



# Guidelines for Educational Interpreters

Nebraska Department of Education  
Technical Assistance Document  
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# NEBRASKA

## Guidelines For Educational Interpreters

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<http://www.education.ne.gov/sped/technicalassist.html>

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**Educational Interpreter Guidelines, 2002**

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The Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Special Populations gratefully acknowledges the individuals who served on the Educational Interpreter Guidelines Committee for their great efforts in developing this technical assistance document. This document is seen as an important part of the state's ongoing efforts to ensure that a high standard of education is available to all students. The Educational Interpreter Guidelines Technical Assistance document is a key instrument in ensuring students who are deaf or hard of hearing have equal access to their educational environment. This document contains best practices, as of the time of printing. The Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Special Populations will continue to view this document as an ongoing project. The Department will continue to review this and future documents to maintain a current and relevant approach to the education of students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

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Information for the Nebraska Department of Education Technical Assistant Document Nebraska Educational Interpreter Guidelines was developed from the following resources:

- Kansas State Board of Education Guidelines for Educational Interpreters, 1995
- New York State Education Department Guidelines for Educational Interpreting
- Ohio State Board of Education Guidelines for Educational Interpreters, 2000

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# Introduction

## Background

All students can learn and all students will learn if the conditions for learning are right. Getting the conditions right, including the resources, facilities and attitudes to support student learning, is part of what good teaching is all about. Shared responsibility and ownership for the success of all children, collaboration between regular and special education personnel, and administrative and parental involvement are critical elements of schools. (*The Ohio State Board of Education Guidelines for Educational Interpreters, 2000*)

The provision of education to students with disabilities has been greatly affected since the passage of Public Law 94-142. This legislation assures that students with disabilities are entitled to an equal opportunity to benefit from public instruction. The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA '97)* underscores the importance of educating children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. IDEA '97 also requires that children with disabilities have access to the general curriculum. In addition, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 have significantly strengthened the rights of individuals with disabilities. Together these laws have expanded the nation's commitment to the full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency of people with disabilities.

In Nebraska, the right to a free appropriate public education is guaranteed for all students with disabilities. The needs of the individual child determine what an appropriate education shall be for the child. For many students who are deaf or hard of hearing and placed in the general education environment, educational interpreting is the support service which allows the student equal access to instruction in the overall school experience. This support service provides these students, their parents, hearing children, faculty, and other school personnel with the communication bridge necessary to allow participation in the educational and social activities of the school.

There are a limited number of interpreters available to work in educational settings who have the interpreting skills and knowledge of the instructional process. This situation was identified by the Commission on Education of the Deaf in the report entitled, *Toward Equality* (1988) and by the National Task Force on Educational Interpreting in the document entitled, *Educational Interpreting for Deaf Students* (1989). In addition, these two reports describe the need for both State Education Departments and the local educational agencies to address the quality of interpreting services available in schools today. (*The State Education Department of New York Guidelines for Educational Interpreters*)

## **Developing Standards for Educational Interpreting**

For those students with hearing impairments, access to the general curriculum often necessitates the services of a qualified educational interpreter. While the need for educational interpreters in public school settings has increased as more children are served in general education classrooms, the discipline of educational interpreting is still relatively new; therefore, many school districts are unclear about the type of training and skills needed to qualify one as an educational interpreter (*Kansas State Board of Education Guidelines for Educational Interpreters, 1995*).

In response to the need to address the quality of interpreting services, the Nebraska Department of Education has established the requirement that an individual who works as an interpreter in an educational setting be appropriately qualified. These qualifications can be found in Rule 51, Section 010.07 (*92 NAC 51. 010.07, Rev. October 16, 2002*). Several Rule 51 references are provided throughout this document.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist school districts in providing appropriate educational interpreting services to children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. This document is intended to provide support to local school districts, educational interpreters, parents, and other members of the educational team by serving as a resource and expanding on best practices in such areas as ethical conduct, qualifications, and roles and responsibilities of the educational interpreter. This document will also assist administrators and teachers to gain a more thorough understanding of the role of educational interpreters as critical members of the student's educational team.

Further consultation is available through the Nebraska Department of Education Special Populations Office and your Regional Program for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. Contact information is provided at the end of this document.

# Roles and Responsibilities of the School

## Providing Meaningful Access

Schools are responsible for providing both students and parents with meaningful access to the education process. For students and/or parents who are deaf or hard of hearing, an interpreter is often that link to access. A school has responsibility for providing interpreter services in at least, but not limited to, the following situations:

- A student who is deaf or hard of hearing who is receiving educational services in a setting with hearing individuals.
- A parent who is deaf or hard of hearing who is involved in the special education process on behalf of his/her child.
- A parent who is deaf or hard of hearing who is involved in school-sponsored activities that are related to his/her child.

### **Sign Language is not a universal language.**

It is incorrect to assume that all human languages are spoken. Every language is composed of a limited set of words or signs that when combined form a potentially unlimited set of structures allowing people to discuss topics removed in time and space from their personal experience. A signed language is no more or less iconic or conceptual than a spoken language. No one invented American Sign Language (ASL). This is a naturally occurring language and should not be confused with a manual code for English. ASL is indigenous to the United States and parts of Canada.

Additional Information: American Sign Language Teachers Association  
National Association of the Deaf [www.nad.org](http://www.nad.org)

Guidelines, handbooks and in-service training are critical to ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of the educational interpreter are well understood by the teachers, administrators, and others who make up the educational team. The students who will be using the services, their parents and, the educational interpreter, must also understand these roles and responsibilities.

Educational interpreters should be encouraged and, when possible, reimbursed to attend professional development opportunities and conferences that provide both training and networking opportunities locally and nationally. Interpreters should be considered when scheduling building and district in-service training.

## Employment of Educational Interpreters

### Job Title

It is critical that the interpreter functions as a facilitator of communication, not as the child's tutor or teacher. Too often, interpreters have stated that they are given a textbook, provided a space in the corner of the classroom, and asked to "teach" the child the lesson. The interpreters should not function or be expected to function as the child's teacher unless they have the required credentials and it becomes part of their individual contract with the school.

As a matter of administrative ease, an already existing job title, such as "teacher's aide," is often inappropriately given to educational interpreters. Those individuals may find themselves locked into a title, wage, benefits, and role expectations designed for persons with different kinds of responsibilities.

The job title for the educational interpreter must correspond as closely as possible to actual job responsibilities. A clear distinction must be made between interpreter and paraprofessional. The term "aide" must be avoided in the job title of the interpreter. The interpreter may occasionally perform a duty similar to that of an aide, but it must be remembered that his or her **primary responsibility is interpreting**. There is an inherent risk in using the term "aide" in that it may lead the administrator or teacher to assign aide-related tasks to the interpreter at the expense of the interpretation and communication needs of the student who is deaf or hard of hearing. This could perpetuate confusion about the primary function of the interpreter.

### **What is an interpreter?**

American Sign Language/spoken English interpreters are trained professionals who are able to listen to another person's choice of words, inflections and intent while simultaneously interpreting them into the visual language of signs using the mode of communication requested. They are also able to comprehend the choice of signs, inflections and intent of the person signing and simultaneously speak articulate and appropriate English. Interpreters apply specialized knowledge and skills to facilitate effective cross-cultural communication accurately and impartially between people using spoken and signed languages.

Additional Information: Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)

When personnel who are available to provide sign language interpretation do not possess all of the qualifications to meet the “standards”, consult Rule 51, 010.07 before hiring them. A person hired with lesser qualifications will need specific provisions for professional development to reach the standards within the required amount of time.

### **Rule 51**

The following information has been excerpted from Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51 Regulations and Standards for Special Education Programs, October 16, 2000.

#### **010.07 Educational Interpreters**

Beginning in the 2001-02 school year, in order to be a qualified educational sign language interpreter for the purposes of Subsection 010.07, an individual must attain one or more of the following competency levels as measured by the following assessments:

- Registry of Interpreters of the Deaf Certification (RID)
- National Association of the Deaf (NAD)  
Competency level 4.0
- Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA),  
Competency level 3.5
- Quality Assurance Screening Test (QAST)  
Competency level 4.0

Resources: Nebraska Department of Education [www.nde.state.ne.us](http://www.nde.state.ne.us)  
Special Populations Office  
Director of Outreach Services  
Nebraska Regional Programs for Students  
Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

## **Job Descriptions**

A written job description is of major importance to both the interpreter and the employing school or school system, and should be shared with all staff who will be involved with the deaf or hard of hearing student. Job descriptions may vary according to the specific needs of the individual school district and should be developed by local school administrators to meet local needs and specifications. The duties of an educational interpreter in a district with one student, may be different than those in another district which has numerous deaf or hard of hearing students. Further, duties at different educational levels should be differentiated.

Reflecting the principle of gradually leading a student toward more responsibility for his/her own education, the range of duties and breadth of responsibilities of an educational interpreter need to be considered. Expectations for interpreters at the elementary school level for students who are deaf or hard of hearing would tend to be more comprehensive than at the high school level, where an interpreter would fit more closely the community interpreter model, (i.e., providing interpreting services only).

Although specific duties will vary depending on the factors noted above, in general, educational interpreters should be able to function in, at least, the following situations: classroom; student/teacher meetings or other meetings involving the student and other school personnel; extracurricular activities; parent conferences; supported work situations; and tutoring. Non-classroom interpreting duties (field trips, school assemblies, and counseling), can be expected as part of the educational interpreter's duties when within regular working hours. The specific communication needs of the student should be considered when hiring an interpreter to work with a particular student or in selecting which interpreter on staff would be appropriate to provide the interpretation.

The job description should be detailed, ensuring that all members of the educational team understand clearly the educational interpreter's duties. Each interpreter's job description should include the job title, (Educational Interpreter is recommended), general description, responsibilities, qualifications, skills required, and language expertise. Specific reference should be made to language and/or communication modes to be practiced in the school setting. If a specific communication methodology is encouraged or required by the school district, it should be clearly stated and defined. The interpreter's hours of work and reference to the immediate supervisor should also be included if known.

Consult your Regional Program, Nebraska Department of Education Special Populations Office, the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing or the Nebraska Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf for additional information regarding the use and provision of interpreting services.

## **Job Application and Qualifications**

Because of the low incidence nature of deafness, a school district may not have knowledge about deafness and interpreting. Therefore, when a student who is deaf or hard of hearing enters the school system for the first time, the school may need guidance from outside sources to assess the communication needs of the student and to judge the credentials of a candidate for an interpreting position.

### **Interview Committee**

Ideally, the interview committee should be comprised of district interpreters, teachers, supervisors, community interpreters, interpreter educators, deaf and hard of hearing adults who understand the educational interpreter position and individuals who possess knowledge about deafness and the process of educational interpreting. In order to fully participate, the members of the interview team who are deaf or hard of hearing will need the services of an interpreter who is *not* part of the evaluation team.

