
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5025

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Lovick, Nobles, Salomon, Trudeau, Valdez, Wellman, and C. Wilson)

READ FIRST TIME 02/06/25.

1 AN ACT Relating to educational interpreters; and amending RCW
2 28A.410.271.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.410.271 and 2017 c 34 s 1 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this
7 section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

8 (a) "Educational interpreters" means school district employees,
9 whether certificated or classified, providing sign language
10 interpretation, transliteration, or both, and further explanation of
11 concepts introduced by the teacher for students who are deaf,
12 deaf-blind, or hard of hearing.

13 (b) "Educational interpreter assessment" means an assessment that
14 includes both written assessment and performance assessment that is
15 offered by a national organization of professional sign language
16 interpreters and transliterators, and is designed to assess
17 performance in more than one sign system or sign language.

18 (c) "Interpretation" means conveying one language in the form of
19 another language.

20 (d) "Transliteration" means conveying one language in a different
21 modality of the same language.

1 (2) The professional educator standards board shall:

2 (a) Adopt standards for educational interpreters ~~((and identify))~~
3 including, as necessary, separate standards for deaf and deaf-blind
4 educational interpreters;

5 (b) Identify and publicize educational interpreter assessments
6 that are available and meet the requirements in this section; ~~((and~~

7 ~~(b))~~ (c) Establish a full performance standard and a limited
8 performance standard for each educational interpreter assessment for
9 the purposes of this section, defining what constitutes a minimum
10 assessment result ~~((-~~

11 ~~(3)(a))~~; and

12 (d) Establish criteria for educational interpreter certifications
13 based on meeting the standards established under this subsection.

14 (3)(a) The professional educator standards board shall establish
15 certificates for deaf and deaf-blind educational interpreters based
16 on criteria established under subsection (2) of this section.

17 (b)(i) Each category of certificates established under (a) of
18 this subsection must be categorized as follows:

19 (A) A certificate granted to an individual who has met the
20 limited performance standard but has not met the full performance
21 standard for an educational interpreter assessment under subsection
22 (2)(c) of this section is considered a limited certificate and may
23 only have a period of validity of up to five years from the date of
24 the issuance of the certificate; and

25 (B) A certificate granted to an individual who has met the full
26 performance standard for an educational interpreter assessment under
27 subsection (2)(c) of this section is considered a full certificate
28 and has a period of validity as determined by the professional
29 educator standards board.

30 (ii) The professional educator standards board may adopt rules
31 that add additional requirements for educational interpreters who
32 have not previously worked in a role as an educational interpreter
33 prior to September 1, 2026.

34 (c) By December 1, 2026, and annually thereafter, the
35 professional educator standards board shall make data publicly
36 available relating to educational interpreter certification
37 including, but not limited to, the number of each type of certificate
38 granted, demographic information of certificate recipients, and the
39 geographic distribution of certificate grantees.

1 (4) (a) Through the end of the 2026-27 school year, educational
2 interpreters who are employed by school districts must have
3 successfully achieved the performance standard established by the
4 professional educator standards board on one of the educational
5 interpreter assessments identified by the board. An educational
6 interpreter who has not successfully achieved such a performance
7 standard may provide or continue providing educational interpreter
8 services to students subject to the requirements of (c) of this
9 subsection.

10 (b) Except as otherwise provided by this section, by the
11 beginning of the ((2016-17)) 2027-28 school year, educational
12 interpreters who are employed by school districts must have
13 successfully ((achieved the performance standard)) obtained a
14 certificate established by the professional educator standards board
15 ((on one of the educational interpreter assessments identified by the
16 board)) under subsection (3) of this section. Evaluations and
17 assessments for educational interpreters for which the board has not
18 established a performance standard or certificate may be obtained as
19 supplemental demonstrations of professional proficiency but may not
20 be used as evidence of compliance with this subsection ((3)(a))
21 (4)(b).

22 ((b) An) (c) Beginning in the 2027-28 school year, an
23 educational interpreter who has not successfully ((achieved the
24 performance standard required by (a) of this subsection)) obtained a
25 limited certificate may provide or continue providing educational
26 interpreter services to students for one calendar year after receipt
27 of his or her most recent educational interpreter assessment results,
28 or ((eighteen)) 18 months after completing his or her most recent
29 educational interpreter assessment, whichever period is longer, if he
30 or she can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the employing school or
31 school district, ongoing efforts to successfully achieve the
32 ((required performance standard)) full certificate established under
33 subsection (3) of this section. In making a determination under this
34 subsection ((3)(b)) (4)(c), the employing school or school district
35 may consult with the professional educator standards board. For
36 purposes of this subsection ((3)(b)) (4)(c), "educational
37 interpreter" includes persons employed as educational interpreters
38 before the 2016-17 school year.

39 ((4) By December 31, 2013, the professional educator standards
40 board shall recommend to the education committees of the house of

1 ~~representatives and the senate how to appropriately use the national~~
2 ~~interpreter certification and the educational interpreter performance~~
3 ~~assessment for educational interpreters in Washington public~~
4 ~~schools))~~ (d) The professional educator standards board may adopt
5 rules to limit the number of times an educational interpreter may
6 take an educational interpreter assessment for the purposes of
7 qualifying for a certificate under this section.

8 (5) The provisions of this section do not apply to educational
9 interpreters employed to interpret a sign system or sign language,
10 including nonsigning interpretation such as oral interpreting,
11 computer-assisted real time captioning, and cued speech
12 transliteration, for which an educational interpreter assessment
13 either does not exist or, as determined by the professional educator
14 standards board, is not capable of being evaluated by the board for
15 suitability as a performance standard in Washington.

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