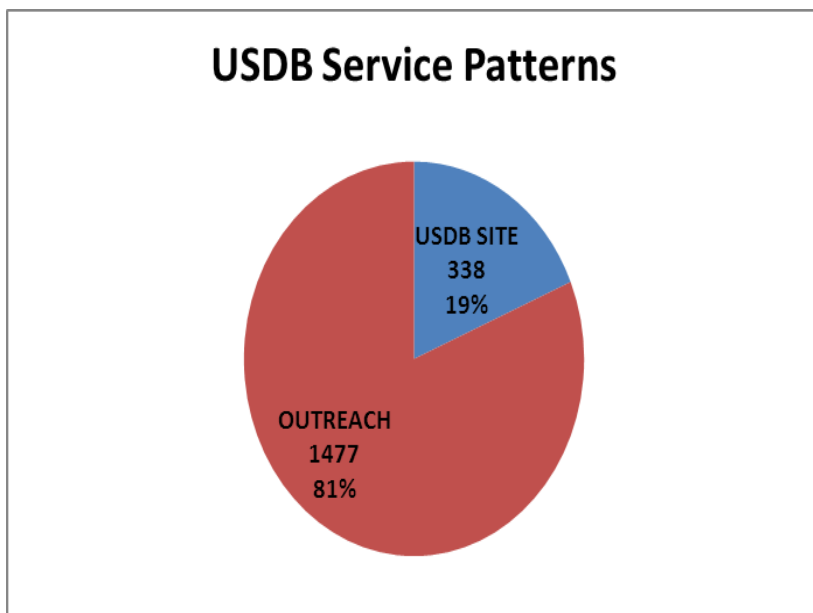


USDB Annual Report
Education Interim Committee
Utah State Legislature
November 2010

Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (USDB) collaborates with Utah districts and charters to implement educational programs for students who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, Blind, Visually Impaired, or Deafblind. Decisions about which program to attend are based on individual learning needs and the preferences of families, and are guided by the outlines described in R277-800. USDB provides services to **1929** students statewide, through service models designed to meet the needs of families.

USDB began collaborating with Utah school districts over thirty years ago in response to legislative committee findings which designated USDB as a statewide resource for children with hearing, vision, or dual sensory disabilities. USDB services to schools, children, and families have evolved into providing services through three different service models; early intervention, classroom programs, and outreach services. With the implementation of R277-800 in December 2009, USDB is now required to limit the services available to students in the largest districts of the state. Districts with greater than 3% of the total school age population must provide services independently or through financial contract with USDB. **USDB joins these larger school districts in requesting to be re-designated as a statewide resource available at no cost to Utah schools.**



USDB Classroom Programs are the most intensive educational programs offered by USDB. Students in these programs receive daily individualized instruction designed to meet their sensory learning needs. USDB sites can be found on our Ogden and SLC Campuses, as well as in partner schools throughout the state.

USDB Outreach Programs are designed to support students who are receiving educational services from their neighborhood school in their home district. USDB teachers provide consultation to the classroom teacher, as well as individualized direct service for students related to their sensory learning needs.

Early Intervention Programs

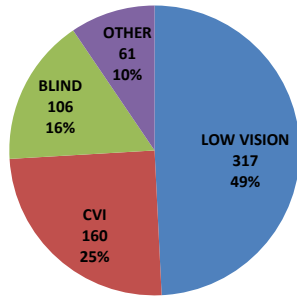
USDB provides early intervention programs in collaboration with the Department of Health BabyWatch program. Early Intervention Specialists from the USDB Parent Infant Programs provide individualized service to families of infants and toddlers who have a diagnosed vision or hearing loss. The Parent Infant Programs foster activities in the home environment using developmentally appropriate practices which include:

- Supporting parents in their efforts to understand their child’s sensory loss and unique needs.
- Providing resources for parents to prepare their child for further education.
- Coaching parents with activities and instruction to enhance developmental skills.

