
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1709

State of Washington

63rd Legislature

2014 Regular Session

By House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Dahlquist, Santos, Magendanz, Moscoso, Fagan, Ryu, Maxwell, Pollet, and Bergquist)

READ FIRST TIME 01/24/14.

1 AN ACT Relating to training for volunteer foreign language
2 interpreters in K-12 public schools; and creating new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

5 (1) The number of foreign language speakers has substantially
6 increased in Washington's public schools over the last decade. The
7 office of the superintendent of public instruction reports that nine
8 percent of the state's total student population was enrolled in the
9 transitional bilingual instruction program as of May 2013, and more
10 than two hundred different languages are spoken in students' homes.

11 (2) The office of the education ombuds reports an increased number
12 of complaints from English language learner students and limited
13 English proficient parents regarding schools' lack of provision of
14 accurate education interpretation and the use of students as
15 interpreters for their own families.

16 (3) There are no training programs in the state specifically for
17 foreign language education interpreters. The lack of qualified
18 individuals causes public schools to use untrained bilingual adults or

1 students themselves as interpreters for parents in high-stakes
2 situations where decisions about a student's academic future are being
3 made.

4 (4) Communicating effectively with limited English proficient
5 students and families presents a challenge for Washington public
6 schools, and the inability to meet this challenge leads to inequities
7 and increased gaps in student achievement, along with increased student
8 dropouts.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) By February 1, 2015, the office of the
10 education ombuds must submit to the education committees of the
11 legislature a feasibility study for development of a state foreign
12 language education interpreter training program designed to create a
13 pool of trained interpreters for public schools, including volunteer
14 interpreters.

15 (2) The study must include:

16 (a) An overview of current need for and availability of foreign
17 language education interpreters in public schools, as well as current
18 practices for providing these interpreters;

19 (b) An inventory of interpreter training programs in Washington and
20 examples from other states;

21 (c) An examination of state and federal laws that apply to the
22 provision of interpretation in public schools, including how laws
23 pertaining to family and student privacy apply to interpreters, and
24 including Title VI of the civil rights act of 1964 as it applies to
25 national origin discrimination affecting limited English proficient
26 parents and guardians; and

27 (d) An inventory of community resources for interpreter training,
28 including for volunteer interpreters.

29 (3) As used in this section:

30 (a) "Interpreter" means a bilingual or multilingual individual who
31 provides oral translation for others.

32 (b) "Foreign language education interpreter" means an individual
33 who provides oral translation for limited English proficient students
34 and parents in public schools.

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