All aspects of hiring should follow the district's posting and advertising procedures. The district's procedures for the interview process should also be followed when hiring an interpreter.

The candidate's job application may include information regarding:

- Educational background
- Formal preparation as an interpreter
- Certification
- Experience
- Special skills (deaf-blind interpreting, cued speech, oral transliterating)
- Resume

Employing districts might also consider the following primary areas of experience when interviewing job applicants:

- Interpreting for adults and/or children who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Work experience with students who are deaf or hard of hearing in an educational setting
- Working with children on a paid or volunteer basis

### **Candidate's Classroom Interpreting Abilities**

The following areas evaluate the candidate as he or she demonstrates his or her skill in the specific mode(s) of communication utilized within the classroom. The district may choose to consider the following areas when screening applicants:

- Sign-to-spoken language skills - Is the applicant able to understand the signed message and voice the message accurately? A suggestion is to use videotapes of several students who are deaf or hard of hearing to evaluate the applicant's ability to understand potential students. In order to fully participate, the members of the interview team who are Deaf or Hard of hearing will need the services of an interpreter who is not part of the evaluation team.
- Spoken-to-sign language skills – Is the applicant able to understand the spoken message and convey it accurately by signing? A suggestion is to use an audiotape or videotape of several teachers from different grade levels to evaluate the applicant's ability to sign what he or she heard. In order to fully participate, the members of the interview team who are Deaf or Hard of hearing will need transcripts of the spoken message or the services of an interpreter who is not part of the evaluation team.
- Cultural knowledge – Consideration should be given to the child's cultural background when hiring an interpreter. The interpreter needs to have a knowledge base of the child's culture in order to be sensitive to the needs of the child.
- Additional – Does the applicant have experience in other communication modes such as Cued Speech and oral transliteration? Has the applicant had experience interpreting for individuals who are deaf-blind? Is the interpreter comfortable interpreting for deaf and hard of hearing adults? Is the interpreter comfortable with being part of the educational team?

## **Recruiting**

For assistance in recruitment, contacts might be made with interpreter preparation programs and interpreter service agencies in the state. Interpreters and Educators of the Deaf can post their résumés on-line at [www.deafed.net](http://www.deafed.net). Districts may also post job openings.

Elementary, secondary, and post-secondary programs already serving students who are deaf or hard of hearing in your region may also be helpful in identifying possible recruitment sources. A national directory of educational programs and services, such as the *American Annals of the Deaf*, is useful for this purpose. The directory is updated annually. [www.gspp.gallaudet.edu/annals](http://www.gspp.gallaudet.edu/annals)

### **WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A SIGNER AND AN INTERPRETER?**

#### **Signer**

- knows sign language but may not be fluent
- is able to communicate his/her own thoughts
- may not be aware of the RID Code of Ethics for interpreters and is not bound by them
- may have taken sign language classes or learned from a book
- will not be certified or state screened
- may know one or two Deaf people
- is unlikely to be knowledgeable about the professional interpreter's role
- views his/her role as a "helper"
- is not ready or qualified to be an interpreter

#### **Interpreter**

- is fluent in the languages that they interpret
- can interpret someone else's thoughts effectively
- is knowledgeable of and committed to following the RID Code of Ethics
- is formally trained in language systems, interpreting theory, cross-cultural communication & ethical decision making
- is certified or holds the required state screening level that is documented
- is involved in the Deaf Community and knows many Deaf people
- is highly knowledgeable about the professional role of the interpreter
- is qualified and able to interpret in most settings
- is a professional and active in professional organizations

Adapted from: Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)

## Professional Development

Professional development can be provided in a variety of ways through one or a combination of the following:

- Interpreter Preparation Programs
- In-service training
- Workshops and conferences
- Independent study and action research
- College courses
- Content area updates
- Collaboration and team building
- Activities that improve knowledge and skills in understanding and using technology
- School or community programs related to issues involving education and access for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Training for interpreter certification (RID, Inc./NAD)
- Preparation for evaluation (EIPA, QAST)
- Development of skills to assume non-interpreting responsibilities (e.g., tutoring, sign language instruction, supervision of interpreters)
- Training for interpreters at various educational and development levels and with special populations (e.g., students who are deaf-blind, students with learning disabilities)
- Training for interpreting in various language modes (e.g., Oral, ASL, MCE, cued speech, and deaf-blind interpreting)
- Activities that result in greater understanding of the academic and social development of students who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Development of skills for communicating and collaborating with parents and/or general and special educators
- Improvement of skills in academic areas to broaden knowledge in subject areas being interpreted.
- Broadening knowledge of Deaf Culture
- Understanding the roles of an educational interpreter as a member of the school and IEP team
- Development of basic knowledge in the education of students with hearing impairments
- Serve on committees related to interpreting services.
- Active participation in professional organizations and conferences.

## **Employment Conditions**

### **Workspace**

The educational interpreter is entitled to the same conditions of employment as other personnel employed by the district. Interpreters should be provided with a workspace, access to a phone, fax, computer with an Internet connection (if access is possible) and the copy machine. Interpreters often use video recorders and VCR/TV equipment for preparation, evaluation and professional development.

### **Schedule**

The educational interpreter's work schedule will vary depending upon the needs of the student who is deaf or hard of hearing as stated in his or her IEP. Additional factors to be considered include educational levels, full- or part-time positions, and travel time between assignments. Qualified individuals familiar with educational interpreting and program goals should establish the educational interpreter's schedule. They must be aware of student needs and be able to make the necessary accommodations. It is also suggested that a plan be made in advance for substitutes that are called when the staff educational interpreter is absent.

Students who utilize interpreters must have full educational access during all classroom time; therefore, it is imperative that students who are deaf or hard of hearing not be deprived of interpreting services as a result of scheduling conflicts. As an example, a district that hired one interpreter to work with two high school students discovered that the needs and transition plans were very different for each student and each required access to different high school classes. An additional interpreter was hired to accommodate the students' needs for interpreting services.

### **Distribution of Work**

Secondary-level assignments should be distributed so interpreters have a limited number of back-to-back assignments involving uninterrupted lectures. At the elementary level, and particularly in self-contained classes, there is more seatwork and one-on-one interaction between teachers and students.

The use of interpreting teams (more than one interpreter for an assignment) can provide several advantages, which include

- Alleviating back-to-back assignments
- Decreasing interpreter fatigue
- Distributing all interpreter assignments equally

### **Educational Planning Time**

To effectively fulfill his/her primary role of providing interpretation in the educational setting, the educational interpreter's work schedule should include preparation time.

The interpreter, teacher, and other individuals involved in the student's educational program need to consult regularly (perhaps daily) about lesson plans, upcoming activities, tests, new vocabulary, as well as the goals and objectives of the lesson and special nuances that they specifically want to convey.

Interpreters need time to review all pertinent instructional materials such as course and/or lecture outlines, class notes, required readings, and tests or quizzes; preview films, videotapes, and other media to be interpreted. Interpreters need access to all of these materials and to a workspace. Educational planning will improve the quality of interpreting.

When possible, interpreters also need to know ahead of time about special activities, such as a movie or a field trip. The interpreter may also use plan time for instructing deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing students on how to work with an interpreter. This may be especially important in the elementary grades.

### **Duration of Interpreting Periods**

Given the risk of injury posed by Cumulative Trauma Disorder (CTD) and Repetitive Motion Injury (RMI) common in manual interpretation, and the mental processing demands of interpreting, thoughtful consideration must be given to the number of hours interpreting each day. Time for preparation and appropriate intervals for breaks from interpreting should be worked out before the schedule is assigned.

Continuous interpreting for periods of an hour or longer results in fatigue, which, in turn, reduces the quality and effectiveness of the interpreting process. In a lecture or classroom situation, the teacher should be cognizant of this need and provide at least a 10-minute break each hour during which the students could complete deskwork or other activities that do not require the services of an interpreter.

#### **Work related upper extremity Cumulative Trauma Disorder/illness (CTD)**

CTD is an increasingly common occurrence among sign language interpreters. This refers to a variety of symptoms resulting from cumulative traumas associated with nerves, muscles, tendons, bones, or the neurovascular system. CTD is the result of exposure over time to one or more of the following:

- Repetitive performance of a physical task
- A task done repeatedly with force, speed, or with extremities placed in awkward positions
- Inadequate recovery time and insufficient rest at appropriate intervals.

CTD Video and Manual. (2000). Rochester Institute of Technology

## **Special Considerations for the Physical Environment**

Teachers, administrators, and other personnel need to be aware of adaptations that can be made to make the physical environment more conducive to learning for the student with a hearing loss. Such factors will vary depending upon the setting (e.g., classroom, outside the classroom or school building). Interpreters can be the best resource in providing the information needed to make adjustments in the physical environment. Examples of adaptations, which should be made to meet an individual student's needs, include:

- Preferential or roving seating
- Lighting
- Unobstructed visual or tactile access for the child
- Technology and multimedia accessibility for preparation
- Closed- and open-captioned films and videos
- Positioning of the interpreter and seating for the person who is deaf or hard of hearing when attending special activities, such as
  - Assemblies
  - Field trips
  - Sporting events
  - Driver's education

## **Considerations for Deaf-Blind Students**

An educational interpreter for students who are deaf-blind is essential to facilitate effective communication in the educational setting. There are special considerations unique to students who are deaf-blind. For additional information, consult the following sources.

American Association of the Deaf-Blind (AADB)  
[www.tr.wosc.osshe.edu/dblink/aadb](http://www.tr.wosc.osshe.edu/dblink/aadb)

The National Information Clearinghouse On Children Who Are Deaf-Blind  
[www.tr.wosc.osshe.edu/dblink](http://www.tr.wosc.osshe.edu/dblink)

## **Supervision and Evaluation**

### **Supervision**

School districts are responsible for assuring that educational interpreters have appropriate supervision. A member of the educational administration staff could provide such supervision. Schools or school systems that employ numerous educational interpreters should consider employing an interpreter coordinator or evaluator with the credentials and skills needed to serve in an administrative or supervisory role. Several school districts in a regional area could pool resources to hire such a person to work with the school districts' interpreters.

Supervisors must have sufficient knowledge of educational interpreting services to assist with areas such as role differentiation, ethical issues, scheduling, conflict resolution, professional development and mentoring.

