

CONNECTION



Missouri School for the Blind
3815 Magnolia Avenue, St. Louis



It's a great day when dedicated IEP teams come together to effectively plan for the immediate and future educational needs of students who are blind or visually impaired. Often times, the work, time and effort IEP teams put toward identifying student needs and successfully planning a program go unrecognized. However, most IEP team members are not motivated by the recognition they receive for their efforts; the knowledge that they are assisting students to achieve their greatest potential is enough.

At annual IEP meetings, the team determines educational placement and the least restrictive environment (LRE) for a student. In keeping with the intent of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), least restrictive environment means that "to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities are educated with children who are not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily."

While the terminology may imply that "least restrictive environment" applies only to academic education, for students who are blind or visually impaired it must be investigated further. Their education extends beyond the core curriculum of math, science, language arts and social studies. When considering a child's education, the whole picture must be reviewed and it must be decided what setting would provide the student with the least restrictive environment in all areas of learning – from math, science, language arts to daily living skills, social skills and job preparation. For students who are blind or visually impaired the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) must be considered. Knowledge and skills gained through the ECC are essential to the success of students who are blind/visually impaired in school and in post-graduate pursuits.

Educators define core curriculum as "the knowledge and skills expected to be learned by a student by high school graduation." Generally, the core curriculum consists of knowledge and skills related to academic subjects. The ECC includes areas of learning

MSB SUPPORTS



Missouri Learning Standards



MISSOURI SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND



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that may be learned through observation by students with unimpaired vision but require support and direct instruction to be learned by a student with visual impairment. The ECC includes: 1) compensatory skills such as Braille and Nemeth Code; 2) orientation and mobility; 3) social interaction skills; 4) independent living skills; 5) recreation and leisure skills; 6) career and vocational education; 7) use of assistive technology; 8) sensory efficiency; and 9) self determination.

When determining the least restrictive learning environment for a student with a visual impairment, an IEP team must consider if all goals, including those in the ECC, are being addressed. Parental concerns, poor progress or lack of progress on IEP goals and academic progress in specific areas or overall must also be taken into consideration. Problems with academic success can often be traced to lack of progress on the Expanded Core Curriculum.

Missouri School for the Blind values the support from local school districts as we work together to provide quality education for students who are blind and visually impaired. In addition, we extend our gratitude to IEP teams everywhere who make it their business to “think outside the box” and address the unique needs of all students with disabilities.

MISSOURI SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND From Ordinary to Extraordinary!

As a fully-accredited Missouri school, MSB offers students an opportunity to receive a quality education that targets not only the core curriculum but also the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) for the blind/visually impaired. Short-term placement in the KEYS (Knowledge to Empower Your Success) program gives IEP teams flexibility to target essential skills of the ECC. Many students claim that MSB is their “least restrictive environment” because of the unique opportunities and the levels of independence they have achieved.

MSB provides students access to state-of-the-art technology including SmartBoards, iPads, refreshable braille displays and keyboards, text-to-talk software, video magnifiers and electronic note takers. Intensive orientation and mobility instruction begins with teaching students to navigate the campus and, as skills develop, boundaries are expanded and residential/small business travel skills are introduced. These lessons, along with instruction in transition skills, are all geared toward students achieving their greatest level of independence. Dormitory living and the Learning Independence From Experience (LIFE) program give students the opportunity to face and solve challenges they likely will experience on a college campus or in a new living environment. Located in midtown St. Louis, Missouri School for the Blind affords a variety of settings for students to obtain work experience as well as opportunities to navigate a metropolitan area and travel by public transportation.

So what really makes MSB extraordinary is the overall experience for blind/visually impaired students. The extra-curricular programs provided by MSB offer students unique opportunities they likely cannot get elsewhere. MSB students may be a varsity team captain or be on the cheerleading squad. Student athletes travel throughout the midwest to participate in athletics and other extra-curricular events with other schools for the blind. Competitive athletics include track and field, swimming, wrestling, goalball, forensics and cheerleading. Intramural sports include track and field, bowling and skiing. MSB facilities include a full outdoor track as well as a cabled track for those who are visually impaired, indoor pool, bowling alley, two gyms, weight room and more. In addition to athletics, MSB club opportunities include Beta Club, boy scouts, girl scouts and numerous special interest and book clubs. While strong academics are the foundation of effective schools, MSB goes a step further and offers an environment that encourages students to thrive and achieve their maximum potential.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MSB!

On February 27, MSB celebrated its 162nd birthday!

