

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION-SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND (0510)

FISCAL YEAR 2019

AS ENACTED BY ACTS 144 AND AND 124 OF 2018

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, extracurricular 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, evaluation and weekly statewide transportation for residential students.

TOTAL APPROPRIATION

The total appropriation is \$8,474,679 in FY2019.

An additional appropriation for FY2018 is added by Act 124 of 2018 for \$150,000 in Special Maintenance.

FUNDING SOURCES

The appropriations for the School for the Blind are funded by general revenue, federal funds, cash funds and fund balances.

II) CHANGE LEVEL REQUESTS

No Change Level Requests for FY2019

STATE OPERATIONS (APPROPRIATION 077)

By Act 124 of 2018, an additional \$150,000 is added to the FY2018 Appropriation for Special Maintenance. This is to pay for building and maintenance expenses of the School for the Blind.

III) ADDITIONAL POSITIONS

Total Positions FY2019: 105

Total Positions FY2018: 105

Increase / (Decrease): 0

Extra Help Positions FY2019: 17 (Total FY2018 Authorized Extra Help: 17)

IV) SPECIAL LANGUAGE

TRANSFER PROVISION: Authorizes a transfer of appropriation from the Summer projects special line item in the State Operations appropriation to Regular Salaries and Personal Services Matching and Maintenance and General Operating Expenses within the same appropriation, to compensate staff who work during the summer months on summer projects, cover other expenses of summer project

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activities, and pay shift differential pay, upon Chief Fiscal Officer approval.

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

- Teach adult education classes, parent training, or student tutorial services on weekends or evenings
- Coach one or more sports
- Sponsor a club or organization outside of normal working day
- Provide 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.

BRAILLE 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. Also authorizes the School to use this appropriation and funds for costs of providing the books to public schools, such as copying, postage and freight costs. A new line is added to the language to allow the School for the Blind to purchase electronic textbooks and adaptive technology.

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 work during the summer months in addition to working during the regular school term.

CERTIFIED MASTERS OR BACHELOR TEACHERS ENTERING STATE SERVICE: Allows teachers entering state service to teach sensory impaired individuals to be paid not less than what they would have received from their previous employer effective on their employment with the Arkansas School for the Blind, upon certification of the prior service by the Superintendent to the Office of Personnel Management. New language added that approval by the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State is required before this provision may be implemented.

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. School for the Deaf is stricken from the language as the Schools for the Blind and Deaf are now independent of one another in statute.

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, up to the maximum for the assigned grade, 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.

***NEW LANGUAGE* FUNDING TRANSFER:** In Act 124 of 2018 - Supplemental for FY2018, language is added to require a one-time transfer of \$150,000 from the General Revenue Allotment Reserve Fund to the School for the Blind Fund Account for Special Maintenance of the School for the Blind.