The individual designated to be responsible for supervising educational interpreters should be available to meet with the interpreter periodically throughout the school year. Personnel readily available within the school district can evaluate the non-interpreting aspects of fulfilling the job description such as tutoring and team input. Often a school district does not have the capability to evaluate interpreting skills. To evaluate the interpreting aspect of the job, it is recommended that you work with your Regional Program Coordinator to determine a plan for observing the educational interpreter on a periodic basis (annually or biannually) to assess skills and offer recommendations for professional development.

### **Skill Evaluation**

As part of the overall job evaluation, it is necessary that supervisors make provisions for performance-based assessments conducted by qualified interpreter evaluators. These assessments should be reflected in the supervisor's overall evaluation of interpreters. To accurately assess interpreting skills, it is recommended that the district utilize the services of an interpreter educator or a credentialed interpreter with evaluation skills and experiences.

Educational interpreters must receive periodic evaluation as dictated by the employing district's policies and procedures. The evaluation components should be shared with interpreters at the time they are hired. Such components should include:

- Interpreting competencies in language and processing
- Overall job performance

Consult with your Regional Program, the Nebraska Department of Education Special Populations Office, the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and/or the Nebraska Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf for assistance in locating qualified evaluators.

### **Use of the Evaluation**

Comprehensive evaluation of interpreting competencies and the interpreter's overall job performance provides information that should be used to (a) identify individual areas of strength and weakness, (b) chart progress and improvements, and (c) target areas for staff development. Evaluation results and recommendations must be shared with the educational interpreter in a timely manner.

### **Grievance Procedures**

In the event that misunderstandings involving educational interpreting arise, attempts should be made to resolve them informally using standard chain-of-command practices. Educational interpreters have the same rights as other school employees to pursue grievance procedures as a means of resolving difficulties and concerns that cannot be resolved in other ways. The Regional Coordinators or the Nebraska Department of Education Special Populations Office can provide assistance in this area.

## The IEP Process and the Educational Interpreter

The evaluation, program development, planning for transition services, and review for students who are deaf or hard of hearing is the responsibility of the MDT/IEP or IFSP. Determination is made after a student is initially referred to the MDT/IEP or IFSP team, and is then reviewed periodically for as long as the student receives special education services.

In making decisions, MDT/IEP or IFSP members will review all available information regarding the student's individual needs. Such information might include recent evaluations, including vocational assessments, previous school records, IEPs, and classroom observations. When determining the student's communication needs, information and suggestions from the student's teacher(s), language specialists, related service providers, interpreters, parents, and the student should be considered.

The MDT/IEP or IFSP team has the additional responsibility of keeping parents fully informed throughout the special education process. Therefore, whenever an MDT/IEP or IFSP team sends a notice to a parent who is deaf, that parent may request to have the notice interpreted. In addition, whenever a parent who is deaf attends an MDT/IEP or IFSP meeting, an interpreter must be made available, as appropriate, in order for the parent to fully participate in the meeting. The interpreter used for deaf parents at these meetings should not be the student's educational interpreter who may be attending the meeting as a member of the educational team.

### Rule 51

The following information has been excerpted from Nebraska Department of Education Rule 51 Regulations and Standards for Special Education programs October 16, 2000.

- 003.26 Individual Education Program (IEP) shall mean a written statement for a child with verified disabilities that is developed, reviewed and revised in a meeting in accordance with Section 007.
- 003.27 Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) shall mean a written plan for providing early intervention services to a child with a disability birth through age two and the child's family that is developed and implemented in accordance with Section 007.
- 003.36 Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MDT) shall mean a group of persons whose responsibility is to evaluate the abilities and needs of a child referred for evaluation and to determine whether or not the child meets the eligibility criteria in Section 006.

## **Interpreting for Deaf or Hard of Hearing Adults**

Be aware that some children in your school may have parents who are deaf or hard of hearing, and they too have the right to meaningful access to certain school-sponsored activities outside the purview of special education. These activities include school-initiated conferences pertaining to the academic and/or disciplinary aspects of their child's education.

In preparing to meet the needs of adults who are deaf, it is recommended that boards of education adopt such a policy that is consistent with Rule 51 and insure the following:

- Notification to parents who are deaf or hard of hearing of the availability of the interpreting services and the timelines for requesting such services;
- Methods of arranging for interpreters;
- Notification to appropriate school personnel;
- Provision to ensure the availability of a sign language interpreter to eligible parents when district students attend out-of-district schools or programs; and
- Examples of what constitutes reasonable accommodations, in the event an interpreter cannot be located; such accommodations may include the use of written communications, transcripts, note-takers, and technology.

Interpreters who have had limited opportunity to interpret for deaf and hard of hearing adults may need additional training and education to meet the language needs and expectations. It might be necessary to contract with an interpreter that does not work within the school district. Consult your Regional Program, the Nebraska Department of Education Special Populations Office, the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing or the Nebraska Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf for additional information in the use and provision of interpreting services for adults.

Additional information regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act can be found with the U.S. Department of Justice Americans with Disabilities Act ADA  
[www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm)

## **Mentoring and Internships**

### **Mentoring**

In the context of the interpreting profession, mentoring is a goal-oriented relationship between two interpreters: a mentor and a second individual, who seeks to learn and grow through association with that mentor. Whether a novice or an experienced professional, the mentoring relationship is mutually beneficial. The mentor requested has more experience, skill or knowledge, either of interpreting in general, or of some specific aspect of interpreting. Mentoring is *not* a substitute for comprehensive interpreter education or for those internships associated with such formal training. Mentoring can augment the training received in academic settings.

Resource: Registry of Interpreter's for the Deaf [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)

### **Benefits of Mentoring**

Mentoring can benefit everyone involved and the interpreting profession.

The people involved may experience the following:

- A reduced sense of isolation
- An opportunity to look at interpreting from another's perspective
- A challenge to continue developing professionally
- A strengthening of specific skills or knowledge areas
- An immediate feedback and guidance
- An expert modeling to observe and emulate
- A satisfaction in being part of another interpreter's growth professionally
- A network of colleagues
- A recognition of experience and skills

Each mentoring situation is unique, depending on the individuals involved and the goals of the relationship. Some mentoring relationships are formal arrangements set up and overseen by an agency, RID Affiliate Chapter, or interpreter education program. Others are private commitments between two individuals. Common to all successful mentoring relationship is a mutual commitment to professional growth.

### **Internships**

A common need faced by all school districts is the shortage of interpreters qualified to work in the kindergarten through 12th grade settings. One way this need can be addressed is by providing opportunities for internships for students attending Interpreter Preparation Programs (IPP). Internship experiences are excellent recruiting tools in addition to improving the overall quality of educational interpreting services.

To assure a positive internship experience, schools should identify an interpreter to serve as an advisory interpreter. This person is responsible for supervising the student interpreter and for evaluating and monitoring the student interpreter's performance. This may or may not be a mentoring relationship. Suggested qualifications of the advisory interpreter include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Qualified educational interpreter (See Rule 51, 010.07).
- Three or more years of experience as an educational interpreter
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- Excellent organizational skills

Expectations, roles and responsibilities need to be in writing and understood by everyone involved before the internship begins. Colleges and universities offering Interpreter Preparation Programs must provide the advisory interpreter with all the necessary documentation, contacts and guidelines needed for their internship program.

### **Benefits of Internships**

Internships can benefit the intern, working interpreters, students, and the interpreting profession. The intern may experience the following:

- A sense of connection
- A smooth entry into the interpreting field
- A look at interpreting from another's perspective
- Challenge to continue developing specific skills or knowledge areas
- Real-life interpreting experience under supervision
- Immediate feedback and guidance
- Expert modeling to observe and emulate

Deaf or hard of hearing student's benefits may include:

- Increase in the number of interpreters that they know
- Direct involvement in the professional growth of an interpreter
- A new understanding that becoming an interpreter requires commitment and training

Information and assistance in establishing an internship opportunity at your school can be obtained from your Regional Program, the Nebraska Department of Education Special Populations Office, the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing or the Nebraska Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.

Mentoring Source: Registry of Interpreter's for the Deaf [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)

# **Roles and Responsibilities of the Educational Interpreter**

## **Primary Role of the Educational Interpreter**

The interpreter is a member of the educational team, serving staff as well as students, hearing as well as deaf people, to minimize linguistic, cultural, and physical barriers. The title “Educational Interpreter” is recommended by the National Task Force on Educational Interpreting and is intended to imply that a person holding this title has specialized preparation in deafness, whose primary role is interpreting, and is qualified to provide certain other educational services described later in this document.

Within the context of the educational setting, the educational interpreter will facilitate communication and understanding among students who are deaf or hard of hearing, hearing students, the teachers, and others involved in the student’s education. Educational interpreters are an integral part of providing educational access for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

## **Explaining the Role of the Interpreter**

The interpreter shares responsibility with the school administration and others, (such as the supervisor of deaf education) for providing clarification regarding an accurate understanding of his/her role with students who are the deaf or hard of hearing, hearing students, school personnel, and parents. This is especially important in a school setting where there has been little or no experience with children who are deaf or hard of hearing or with educational interpreters.

Section 003.16, Rule 51 states: Educational sign language interpreter shall mean a person who provides interpreter services for educators and for deaf and hard of hearing individuals for special education evaluations or services pursuant to IEPs and IFSPs; and who is qualified to facilitate communication between people who do not share a common language or mode of communication.

Responsibilities of an Educational Interpreter may include:

- Facilitating communication in a variety of environments
- Participating in the individualized education program (IEP) process
- Participating as a member of the educational team
- Non-interpreting educational related activities
- Collaborating with educational staff
- Explaining the role of an interpreter

Clarification of the interpreter's role will do much to prevent uncertainty regarding how he or she contributes to the educational process. Providing in-service training to the entire school on the role of an interpreter may assist staff in accepting the interpreter as part of the educational team and promote the fuller integration of the interpreter into the school community. Information on the role of the interpreter may be provided during staff meetings, special announcements, one-on-one meetings, or with simple printed handouts explaining how best to utilize the service of an educational interpreter. It is important that the point be made that the interpreter is there for everyone, not just the individual who is deaf or hard of hearing - a point that may need to be reiterated periodically during the school year.

## **Modes of Communication**

Depending on the communication needs of the student(s) who are deaf or hard of hearing, there are different types of interpreters.

- There are oral interpreters who work with individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing who use speech and speechreading to communicate. The individual reads the lips of the interpreter who is specially trained to silently and clearly articulate speech.
- A cued speech interpreter is similar to an oral interpreter except that a hand code system or cue is used to represent speech sounds.
- Those who have both limited sight and hearing may receive services from a deaf-blind interpreter. There are several different deaf-blind interpreting techniques, but most frequently the deaf-blind individual receives the message by placing his/her hands on top of the interpreter's hands.
- The most common interpreter is a sign language interpreter. This interpreter listens to spoken messages and watches signed messages to interpret them.

