

Better Training for Interpreters

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Kristen Miranda (Rochester, NY) 1/6/06 - A thousand people across the state have very important jobs: interpreting for deaf and hard of hearing students in kindergarten thru 12th grade.

The interpreters have different kinds of training, which may not always best for students.

A technology class in Perinton presents plenty of obstacles for educational interpreter Terri Reisinger.

She said, "Such noise... (can) make it hard to hear...positioning is difficult...vocabulary is definitely difficult."

Reisinger earned her Associate's Degree from Rochester's National Technical Institute for the Deaf. That advanced training is something not all interpreters have.

She said students could suffer because these differences in training, sometimes not getting all the information, or missing a lot of the information.

Any teacher in New York State is required to be state certified to teach, but there is currently no certification requirement for educational interpreters.

Marilyn Mitchell of NTID said, "I believe very strongly that districts do the best they can, but many are in rural areas,...are not qualified to do the job."

However, that is changing. In 2008, a certification requirement is expected from the state.

Until then, NTID and Monroe One BOCES are under a \$2.8 million contract with the state to improve the number and quality of interpreters.

Once the state standards are in place, interpreters would be given a deadline to meet them.