



GOV. MSG. NO. 1254

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

June 29, 2016

The Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi,  
President  
and Members of the Senate  
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 409  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Joseph M. Souki,  
Speaker and Members of the  
House of Representatives  
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature  
State Capitol, Room 431  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear President Kouchi, Speaker Souki, and Members of the Legislature:

This is to inform you that on June 29, 2016, the following bill was signed into law:

SB2981 SD1 HD1 CD1

RELATING TO EDUCATION  
**ACT 152 (16)**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Y. Ige".

DAVID Y. IGE  
Governor, State of Hawai'i

Approved by the Governor

JUN 29 2016

on

THE SENATE

TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE, 2016

STATE OF HAWAII

ACT 152  
S.B. NO.

2981  
S.D. 1  
H.D. 1  
C.D. 1

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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EDUCATION.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. American Sign Language is a vital part of the  
2 linguistic heritage of the State that benefits and enriches  
3 hearing-impaired and non-hearing-impaired individuals. American  
4 Sign Language interpreters are routinely provided at private and  
5 state functions and events. Introduction to American Sign  
6 Language at an early age helps hearing-impaired individuals  
7 become confident in their identity and sets the stage for their  
8 personal success.

9           Although American Sign Language is the fourth most-popular  
10 language at colleges and universities in the United States, it  
11 is not currently recognized as a foreign language in Hawaii.  
12 This lack of recognition makes it difficult for Hawaii public  
13 schools to meet the needs of hearing-impaired students and to  
14 help students who are interested in studying American Sign  
15 Language in college to prepare for their studies. Forty-two  
16 states currently recognize American Sign Language as a foreign  
17 language and have incorporated it into public school curricula.



1 The department of education uses the term "world language" in  
2 its course descriptions and graduation requirements.

3 The purpose of this Act is to recognize American Sign  
4 Language as a world language and to allow students who pass  
5 courses in American Sign Language to receive credit for those  
6 courses toward satisfaction of graduation requirements for world  
7 language.

8 SECTION 2. Chapter 302A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
9 amended by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately  
10 designated and to read as follows:

11 "§302A- American Sign Language. For purposes of this  
12 chapter, American Sign Language shall be recognized as a world  
13 language, and any public school may offer a course in American  
14 Sign Language. A student who successfully completes a course in  
15 American Sign Language shall be entitled to receive credit for  
16 that course toward satisfaction of a world language requirement  
17 of the public school at which the course is offered."

18 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

19 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

APPROVED this 29 day of JUN, 2016



GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF HAWAII