USDB has engaged in a substantial revision of the Parent Infant Programs, in order to maximize the impact our services have on children and their families. **The expanded Parent Infant Programs now offer intensive services in the home, opportunities for service at USDB sites, interactive child development through playgroups across the state, and opportunities for parent support and education.** The Parent Infant Program provides services to 390 infants and toddlers throughout the state (163 enrolled in PIP Deaf, 227 enrolled in PIP Blind).

Utah School for the Blind

Types of Vision Loss Served

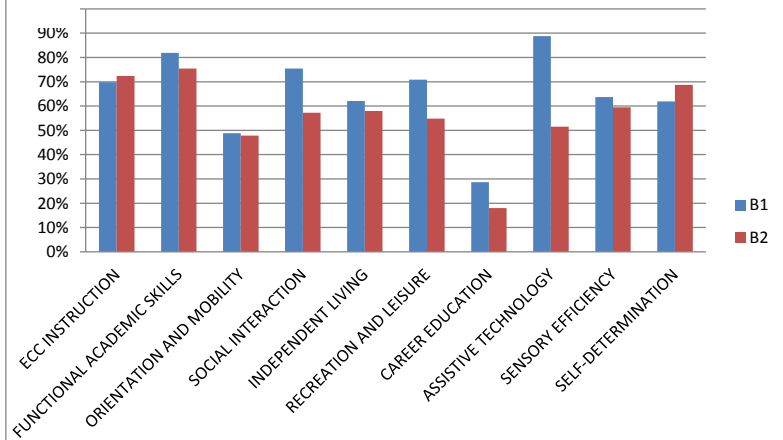


Utah School for the Blind provides instruction designed to meet the unique learning needs of students with vision loss. The type and intensity of service provided to each student is determined by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan; developed with input from parents, students, teachers, administrators, and other service providers. USB Region 1 provides services to 233 students through classroom and outreach services in the north and east areas of the state. USB Region 2 provides services to 191 students in the central and southwest areas of the state.

Beginning in the 2009-10 school year, the Utah State Office of Education and USDB partnered with school districts, community agencies, and consumer groups to develop braille standards for students to align with the Utah State Core Curriculum. In addition, effective practice guidelines were established for teachers of the visually impaired. Expected completion is slated for January, 2011. USDB has begun the process of implementing the effective practice guidelines to provide each student with a skilled and qualified educator.

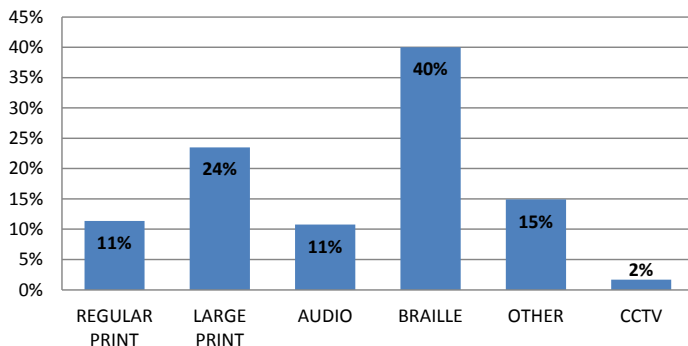
USB programs offer the state core and alternate core curriculums as appropriate, and also emphasize instruction in the Expanded Core Curriculum. The Expanded Core Curriculum is a national curriculum developed specifically to meet the educational needs of students who are blind or visually impaired. The Expanded Core Curriculum is designed to support students in accessing the Utah Core Curriculum. The chart to the right reflects the percentage of students receiving direct instruction in each area of the Expanded Core Curriculum

Expanded Core Curriculum Instruction



The decision to use braille, large print, or magnification is individualized for each child, and is determined by the IEP or 504 team. Students have access to a wide range of learning media, based on individual assessments and specific learning needs. Many students use multiple formats, such as pairing audio with braille, to access their instructional materials.

