

2016-18 Executive Progress Report

Commonwealth of Virginia
Secretary of Education

Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind

At A Glance

Our mission at the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind is to provide educational programs and services to students ages 0 through 21 who are deaf, blind and sensory impaired with other disabilities. Educational and residential services shall promote: V - Value for each person and his/her unique abilities, S - Success in meeting each student's academic goals, D - Diversity in instruction to meet the needs of all students, B - Building opportunities that foster expertise in technology and its integration, communication, and achievement for all staff and students and their families.

Staffing 157 Salaried Employees, 0 Contracted Employees, 185.5 Authorized, and 52 Wage Employees.

Financials Budget FY 2017, \$11.91 million, 89.25% from the General Fund.

Trends	↑ Percent of Students passing SOL assessment	Key Perf Areas	↑ Percent of Students passing SOL assessment
	↑ Percent of students with 375-400 on SOL assessment		↑ Percent of students with 375-400 on SOL assessment
Legend	↑ Increase, ↓ Decrease, → Steady	Productivity Legend	↑ Improving, ↓ Worsening, → Maintaining

For more information on administrative key, and productivity measures, go to www.vaperforms.virginia.gov

Background and History

Agency Background Statement

The Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind was established in 1839. Virginia students ages 0-21 who are deaf/hard of hearing or blind/visually impaired and multi-disabled who meet admission criteria are potential candidates for admission.

As of July 1, 2009, § 22.1-346 of the Code of Virginia, was established by the General Assembly transferring the property; rights and duties to the Board of Visitors of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind; supervision of school; appointment and removal of officers and faculty; and certain funding initiatives.

§ 22.1-346.2 established the Board of Visitors of the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind (Board) as a policy agency in the executive branch of state government under the name of the "Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind" for the purpose of governing the educational programs and services to deaf, blind, and multi-disabled students enrolled at the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind.

Major Products and Services

VSDB serves students who are ages 0-21 and who are deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired, deafblind, and sensory impaired with other disabilities. Students are referred through their local school division and must participate in the admission process for considered enrollment. VSDB works closely with the school divisions to ensure a smooth application process. VSDB has a rolling admission policy and currently serves 102 students in grades preschool through 12. Admission criteria are established by the Board of Visitors and are in compliance with the Code of Virginia. Students who qualify to apply to VSDB for enrollment must be served through special education services with deafness or blindness as their primary disability category. VSDB serves students on the vision continuum from low vision to blind. In addition, VSDB serves students who are deaf or hard of hearing and supports students who utilize American Sign Language, cochlear implants, and/or are more oral. In the multiple disabilities area, students are served who are deafblind or sensory impaired with other disabilities and who are able to function at a participatory level within the classroom.

Students are admitted as day or residential students. Residential students live on campus Sunday evening through Friday and return home every weekend. VSDB is seeing an increase in the need of services for students with emotional issues, students who are sensory impaired with autism, students who are multi-disabled and students who are more oral and want to learn American Sign Language as a communication option.

Customers

Customer Summary

Customer Table

Predefined Group	User Defined Group	Number Served Annually	Potential Number of Annual Customers	Projected Customer Trend
Student	Deaf and blind students and students with multi-disabilities in addition to deafness and/or blindness	102	200	Stable

Finance

Financial Summary

VSDB administers a budget of \$11.5 million dollars which includes general and non-general funds. VSDB receives federal grants that are managed under the specified mandates for each grant.

Fund Sources

Fund Code	Fund Name	FY 2017	FY 2018
01000	General Fund	\$10,625,692	\$10,300,061
02218	Vsdb Special Revenue Fund	\$381,634	\$381,706
02860	Recycl Mtrl Sales-Nongen/Nonhe	\$1,000	\$1,000
02870	Surp Suppy/Equip Sale-Gf-Nonhe	\$10,000	\$10,000
10000	Federal Trust	\$887,242	\$887,310

Revenue Summary

VSDB's main source of funding is state general funds. The agency receives federal funds from ESSA and IDEA grants. A portion of the revenue comes from Medicaid reimbursement for services performed by our clinical staff for students.

Performance

Performance Highlights

VSDB offers comprehensive educational programs and support services to students with sensory impairments as specified on each child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The school provides both residential and day options for children depending upon the distance from the child's home and his/her needs. VSDB provides the following services/programs:

- Educational opportunities for students to gain access to all diploma options
- Students who are deaf/hard of hearing enjoy direct interaction through American Sign Language with peers and adults
- Braille instruction and literacy
- Career and technical training
- Family-centered and language based developmental programs for infants, toddlers, and pre-school aged students
- Weekly orientation and mobility instruction for all ages of students who are visually impaired
- Daily living skills instruction
- Nutritional meals that meet dietary requirements developed with student's input
- Dormitory living in a nurturing residential setting for students starting at 5 years of age
- Variety of sports programs for students who are deaf and blind
- Transportation for residential students
- Extracurricular clubs
- Deaf/Blind services
- Services for students who have sensory impairments and autism
- Outreach which includes consultations
- Parent infant services
- Interpreters provide off campus communication

