

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 1664

C 60 L 92
Synopsis As Enacted

Brief Description: Clarifying educational requirements regarding sign language.

By Representatives Belcher, Brumsickle, Ferguson, Fraser, Scott, G. Fisher, Cole, R. Johnson, Mielke, Bowman, Winsley and Anderson.

Senate Committee on Education

Background: Current education law addresses sign language in three ways: 1) sign language classes are allowed to satisfy school district high school foreign language graduation requirements; 2) coursework in sign language satisfies any foreign language requirement established as a general undergraduate admissions requirement; and 3) the State Board of Education is required to take certain steps regarding certification of sign language instructors. In each of these cases, a specific sign language is not designated in statute.

The term "sign language" is a generic term and includes sign language used by the hearing impaired and sign languages used by others. For the hearing impaired, there are more than 20 different sign languages. American sign language, however, is the most common and has a specific syntax and grammar.

Summary: The only sign language that meets a foreign language requirement for high school graduation or college admission is American sign language.

The State Board of Education is directed to adopt rules pertaining to the certification of instructors in American sign language.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	90	1
Senate	44	1

Effective: June 11, 1992