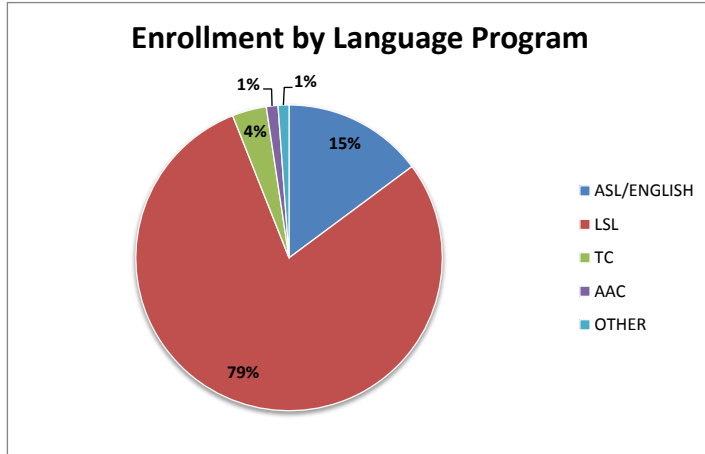
Student Learning Media



- 113 school age students are receiving braille instruction.
- 40% of students learning braille are using braille as their primary reading medium.
- 39% of students receiving braille instruction have no additional learning needs and are expected to attain proficiency.
- 31% of students receiving braille instruction are classified as having multiple disabilities.
- 30% have learning needs in addition to their vision loss.
- 62% of braille learners are beginners.
- 46% of beginning braille users are over 12.

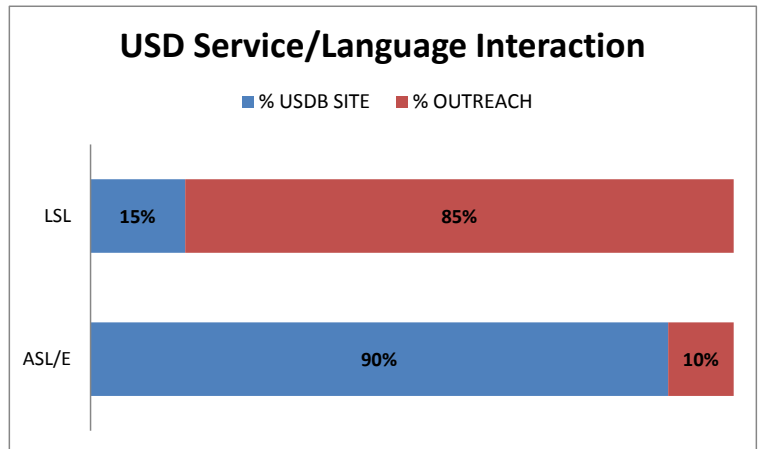
Utah School for the Deaf

Utah School for the Deaf provides instruction designed to meet the unique learning needs of students with hearing loss. The type and intensity of service provided to each student is determined by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan; developed with input from parents, students, teachers, administrators, and other service providers. USD programs are focused on the development of language as a foundation for learning.

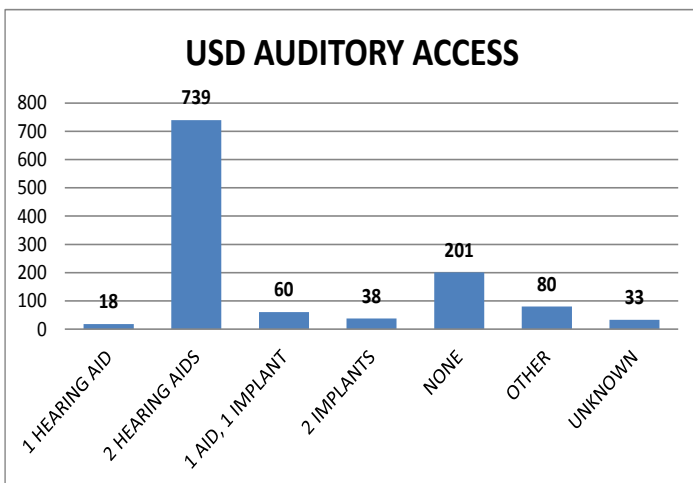


USD is the only statewide program in the U.S. that offers families the option of selecting a Listening and Spoken Language educational program or an ASL/English educational program. The decision to use spoken language or sign language is made by the family, in collaboration with the IFSP, IEP, or 504 team. Service patterns are reflective of the educational goals for each language based program.

