

EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETERS

for STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF

or HARD OF HEARING



Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities
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The problem

- Without adequate qualified, skilled educational interpreters, Texas schools will not be able to teach students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The need for educational interpreters is higher than ever, yet the supply is not meeting the demand.
- Meeting the unique communication and related needs of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing is a fundamental part of providing a free appropriate public education to the child.
- When an educational interpreter is not qualified, the student who is deaf or hard of hearing does not have access to the education that a student who is hearing receives.

What is “educational interpreting”?

- Educational interpreting jobs are different than those of community interpreters. Schools do not just teach the content curriculum; they also foster growth in language and social-emotional development.
- An educational interpreter works in complex environments requiring a high level of educational skills. The educational interpreter works with children and youth at varying stages of development including children with multiple disabilities.
- Schools are accountable for student achievement and, as a member of the educational team, so are educational interpreters.

Interpreters Speak Out

- The Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities conducted a survey of interpreters throughout Texas. The survey was shared with 1,800 certificated interpreters and interpreter training programs.
- Participants provided information about their experience as educational interpreters and why they left the profession.
- The survey received 672 responses.

The most common reasons survey respondents did not choose, or left educational interpreting as a career include:

- Poor pay
- Lack of respect/support from administration and staff
- Classification as paraprofessional/aide
- Lack of understanding an interpreter's role by administration
- Few or no breaks which can lead to repetitive motion injury
- Expectation to perform additional duties (e.g. managing a student's behavior)

For additional information on the data from this survey: Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities. 512-463-5739 or email gcpd@gov.texas.gov

The Law

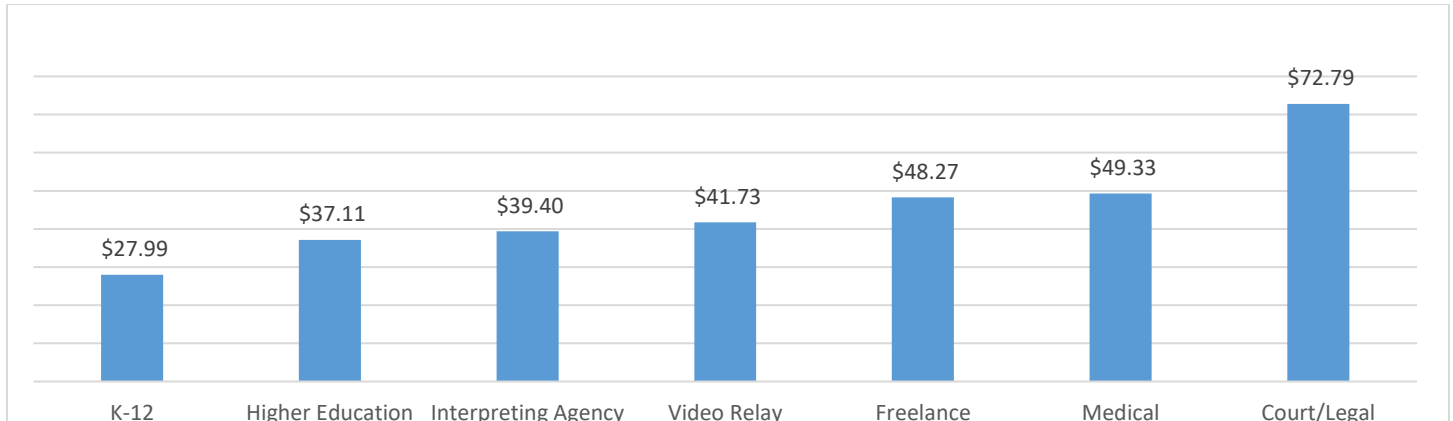
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandates free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) for eligible students.

Texas Education Code Section 29.304 states that a teacher of students who are deaf or hard of hearing must be proficient in appropriate language modes, or use an interpreter certified in appropriate language modes, if available.

The Texas Education Agency rule for interpreter certification determines that interpreting services for students who are deaf or hard of hearing must be provided by an interpreter who is certified in the appropriate language mode, if this is available.

Interpreter Pay

The primary reason why survey respondents left the field of interpreting or did not choose educational interpreting is the pay. The graph below shows the average hourly pay of survey respondents in multiple settings.



Educational Interpreter Salaries Compared to Bus Drivers

Comparing the salary of interpreters and bus drivers is useful because often the pay is similar, despite the stringent requirements for interpreter certification. The chart below is divided by Education Service Center (ESC) regions and compares the average hourly salary of interpreters and bus drivers.¹

ESC Region Number	Sign Language Interpreter Hourly Rate	Bus Driver, Hourly Rate
1 Edinburg	\$37.00	\$16.87
2 Corpus Christi	\$24.44	\$19.68
3 Victoria	\$15.55	\$22.12
4 Houston	\$27.89	\$20.23
5 Beaumont	\$20.94	\$19.48
6 Huntsville	\$28.64	\$20.80
7 Kilgore	\$17.92	\$21.86
8 Mount Pleasant	\$26.57	\$19.91
9 Wichita Falls	\$19.19	\$20.92
10 Richardson	\$26.73	\$22.83
11 Fort Worth	\$25.87	\$21.37
12 Waco	\$23.67	\$21.21
13 Austin	\$27.36	\$20.91
14 Abilene	\$19.50	\$17.23
15 San Angelo	\$13.50	\$19.75
16 Amarillo	\$17.86	\$16.40
17 Lubbock	\$28.27	\$18.87
18 Midland	\$21.16	\$21.07
19 El Paso	\$15.24	\$16.97
20 San Antonio	\$20.27	\$18.12

¹ Texas Association of School Boards, HR Services District Personnel Salary Survey, Deaf-Education Interpreter and Bus Driver, Fall 2021.