STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 51st Legislature (2007)

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
SENATE BILL 500

By: Myers of the Senate

and

(Luttrell) of the House

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

[ schools - Oklahoma Educational Interpreter for the Deaf Act - effective date - emergency ]

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY Section 4, Chapter 220, O.S.L. 2002 (70 O.S. Supp. 2006, Section 13-115.3), is amended to read as follows:

Section 13-115.3 A. Except as otherwise provided in this section, any person who functions as an educational interpreter in a public school shall have the interpersonal skills to work effectively and collaboratively with staff and students within the instructional setting as well as a comprehensive, general knowledge of academic subjects and current events, educational processes and organization, principles and practices of special education, aspects
and issues of deaf culture, and have met a minimum of two (2) of the following requirements:

1. Completed an interpreter training program;
2. Attained a bachelor’s degree; or
3. Worked three (3) or more years in an area related to the field of deaf education.

B. In addition to the requirements of subsection A of this section, a person who functions as an educational interpreter in a public school shall attain one or more of the following:

1. Certification by the Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf (RID);
2. National Association of the Deaf (NAD) Level IV or better;
3. Quality Assurance Screening Test (QAST) Level III or better;
or
4. A comparable level of proficiency.

It shall be desirable for an educational interpreter to hold either a bachelor’s or associate’s degree.

C. A person who has never worked as an educational interpreter in any public school, who meets the requirements as provided in subsection A of this section, who does not meet the requirements of subsection B of this section, and who has attained the Quality Assurance Screening Test (QAST) Level I or II, may be employed as an educational interpreter for up to three (3) years. The person shall not be eligible to be employed as an educational interpreter in any
public school of this state after the third year until the person attains one of the proficiency levels as provided in subsection B of this section.

D. Any educational interpreter employed by a public school on the effective date of this act who does not meet the requirements of subsection B of this section shall be required to attain QAST Level I or a comparable level of proficiency by July 1, 2004. An educational interpreter shall have until July 1, 2006, to meet the requirements of subsections A and B of this section or a comparable level of proficiency.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY Section 5, Chapter 220, O.S.L. 2002 (70 O.S. Supp. 2006, Section 13-115.4), is amended to read as follows:

Section 13-115.4 The State Department of Education shall adopt rules to implement the provisions of this act in collaboration with the State Department of Rehabilitation Services. The State Department of Education shall:

1. Maintain a registry of individuals who meet the qualifications as educational interpreters as set forth in this act; and

2. Establish a system of and requirements for continuing education. Such system shall require completion of the minimum QAST of ten (10) continuing education units per year, in which fifty
Section 6-206. A. Subject to the availability of funds, the State Board of Education shall provide an annual salary bonus in the amount of Five Thousand Dollars ($5,000.00) no later than January 31 of each year to the following employees of public school districts:

1. Any school psychologist who has been designated as a Nationally Certified School Psychologist by the National School Psychology Certification Board; and

2. Any speech-language pathologist or audiologist who holds a Certificate of Clinical Competence awarded by the American Speech-Language Hearing Association; and


B. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules for the provision of the bonus pursuant to this act section to include, but not be limited to, a process by which a nationally certified school psychologist, speech-language pathologist and audiologist, and educational interpreter may verify that:
1. The individual is still employed full-time by a school district;

2. The certification required in subsection A of this section has been attained and has not lapsed; and

3. The individual is licensed to practice in this state, if required.

C. No school or school district shall be liable for payment of bonuses pursuant to this section. The bonus shall not be included in the calculation of salary for purposes of meeting the district or statutory minimum salary schedule or for purposes of calculating Teachers’ Retirement System of Oklahoma contributions or benefits.

D. The amount of the salary bonus pursuant to subsection A of this section shall be increased to Seven Thousand Dollars ($7,000.00) upon implementation of subsection N of Section 6-204.2 of Title 70 of the Oklahoma Statutes.

SECTION 4. AMENDATORY Section 2, Chapter 311, O.S.L. 2004 (70 O.S. Supp. 2006, Section 6-206.1), is amended to read as follows:

Section 6-206.1 There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund for the State Board of Education to be designated the "Oklahoma School Psychologist, Speech-Language Pathologist, and Audiologist, and Educational Interpreter National Certification Revolving Fund". The fund shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations, and shall consist of all monies
appropriated or transferred to the fund by the Legislature. All
monies accruing to the credit of the fund are hereby appropriated
and may be budgeted and expended by the State Board of Education to
provide an annual bonus for individuals meeting the requirements of
Section 6-206 of this act title. Expenditures from the fund shall
be made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against claims
filed as prescribed by law with the Director of State Finance for
approval and payment.

   SECTION 5. This act shall become effective July 1, 2007.

   SECTION 6. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby
declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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