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**Education Committee**

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**HB 3031**

**Brief Description:** Provide for certification of teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing.

**Sponsors:** Representatives McDermott, Dickerson, Santos, Kenney, Simpson, D., Quall, Conway and Kagi.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Directing the State Board of Education to develop a certification program for teachers of students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

**Hearing Date:** 2/2/04

**Staff:** Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

**Background:**

During 2003, the House Children and Family Services Committee assembled a Work Group on Deaf Education in Washington (Work Group). The group's purpose was to consider the respective roles of, and the relationships among, the Washington School for the Deaf (WSD), local school districts, educational service districts, community services, and community resources in the delivery of effective education to hearing impaired children throughout the state. In addition, the Work Group considered different appropriate service delivery models for hearing impaired children.

The Work Group included representation from parents and teachers of hearing impaired children, the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), educators, the Board of Trustees of the Washington School for the Deaf, the Washington Sensory Disabilities Services, and the Infant Toddler Early Intervention Program. In addition, four members of the Senate, a member of the House Education Committee, and the members of the House Children and Family Services Committee served on the Work Group.

The Work Group held three meetings over the course of the interim to discuss a range of issues, including current service delivery in the state from newborn hearing screening and early intervention services through the P-12 system, technological advances relating to hearing impairment, and the most recent research on outcomes and costs relating to hearing impairment.

At the final meeting of the Work Group, the members developed consensus statements, which reflect the basic principles agreed upon by all of the members of the Work Group, and goals and policy recommendations, which are based upon those consensus statements. One of the goals of

the Work Group was the certification of teachers who have the educational and communication skills required to meet the needs of hearing impaired students.

The State Board of Education establishes certification requirements for teachers and educational staff associates. Teachers must be endorsed in a particular area of expertise from a list adopted by rule by the state board. Special Education is one of the endorsements available to teachers. An endorsement in the specialty area of education designed exclusively for hearing impaired students is not included on the list of permissible endorsements.

**Summary of Bill:**

The State Board of Education will develop certification requirements for teachers of hearing impaired students. The certification standards will be based on the skills and knowledge necessary to serve the education and communication needs of these students. The certification may be limited to work with hearing impaired students. When establishing the certification rules, the board will waive any special education endorsement requirements for applicants who intend to teach hearing impaired students if the applicants have a baccalaureate or master's degree from a teacher training program that has been approved by the Council on Education of the Deaf.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 26, 2004.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.