learning opportunities for students attending the MSDB in Great Falls, and also to provide support to students served through the schools' Outreach Program. Video conferencing equipment was purchased as part of this initiative.

Seventy percent of the cost for the T1 circuit, video conferencing equipment and internet access was paid by the Universal Service Administrative Corporation (USAC) under the E-Rate Program established by congress in 1997. This program provides funding to schools and libraries for specified services such as internet access and the provision of distance learning. The school paid the remaining balance, or 30%, from its budget.

Updating Schools' Website

The school updated its website which is hosted by the ITSD. This update primarily was done to provide better navigation and ease of use by constituents of the MSDB and the general public. This project was funded by the MSDB Foundation, Inc.

Other Technology and Connectivity Needs

In FY 2010 the school made available to students current technology in support of their educational and life-skill needs.

Due to lack of funding the school was not able to maintain a 5-year replacement cycle for PC's, and equipment used in the schools' lending library. The lending library was established by the 2007 legislature. This program allows the MSDB to lend on a short-term basis to school districts technology used by blind or low vision students; providing districts the opportunity to determine if the equipment item meets the needs of their students prior to making a purchasing decision. The district(s) return the equipment to the MSDB at the end of the evaluation period.

Some of the equipment in the lending library needs to be replaced. The school submitted a request with its 2015 biennium budget to spend \$25,000 in FY 2014 to replace the most outdated equipment.

In FY 2010 the school maintained connectivity to the Office of Public Instruction (OPI) to access OPI's E-Grant, AIM and School food data systems. The E-Grant system is used for federal grant requests and reporting; AIM is used for reporting data on students and educational staff; and the School food data system is used to report student meal counts.

The school also maintained connectivity with the Great Falls Public Library (GFPL) to allow parents and other constituents of the school access to the schools' library resources. This also allows customers of the school access to databases maintained by the GFPL saving the school from having to purchase access rights to these databases.

The school maintained connectivity to the DPHHS Child Health Referral Information System (CHRIS). This database allows the school to track students with hearing or vision impairments from the time of impairment identification through the child's exit from intervention or educational services. Section 20-8-102, MCA requires the MSDB to track sensory impaired children. Access to this database allows the school to meet this mandate.

Initiative Status	Total	Fully Funded	Unfunded	Partially Funded
Completed				
Substantially Completed				
Deferred				
Delayed				
Cancelled				
Remain on-going by design				

SECTION 1: AGENCY IT PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS – GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal Number 1:

IT Goal 1 Maintain technology to ensure services remain secure and current.

Description: Keep connectivity to SummitNet in order to access online resources and services, maintain ITV circuit and services, maintain equipment and telecommunications, update software including security and filter software, maintain equipment rotation schedule and keep short-term lending library up-to-date.

Benefits: What benefits are realized and who realizes the benefits? Reduced cost, improved employee and program efficiencies, staff & students have access to current information and resources, LEA and other agencies serving sensory impaired students across Montana will have greater access to the specialists at our school. Staff, students, families, LEA/agencies serving sensory impaired students, and constituents.

Which state strategic goal(s) and/or objective(s) does your goal address? Goals # 3 and 4--This goal supports the State's goal of developing IT resources in an organized, deliberative, and cost-effective manner and by protecting individual privacy and the privacy of information contained within IT systems.

Supporting Objective/Action

Objective 1-1 Maintain Internet connectivity to access Sabhrs Financials and state H.R. resources, AIM student information system, CHRIS data system on students served by MSDB, OPI, NWEA Measures of Academic Performance assessment site and tools, Library resources, Educational online resources for students and staff, and VPN connections for Outreach and other tele-workers that have high speed capabilities.

Accomplishments: We have been able to maintain connectivity with all of the services required. We have had additional training on the CHRIS database as well as with the AIM system to be sure it was being used effectively.

Status: Completed

Supporting Objective/Action

Objective 1-2 Maintain connectivity on the ITV circuit and on-going services to provide distant learning activities for sensory-impaired students, professional development opportunities for MSDB staff, Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), and other agencies providing services to sensory-impaired students, support to parents and families of sensory impaired children, avenues of collaboration and interaction between other schools and programs for sensory impaired students, support business meetings where appropriate, and conference in tele-workers and Outreach staff.

Accomplishments: We have completed setting up the equipment and we have established a dedicated room for the system and have begun to offer distance learning classes to students who were unable to attend on campus. The system is also being used for meetings, virtual fieldtrips, and training for our staff and LEA's.

Status: Completed.