You should make your Regional Coordinator aware of the communication modes used by students. The coordinator will be inviting students to attend regional and statewide events and the appropriate communication accommodations will need to be arranged in advance.

## Commonly Used Modes of Communication

### **American Sign Language (ASL)**

ASL is a visual-gestural language used by people who are Deaf in the United States and parts of Canada. ASL has its own culture, grammar and vocabulary. It is produced by using the hands, face and body and is not derived from spoken language.

### **Conceptually Accurate Signed English (CASE)**

CASE is often used for educational purposes, using manual signs in English word order. Few if any prefixes and suffixes are used and it is often used in simultaneous communication (talking and signing at the same time).

### **Manually Coded English (MCE)**

MCE is a system created to represent English using natural and invented signs in English word order. Some examples are Signing Exact English (SEE), Conceptually Accurate Signed English (CASE), and Signed English. Cued Speech is a manual representation of English that does not use signs.

### **Oral Communication Lip Reading**

Oral communication is the process of understanding the speech and/or mouth movements of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and repeating the message in spoken English; also the process of paraphrasing/transliterating a spoken message with or without voice and with natural lip movements or natural gestures.

### **Signing Exact English (SEE)**

The SEE system was developed for educational purposes. Each sign represents literal English, always adding prefixes and suffixes not present in American Sign Language.

The language to be used in the interpreting process should be compatible with that used by the student. It is not the interpreter's responsibility to select the mode(s) of communication to be used in class. The mode(s) should be dictated by student needs as indicated on the IEP or IFSP.

Interpreters/transliterators are important language models for the student who is deaf or hard of hearing and therefore must strive to be skilled in all mode(s) of communication. Contingent upon the training and experience, the educational interpreter should be able to determine the extent of the student's comprehension of the mode(s) of communication utilized. If the student has difficulty with instructional content, the educational interpreter must collaborate with the appropriate member of the educational team immediately.

## **Physical Setting Adaptations**

The general education teacher should assign seats for students who are deaf or hard of hearing where they will have an unobstructed view of the teacher and the interpreter. The interpreter, teacher, and other speakers must always be visible to those receiving visual communication

### **Physical Setting Suggestions**

The following suggestions for arranging the physical setting of the classroom are adapted from the *Kansas State Board of Education*, 1995 and the *Ohio Guidelines for Educational Interpreters*, 2000:

- The interpreter should be positioned close to the teacher whenever possible to enable the student to see the teacher and the interpreter clearly.
- If the teacher moves to another part of the room to lecture, then the interpreter may follow, making sure to stay in view of the student who is deaf or hard of hearing. If the teacher continues to walk and speak, the interpreter should find an appropriate place and interpret from there.
- The interpreter and the teacher must recognize that it is not possible for the student to look at visual aids and the interpreter simultaneously. Adjustments will need to be made.
- Dimming the lights often impedes the transmission of signed language so an alternative lighting source will need to be in place before the class begins.
- Teachers should use captioned media when available.
- The interpreter should be placed in the best position for viewing by the student when interpreting movies, TV, and overhead projections. The interpreter should not have his or her back to any lighting or windows that produce glare.
- When the interpreter is interpreting during an assembly program, placement should be where the student who is deaf or hard of hearing can see both the event and the interpreter.

Some accommodation of special needs will arise during events such as field trips, assemblies, public address announcements, films, media presentations, parent/teacher conferences, and other school events. The interpreter can work with the teachers, staff and the students to assist in determining where students are seated, the amount of lighting needed and where he/she should be positioned while interpreting.

## What does interpreting involve?

### **Cognitive Process**

The interpreter will perceive the source message...  
conceptualize...analyze...visualize...rehearse...  
then produce the target message while  
monitoring and making adjustment for accuracy...

Simultaneously the interpreter perceives the next chunk of source message...

### **Physical Process**

The interpreter will articulate accurately and monitor their production of spoken English and/or signed language (including correct spelling when using fingerspelling) while monitoring for a physically healthy work style...

### **Monitoring/Assessing**

The interpreter is continuously seeking and responding to feedback from those involved in the interpreting process, all the while monitoring and assessing their production into the target language. Interpreters will need to also monitor information to and from team interpreters, external environmental information, and changes in consumer modalities

**NOTE:** The above should be accomplished while maintaining a professional demeanor that does not distract from the presentation.

Adapted: National Technical Institute for the Deaf  
Department of Interpreting Services, 1996

## **Additional Interpreting Environments**

The educational interpreter's responsibilities may include interpreting during out-of-class and extracurricular activities. These responsibilities should be distinguished from extra assigned duties. Out-of-class activities are those in which the educational interpreter is involved primarily to interpret for the student who is deaf or hard of hearing and facilitate communication among students outside the classroom. This will include assemblies, field trips, and meetings involving disciplinary issues, parent or IEP conferences, and meetings with school personnel. Students that are deaf or hard of hearing often participate in school-sponsored extracurricular and other non-academic activities. Interpreting assignments involving time beyond the regular working hours should be compensated in some form per local policy (e.g. stipend, compensatory time off, or overtime pay).

## **Responsibilities Outside of Interpreting**

The educational interpreter may perform a number of other educational tasks, depending on the needs of the students and the interpreter's skills and background. Such duties are the responsibility of the individual school district to specify in a job description, and for the interpreter to accept or negotiate when hired. It is suggested that typical non-interpreting duties be identified and explained as follows:

### **Member of the Educational Team**

The educational interpreter is a member of the educational team, and, in some cases, may be the only staff person providing direct educational access to the student who is deaf or hard of hearing.

Members of the educational team rely on an interactive process based on joint analysis and problem solving. Educational interpreters both contribute to and benefit from this experience. The educational team is most often comprised of teachers, supervisors, school staff, and others who are directly responsible for the educational program of the student for whom the interpreter delivers services. The educational interpreter will learn information from the team experience that will be helpful in the interpreting task.

An educational interpreter's responsibilities are likely to vary considerably from one work setting to another. Based on education, experience, and daily interaction with the student, educational interpreters will be able to share information that would help the team determine a student's educational needs in the areas of functional language and communication skills. As a member of the educational team, the interpreter will be able to contribute special expertise, such as, information on the student's communication competencies and needs, the child's opportunities to communicate with peers, how the child understands others, and the child's understanding of the subject material. As part of the team interpreters may also provide information from deaf studies and the linguistics of American Sign Language. Educational interpreters should participate in the development and implementation of goals and objectives related to mode of communication and interpreting services.

When a team member, who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing, needs interpreting services it is important that a different interpreter be provided so that the student's interpreter can participate in the meeting without a role conflict.

## **Confidentiality**

As communication facilitators participating in all aspects of a student's school day, educational interpreters have more access to information about the student than other educational professionals. Decisions as to what should and should not be disclosed may be unclear to the interpreter unless he or she has a full understanding of district policies and the type of information school personnel are legally obligated to report. Confidentiality should not supersede the responsibility of all school employees to report information gained during school-related activities. If the interpreter has information that leads him or her to believe that the health, safety or welfare of students, staff, or property may be jeopardized, he or she should be aware of the reporting procedure.

The educational interpreters should be able to participate in several activities based on their skills:

- The interpreter may assist in the assessment of the student's receptive and expressive sign language and mode of communication used in order to judge the effectiveness of interpretation.
- Educational interpreters may also be able to share information as to how well the student utilizes interpreting services and knowledge of any special needs or instruction needed to help the student become a better consumer of interpreting services.
- Educational interpreters with appropriate education and training may be able to assist team members in conducting language and communication assessments.
- The interpreter should work with the student's teacher to keep an inventory of new and emerging signs and vocabulary that the student is learning and using.
- The interpreter should consult with the academic and/or vocational teachers of the student who is deaf or hard of hearing on a regular basis to prepare for any new concepts and vocabulary that will be introduced in a subsequent class.
- The interpreter should be able to share knowledge about the deaf or hard of hearing student's sign communication ability with the student's teachers.
- Interpreters can be part of the planning process with the student's teacher(s) or other support staff.
- Interpreters may be asked to participate in student conferences and meetings with the Multi Disciplinary Team (MDT).

Before an interpreter is to participate at the MDT conference, he/she may require some knowledge of standard assessments, basic assessment processes, and how these processes may or may not relate to the observed classroom behavior. Interpreters may also need some background in language and literacy assessments to describe their perceptions competently. Per Rule 51 (§006.04E1), a teacher endorsed in education of the deaf and a speech-language pathologist will be members of the student's MDT and IEP teams. The interpreter may need an understanding of the school environment and culture to be able to comment on the student's behavior and adjustment to the general education classroom and to assist school personnel in making accommodations in a variety of areas.

Educational interpreters appreciate access to information and student files regarding special instructional needs in order to effectively provide interpreting services that match the student's communication and cognitive abilities.

The success of the educational interpreter may depend as much on his or her ability to work cooperatively with adults and children as on interpreting skill. A collegial relationship with other professionals and willingness to share responsibilities can be the basis for successful team operation. Administrative understanding and support of these relationships create an atmosphere for collegial relationships to develop and grow.

### **Parent Conferences**

Interpreters may be asked to provide interpreting services to parents who are deaf or hard of hearing during conferences about their, or with parents who are deaf or hard of hearing and have hearing children who attend the school. The interpreter should be skilled in the language/mode with which the adult is most comfortable.

In this situation, it must be made clear that the interpreter is functioning in only one role. The interpreter may serve as facilitator of communication, whose task is to ease the exchange of information or as a participant, whose responsibility is to contribute information to the discussion, but not both. In this case, the optimum situation would be to bring another interpreter into the meeting, in order to avoid role confusion and the potential compromise of the quality of interpreting.

### **Tutoring**

Interpreters may be asked to tutor under the supervision of the regular classroom teacher or the teacher of the deaf. Since interpreters must, by definition, be able to communicate well with the student, tutoring and reviewing assignments may be an appropriate job responsibility. However, it must be clear that these additional responsibilities will not take the place of interpreting. The subject area in which interpreters are expected to tutor should be one with which they are familiar. Interpreters should also receive ongoing in-service training in instructional strategies to be used during the tutoring sessions. It is recommended that educational interpreters who tutor should receive instruction in behavior management techniques before they

begin tutoring. This skill is important in order to know how to keep students focused and on task.

### **Who can teach Sign Language?**

At times, the educational interpreter may be expected to teach basic and enrichment level sign language to hearing and/or deaf students, as well as to faculty and other staff members. Interpreter preparation programs seldom cover in-depth training in the instruction of sign language and interpreters are not ordinarily prepared to teach the linguistics of American Sign Language (ASL). If your school or district chooses to teach ASL as a second language or for language credit, only qualified individuals should be hired. To locate qualified instructors contact the American Sign Language Teachers Association.