Selected Measures

Measure ID	Measure	Alternative Name	Estimated Trend
218.0003	Percentage of high school students who are enrolled in secondary post education vocational programs or have achieved employment within one year of graduation.		Improving
218.0002	Percentage of passing scores out of the total number of assessments administered for the Virginia Standard of Learning assessments.	Percent of Students passing SOL assessment	Improving
218.0006	Percentage of scores within the 375-400 range out of the total number of assessments administered for the Virginia Standard of Learning Assessments	Percent of students with 375-400 on SOL assessment	Improving

Key Risk Factors

VSDB operates multiple programs in an attempt to address the needs of the students. Approximately ten percent of the student population is academic diploma students. However, to remain in compliance with VDOE, VSDB must maintain a full staff of highly-qualified teachers for instruction. This creates classrooms with minimal students per each teacher. VSDB maintains one teacher per content area as well as operates

classrooms that are serving multiple grade levels under one teacher. Within the student population, 83% of the students have more than one disability. This creates a significant need for vocational, career readiness, and life skills training. Maintaining the academic program creates significant funding challenges to the necessary development of a more functional life skills program. Maintaining both an academic program as well as a functional life skills program is not cost effective.

Additionally, due to budget constraints, VSDB is not able to maintain complete salary schedules for our educational staff. The starting salary for teachers is now the lowest in the region.

The combination of increased workload and non-competitive salaries are causing retention issues for VSDB. Our ability to provide services to our students is at significant risk if these issues are not addressed.

Due to the Consolidation project several years ago, VSDB had several vacant buildings. VSDB has worked with Department of Real Estate Services to find renters for these buildings. VSDB now has three entities renting space on campus. Leasing the buildings is necessary to keep the buildings in good working order and to assist VSDB with the costs of these buildings.

Agency Statistics

Statistics Summary

The following statistics provide a breakdown of the students VSDB is serving as of July 2017.

Statistics Table

Description	Value
Number of residential students	53
Number of day students	34
Number of deaf/hard of hearing students	49
Number of blind/visually impaired students	25
Number of multi-handicapped students	13
2017 graduates	13

General Information About Ongoing Status of Agency

Curriculum development is ongoing to meet the needs of all students at VSDB. Staff participates in staff development opportunities to better enhance their skills.

Teacher Preparation- Teachers at VSDB must meet the fully licensed and endorsement requirements outlined by Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 and/or IDEA 2004. To meet these requirements teachers must hold a Hearing Impaired/Visual Impaired endorsement and/or Special Education Adapted Curriculum endorsement if they teach students in State Alternate Assessment program and be fully licensed and endorsed in a content area. Currently, VSDB develops a program of study for teachers with a conditional or provisional license so they complete these classes within three years.

Information Technology

VSDB has made great strides in modernizing the IT offerings for Students, Teachers and Parents over the last 5 years. VITA's allowances for semi-autonomous decision making in the School IT Infrastructure have aided in our ability to focus on bringing and keeping services online. Our current investments are all hardware and software maintenance and licensing. We have no infrastructure projects or major changes anticipated within the 2016-18 timeframe. Our current focus is regulatory compliance. We have completed a Business Impact Analysis and Risk Assessment to form the foundation of our IT Security Plan. The IT Security plan is a collection of disparate documents updated a periodically. VSDB is focusing 2016-18 to bring this together into cohesive whole and meet our VITA data points.

For the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind the factors impacting IT needs are the complexity and costliness of overlapping Federal and State legal and regulatory mandates. The unique needs of our students in the area of assistive technology are complicating factors in the effective and compliant delivery of services. VSDB is the smallest K-12 Local Education Authority (LEA) in the Commonwealth and no accommodation is made for our lack of locality. We have no local tax base to fund the operations and almost completely dependent on General Assembly funding. Even without the portion of annual budget supplied by a locality VSDB still carries all the performance factors of any other, larger, school district in terms of technology deployment in classroom environments and data collection, protection, dispersal, and reporting. VSDB must maintain the same Student Information Systems, Individualized Education Plan (IEP) systems, Building Automation, and Security Systems as any other school district. These obligations add complexity and difficulties to VSDB IT.

Workforce Development

The retention of employees in the educational and residential programs has been difficult. The underlying causes are the increasing specialized qualifications required for special education staff, increased workload due to staffing shortages and the compensation limitations resulting from funding constraints. Our requests for salary increases for our teaching staff in order to remain competitive with the local school divisions have rarely been funded which is affecting recruitment and retention. Our compensation levels are also below the local school divisions in the areas of administration, housekeeping, and food services. We anticipate increased turnover if these compensation issues are not addressed. There is a need for additional full-time staffing in the areas of education, interpreting, housekeeping, and security. We are meeting most of these needs with wage staff; however, the retention of these employees is difficult due to the lack of benefits and low compensation.

Physical Plant

The consolidation project for VSDB provided the school with new and renovated buildings. The new/renovated buildings are more energy efficient than our old buildings. However, while more efficient the cost has increased for utilities. VSDB now has in all new and renovated buildings air conditioning and elevators.

There is an approved capital project for the planning process for the renovation of Main Hall, an original building from 1839 and currently houses administrative staff. There is also an approved project for the exterior of Main Hall and to renovated Bradford Hall which previously housed the infirmary.