

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SHB 1144

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Regarding qualifications for educational interpreters.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Dahlquist, Lytton, Fagan, Haigh, Moscoso, Magendanz, Liias, Ryu and Santos).

**House Committee on Education**

**House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Education**

**Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education**

### **Background:**

In November 2011 there were just over 1,300 students aged 3 through 21 receiving special education in public schools as a result of being hearing impaired, deaf, or deaf-blind. Some of these students need sign language interpretation in order to access their education. Although there are state laws requiring qualified interpreters for legal proceedings, there are no minimum qualifications or standards for interpreters in Washington public schools.

The Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) is the primary national certification for educational interpreters and consists of both a written and performance examination. Other states that have established qualifications for educational interpreters have generally adopted scores ranging from 3.5 - 5 on the EIPA.

### **Summary:**

An educational interpreter is defined as a school district employee, whether certificated or classified, who provides sign language translation and further explanation for deaf, deaf-blind, or hearing impaired students. An educational interpreter assessment is defined as a written and performance assessment that is offered by a national organization of professional sign language interpreters that assesses performance in more than one sign language or system.

The Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) must adopt standards and identify and publicize educational interpreter assessments that are available. The PESB must also establish a performance standard for each assessment, defining what constitutes a minimum assessment result.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

By the beginning of the 2016-17 school year, educational interpreters who are employed by school districts must have successfully achieved the performance standard established by the PESB. The PESB must recommend to the Legislature by December 31, 2013, how to appropriately use the national interpreter certification and educational interpreter assessment for education interpreters.

These assessment requirements do not apply to educational interpreters who are employed to interpret a sign system or sign language for which no educational interpreter assessment has been identified by the PESB.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	91	6	
Senate	45	0	(Senate amended)
House	88	7	(House concurred)

**Effective:** July 28, 2013