

5105-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators Fraser, B. Sheldon, Carlson, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles)

Brief Description: Ensuring the quality and availability of educational interpreters.

**SB 5105-S - DIGEST**

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Provides that, by November 30, 2004, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with educators, parents, organizations representing special education, organizations representing educational interpreters and the interests of deaf and hearing impaired children, and other interested parties, shall conduct a comprehensive review and analysis of the qualifications and competencies required of educational interpreters who assist deaf and hearing impaired students. The review shall include an analysis of all state and federal requirements for meeting the educational needs of deaf and hearing impaired students, including the requirement to provide educational interpreters, and shall identify all funding sources available to pay for those educational needs. The office shall make recommendations to the governor, appropriate legislative committees, and the state board of education on the following options: (1) Requiring that all educational interpreters for deaf students and hard of hearing students meet national registry standards;

(2) Requiring the state board of education or the office of the superintendent of public instruction, as appropriate, to establish competencies for educational interpreters;

(3) Identifying state and national training programs that could prepare educational interpreters to meet and maintain any standards or competencies necessary to serve deaf and hearing impaired students;

(4) Studying the feasibility of using distance learning options as a way to both maintain the quality and increase the availability of educational interpreters;

(5) Requiring the office of the superintendent of public instruction, in cooperation with institutions of higher education that have a deaf studies program, to provide a training program for educational interpreters. The training program should be accessible to all areas of Washington through a combination of interactive video conferences, on-line courses, and traditional teaching methods; and

(6) Any other option that the office deems viable to increase and maintain the quality and availability of educational interpreters in a fiscally responsible manner.