Listening and Spoken Language programs emphasize the use of auditory technology such as hearing aids and cochlear implants to teach students to listen and talk. These programs are designed to provide intensive early childhood education to prepare children with hearing loss to succeed in the general education classroom. **79% of all students served by USD are using Listening and Spoken Language**, with 85% of these students receiving services in their neighborhood schools.



ASL/English programs emphasize the use of American Sign Language as a first language, on which base students can acquire written English as a second language. These programs are designed to provide students with access to direct communication with teachers and peers through the use of American Sign Language throughout their school career. **14% of all students served by USD are using ASL**, with 90% of these students receiving services in an ASL/English bilingual education environment located at USDB sites.

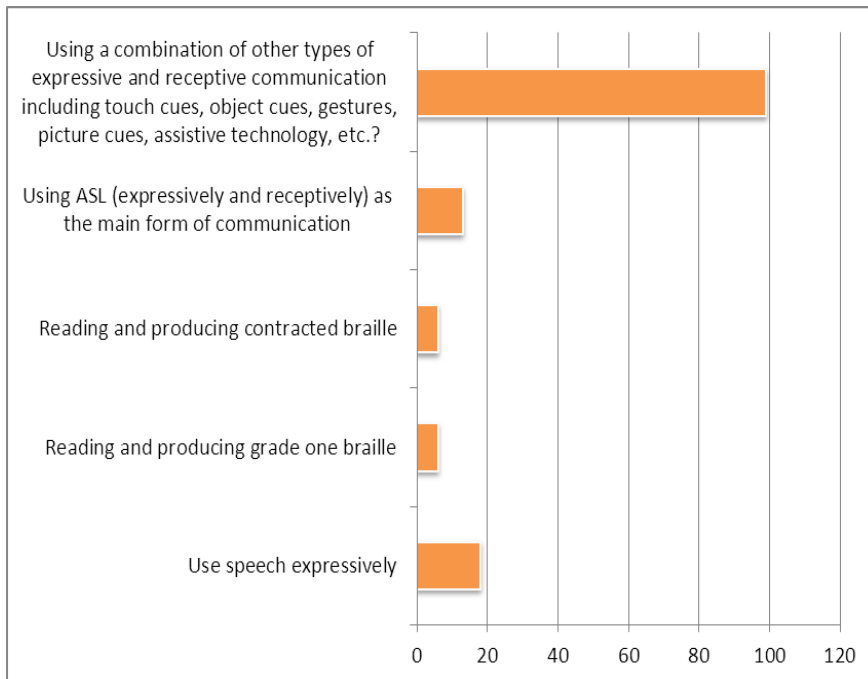
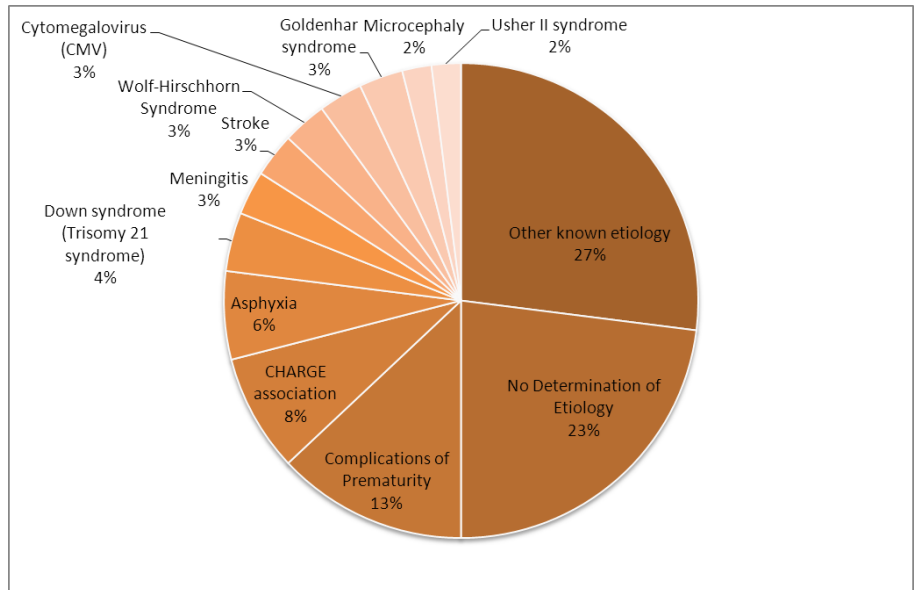