### **Classroom Assistance**

While classroom management is the responsibility of the teacher, interpreters may provide other kinds of assistance to the classroom teacher when interpreting is not needed. There must be a good understanding of the level and kind of assistance the interpreter can contribute to the classroom environment without interfering with the primary duty of interpreting.

### **Discipline of Students**

Because of the proximity of the educational interpreter and the student, the educational interpreter may be involved in situations that need disciplinary action. It would be helpful for both the teacher and the educational interpreter to establish a mechanism for dealing with these situations at the beginning of the school year. At this time, strategies to address behavior that may require disciplinary action could be jointly developed. The teacher and the interpreter could then implement a plan to address a student's classroom management needs, behavior expectations, and discipline. This could be as simple as a predetermined signal from the interpreter to the teacher that there is a problem.

Generally, the educational interpreter would not be involved in disciplinary action. This would cloud the perception of roles, compromise the student-teacher relationship, and strain the relationship between the student and the interpreter.

In situations where the student is misbehaving toward the interpreter, the interpreter may respond directly. This may take the form of a private discussion between the interpreter and the student concerning mutual responsibility and respect or may include expanding discussion to include the teacher, administrators and other staff, as appropriate. The educational interpreter may also be asked to facilitate communication in disciplinary settings involving the teacher or other staff. In this case, it is possible that the anger the student may feel at the punishment, especially during the elementary years, may be focused on the interpreter rather than on the individual dictating the

punishment. If the interpreter is involved in the situation being discussed, he/she should not also be expected to interpret. It is important that the child understands clearly the roles of the various professionals. Both the person providing the punishment and the interpreter will need to understand and be able to articulate these dynamics. Your Regional Program can assist in locating interpreters and/or mediators for such situations involving the student's educational interpreter.

### **Educational Planning Time**

To effectively fulfill his/her primary role of providing interpretation and transliteration in the educational setting, the interpreter's work schedule should include preparation time.

### **Suggested Uses of Interpreter Preparation Time**

#### **Within the School Day**

- Obtain and preview/read course textbooks subject-related materials, media resources (film/video), and support materials: scripts, outlines, overhead slides etc.
- Periodically review course notes, past and present course syllabi, etc.
- Recall and not previously acquired knowledge and resources.
- Address logistics by securing assignment location, necessary support equipment (e.g., lights, sound, video, chairs).
- Assure environmental safety by consulting with teachers, students, administrators, guest speakers, and others involved.
- Obtain and translate written text such as music, poetry, scripts and recitations.
- Practice specific skills to interpreting: fingerspelling, voicing practice by videotape, vocabulary production/pronunciation, and grammatical structures and features of American Sign Language. Continue to study how these skills can transfer to signing in English word order.
- Consult and share knowledge with support colleagues including interpreters, tutors, educational specialists and Deaf professionals.
- Continue extended dialog with people involved in new or special assignments.
- Assess linguistic needs (e.g. register, regional accent).
- Continue to educate others by providing cultural specific information for both deaf and hearing people regarding deafness, interpreting, modes of communication, captioned materials and linguistic limitations.
- Complete required paperwork, which may include IEP requests for information, assignment communication, FYI notes.
- Read & respond to e-mail, regular mail, and process professional development forms (e.g. CEUs, reimbursement forms).
- Communicate with event sponsors & contact persons.
- Secure logistics regarding changes and substitute assignments.
- Exchange pertinent information with colleagues including substitutes, team members, and support service personnel.
- Communicate with supervisor regarding professional development plan, licensure, assignment changes, service changes and possible alternate assignments.

- Facilitate support service concerns as a member of the IEP team.
- Set up equipment and preview materials

### Outside the School Day

- Attend in-service training or enroll in college courses related to interpreting.
- Retain mentors or participate in small group study of specific topics related to the interpreting process.
- Practice specific skills (e.g., fingerspelling, voicing, grammatical structures of ASL).
- Practice healthy living activities that can reduce problems related to stress and cumulative trauma disorders (e.g., conditioning, stretching, aerobic training, stress management, cognitive relaxation, time management).

The Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing maintains a current list of language mentors, small group facilitators, and workshop leaders for analyzing your work to maintain a healthy work style.

### Supported Work and Internship Settings

In vocational settings, the interpreter may be asked to facilitate communication in on-the-job situations on or off the school premises. Although the interpreter may be working as part of an educational team, he or she will be specifically responsible to assist the student in meeting communication needs. In such settings, a job coach rather than an interpreter may advocate for the worker who is deaf or hard of hearing. The job coach develops strategies for on-the-job communication, helps train the prospective worker and educates staff about disabilities. The roles of a job coach and an interpreter should be clarified to those involved with the student before a work or vocational experience or training begins. While serving as a job coach in one setting and an interpreter in another setting, the role must be clearly differentiated in the vocational environment.

### Counseling Situations

When students who are deaf or hard of hearing receive counseling, an interpreter may be needed. In counseling situations that deal with social or emotional issues, the Code of Ethics of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf should be consulted. In these counseling sessions, the role of the interpreter is clearly that of communication facilitator *only*. The ethics of the counseling professionals as well as the interpreter should work to be sure that confidentiality is carefully observed, and that the child's classroom interpreter is not present if the child needs to discuss a problem involving that interpreter. For example, the child maybe experiencing difficulty adjusting to the interpreter's personality or may be critical of the interpreter's sign language skills. This type of situation would require the services of another *non-involved* interpreter.

## **Testing Situations**

Educational interpreters are often called upon to interpret the written and spoken language of an examination, such as a psychological evaluation, standardized test, reading exam, or spelling test or to provide for communication needs during a student's individualized evaluation or vocational assessment. The educational interpreter's role during testing situations should be clear to everyone involved. It is important that interpreters and the evaluator meet prior to the testing situation to discuss such things as the student's background and role/expectations of the interpreters in this setting.

It is imperative that the interpreter, instructional staff and administration work together to ensure fairness both to the student and to the testing instrument. When providing interpretation as a test modification, care should be taken to conform to the requirements of tests and not to interfere or adversely affect what is being tested.

## **Special situations**

Those educational situations that take the student and the interpreter outside of a typical school environment may be defined as special situations. These may include driver education classes, field trips, and involvement in community activities or situations related to employment or transition activities. It is advised to call ahead to see if interpreters are available or can be provided by the sponsor of the activity or event. These situations may require different kinds of arrangements and considerations.

Situations:

- Should an interpreter accompany a student during "on-the-road" segments of driver education classes? What are the safety considerations inherent for visible communication in a moving vehicle?
- How may the educational interpreter assist in planning for situations that take the student outside of school, such as, when meeting with a prospective employer or exploring college and community opportunities?
- Should the interpreter be expected to interpret a play or a lecture without access to the script, notes and/or previewing the event?
- Should the interpreter be expected to interpret for one student off campus while the other students remain in the classroom?
- How many interpreters are needed when interpreting over a three-hour block of time?

- Who should interpret for a meeting on school grounds between the student and his/her visiting social worker or parole officer?
- Should an interpreter be expected to interpret for Multi-Media that is not closed captioned? (i.e. Educational CD, Digital Video presentations).
- Should guest speakers who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing provide their own interpreter? Who will pay for the interpreter? Is your educational interpreter specially trained in interpreting presentations made by adults who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing?

Strategies for dealing with special situations should be developed on a case-by-case basis to meet the student's individual needs and the needs of the interpreter.

## **The Interpreter and the Student Who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing and their interpreter often establish a close relationship because they are together every day in many different situations. An overly dependent relationship may develop when a student begins to rely on the interpreter for the emotional support and understanding that might better be provided by the student's peers. When this occurs, the interpreter should ask for guidance from the school counselors and the Regional Coordinators, when appropriate to develop strategies for enhancing student independence and self-confidence. When the student has concerns regarding the support services provided, including interpreting, it is important that he or she has a forum where these issues may be aired. In situations where the interpreter must be present as a participant, it is essential that the district provide an interpreter *not* involved within the program to facilitate communication.

Students, especially in elementary grades, do not necessarily know how to work with the interpreter effectively. Students must learn proper use of all support services including the educational interpreter. The teacher of the student who is deaf or hard of hearing, educational interpreters or members of the student's educational support team could work with the student in understanding the interpreter's role. Such learning is an ongoing process as the student matures and interpreting situations become more involved (e.g., in a laboratory or driver education environment). When the student has concerns regarding the support services provided, including interpreting, it is important that he or she be able to advocate for appropriate services.

The interpreter must keep current on the standardized technical signs used in different content areas. When a standardized sign is unavailable or unknown, the interpreter, with input from a language specialist, may create a sign for use within the educational setting that is expedient enough for everyday use. The sign must also be conceptually appropriate. The appropriate standardized sign should be determined subsequently through research and incorporated into both the student and interpreter's sign repertoire. The interpreter can rely on fingerspelling as an appropriate alternative for a word or concept without a sign, or for which a sign is not known.

Students should exit the public school with an understanding of the role of the educational interpreter at the elementary, secondary, and post-secondary level. They should also be educated in strategies for dealing with an interpreter who lacks sufficient skill and knowledge needed for the circumstances. It is inappropriate for a school to hire a family member to provide interpreting services in the educational setting.

## **Suggested Goals for Empowering Students who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing Working with an Educational Interpreter**

### **Elementary:**

- The student will learn the role of the educational interpreter in the classroom.
- The student will direct questions to the classroom teacher.
- The student will learn the best seating for the classroom in order to access the teacher and the interpreter at any given time.

### **Middle School:**

Above goals are repeated as needed before moving on to the following:

- The student will learn how to access services in the school and how to request interpreting services.
- Student will use the state's relay call service to make a phone call independent of the interpreter.
- The student will understand the roles of the differing school personnel, principal, assistant principal, and guidance counselor so as not to rely on the interpreter to direct him/her.

### **High School:**

All the above goals are repeated as needed before moving on to the following:

- Student will learn the roles the members of his/her IEP team.
- Student will understand how the interpreter fits into career exploration and development.
- Student will learn what interpreting services are available to him/her through the State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services.
- Student will learn the laws that protect his/her rights to an interpreter: (e.g. IDEA, ADA, 504).
- Student will learn the difference in working with an educational interpreter and a contracted interpreter in the community.
- The student will learn how to request an interpreter for personal needs. (e.g. drivers testing, arrangements for prom, job interviews).
- The student will learn how to advocate for him/herself in requesting interpreters and other assistive listening devices (e.g., during transition activities).

