

YMCA YOUTH LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

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House Bill Number 332

Legislative Action:

Introduced by: Valerie Klepzig

House Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Authored by: Valerie Klepzig

House: \_\_\_\_\_

Senate Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Senate: \_\_\_\_\_

Delegation: Jefferson High School

Governor: \_\_\_\_\_

Referred to Committee: House Education Committee

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1 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT HELPING ENSURE EQUAL ACCESS TO  
2 FREE APPROPRIATE PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING  
3 CHILDREN; REQUIRING THE BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH  
4 STANDARDS FOR SIGH LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS AND PERSONNEL WHO  
5 PROVIDE DIRECT INSTRUCTIONS USING SIGN LANGUAGE; REQUIRING A SCHOOL  
6 DISTRICT TO COMPLY WITH THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION  
7 ACT AND TO HAVE PERSONNEL WITH SPECIFIED QUALIFICATIONS HELP DESIGN  
8 THE INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM OF A STUDENT WHOSE PRIMARY  
9 DISABILITY IS LISTED AS DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING; PROVIDING AND  
10 APPROPRIATION; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."

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13 WHEREAS, nationally, the majority of deaf and hard of hearing students are educated in  
14 their local school districts; and

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16 WHEREAS, as stated in "Toward Equality", a report by the Commission on the  
17 Education of the Deaf, between the ages 8 and 18, deaf and hard of hearing children go from a  
18 1.3 grade reading level to a 2.8 grade reading level, representing only a 1 1/2 year gain in reading  
19 skills over a 10-year period; and

20  
21 WHEREAS, 30% of deaf and hard of hearing children leave school functionally illiterate;  
22 and

23 WHEREAS, only 8% of deaf and hard of hearing children graduate from college; and  
24 WHEREAS, approximately 33% of the deaf population rely on government assistance;  
25 and

26 WHEREAS, most school districts have no standards for signing skills; and  
27 WHEREAS, as documented in "Skill Levels of Educational Interpreters Working in  
28 Public School's", a classroom discourse that might inadequately represent the information being  
29 communicated, perhaps reflecting the facts that educational interpreting is still a relatively new  
30 discipline and that many school districts are unaware of the type of training and skills that are  
31 needed to serve as an educational interpreter; and

32 WHEREAS, there are approximately 200 deaf and hard of hearing students in Montana's  
33 public schools according to the "Special Education Report to the 2005 Montana Legislature".

34 NEW SECTION. Section 1. Individualized education programs for deaf or hard of  
35 **hearing students.** Individualized education programs for students with a primary disability  
36 listed as deaf or hard of hearing must be developed in accordance with 20 U.S.C.1414 and 34  
37 CFR 300.340 through 300.350. Evaluation teams that determine student eligibility for special  
38 education services and individualized education program teams shall consider recommendations  
39 from a person who is:

- 40 (1) an employee of the Montana school for the deaf and blind who has been  
41 assigned responsibilities to provide technical assistance to schools for the  
42 provision of services for children who are deaf or hard of hearing; or  
43  
44 (2) a public school employee who has successfully completed a course of study as  
45 a teacher of the deaf from accredited college or university.  
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47 NEW SECTION. Section 2. Personnel training and supervision. The board shall  
48 establish standards to ensure that sign language interpreters and personnel who provided  
49 direct instruction using sign language are appropriately trained and supervised.  
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51 NEW SECTION. Section 3. Appropriation. There is appropriated from the general  
52 fund \$341,495 in each fiscal year to the Montana school for the deaf and blind for hiring  
53 six individuals who have successfully completed a course of study as a teacher of the  
54 deaf from an accredited college or university to provide outreach services throughout the  
55 state.  
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57 NEW SECTION. Section 4. codification instruction. [Sections 1 and 2] are intended  
58 to be codified as an integral part of Title 20, chapter 7, part 4, and the provisions of Title  
59 20, chapter 7, part 4, apply to [sections 1 and 2].  
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61 NEW SECTION. Section 5. Effective date. [this act] is effective July 1, 2007.  
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65 BE IT ENACTED BY THE MONTANA YMCA YOUTH LEGISLATURE:  
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