Technology is increasingly sophisticated, and can provide students who are deaf or hard of hearing with access to sound and speech. The majority of USDB students (83%) are using some type of technology to access sound. Auditory access increases the ability of the student to interact with society at large. **USDB has implemented an intensive audiological support program**, and is collaborating with local districts and Primary Children’s Medical Center to explore the possibility of cochlear implant mapping as an educational service available to all children throughout the state.

Deafblind Services

The prevalence rate for deafblindness in school age children hovers around two per every 1000 students who receive special education services. Of the over one half million children ages 5-22 in Utah schools in 2009, 94 have both vision and hearing loss, or 1 out of every 6000 students.

Deafblind Services of Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind is currently serving 114 children birth-22 with deafblindness. However, these children cannot be generalized to represent a *typical* child with deafblindness. Children who are deafblind are as varied as the number reported, and the nature and extent of deafblindness in children is often misunderstood. **These children represent one of the lowest incidence, yet most diverse group of learners receiving early intervention and special education services.**



Children with deafblindness are in 20 LEAs and two early intervention programs from the most rural areas in Utah to the densely populated Wasatch Front. 48% of these children are in the five largest districts along the Wasatch Front. 13% are in USDB classroom or campus programs. In each of seven rural districts there is only one child with deafblindness. These children are an extremely heterogeneous group whose sensory losses may be accompanied by additional physical or cognitive disabilities, complex medical needs and/or behavior challenges. **In Utah 97% of children with deafblindness have additional disabilities.**

Deafblindness has significant impact on an individual's communication. Ninety-nine children and students served by Deafblind Services use a combination of forms of communication including touch cues, object cues, picture cues, and assistive technology for receptive and expressive communication. Eighteen use speech expressively, six read and produce uncontracted braille and six read and produce contracted braille. Thirteen use American Sign Language as their main form of communication.

Regardless of their location, etiology, individual impact of disability or the complexity of their communication needs, Deafblind Services works collaboratively with LEAs or EI agencies to provide specialized and unique services:

Deafblind specialists serve children with deafblindness in early intervention and educational programs. Six full-time and four-part time specialists provide support for classroom teachers, early intervention service providers, parents, administrators, classroom peers, related service providers and community members

If the IEP/IFSP team determines there is significant need for communication support resulting from deafblindness, a one-on-one communication intervener may be provided. Communication interveners are specially trained paraeducators who work under the direction of a deafblind specialist and the classroom teacher. Deafblind Services currently employs 79 communication interveners who provide services for 72 infants and students with deafblindness.

Additional services are provided through Utah Deafblind Project, a federally funded technical assistance and dissemination project administered by Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

