

# Proposed programs to benefit deaf

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interpreter training project and set new standards for educational interpreters.

That program would begin in the 2001-02 school year. The board set aside \$1.2 million to implement these projects.

As a result, Don Anderson, member of the Department of Education special populations administration, said the bill is unnecessary because the department's standards are "very similar" to the ones stated in the bill but worded differently.

He said he opposed the bill because once legislation passes, it would be hard for the board to review the standards regularly and make necessary changes.

But Kiel and many parents believe

the department's plan is inefficient and the standards aren't specific enough.

For example, one of the proposed ideas is that after NSD closed, the students would have the option of attending the Iowa School for the Deaf in Council Bluffs.

School districts would make a contract with ISD for the student and would then be reimbursed later from state funds. Anderson said the agreement with Iowa should be final by April.

Kiel said she doesn't like that idea, especially since students would either have to commute or live on campus in the dorms. The parents who are Nebraska taxpayers and voters would be sending their money to Iowa, she said.

"I don't know why we're trying to send our children away when we've all

"

*If something is wrong, who is going to listen, who is going to care?"*

**VICKIE DOHERTY**  
mother of NSD students

been talking about keeping our children here," she said.

Vickie Doherty of Omaha has two children who attend NSD and said she doesn't understand why she should have to send them out of state.

"If something is wrong, who is going to listen, who is going to care?" she said. "ISD has their own standards. Why would they adopt ours?"

Another concern deals with the Department of Education's plan to put deaf programs in four regions of the

state.

Students would have to contact those center sites or ask for outreach assistance, where a teacher or interpreter would come to the child's school. Anderson said parents also would have the option of having their children live with foster families while they attended school in the specified area.

Doherty said she didn't understand how this part of the plan would work. "If a family lives in another city,

how could you expect them to live away from their child five days a week?" she said.

Although there were several other areas of the plan discussed, Kiel said the most important concern was the welfare and education of the children.

"Deaf children should not be fighting this hard to get an education." At the end of the hearing, Hastings Sen. Ardyce Bohlke said she thought it was unlikely that the bill would get through in the short session.

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