

RCW 28A.410.271 Washington professional educator standards board
—Standards for educational interpreters. (1) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

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

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

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

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

(2) The professional educator standards board shall:

(a) Adopt standards for educational interpreters and identify and publicize educational interpreter assessments that are available and meet the requirements in this section; and

(b) Establish a performance standard for each educational interpreter assessment for the purposes of this section, defining what constitutes a minimum assessment result.

(3) (a) Except as otherwise provided by this section, 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 professional educator standards board on one of the educational interpreter assessments identified by the board. Evaluations and assessments for educational interpreters for which the board has not established a performance standard may be obtained as supplemental demonstrations of professional proficiency but may not be used as evidence of compliance with this subsection (3) (a).

(b) An educational interpreter who has not successfully achieved the performance standard required by (a) of this subsection may provide or continue providing educational interpreter services to students for one calendar year after receipt of his or her most recent educational interpreter assessment results, or eighteen months after completing his or her most recent educational interpreter assessment, whichever period is longer, if he or she can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the employing school or school district, ongoing efforts to successfully achieve the required performance standard. In making a determination under this subsection (3) (b), the employing school or school district may consult with the professional educator standards board. For purposes of this subsection (3) (b), "educational interpreter" includes persons employed as educational interpreters before the 2016-17 school year.

(4) By December 31, 2013, the professional educator standards board shall recommend to the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate how to appropriately use the national interpreter certification and the educational interpreter performance assessment for educational interpreters in Washington public schools.

(5) The provisions of this section do not apply to educational interpreters employed to interpret a sign system or sign language,

including nonsigning interpretation such as oral interpreting, computer-assisted real time captioning, and cued speech transliteration, for which an educational interpreter assessment either does not exist or, as determined by the professional educator standards board, is not capable of being evaluated by the board for suitability as a performance standard in Washington. [2017 c 34 § 1; 2013 c 151 § 2.]

Effective date—2017 c 34: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 17, 2017]." [2017 c 34 § 3.]

Finding—Intent—2013 c 151: "The legislature finds that although the professional educator standards board has begun work on standards and assessments for educational interpreters as directed by the 2012 supplemental operating budget, there is a need formally to codify this as an ongoing responsibility. The legislature also intends to specify how the standards and assessments will be used to improve learning opportunities for students who are deaf, deaf-blind, or hearing impaired." [2013 c 151 § 1.]