## **Educational Interpreters and Their Colleagues**

### **Educational Interpreter and the Teacher**

The relationship between the educational interpreter and the teacher is of primary importance. Having another adult in the classroom may cause some anxiety for teachers who are not used to providing instruction with other adults present. Teachers may regard it as diminishing their authority at first, but over time, most come to value the help which the interpreters provide and become comfortable with their presence.

In order to coordinate communication and educational planning for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, time must be allotted for educational interpreters and teachers to meet and discuss course content, lesson plans, upcoming tests, student learning styles, and special classroom environment considerations. Interpreters appreciate pre-viewing lesson plans, quizzes, tests, the text, and the questions and answers to timed games and other competitions.

Educational support might be included as an educational interpreter's responsibility, but the teacher is charged with the main responsibility for teaching and assessing student progress. Educational interpreters do not provide primary instruction; however, they should be available to interpret tutoring sessions between teachers and students and to reinforce curriculum-based vocabulary.

The responsibilities for management of the classroom should never be placed on the interpreter. The educational interpreter should not be asked to assume duties such as covering a classroom or teaching a lesson, with the exception of teaching signed language to the student's peers (*Kansas State Board of Education, 1995*).

### **Educational Interpreter and the Teacher of the Deaf**

The relationship between the teacher of the deaf and the educational interpreter is an important one. Both are professionals working as part of a team to ensure the most appropriate education for the student. They must draw upon their expertise in order to provide in-service training for staff and hearing students as well as instructional strategies and delivery systems for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Because teachers of the deaf should have knowledge about the implementation of support services, they may be called upon to coordinate interpreter services, (i.e., to help devise scheduling and deal with logistics). The coordination, however, depends on the success of this constant feedback from the interpreter and must be accompanied by an open-mindedness and respect on the part of the teacher of the deaf for the skills, responsibilities, and demands placed on the educational interpreter.

Interpreters can provide essential information to the teacher of the deaf because they are present with the student throughout the school day. They may provide input on the student's use of language skills, strengths, and weaknesses. At the secondary level,

the input from the interpreter should be less because the student should be more capable of communicating his or her own needs.

Because contact between the interpreter and teacher of the deaf is so essential to the student's success within the regular education environment, consultations between them should be routinely scheduled within the school day

### **Educational Interpreter and the Parent**

Since the interpreter will typically spend most of each school day with the child, the parent may contact the interpreter for information about the child. The interpreter should refer the parent to the teacher for specific information concerning academic or vocational progress and overall student performance. Matters concerning placement, other support services, etc., should be referred to the person who heads the student's educational support team, or student's special education teacher. The interpreter should be able to communicate about the benefits or effectiveness of the interpreting service, general information about deaf culture and signed language.

### **Educational Interpreter and the Note-taker**

The educational interpreter may not be the only support service provider in the classroom on a daily basis. Note-takers may be provided to record class material for some students who are deaf or hard of hearing. A student who is attending to the interpreter, to the teacher for speech-reading clues, and watching the blackboard or overhead display, will not be able to take notes. In addition to taking notes, the note-taker provides a written context of the classroom and content area. It is important to diminish the potential for confusion, distractions, and anxiety by careful planning and explanation. In the many situations where this has occurred, it quickly becomes the norm, and is usually readily accepted by all parties.

Interpreters are unable to act as note-takers when interpreting. Students meeting specific criteria may be encouraged to become note-takers for the student who is deaf or hard of hearing. These notes could also be made available to other students in the classroom if the IEP state that notes need to be provided. Student note-takers should be provided training including specific instructions, as well as the materials needed (i.e., carbon notepads providing up to three copies of the notes). In some instances it would be appropriate for teachers to provide notes (especially information presented quickly from an overhead or power point presentation) to the student, to the educator of the deaf, or to parent(s). Interpreters often request a copy of the notes to review vocabulary, prepare substitute interpreters and review the concepts presented.

## **Educational Interpreter and the Building Administrators**

The administrators of the building are important people on the educational team. Their attitude toward the interpreter will influence the way the rest of the staff will perceive and interact with the interpreter. Routine inclusion of the interpreter in staff meetings, in-service opportunities and activities will set a positive tone, and will greatly enhance the interpreter's ability to perform his/her responsibilities.

The administrator can also ensure that the interpreter has sufficient time to prepare for and rest from interpreting, thereby avoid cumulative trauma disorders and diminished quality of interpretation due to mental and physical fatigue. The interpreter should be willing to work flexibly with administrators on matters related to scheduling and roles and responsibilities. A word of caution needs to be expressed regarding the role of the educational interpreter on the educational team. Because the interpreter is often the only person in the school with special knowledge about deafness, he or she may be called upon as a resource in this field. However, the interpreter is ethically obligated to be aware of his or her limitations and be able to identify other resources, where appropriate (i.e., Regional Coordinators, Nebraska Department of Education Special Populations Office).

### **Code of Ethics**

**The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)** in 1979, adopted a Code of Ethics for Interpreters. Most interpreting up to this time had been for adults in everyday situations such as going to the doctor, conducting business in the community, and attending church. The advent and expansion of the mainstream movement increased the demand for interpreters in the educational settings at a rapid pace--- first in colleges, and subsequently through all levels of public education. Currently, by far the majority of interpreting for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing is done in educational settings.

The Code of Ethics was developed to set a standard of ethical behavior and to guard against potential for abuse of interpreter-client relationships, especially in regards to confidentiality. Of the nine tenets detailed in the Code of Ethics, the one aimed at preserving confidentiality in the interpreter-client relationship has proven the most problematic in educational settings. A strict application of the Code of Ethics for adults, in community settings, would prevent the educational interpreter from discussing anything about the content of interpreting with any person.

Source: Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf [www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)

School districts in some states have adapted the RID Code of Ethics to educational settings so that it still provides useful guidelines for ethical behavior, but incorporates the principle of discussing student needs and performance with the educational team or as dictated by policies and procedures within the district and school building. Any school may choose to adapt the RID Code of Ethics to clarify the educational interpreter's role within the educational setting.

In any case, the educational interpreter would need to maintain a professional attitude and adhere to the policies and practices established within the school for its entire staff in promoting the safety and welfare of students within the school. The authority for determining the communication mode to be practiced in the school lies with the MDT/IEP team. The RID Code of Ethics states that the client determines the mode. This may not be practical in the educational environment, especially in an elementary setting where English language development and sign development may be rudimentary in the beginning. The MDT/IEP Team determines the mode and method of communication to be used with the student.

The RID, Inc. Code of Ethics has become a national standard for gauging the ethical behavior of interpreters. The Code of Ethics is not intended to replace or supplant law, nor is it a substitute for work rules.

### **Educational Interpreter's Code of Conduct**

1. The educational interpreter shall hold all school-related information confidential. As a member of the educational team, the interpreter shall function in a manner that is appropriate to the team, sharing information that relates directly to the work of other professionals in their contact with the deaf or hard of hearing student in a professional and judicious manner.
2. The educational interpreter shall strive to equalize the source language and target language by using language that is compatible with the student's developmental level.
3. The educational interpreter shall not counsel or advise students or other professionals in a manner that is inconsistent with his or her role as an interpreter.
4. The educational interpreter shall present a professional appearance and demeanor appropriate to the educational environment(s) in which he or she works. The educational interpreter shall develop professionally through continuing education, including education that is relevant to the role(s) for which the interpreter is hired.

Chafin-Seal, Brenda. Best Practices in Educational Interpreting 1998

## Ethical Considerations

*(Adapted from the Ohio Guidelines for Educational Interpreters, October 2000)*

Ethical considerations are a set of principles that direct district board policies for guiding and protecting educational interpreters, students, and educational agencies. Expected practices of educational interpreters with accompanying guidelines follow.

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- Educational interpreters/transliterators will discuss assignment-related information only with other members of the educational team who are directly responsible for the educational programs of children who are deaf or hard of hearing for whom interpreters interpret or transliterate.

**Guideline:** Interpreters/transliterators at the elementary and secondary levels function as support service providers on the educational team, collaborating with the teachers who are responsible for the children's educational programs. Interpreters/transliterators should discuss the children's communicative functioning in the interpreting situation on a regular basis with the classroom teacher and/or designated administrator.

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- Educational interpreters/transliterators shall render the message faithfully, always conveying the content and spirit of the speaker, using the mode of communication stated on the IEP.

**Guideline:** It is the interpreters'/transliterators' responsibility to transmit the message as it was intended. Short clarifications of presented materials may be done throughout the presentation, but if extensive explanation is required, this should be done at a later time by the classroom teacher.

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- Under the supervision of the classroom teacher, interpreters/transliterators may work with individual students who are deaf or hard of hearing and assist them to better access the presented material. Interpreters should direct students to an appropriate person for the advice they seek.

**Guideline:** Interpreters are to interpret the message faithfully during actual interpreted sessions, but they may work individually with students to reinforce concepts taught after the interpreting sessions have been completed. The classroom teacher will direct the interpreters'/transliterators' activities and provide all materials needed for individual work. Interpreters will not be required to devise materials or activities for students who are deaf or hard of hearing without input from the classroom teacher.

## Ethical Considerations Continued

- Educational interpreters/transliterators will function in a manner appropriate to the situation.

**Guideline:** In the educational setting, it is vital that interpreters/transliterators conduct themselves in a professional manner and dress in a way that is reflective of the other professionals working in the school. Interpreters/transliterators will display professional conduct and wear clothing befitting the interpreting situation. The interpreter's clothing should contrast with skin tones and not be distracting to the conveyance of the signed message. The interpreter's/transliterators' personal conduct will demonstrate his/her willingness to be part of the educational team and he/she will display behavior that is cooperative and supportive in spirit.

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- Educational interpreters/transliterators shall accept the same responsibilities and authority as other members of the educational staff. They will abide by and enforce federal, state, school district and individual school laws and rules.

**Guideline:** As school district employees, interpreters must assume responsibility for knowing and enforcing government and school laws. As working members of the educational team, interpreters/transliterators are not exempt from the codes and policies established by the educational agency. Participation as educational team members requires that interpreters/transliterators help enforce these rules and report infringements of laws, rules, and codes to the appropriate authority.

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- Educational interpreters/transliterators will further their knowledge and skills by fulfilling the requirements of licensure standards.

**Guideline:** Interpreters/transliterators in the educational setting will attain and maintain their knowledge and skills required by the state standards by participating in continuing professional development activities as approved by their supervisor.

Source: The Ohio State Board of Education Guidelines for Educational Interpreters, 2000

## **Professional Development and Promotion**

### **Professional Development**

Continued professional development is a necessary part of growth for educational interpreters, teachers, administrators, and other employees. As interpreters evaluate their needs and goals for professional development, their options should not be limited to just classes that stress the movement of their hands or the actual process of facilitating communication. There are several other areas that should be considered for individual growth as an educational interpreter in a school setting.