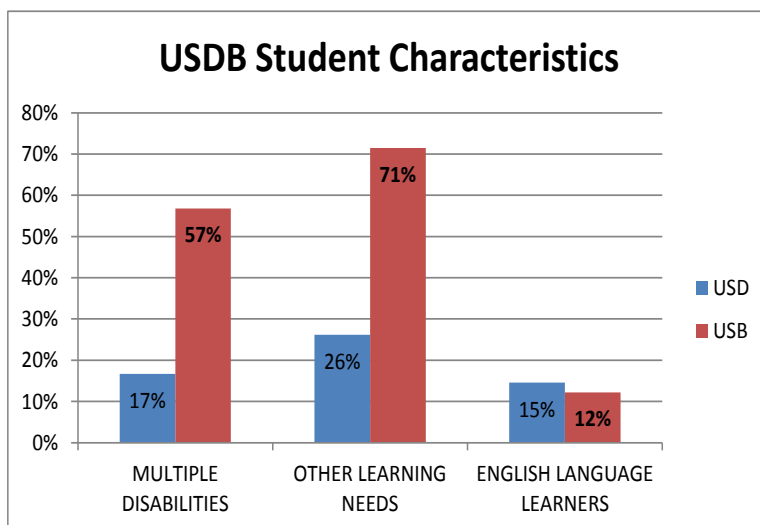
Related Services

The USDB Related Services Department provides diagnostic, prescriptive evaluations and interventions for students with sensory disabilities. Related Services are provided in conjunction with USD or USB services. Consultation is available to school districts throughout the state, community agencies, and parents of children with sensory disabilities. USDB is in support of the many school districts who have requested that the specialized services of audiology and low vision be available statewide at no cost, we are currently increasing our capacity within these programs in order to meet this demand. Services are available from several support teams:

- Orientation & Mobility
- Audiology
- Speech Language Pathology
- Low Vision
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Psychology
- Curriculum
- Assistive and Educational Technology
- Nursing
- Transportation

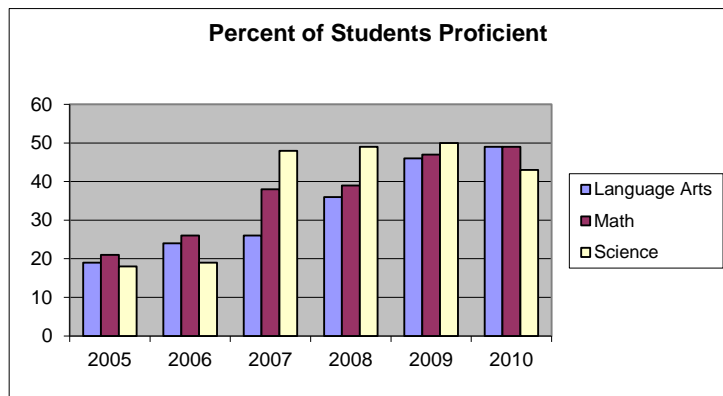
Assessment

Utah Schools for the Deaf and the Blind is committed to using assessment results to inform our decision making. A clear understanding of the students we serve and the effectiveness of our interventions will guide us in the development of plans for program improvement.



Several of the students served by USDB face life challenges other than sensory loss, and this has a significant impact on educational programs. **Nearly half (46%) of the students served by USDB have a disability in addition to their sensory loss.** 34% of USDB students are classified as having multiple disabilities, and require an intensive functional curriculum in addition to instruction specifically designed to meet their sensory needs. 57% of students served in our School for the Blind classrooms have severe multiple disabilities requiring an individualized functional curriculum.

USDB participates fully in the UPASS and AYP programs for the 915 students served in grades 2-12. USDB administers the UPASS assessments to all eligible students in our USDB Classroom programs. USDB continues to see an increase in the percentage of students who achieve proficiency on the year-end Criterion Referenced Tests.



In addition to the UPASS program, USDB administers individualized assessments to guide the development of Individualized Educational Programs or 504 plans. Based on these assessments, 25% of students served in USDB classrooms and 48% of students served in USDB outreach programs are reading on grade level. When students begin reading at typical levels, they are often transferred to a less intensive service. Students receiving USDB Outreach services are often placed in this less intensive program because they have benefitted from early USDB services.