To celebrate, Superintendent Patty Yocum, and Assistant Superintendent Joy Waddell surprised the students with colorful balloons to brighten the day!

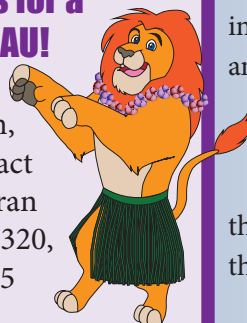
Happy birthday MSB, here's to another 162 years!



LIONS NIGHT SUN., APRIL 14

Join us for a
LION LUAU!

For more information,
please contact
Patti Curran
314-776-4320,
ext. 1135



VISION SUMMIT

for Parents and Educators of Children with Visual Impairment/Blindness

For more information visit:
www.MSB.dese.mo.gov



APRIL 29, 2013

Stoney Creek Inn & Conference Center
2601 S. Providence Road
Columbia, Missouri 65203

Sponsored by Blind Task Force of Missouri, Missouri School for the Blind, Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, Missouri Council of the Blind, Missouri Guide Dog Users and Society for the Blind.

KINDNESS AND JOY OVERFLOW THROUGH THE HOLIDAYS

The holiday season at MSB kicked off on December 4 with the Maplewood Lions Club's annual holiday party. MSB Juniors and Seniors attended the party and had the opportunity to share a little bit about themselves and their plans for after graduation. Along with delicious home prepared food, students enjoyed fellowship with the Lions.



The cheer continued the next day with an opportunity for students to spread a little joy themselves. Invited by alum Charles Tabor, students attended the Christmas party for residents of Tower Grove Manor on December 5 and spread cheer by performing classic winter tunes. Residents and students had a great time at this event!



Also in December, students were invited to Bob Kramer's Marionette Company. One of the longest running on-site puppetry theatres in the U.S., Bob Kramer's Marionettes has been enchanting audiences of all ages for more than 45 years. Students enjoyed an entertaining holiday show, demonstration on how puppets are made – each one taking about 1,500 hours of exacting work – then each student able to meet the puppets up close and personal, getting to feel the details that go into every work of art.



ALUMNI WEEKEND • MAY 17-18 For information, contact June Lenk at 314-351-2814



Throughout the year, there are constant reminders of the generosity and kindness extended to the Missouri School for the Blind, its students and staff. However, one of the most visible reminders has to be the annual Christmas Extravaganza and Giving Tree program. We are humbled that during a busy time of year for all, so many people spend so much time, energy and money to make the holidays extra special for our students.

This year's extravaganza kicked off with students performing classic seasonal tunes to get everyone in the holiday spirit. Then, surrounded by family, Lions and alumni, students opened gifts while enjoying delicious cookies and hot chocolate. Students received winter necessities, including coats, hats and gloves, as well as music, books, games, toys and other fun items. This event, which students look forward to all year long, is made possible by the tremendous generosity of many MSB friends, including:

- First Capitol Lions - St. Charles, MO
- West County Lions - Eureka, Mo
- New Melle Lions - New Melle, MO



- Harmony Lions - St. Louis, MO
- United Workers for the Blind of Missouri
- Missouri School for the Blind Alumni Association

In addition to the holiday extravaganza, students who live on campus enjoyed the bonus of an additional Christmas party hosted by the Meramac Elks club. The Elks provided food, games and fun during the evening party and also presented the students with gifts that were thoroughly enjoyed.

Thank you to everyone who has extended generosity to MSB and its family. You are truly appreciated!

Explorations in STEMs

(Science, Technology, Engineering & Math)

STEMs is an interactive opportunity for students who are blind or visually impaired to work alongside experienced staff to develop skills for scientific inquiry that will allow them to increase their independence while participating in laboratory-based classes. During each two-week session students will use state-of-the-art technology specifically designed for students who are blind or visually impaired.

July 8-19

July 22 - August 2

Recycle City

Robotics Academy

Grades 5-8

Grades 7-12

For more information, visit www.MSB.dese.mo.gov or contact Joy Waddell at (314) 776-4320, ext. 1140 or via e-mail at Joyce.Waddell@msb.dese.mo.gov

WRESTLERS FINISH SEASON STRONG



The MSB wrestlers started the new year with a set of impressive performances against Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota at the Wisconsin Invitational, with wins from Jesse Finnell, Josh Starner, Michael McCurdy, Michael Babusa, Tabitha Jenkins and Jill McBroom, and good efforts from newcomers Elijah Shick and Jade Scallion. Two weeks later, the season climaxed with a 4th place finish in the Conference Championships in Indianapolis. McBroom took 2nd place in her weight class, and McCurdy and Babusa took 3rd place in theirs.

