

MAR 10 2010

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO ESTABLISH APPROPRIATE REQUIREMENTS FOR INDIVIDUALS IN THE DEPARTMENT WHO PROVIDE INSTRUCTION TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, INCLUDING BOTH THOSE WHO HEAR AND THOSE WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING, TO INCORPORATE THE USE OF SIGN LANGUAGE AND OTHER MEANS OF COMMUNICATION DURING INSTRUCTION TO ENHANCE THEIR STUDENTS' LEARNING.

1 WHEREAS, the Department of Education has a departmental
2 duty under section 302A-436, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to provide
3 exceptional children, which includes students with disabilities,
4 residing in the State with instruction, special facilities, and
5 special services for education, therapy, and training to enable
6 them to live normal competitive lives; and

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8 WHEREAS, the Department of Education has studied and made
9 recommendations in the past on ways to improve the development
10 and learning of children with disabilities; and

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12 WHEREAS, the Department of Education submitted a report to
13 the Legislature in 2007 entitled "Educational Implications of
14 the Special Needs of Preschool Age Children with Developmental
15 Disabilities: Report to the 24th Legislature, 2007" that
16 provides the following recommendations:

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18 (1) The development of a child's communication skills
19 should be an ongoing process that is incorporated into
20 all activities by professionals and by the child's
21 family during the course of the intervention and
22 during all daily activities;

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24 (2) A total communication program (sign language, oral
25 communication, and visual cues) should be used to
26 facilitate the development of expressive language;

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- 1 (3) When using a total communication approach, it is
2 important that the sign language system be one that
3 can be used simultaneously with spoken English (or
4 other language spoken in the home) and that the child
5 receives speech or language therapy to support and
6 enhance speech production and oral communication;
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- 8 (4) It is important for parents and professionals to
9 recognize that the use of sign language should not
10 interfere with oral language development; and
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- 12 (5) When sign language is included as a communication
13 strategy, it is important that the families,
14 caregivers, and those working with a child learn the
15 same signs and are encouraged to use the signs and
16 that the signs and oral vocabulary being taught have
17 practical, functional, and cultural value to the
18 family; and
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20 WHEREAS, despite the findings and recommendations outlined
21 in the Department's 2007 report, the Department's existing
22 procedures limit the provision of sign language interpretation
23 services to children who are deaf or hard of hearing; and
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25 WHEREAS, according to the findings and recommendations in
26 the Department's 2007 report to the Legislature, students who
27 are not deaf or hard of hearing should also receive instruction
28 in sign language as part of a total communication program; and
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30 WHEREAS, individuals are required to possess certain
31 qualifications and certifications in order to serve as sign
32 language interpreters for the Department, and there is a
33 shortage of sign language interpreters available to assist
34 students with disabilities in the State; and
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36 WHEREAS, providing sign language interpreters in the
37 Department with training to allow them to work with children who
38 hear would apply the total communication approach to these
39 children, providing them with a greater opportunity for
40 learning; now, therefore,
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42 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
43 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010, the
44 House of Representatives concurring, that the Department of



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1 Education is urged to establish appropriate requirements for
2 individuals in the Department who provide instruction to
3 children with disabilities, including both those who hear and
4 those who are deaf or hard of hearing, to incorporate the use of
5 sign language and other means of communication during
6 instruction to enhance their students' learning; and
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Education is
9 also urged to facilitate the professional development, training,
10 and preparation of educational personnel, sign language
11 interpreters, and other individuals involved with the
12 instruction of children with disabilities, including both those
13 who hear and those who are deaf or hard of hearing, through
14 continuing education or other means, to use total communication
15 and sign language skills during instruction; and
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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
18 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Chairperson of the
19 Board of Education, the Superintendent of Education, the Special
20 Education Advisory Council, and the Hawaii Speech-Language-
21 Hearing Association.
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OFFERED BY: Michelle N. Kiani (br)

