

HOUSE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Antonio F. D. Cabral

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to the training, assessment, and assignment of qualified school interpreters in educational settings.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Antonio F. D. Cabral</i>	<i>13th Bristol</i>	<i>1/9/2025</i>

HOUSE No.

[Pin Slip]

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 437 OF 2023-2024.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)**

An Act relative to the training, assessment, and assignment of qualified school interpreters in educational settings.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 69 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition,
2 is hereby amended by inserting the following new section:-

3 Section 37. Training, assessment, and assessment of qualified school interpreters in
4 educational settings

5 (a) The following words, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, shall have the
6 following meanings:

7 “Department”, the department of elementary and secondary education;

8 “Limited English proficient (LEP) person”, an individual who has a limited ability to
9 read, write, speak or understand English because the person uses primarily a language other than

10 English. This includes LEP parents or guardians of minor children, regardless of the
11 children's

12 LEP status;

13 "Interpretation", the immediate oral rendering of an utterance from a source language
14 into a target language;

15 "Interpreter", a person who has demonstrated language proficiency in English and at least
16 one other language and is readily able to interpret spoken language from English to the target
17 language and from the target language to English, and who also has knowledge and
18 understanding of the pertinent subject matter to be translated, the role of the interpreter in school
19 settings, and ethics and confidentiality with respect to interpretation;

20 "Parent", a natural, adoptive, or foster parent of a child, a guardian, or an individual
21 acting in the place of a natural or adoptive parent (including a grandparent, stepparent, or other
22 relative) with whom the child lives, or an individual who is legally responsible for the child's
23 welfare;

24 "Specialized meeting", a school district meeting requiring a high level of interpretation
25 skills including but not limited to discussion regarding: an Individualized Education Program
26 (IEP); a safety plan or behavioral intervention plan (BIP); matters regarding school discipline;
27 matters regarding special education due process; placement in an English Learner Education
28 (ELE) program; development of or changes to an Individual 504 plan; addressing bullying
29 complaints; or the use of physical restraint or seclusion of students;

30 “Standard meeting”, a parent conference, community meeting, or other school gathering
31 that does not have legal context.

32 “Tier 1 interpreter”, an interpreter whose language proficiency need not be formally
33 Assessed

34 “Tier 2 interpreter”, an interpreter who, after a formal assessment process to be
35 determined by the department, demonstrates an understanding of basic educational terminology
36 used in school settings, participates in ongoing professional development in interpreting, and
37 exhibits tier-2 competency pursuant to subsection 2 of this section and department regulations;

38 “Tier 3 interpreter”, an interpreter who, after a formal assessment process to be
39 determined by the department, understands specialized educational terminology used in school
40 settings, participates in ongoing professional development in interpreting, and exhibits tier-3
41 competency pursuant to subsection 2 of this section and department regulations.

42 (b) Consistent with the recommendations of the School Interpreters Task Force, as
43 authorized by section 81 of chapter 154 of the acts of 2018, the department shall: (1) develop and
44 administer a system for training, assessing, and determining qualifications of interpreters in
45 educational settings ensuring that tier 3 interpreters shall be used for all specialized meetings, tier
46 2 or 3 interpreters may be used for all standard meetings and tier 1 interpreters may be used
47 during spontaneous, unannounced meetings or communication scenarios that occur in schools
48 when a tier 3 or 2 interpreter is not available; (2) make available an educational courses of
49 sufficient duration that includes coursework and field experience for tier 1, tier 2, and tier 3
50 interpreters, to support development of the key competencies and knowledge required of
51 interpreters in schools consistent with the courses developed by the Department pursuant to

52 chapter 102 of the acts of 2021; and (3) create a publicly accessible mechanism to identify tier-3
53 interpreters for scheduled specialized meetings.

54 (c) The department shall adopt regulations necessary to administer a system for training,
55 assessing, and determining qualifications of interpreters in school settings to improve access for
56 LEP parents. Said regulations shall be consistent with the recommendations of the School
57 Interpreters Task Force, as authorized by section 81 of chapter 154 of the acts of 2018, and shall
58 include, but not be limited to:

59 (1) a process for assessing the language proficiency of interpreters seeking to interpret in
60 school settings, including required levels of competency necessary to obtain tier-2 and tier-3
61 interpreting status, with grandfathering allowed for school employees whose primary job
62 responsibility has been to serve as an interpreter for one or more years; (2) required hours of
63 supervised field experience for tier-3 interpreters; and (3) procedures for implementation of the
64 publicly accessible mechanism created pursuant to subsection 1 of this section to identify and
65 secure tier-3 interpreters for scheduled specialized meetings.

66 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon its passage; provided, however, that the
67 department may administer a phased implementation of the provisions of subsection (b) of this
68 act to a diverse number of school districts, subject to appropriation, and provided further that
69 final implementation of all sections of this act, including but not limited to the requirement that
70 tier 3 interpreters shall be used for all specialized meetings, shall take effect statewide when
71 certified as appropriate by the commissioner of elementary and secondary education in a report
72 to the general court.

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