### **Professional Development Options and Activities**

- Interpreter training/preparation programs
- In-service training opportunities
- Workshops and conferences
- Independent study and research
- College courses
- Content area updates
- Collaboration and team building
- Activities that improve technology skills
- School or program committees related to issues in the area of hearing impairments
- Training for interpreter certification (RID, Inc. or NAD)
- Development of skills to assume non-interpreting responsibilities (e.g., tutoring, sign language instruction, supervision of interpreters)
- Training for interpreting at various educational development levels and with special populations (e.g., students with both hearing and visual impairments)
- Training for interpreting in various language modes (e.g., oral interpreting, ASL, Manually Coded English, Cued Speech, and deaf-blind interpreting)
- Activities that result in greater understanding of the academic and social development of students who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Development of skills for communicating and collaborating with parents and/or general special educators
- Improvement of skills in academic areas to broaden knowledge in subject areas being interpreted
- Broadening knowledge of deaf culture
- Understanding the roles of an educational interpreter as a member of the school and IEP team
- Development of basic knowledge in the education of students with hearing impairments and foundations of education
- Involvement in professional interpreter organizations and conferences

## **Professional Development Plan**

Each interpreter should be encouraged to submit an individual professional development plan to ensure that the identified goals and strategies are relevant to the needs of the school, the district, the students, and the interpreter. Interpreters should document their attendance at activities, classes, or other training opportunities.

In developing an individual professional development plan, importance is placed on showing the relationship between these professional endeavors and the interpreter's assignment and job responsibilities in the school setting. For example, taking computer classes could help to improve the interpreter's understanding of specialized vocabulary for use in accurate interpreting, while also helping him or her to better use e-mail to communicate with other personnel in the program and school.

## **Promotion**

Based on local personnel policies, there may be opportunities for promotion into roles such as lead interpreter, interpreter mentor, interpreter coordinator, and interpreter supervisor. Advancement opportunities foster job satisfaction and motivation for continuing professional development and longevity of employment.

Opportunities should be present for professional advancement for educational interpreters through salary and wage increments that are based on local personnel policies. Compensation or other rewards could also be offered based on academic degree, national interpreter certification, membership in interpreter organizations, and seniority.

A fully qualified educational interpreter will possess the optimum combination of interpreting skills for expressing and receiving information in a variety of signed and oral languages or modes. Interpreters should also have interpersonal skills that will enable them to work effectively with students and staff. They should also have comprehensive and general knowledge of academic subjects, current events, the educational processes, including principles and practices of special education, as well as aspects and issues of hearing impairment in students and adults.

## **General Knowledge**

The educational interpreter is called upon to interpret a wide variety of academic and vocational subjects. This requires general knowledge in a broad range of content areas, including knowledge from the humanities, the sciences, and the arts. Therefore, the preparation of the educational interpreter should contain a broad spectrum of studies often collectively referred to as, "general studies."

## **Interpreting Skills**

Given the variety of communication skills and preferences represented by deaf and hard of hearing students, an interpreter must be skilled in presenting information visually to the deaf child, in the form most effective for that child's understanding. An interpreter might be called upon to do the following:

- Interpret the English message into American Sign Language, or a variation of signed English;
- Voice interpret a message from American Sign Language, or a variation of signed English into spoken English;
- Interpret spoken message into Cued Speech, or Cued Speech into spoken English;
- Interpret a spoken message using principles of Oral Transliteration.

It is impractical to expect that an interpreter has expertise in all these forms of interpretation, but minimally, an educational interpreter should be able to:

- Interpret from and into American Sign Language,
- Interpret orally, and
- Interpret from and into signed English.

Skill in interpreting presumes a good command of spoken and written English, including a large vocabulary and good spelling skills.

## **Specialized Knowledge**

In addition, specialized knowledge about deafness is critical. This should include knowledge and understanding of the etiology of hearing loss; communications, educational and sociological impact of deafness; use of assistive listening and communication devices; the deaf community; political and social organizations of, by and for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing; principles and techniques of educational and other kinds of interpreting; and cultural and intercultural communication.

## **Knowledge of History, Principles, and Practice of Education**

In order to function effectively in an educational system, a general knowledge of the development and operation of that system is important. An educational interpreter needs to understand the operation of school systems to be able to communicate effectively with other personnel within the system. Likewise, knowledge of the principles of education will assist the interpreter in the shared task of providing an appropriate educational experience. Moreover, knowledge of history, philosophy, practices, and methodology in education of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, within the context of special education is necessary.

Preparation should include:

- Child development and the impact of deafness on the developmental process in children who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Overview of education and knowledge of trends in education at all levels
- Overview of the history and philosophy of education of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing, and the role herein of communications methodologies, establishment and maintenance of a Deaf community
- The position of the education of the deaf within the larger category of special education and vocational rehabilitation
- National and State laws and regulations centrally affecting the education of students with disabilities
- The history, purpose and function of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), and issues and research dealing with the field of interpreting in general.

### **Professional Manner**

The educational interpreter must work cooperatively and effectively with members of the educational team who impact on the educational experience of the child who is deaf or hard of hearing. The quality of this interaction can impact the effectiveness of the interpreter as a member of the educational team and can influence the attitudes of professional personnel (as well as students) toward a positive and active acceptance of a student who is deaf or hard of hearing in the classroom.

Interpreters must be able to demonstrate in a non-threatening manner the nature of their expertise and knowledge about deafness and how that may be applied to support the teacher, the student who is deaf or hard of hearing and the other students in the educational setting. Interpreters must be assertive without being confrontational, and show initiative in helping others understand how to work with interpreters most effectively. The traits of friendliness, courtesy, and respect for the knowledge and abilities of everyone in the environment, including students, are vital. Some of these skills are often learned in the normal course of human development, but understanding one's role as a member of an educational team would probably have to be learned in a educational interpreting class and be continuously refined through practice.

## **Nebraska Department of Education**

The Nebraska Department of Education has and will continue to support numerous educational opportunities for working interpreters to upgrade and evaluate their skills. Development of an Educational Interpreter Preparation Program is underway at the University of Nebraska at Omaha in order to provide ongoing educational opportunities for current and future educational interpreters.

While these activities will address the qualification of educational interpreters, there is still a need for the standardization of their roles and responsibilities within the educational setting. This document has provided general guidelines regarding the appropriate provision of educational interpreter services, including the adoption of standards at the local level, and the recruitment and responsibilities of educational interpreters.

There is a shortage of consumer-oriented materials to assist in making good use of educational interpreter services. Information about educational interpreting resources can be found in the Appendixes of this document.

This publication is not intended to provide comprehensive information for every situation but rather to begin to standardize practice regarding English/Sign Language Educational Interpreting. The Nebraska Department of Education, Special Populations Office along with your Regional Program Coordinator can provide you with extensive consultation and continued support.

## **Appendix A                      Responsibilities of the Educational Interpreter**

- The interpreter should take time at the beginning of the school year to discuss the role of the interpreter in the classroom.
- Before the first day of school, the interpreter should obtain textbooks (teacher's editions if available), course outlines, and other related materials.
- The interpreter should obtain lesson plans needed to familiarize himself or herself with the vocabulary so that appropriate sign choices can be made.
- The interpreter shall interpret all lectures, discussions, demonstrations, and announcements as accurately as possible.
- The interpreter shall interpret the student's comments, responses, and presentations as accurately as possible.
- The interpreter should ask for clarification when information is not clear.
- The interpreter should sit or stand where the student can easily see him or her, the teacher; and the chalkboard, and be aware of distracting backgrounds.
- The interpreter should sit or stand where light or sunlight does not shine in his or her eyes or the student's eyes.
- The interpreter should, when necessary, remind the teacher and students to communicate directly with each other.
- If the interpreter suspects the student is having difficulty understanding the course content, he or she should inform the teacher.
- The interpreter should work with the instructor and deaf education staff to determine if problems are course related or interpreting service related.
- Under no circumstances should the responsibility of the teacher for management of the class be abdicated to the interpreter. In addition, the interpreter should not be asked to assume duties for which he or she does not have the necessary training or background knowledge. The interpreter's duties should be consistent with the job description, school guidelines, and/or the contract with an interpreting agency.
- The interpreter should be able to communicate about the benefits or effectiveness of the interpreting service provided and refer any parent with concerns or questions to the teacher for progress and overall student performance. Matters concerning placement, other support services, and related issues should be referred to the person who heads the student's support team.
- The interpreter shall function in a manner appropriate to the situation and should strive to maintain professional standards.
- The interpreter shall not allow inappropriate dependence to be developed with-in the student/interpreter relationship.
- In the case of inappropriate or "questionable" language, it is not the role of the interpreter to act as an editor or censor. The message should be interpreted or voiced in the manner and content in which it is presented.
- The interpreter should clarify the role of the interpreter to help all parties concerned understand how best to use an interpreter. This may be necessary throughout the year.
- The interpreter shall maintain confidentiality as required by the code of ethics.

(Adapted from the Kansas State Board of Education, 1995)

## **Appendix B**

### **Sample job Description for the Educational Interpreter**

This sample represents a “generic” job description that may be suitable for K-12. It is a composite of job descriptions contained in the Clearinghouse on Educational Interpreting materials housed at the National Technical Institute for the Deaf [www.ntidweb.rit.edu](http://www.ntidweb.rit.edu) and edited to be consistent with the Educational Interpreting for Deaf Students Report of the National Task Force on Educational Interpreting.

Be aware that job descriptions may need to be tailored for Nebraska and/or the particular school district.

#### **General Description**

Educational interpreters provide interpreting and other support services to students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing participating in inclusive, mainstreamed, or self-contained settings within the school district. The educational interpreter’s primary function is to facilitate communication among students who are deaf or hard of hearing and their hearing peers, the classroom teacher, or other personnel within the school system.

#### **Responsibilities**

- Provide sign-to-spoken and spoken-to-sign interpreting which may include American Sign Language or a form of Manually Coded English.
- Participate in educational team meetings, including the multidisciplinary evaluation process and the development and review of progress on the individualized educational program (IEP), to provide goals and insight of the success of communication strategies.
- Provide interpreting for extracurricular activities and parent meetings when necessary, with compensation.
- Assist in providing orientations to deafness for students and staff.

#### **Qualifications**

- Bachelor Degree preferred. A minimum of an Associate Degree required.
- Certification Preferred (RID, NAD)
- Completion of an interpreter Preparation Program.
- Two or more years experience interpreting in an educational setting desired.