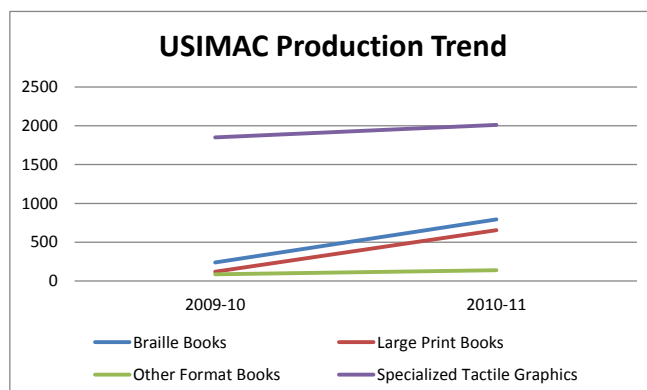
Utah State Instructional Materials Access Center

During the 2010 legislative session, the Utah State Legislature appropriated \$498,000 for the ongoing operations of the Utah State Instructional Materials Access Center (USIMAC). USIMAC has been established to aid local education agencies in meeting the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA) for the provision of accessible instructional materials. USIMAC offers opportunities for students with print disabilities (including blindness and visual impairment, physical disabilities, and other diagnosed reading disabilities) to gain increased access to the general curriculum by making available instructional materials in alternate formats.

USIMAC services are available to K-12 students throughout the state of Utah. Once a student has been verified as eligible for accessible instructional materials, all of their textbooks are available in the format that best fits their learning need. USIMAC has completed materials for 236 students in 26 different districts and 7 charters. As described in R277-800, Utah districts and charter schools are responsible to pay a portion of the cost for accessible instructional materials produced through USIMAC.

	2009-10	2010-11	in progress
Braille Books	240	795	126
Large Print Books	120	654	20
Other Format Books	88	140	10
Specialized Tactile Graphics	1850	2,012	52

USIMAC produces textbooks in a variety of formats, with staff specially trained for the requirements of each production type. In 2009-10, USIMAC completed 240 braille books for students statewide. Already in 2010-11, USIMAC has completed 795 books with another 126 in progress. Orders continue to come in throughout the year as student course needs change. USIMAC has a significant need to increase our capacity to meet the demand of Utah students for accessible materials.



Educational Resource Center

The Educational Resource Center (ERC) provides information, technology, materials, instructional support, and professional learning opportunities which assist Utah children with sensory impairments in reaching their maximum potential. The ERC works to facilitate access to materials, information and training for teachers and parents of children with sensory impairments throughout the state of Utah.

The ERC serves 683 patrons throughout the state of Utah. Accounts are available to all USDB employees and students, to teachers of students with sensory disabilities working in Utah districts and charter schools, to University students, and to parents. **The total ERC collection contains 84,805 items, and has an estimated value of \$5,171,736.** During the 2009-10 school year, the ERC conducted over 40,000 transactions with materials checked in and out for student use.

In addition to providing materials, the ERC responded to over 2,000 individual requests for support from USDB teachers specifically related to accessing the Utah Core Curriculum. The ERC disseminated information for teachers to access over 50 different professional development opportunities offered by districts, charter schools, the Utah State Office of Education, and the Utah Personnel Development Center. We coordinated over 800 hours of training related to successful implementation of the Utah Core Curriculum or the Expanded Core Curriculum. The ERC also conducts a special weekly sensory story time that follows the Utah Core Curriculum for library skills. There are currently 70+ students attending this per week and has had several new breakthroughs with the students this year as a result of the program.

New Directions

USDB is moving into a new era of urgency and intensity with our programs and services. We can no longer afford to sit by waiting for action, for funding, for support, for leadership, and for cooperation. We are moving forward to implement the changes detailed in HB296 and in R277-800. We continue to work toward the goals identified in 2009-10:

- increase attention on early childhood programs,
- provide individually designed instruction,
- use technology to enhance learning, and
- build cooperative partnerships.

USDB has served for many years as a statewide resource for all schools, students, and families of children with sensory disabilities. Several features of R277-800 have placed USDB in the regrettable position of requiring some districts to pay for some services. USDB is committed to serving as a statewide resource, and requests support from the Utah districts and charters, parents, the Utah State Office of Education, the State Board of Education, and the Utah State Legislature to realize our mission as a statewide provider. We are ready to host visitors who want to observe our programs and services, and to meet with any interested parties to clarify our role and function within the state.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven W. Noyce, Superintendent
Jennifer Johnson Howell, Associate Superintendent of the Deaf
Michael Sears, Finance Director