With the 2012-13 wrestling team having many members new to the sport, they displayed a tremendous amount of spirit and dedication. Their overall improvement showed in more than the results of their matches - even in defeat, many wrestlers kept the score close, and every wrestler kept fighting to the end. This season may very well be seen as the foundation year for the strong wrestling team that lies ahead.

ALUMNI NEWS

MSB is proud to announce that 2011 graduate, David Brown, and his guide, Roland Slade, have been named to the 2013 U.S. Paralympics Track and Field National Team. Brown and Slade, who also competed at the 2012 Paralympics in London, England, will be among 33 stellar athletes on the U.S. team.

MSB BETAS PRESENT

GREAT SHOWING AT CONVENTION

Congratulations to all of the Junior Beta members for their excellent work at the State Junior Beta Convention in Poplar Bluff November 29-30, 2012! In front of more than 2,000 people, Tiondra Pollard gave a wonderful speech in her bid for State Reporter. Jill McBroom was one of only 25 Junior Betas nationwide to receive the prestigious John W. Harris leadership award. Along with a trophy, Jill will receive an invitation to attend the Broyhill Leadership Academy in North Carolina in July.

MSB students participated in art, social studies and science competitions and performed a scene from Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows in the Living Literature competition. The team also submitted a "Spotlight Your Club" display featuring pictures of the school and school events, facts about MSB and its Beta Clubs, and photographs of MSB's 6 Junior Beta members.

Shaughn Doyel completed his 2-year term as the Missouri State Junior Beta sponsor, wrapping up 8 years of serving the Junior and Senior Beta Clubs at the state level. Thank you Mr. Doyel!

BRAILLE CHALLENGE

On Thursday, February 28, students from across the region came to MSB for the Braille Challenge regional competition. With more than 30 students testing their skills, competition was fierce! The Braille Challenge, sponsored by the Braille Institute, is an academic contest for Braille readers. Students can demonstrate his/her Braille skills, depending on grade level, in the areas of spelling, reading comprehension, proofreading, speed and accuracy, as well as charts and graphs. Students who place in the top 12 are invited to participate in the national championship in Los Angeles, CA! MSB cheerleaders were on hand throughout the day to welcome participants and keep their momentum going throughout the competition!



*Alyssa Henson,
Varsity
Champion*



VARSITY:

1st Alyssa Henson
2nd Annie Donnell
3rd Abby Trimble

JR. VARSITY:

1st Kaitlyn Hall
2nd Brandon Hahs
3rd Nicole Cox

SOPHOMORE:

1st Lydia Holmsted
2nd Josh Starner
3rd Sam Doman

FRESHMAN:

1st Zyshaun Cross-Williams
2nd Carter Temm
3rd Alexandria Lyon

APPRENTICE:

1st Richard Tienter
2nd Chance Cole
3rd Joshua Fields

APPRENTICE

(print to braille):
1st James Rodgers
2nd Jessica Johnson

MSB Students in RED

MSB HONORS STAFF



35 Years of Service
Linda Havlik



30 Years of Service
Jennie Mascheck, Angie Thompson



25 Years of Service
Karen Coleman, Priscilla Andrews



15 Years of Service
Marsha Bryant, Marian Turner



10 Years of Service
Carole Sohn, Ed Calvin, Tim Cobb, Matt Johnson



5 Years of Service
Mike Swatske

MARCH

8-9	Missouri Senior Beta Convention
15-16	NCASB Swim/ Forensics meet @ IN
21	NCASB Swim/ Forensics meet IL End of 3rd Quarter
25-29	SPRING BREAK - NO SCHOOL

APRIL

1	Staff Development – NO SCHOOL
2	Classes Resume 3rd Quarter Achievement Assembly
8	NCASB Swim/ Forensics Meet @ IL
8-9	Hand In Hand Session III, Columbia
12-13	NCASB Swim/ Forensics Meet @ OH
14	Lions Appreciation Night
26-28	NCASB Swim/ Forensics Conference @ TN

MAY

6-10	Teacher Appreciation Week
9	Junior/ Senior Prom – 7:00
13	Truman's Birthday Observed – NO SCHOOL
17-19	MSB Alumni Weekend
20-24	Senior Week
27	Memorial Day – NO SCHOOL
29	Achievement Banquet – 11:00 Commencement – 7:00
31	Last Day of School – 1:00pm dismissal End of 4th Quarter/ 2nd Semester

JUNE

15-22	National Beta Convention in Mobile, AL
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