

1 Whereas, children who are deaf or hard of hearing may be best served by having
2 opportunities to interact with a sufficient number of same language and communication mode
3 peers who are of the same age and ability level; and

4 Whereas, it is desirable for children who are deaf or hard of hearing to have
5 opportunities to interact with adult role models who are deaf or hard of hearing; and

6 Whereas, children who are deaf or hard of hearing should be offered equal
7 opportunity to benefit from all services and programs at their school; and

8 Whereas, North Carolina has adopted the Common Core State and NC Essential
9 Standards; Now, therefore,

10 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

11 **SECTION 1.** The State Board of Education shall do at least all of the following to
12 improve the educational outcomes for North Carolina children who are deaf or hard of hearing:

- 13 (1) Develop assessment procedures and protocols to measure, at least annually
14 or more frequently if specified in a child's Individualized Education Program
15 (IEP), the acquisition of language skills necessary for literacy using
16 linguistically and culturally appropriate assessment tools. The results of
17 these assessments shall be used to determine whether further support and
18 services, if any, are needed for a child.
- 19 (2) Require an IEP team to use the Communication Plan Worksheet for Student
20 Who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing to document (i) the team's consideration of
21 the language and communication needs of the individual child as the IEP is
22 developed, reviewed, or revised, (ii) data to be used in the placement
23 decisions made for that child, and (iii) the team's review, at least annually, of
24 the child's placement and language and communication needs.
- 25 (3) Ensure that personnel who are highly qualified in the education of children
26 who are deaf or hard of hearing are available to meet the unique needs of
27 each child, including interactions in the child's language and communication
28 modality to meet academic and social goals.
- 29 (4) Develop and implement strategies to ensure that parents of a child who is
30 deaf or hard of hearing know they are entitled to request that the child's IEP
31 team consider placement of their child in a residential setting and, if such a
32 request is made, that a representative from one of the two North Carolina
33 residential/day program schools for the deaf shall be a member of the IEP
34 team.

35 **SECTION 2.** The Department of Health and Human Services and other State
36 agencies and organizations upon the request of the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) shall
37 make databases containing information on children under the age of 22 who are diagnosed as
38 deaf or hard of hearing available to DPI. DPI shall use this information to develop and maintain
39 a statewide data tracking system for the purpose of coordinating with other State agencies and
40 organizations and ensuring literacy achievement for all such children who are deaf or hard of
41 hearing.

42 **SECTION 3.** This act is effective when it becomes law.