

# ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



SENATOR ELVI GRAY-JACKSON  
SENATE DISTRICT G

## SB 8: Education for Deaf & Hearing Impaired

### Sectional Analysis – Version A

#### **Section 1-** Adds a new subsection to AS 14.30.272- *Procedural Safeguards*

(c) Requires each school district to:

(1) provide to parents of a child who is or is suspected of being deaf or hard of hearing with comprehensive, neutral, and unbiased information regarding

(A) hearing technology, including hearing aids, bone-anchored hearing aids, cochlear implants,

(B) different methods of communication for a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, including listening and spoken language, a bilingual approach cued speech, and total communication.

(C) services and programs that are designed to meet the needs of children who are deaf or hard of hearing;

(D) public and private entities knowledgeable about the needs of children who are deaf or hearing impaired;

(2) allow parents of children who are or are suspected to be deaf or hard of hearing to choose the method of communication they determine to be most appropriate and provide services in the chosen method;

(3) deliver services to a child who is or are suspected to be deaf or hard of hearing through professionals with training, experience, and a background in the chosen method of communication.

(d) Requires each school district to inform parents of a child who is or may be deaf or hard of hearing, of the district's duties and parent's rights provided in (c) of this section.

(e) Defines

(1) "bilingual approach" means the development of both sign language and English language literacy skills as a child's mode of receptive and expressive communication;

(2) "cued speech" means a visual communication system that uses hand shapes and placements in combination with the mouth movements of speech to identify the phonemes of spoken language that look similar to one another;

(3) “deaf” means possessing hearing levels that, with or without hearing technology, substantially affects a child’s ability to understand spoken language;

(4) “hard of hearing” means possessing hearing levels that, with or without hearing technology, affects a child’s ability to understand spoken language;

(5) “listening and spoken language” means communication that focuses on maximizing listening through the use of hearing technologies professional intervention, and family involvement and support to facilitate the acquisitions and development of the spoken language of the child’s home and community;

(6) “total communication” means the combined use of signs, speech, speechreading, auditory training, visual aids, annual gestures, and writing to convey information.

**Section 2- Adds a new section to 14.30.276- *Least restrictive environment.***

(b) The department shall establish and operate a centralized program for the deaf to be made available to deaf students in the state. The program must provide residential services as part of its educational program. The program may be operated by a school district under an agreement with the department. If a school district operates the program, the school district shall annually submit a plan of operations to the department for approval and shall perform all duties of a local school district related to special education under state and federal law, except that the school district is required to offer transportation only to students who reside in the district. If a school district determines that placement at the program is appropriate for a child who resides in the district, the school district that makes the placement retains the school district’s responsibilities for special education for that child under state and federal law. The department shall provide a school district that operates the program funding for students who attend the program.