



# Minnesota State Academies for the Deaf and the Blind

March 18, 2024

The Minnesota State Academies empowers every student to achieve, care, and thrive in an ever-changing world





# Who We Are

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- State Agency under the Executive Branch
- Two academies serving deaf, hard-of-hearing, deafblind, blind, and visually impaired students.
- Established in 1858, we are among the oldest public schools in Minnesota.





# Who We Serve

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- We provide a broad range of educational services from infancy up to age 22
- Our students come from across the state (50-60 school districts on average)
- We provide numerous services and supports for parents, families, and school districts throughout the year.





**MSAB**

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Serving blind, visually impaired, and deafblind students.



**MSAD**

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Serving deaf, hard-of-hearing, and deafblind students

Some students attend classes or receive services on both campuses, depending on their individual needs.

We serve students from all parts of the state. About 60% of our students commute daily from their homes while 40% of our students are residential students in our dorms.





All of our students meet special education criteria and have Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs). In addition to being deaf, hard-of-hearing, deafblind, blind or visually impaired, many of our students also have additional learning needs or other challenges.



Our teachers are licensed by the Minnesota Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB). Our staff are professionals who have additional training and skills necessary to serve our student population.



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## **MINNESOTA STATE ACADEMIES** FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND



We provide a wealth of resources, educational tools and strategies, and trained/knowledgeable personnel that are available to support students, parents, families, and school districts statewide.



Our Residential Option provides opportunities for social/emotional development, self-advocacy, and independent living skills as well as extending learning beyond the classroom walls.



# How We are Funded

For any of our construction or asset preservation projects, we are NOT funded through the usual levy referendum process utilized by public schools.

We rely solely on bonding funds allocated by the legislature, based on the Governor's recommendations. Those funds support major construction projects and asset preservation funds help maintain buildings and grounds on our campuses.



# Our 2024 Bonding Requests

We have three requests included in the governor's recommendations this year.

MSAD Student Center Pre-Design Funds  
MSAB Therapy Pool Replacement Pre-Design Funds  
Asset Preservation Funds





# Student Center PreDesign

## \$300,000

- This project will allow us to hire architects to evaluate our needs and recommend an energy-efficient/low maintenance building that is fully accessible and code compliant, potentially replacing up to 5 aging, high-maintenance buildings and outdated, inaccessible facilities
- The center will incorporate our athletic/PE facilities; cafeteria; career/technical education; and other needs on our MSAD campus
- This has a potential for great savings in staffing, energy costs, maintenance needs, and workers compensation costs
- This will help us examine our needs and propose a project that can potentially have great savings for us and set us up for the next 25 years. The buildings that we are evaluating are 75-100 years old and require a lot of upkeep, maintenance, and have high energy costs, and they have drained funds from our Asset Preservation and General Funds, so we believe replacement is a more cost-effective approach.



# Student Center - Additional Information

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This project is especially important as our current buildings are not fully accessible, do not meet current standards/codes, and are largely inefficient. Our current buildings' limitations have a negative effect on the ability to provide appropriate educational programs for our students, both in and out of the classroom. We have an increasing number of students (and staff) with physical limitations that require a more accessible and user-friendly building. This also aligns with MSA's strategic planning goals and policies.



# Therapy Pool Replacement PreDesign - \$300,000

- MSA has spent considerable time and funds attempting to maintain and use the 50-year-old therapy pool and therapeutic hot tub, which is currently minimally accessible and difficult for our students to enter or exit.
- The predesign work will allow us to evaluate and design a replacement for our current pool and therapy spa, including related site improvements that will allow us to use the spaces better within our MSAB educational building. This project will include building an addition to our MSAB instructional building to house a new pool/hot tub that is appropriately designed for our students' physical therapy needs, with the goal of improving the existing spaces for other academic needs. This has a potential for great savings in staffing, energy costs, maintenance needs, and workers compensation costs.
- This will also help expand our academic, transition, and performing arts courses for our students into the current pool area to meet our school's mission and goals



# Therapy Pool - Additional Information

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This project is especially important as our current pool/hot tub are not fully accessible, do not meet current standards/codes, and are largely inefficient. Our current pool/hot tub limitations have a negative effect on the ability to provide appropriate educational programs for our students, especially with the limited accessibility and frequent repairs that are required. We have an increasing number of students with physical limitations that require physical exercise and therapy in our pool/hot tub. We need a fully accessible environment for our students, many of whom have numerous physical challenges requiring the use of assistive technology.



# Asset Preservation Funds

## \$1.227 M

- We have requested and received Asset Preservation funds over the past few years. We have made progress in reducing the number of projects that are needed on our campuses, but due to the age and design of many of our buildings, continued funding and work is required.
- This will allow us to continue maintenance, upkeep, and improvements to our buildings and facilities on both campuses to ensure safety, security, accessibility, and long-term maintenance so that our programs can continue to operate safely.
- Current priorities include (but are not limited to): boiler replacement; preservation of exterior stone facades; replacement/correction of deteriorated walks and roadways; roof repair/replacement; safety upgrades to doors and windows; asbestos remediation; accessibility upgrades, bathroom accessibility and safety improvements; HVAC upgrades; and building renovation needs.
- Asset Preservation projects are prioritized based on life/safety, accessibility, program needs, and efficiency of our buildings. As we complete projects, we see savings in different areas (less maintenance needs, less workers compensation costs, more safety and accessibility, increased productivity and so forth).



# Asset Preservation - Additional Information

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Most of our buildings on both campuses were built in pre-ADA times which means we are continually assessing, repairing, and updating different aspects of our campuses to meet the current needs of our students. We also have invested time, money, and energy to increase the security and safety of our buildings to support our students'/families' needs. It is our goal to maintain state facilities and operate our educational programs within state expectations, federal regulations, and all other expectations, statutes, and guidelines.



# Asset Preservation Projects funded by previous appropriations

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## Some projects funded by previous appropriations:

- Replacement of Noyes and Tate Hall Roofs
- Renovations of Smith Hall classrooms and instructional spaces
- Replacement/repair of sidewalks and parking lots
- HVAC upgrades

## Upcoming projects in the pipeline (2023 AP Funds):

- Replacement of entry doors into school buildings (safety/accessibility)
- Replacement of cafeteria walk-in freezer
- ADA accessibility lifts for two stages
- Asbestos abatement project
- Accessibility and safety upgrades to playgrounds



# Thank you for your support

[www.msa.state.mn.us](http://www.msa.state.mn.us)