Supporting Objective/Action

Objective 1-3 Maintain equipment functionality, rotation schedule, telecommunication system, software upgrades as well as keep the MSDB Technology Lending Library up-to-date.

Accomplishments: We have done our best to maintain equipment. Due to budget cuts we have not been able to keep up with our scheduled rotation. We were able to purchase 7 new desktops and one new laptop this summer however to help update our oldest equipment.

Status: On going.

Supporting Objective/Action

Objective 1-4 Maintain a dynamic website with links to and resources about sensory impaired children and working with them.

Accomplishments: We completed the redesign of the website and have worked hard to keep it up to date and useful.

Status: Completed

Goal Number 2:

IT Goal 2 Students will access and utilize technology for communication, learning, and life.

Description: Students will use technology to communicate with each other, their families, friends, teachers, etc. They will build skills with basic desktop applications and tools. They will learn skills that can be applied in a work environment. They will learn to be safe on the Internet. Students needing accessible tools to access technology will learn such tools so that they will have equal access.

Benefits: What benefits are realized and who realizes the benefits? Students learn skills that will enable them to be independent and contributing members of society. Strategic Plan objective and School Improvement goals can be met.

Which state strategic goal(s) and/or objective(s) does your goal address? Goal # 3 (Improve the quality of life of Montana citizens).

Supporting Objective/Action

Objective 2-1 Students will learn and apply technology related skills including learning and using accessible software/hardware to complete educational tasks and projects. Students, Grade 8 and above, will improve test scores (pre/post each year until such time that they reach and maintain a level of proficient) within the SimpleK12 Technology Assessment tool.

Accomplishments: We continue to offer technology classes and make sure the students are proficient.

Status: On going.

Goal Number 3:

IT Goal 3 Staff will use technology efficiently and effectively within their job assignments.

Description: Staff will be able to use technology to communicate, to build and deliver lessons, participate in professional development, reporting and maintaining student records (AIM system), create brochures and handouts that communicate the services at MSDB.

Benefits: What benefits are realized and who realizes the benefits? Staff, students, parents/families, constituents, citizens of Montana.

Which state strategic goal(s) and/or objective(s) does your goal address? Goal #5 – Improving our staff’s skills will improve our ability to provide our service – education to deaf/hard of hearing and visually impaired students as well as being a resource to families, LEAs and other constituents.

Supporting Objective/Action

Objective 3-1 Teachers will integrate current and emerging technology (including ITV) into their lessons, participate in technology related professional development activities, and will demonstrate technology proficiency via the SimpleK12 Technology Assessment tool.

Accomplishments: We continue to offer training opportunities to staff. We have teachers that have started to use the ITV to offer distance learning classes.

Status: On going.

Supporting Objective/Action

Objective 3-2 Staff will use utilize technology to facilitate communication, maintain data, and participate in and/or provide professional development opportunities for families, LEAs, and other agencies working with sensory impaired students.

Accomplishments: Staff are given opportunities for training, they use the AIM system for student records and IEPs,

Status: On going.

SECTION 2: IT INITIATIVES STATUS UPDATES

Initiative 1 <Title>

Description: <>

EPP Number:

Status: <Completed, Substantially Completed, Deferred, Delayed, Cancelled, or On-going>

Funding: <Funded, Not Funded, or Partially Funded>

Initiative 2 <Title>

Description: <>

EPP Number:

Status: <Completed, Substantially Completed, Deferred, Delayed, Cancelled, or On-going>

Funding: <Funded, Not Funded, or Partially Funded>

Initiative 3 <Title>

Description: <>

EPP Number:

Status: <Completed, Substantially Completed, Deferred, Delayed, Cancelled, or On-going>

Funding: <Funded, Not Funded, or Partially Funded>

Initiative 4 <Title>

Description: <>

EPP Number:

Status: <Completed, Substantially Completed, Deferred, Delayed, Cancelled, or On-going>

Funding: <Funded, Not Funded, or Partially Funded>

Initiative 5 <Title>

Description: <>

EPP Number:

Status: <Completed, Substantially Completed, Deferred, Delayed, Cancelled, or On-going>

Funding: <Funded, Not Funded, or Partially Funded>

SECTION 3: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION - OPTIONAL

The Montana School for the Deaf and Blind did not have any new initiatives outlined in our tech plan. We have worked hard to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in our plan. The largest issue we have run into is funding for maintaining our equipment as well as sticking to our hardware and software rotation schedule. We have used E-Rate money, applied for grants, and requested money from the MSDB Foundation to help fill in the holes in the budget. We have requested additional money to be available in the 2014 budget to hopefully get things back on track.