

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION-SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND
AGENCY 510) - 2007-09 BIENNIUM**

I) AGENCY SUMMARY & REVENUE SOURCES

MISSION

The School for the Blind provides education and training for all children and young people (birth through age twenty-one) who are visually impaired so they possess the required skills to become personally productive and self-sufficient citizens. The School's programs include academic and vocational training, residential living, extra curricular activities, low vision evaluation services, physical and occupational therapy, psychological evaluations, orientation and mobility services, life skills training, nutritional meals, vocational work study program, Braille publications, adaptive technology training, and evaluation. The School provides special education services to visually impaired students both on campus and in the public schools.

TOTAL BIENNIAL BUDGET

The total authorized appropriation is \$7,259,039 in FY08 and \$7,343,892 in FY09 which is an increase of \$439,000 or 6.4% each year.

FUNDING SOURCE

The budget for the School for the Blind is financed by general revenue (approx. 71%), federal funds (approx. 11%), cash funds (approx. 5%) and fund balances (approx. 13%).

II) SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

GENERAL REVENUE:

The 2007-09 biennial budget includes a total general revenue increase of \$235,000 each year for the following purposes:

<u>Purpose</u>	<u>FY08</u>	<u>FY09</u>
Operating Expenses - for fuel costs and official business travel	100,000	100,000
Capital Outlay for equipment replacement	25,000	25,000
Special Maintenance for Preventive Maint. Costs	60,000	60,000
Summer Project Costs	15,000	15,000
Braille Textbooks	<u>35,000</u>	<u>35,000</u>
Total	\$235,000	\$235,000

SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND - STATE OPERATIONS

This appropriation is funded with general revenue and is used to support personal services and operating expenses for the general operation of the school. The total authorized appropriation is \$5,747,862 in FY08 and \$5,828,513 in FY09, and includes the following increases:

Operating Expenses - An increase of \$100,000 each year for fuel costs and official business travel.

Capital Outlay - An increase of \$25,000 each year for equipment replacement.

Special Maintenance - An increase of \$60,000 each year to support building preventive maintenance costs.

Summer Projects - An increase of \$15,000 each year for increased costs of 3 weeks of required summer school.

SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND - FEDERAL OPERATIONS

This appropriation is federally funded and is used for the primary operational support for the School for the Blind. The total authorized appropriation is \$716,669 in FY08 and \$720,871 in FY09 which includes the following increase:

Capital Outlay - An increase of \$104,000 each year for restoration of the FY07 authorized level which is needed for replacement of equipment.

BRILLE TEXTBOOKS

This appropriation is funded by general revenue and is used to purchase Braille and large print textbooks for visually impaired students attending public schools. The total authorized appropriation is \$175,000 each year which includes an increase of \$35,000 each year to cover the cost of large print and Braille textbooks which can cost as much as \$10,000 each.

MEDICAID PROVIDER - FEDERAL

This appropriation is federally funded by the Arkansas Medicaid Program and by an Adaptive Assistance Grant from the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education. The thirty-one percent (31%) matching for these federal funds is provided to the State Department of Education through General Revenue. This appropriation is used to purchase materials and equipment for Medicaid eligible students. The total authorized appropriation is \$195,000 each year which includes an increase of \$50,000 each year to purchase replacement equipment for the vocational and educational areas and library holdings.

SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND - CASH OPERATIONS

This appropriation is funded by donations, USDA reimbursements, meal ticket sales, royalties, and interest and is used to supplement general revenues as needed to provide required services for blind and visually impaired students.

The total authorized appropriation is \$424,508 each year which includes the following increase:

Capital Outlay - An increase of \$50,000 each year to restore the FY07 authorized level and to purchase food service and maintenance equipment that cost in excess of \$2,500 per item.

III) ADDITIONAL POSITIONS

Total positions for the 2007-09 biennium: 102

Total positions for the 2005-07 biennium: 107

Increase/(Decrease): (5)

This reduction is due to the following 5 positions not being restored for the 2007-09 biennium:

2 Grade 15 Houseparent IIs

2 Grade 15 Recreational Activity Leader IIs

1 Grade 4 Custodial Worker II

IV) SPECIAL LANGUAGE

TRANSFER PROVISION: Authorizes a transfer of appropriation from the Summer projects and Miscellaneous Activities special line item to Regular Salaries and Personal Services Matching and Operating Expenses, to compensate and provide special allowances to staff occupying positions who work during the summer months, and cover other expenses of summer project activities.

SPECIAL ALLOWANCE: Allows the School to provide up to \$3,500 per school term/per year in special allowances to employees who complete any of the following in addition to their regular duties:

Teach adult education classes

Coach one or more sports

Sponsor a club or organization outside of normal working day

Interpretative services

ADDITIONAL SALARY/COMPENSATION PROVISION: Prohibits employees from receiving an additional salary from the School or other state agency without written certification from the Superintendent and approval by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State that the additional position does not interfere with their primary duties and that the combined salaries do not exceed the maximum salary for the highest salary of the two positions. Provides for termination upon knowingly violating this provision, and the employee is barred from employment for three (3) years or until the salary in violation of this provision has been repaid including 10% interest.

SHARED SERVICES: Authorizes a joint paying account in the State Treasury between the School for the Blind and School for the Deaf for the purpose of serving both schools in the areas of Accounting, Personnel, Inventory, Safety and Health Services upon direction by the Board of Trustees for the Arkansas School for the Blind and the Arkansas School for the Deaf. Authorizes the Board to transfer positions, funds and appropriations with the funding and appropriation to be divided proportionately from each agency based on student population.

BRILLE AND LARGE PRINT TEXTBOOKS: Authorizes the State Board of Education to adopt rules and regulations for the implementation of the Braille and Large Print Textbooks program and allows the Board to negotiate directly with publishers for the purchase of such books.

SUMMER SCHOOL EMPLOYEES: Authorizes additional compensation not to exceed 1/12 of their annual salary each month or part thereof worked to selected classifications of employees who in addition to working during the regular

school term, also work during the summer months.

TEACHERS FOR SENSORY IMPAIRED ENTERING STATE SERVICE: Allows teachers certified to teach visually impaired that are entering state service to teach sensory impaired individuals to be paid not less than their most recent annual salary, upon certification of the prior service & salary by the Superintendent to the Office of Personnel Management.

TEACHER SALARY INCREASE: Provides that if an act is passed to provide funds to the public schools to raise salaries of teachers, the School for the Blind and the School for the Deaf are also included.

SPECIAL RATES OF PAY: Authorizes the School to adjust specified classifications of new or current employees to at least the minimum level of compensation for public school employees upon Office of Personnel Management and Arkansas Legislative Council Personnel Committee review and Chief Fiscal Officer Approval of the plan for the adjustments. Authorizes the use of Merit Adjustment funding for these increases, but also requires the School to use salary savings.

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