## Appendix C

### **Suggestions for Testing Situations That Could Include a Sign Language Interpreter**

*Adapted from the Ohio Guidelines for Educational Interpreters 2000*

There is an increasing emphasis on measurement, assessment, and validation of learner performance. Measurements may include curriculum-based evaluation, proficiency testing, and other forms of evaluation. Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may not be automatically excluded from proficiency tests; participating in statewide proficiency testing is not, however appropriate for all students.

The student's IEP team must determine the degree to which a student who is deaf or hard of hearing participates in proficiency testing (i.e., whether the student takes one or more of the tests) after consideration of the student's individual needs. The student's IEP must document the specific test to be taken and whether or not any accommodations, such as interpreting, will be provided to the student. Care must be taken to assure that accommodations shall not change the content or structure of the test, shall not change what the test is intended to measure, and shall not change or enhance the student's response.

Interpretation is a valid accommodation for some students taking proficiency tests. State law regarding proficiency tests, the IEP, and classroom procedures used with the student determine whether the test can be interpreted and how. Individuals who provide this interpretation must follow all applicable laws and procedures.

In no case should accommodations be provided beyond regular classroom practice. For example, when the student's IEP stipulates interpretation, that generally includes interpreting such things as directions, prompts of the writing test questions and multiple-choice answers. Individual words should not be interpreted; instead, the interpreter may interpret the entire sentence in which that word occurs. Interpretation of reading passages would generally not be permitted since the purpose of the test is to assess the student's ability to comprehend text. An exception may be made only if all instruction is delivered via sign (i.e., if the student never reads).

Use of dictionaries is allowable if such use is a regular IEP accommodation. This is not a common accommodation for students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Dictionaries are also allowed for students identified as limited English proficient (LEP). However, this is a legal definition that generally does not apply to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. Though some students who are deaf or hard of hearing have limited English skills, LEP refers to "national origin minority group children" who come from environments where English is not the dominant language.

If all test items are interpreted, test administration will take longer than the prescribed time. Waiving time limits is a reasonable accommodation. If the student who is deaf or hard of hearing will take longer than other students, or if the interpretation is likely to be distracting to other students, the test may be given in another room with the interpreter serving as proctor. In this case, the interpreter should be made aware of all requirements for test administration, such as procedures for restroom use, ensuring that maps and flags are not visible, and providing for any other state or school conditions.

Effective interpretation requires the interpreter to be familiar with the material being interpreted. For this reason, an interpreter may want to look over the proficiency test ahead of time. While the local test administrator may permit this type of review, he or she may require the interpreter to preview the test material in a secure office. Test materials should always be locked up when not in use. To avoid the appearance of conflict, an individual who is the parent or guardian of a child who is taking a proficiency test should not interpret that test.

## Appendix D

### **Responsibilities of Teachers Working with Children Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the Classroom**

*The Ohio State Board of Education Guidelines for Educational Interpreters, 2000*

Be aware that the interpreter is responsible for providing communication and educational access to the student with a hearing impairment by:

- (a) Signing all the information he or she hears from teachers and other students;
  - (b) Voicing or speaking all the information from students with hearing impairments,
  - (c) Not editing, interjecting personal comments, or deleting information that other students can hear.
- Introduce the interpreter to the entire class at the beginning of the year and allow class time for the interpreter to explain his or her role.
  - Discuss with the interpreter the class format (lecture, discussion, and films/media to be used).
  - Provide the interpreter with all textbooks and other related materials used in the class. Provide an overview of upcoming instruction. Apprise the interpreter of specific or new vocabulary used in class.
  - Learn to use the closed caption decoder (the caption function on the TV's remote control) and other technology the student may be using in the classroom.
  - Use films and videos that are captioned to ensure access for students who are deaf or hard of hearing.
  - Remember the interpreter is working for everyone in class (i.e., he or she is not there just for the student who is deaf or hard of hearing, but rather to facilitate communication for everyone).
  - Consult regularly with the interpreter.
  - Retain all responsibility for classroom management. Interpreters are not expected to have any responsibilities for management, nor are they to take any actions that impinge on the teacher's authority in the classroom.
  - Maintain eye contact with the student, rather than with the interpreter. This establishes a direct and important connection between teacher and student.

- Face and talk directly to the child. “My name is Ms. Smith” is more empowering and inclusive than “Tell him my name is...” This practice applies when working with an interpreter and during all classroom communication.
- Be flexible with classroom seating arrangements. Preferential and roving seating are important so the student can have visual access to the teacher, interpreter, and children who are contributing to classroom discussions.
- Speak at the same speed you would use in any instructional situation. You do not have to slow down to accommodate the child with a hearing impairment in the classroom. The interpreter will ask for clarification if needed. However, during oral reading, it is important to realize that speed tends to increase. Please be aware that the child may be trying to watch the interpreter and follow the text. Modifications/adaptations may need to be devised.
- Visually cue the student who is deaf or hard of hearing to indicate who is talking during class discussions.
- To promote independence and inclusion, hand all materials directly to the student, rather than the interpreter.
- Allow several minutes for the child to visually scan new materials and to become oriented to vocabulary and central concepts. It is impossible to read and watch the interpreter simultaneously. Providing vocabulary and study guides prior to the introduction of new material is also helpful.
- Be aware that, due to the time required to process the information, the interpreter is usually several sentences behind the speaker. During classroom discussion, establish a rule that one person speaks at a time. When students raise their hands and teachers point to the next speaker, it allows the child who is deaf or hard of hearing to more fully participate in fast-paced lively conversations.
- Understand that private conversations between teacher and interpreter, or between interpreter and children who are deaf and hard of hearing, are not appropriate. However, there may be times when the interpreter is still signing information in order to clarify communication—even after the teacher/classmate has finished speaking.
- Hold the student who is deaf or hard of hearing responsible for class rules, homework, materials, and class preparation just as you would any other student.

**Source: The Ohio State Board of Education Guidelines for Educational Interpreters, 2000**

## Appendix E

### **A Guide for Substitute Teachers Working with Sign Language Interpreters**

By Doug Bowen-Bailer, CI and CT, Minnesota

1. Conduct class as you normally would without an interpreter present. The interpreter's role is that of communication facilitator, not that of aide to either teacher or student. Classroom management and instruction are the responsibility of the substitute teacher.
2. The interpreter will transmit your remarks to the Deaf or hard of hearing (HH) student(s) and vice versa. The interpreter will not edit nor delete any comments made by you or any student in class. To the extent that is humanly possible, the interpreter will interpret everything that is communicated in the classroom, whether by the teacher, hearing students, or the Deaf/HH student(s).
3. Speak at your normal pace. If the interpreter needs you to slow down, pause more frequently, or clarify something, she or he will ask you to do so.
4. Speak directly to the Deaf/HH student(s). Use phrases like "Do you want..." or "Open your book..." rather than ask him if he wants..." or "Tell him to open..." The presence of the interpreter allows you to do the asking and telling yourself.
5. When giving instructions, make sure that the interpreter is ready and that you have the attention of the Deaf/HH student(s). You can call to the interpreter if necessary and ask hearing students to tap their Deaf friends to make sure everyone is ready for directions.
6. Discipline is the responsibility of the teacher. Deaf/HH students, just like hearing students, are expected to follow classroom rules, but may sometimes behave inappropriately. Don't expect the interpreter to discipline students. If a problem does arise, make sure the interpreter is ready, and then provide the discipline, which you deem appropriate.
7. Clear turn taking in discussion is important. It is physically impossible to interpret more than one idea at a time. Therefore, it is ideal to have only one person talking at a time.
8. During class discussion, allow time to enable Deaf/HH students to participate. The process of interpretation takes time, which means your questions will reach the Deaf/HH students after they reach the hearing students. Waiting a short period of time before calling on someone will make sure all students have the same opportunity to respond to your questions.
9. Allow Deaf/HH student(s) to sit in an appropriate location in the classroom. This means where they can see you, the interpreter, and any visual aids. Also, try to avoid blocking the line of sight between the student and interpreter.
10. If you have other questions, ask the interpreter. Just make sure it is not while s/he is interpreting. It is best to do so before class or on break. Keeping all these points in mind, you will find that working with an interpreter and Deaf/HH students can be a fun experience.

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## Appendix F

# Continuing Education Topics for Interpreters

## SKILLS

### **Interpreter Product: Spoken-to-Sign**

#### **Prosodic Information**

- Stress/emphasis for important words or phrases
- Affect/emotions (Appropriately uses face & body)
- Register
- Sentence boundaries run-on

#### **Non-Manual Information**

- Sentence types/clausal boundaries indicated (e.g., y/n?, wh?, if/then)
- Production and use of non-manual adverbial markers

#### **Use of Signing Space**

- Use of verb directionality/pronominal system
- Comparison/contrast, sequence, and cause/effect
- Location/relationship using ASL classifier system

#### **Interpreter Performance**

- Consistent use of English morphological markers (English sign systems only)
- Clearly mouth speaker's English (English sign systems only)
- Amount of text conveyed

### **Interpreter Product: Sign-to-Spoken English**

(e.g., fluency/pacing, clarity of speech, volume of speech)

Can Read and Convey Signer's:

- Signs
- Fingerspelling and numbers
- Register
- Non-manual behaviors and ASL morphology

#### **Vocal/Intonational Features**

- Speech production (rate, fluency, rhythm, volume)
- Sentence, clausal boundaries indicated
- Sentence types
- Emphasize important words, phrases, affect/emotions

#### **Word Choice**

- Correct English word selection (ASL/PSE to English)
- Ability to convey idiomatic meaning

#### **Interpreter Performance**

- Adds no extraneous words/sounds to message
- Amount of text conveyed
- Vocabulary:

#### **Sign**

- Amount of sign vocabulary
- Signs made correctly (palm orientation, handshape, location, movement)
- Fluency (rhythm and rate)
- Vocabulary consistent with the sign language or system as chosen by administrator
- Key vocabulary represented
- Idiomatic expressions conveyed (frozen form represented, form/meaning represented, translated to meaning)

#### **Fingerspelling**

- Production of fingerspelling (clarity, fluency, rate)
- Spelled correctly
- Production of numbers (clarity, fluency, rate)

#### **Unknown Sign Vocabulary**

- Variety of strategies for compensating for unknown signs (fingerspelled, target word translated to meaning, F.S. loans, use of invented signs, deletions)
- Sign invention appropriate (respecting ASL morphology, borrows from ASL)

#### **Overall Factors**

##### **Message Processing**

- Uses appropriate eye contact/movement
- Develops sense of whole message (gestalt, chunking)
- Demonstrates process decalage (lag time) appropriately S-V
- Demonstrates process decalage (lag time) appropriately V-S

- Prioritizes information (hierarchy of trivial to important)
- Takes responsibility for message clarity by controlling input/environment when necessary

### **Environment**

- Indicates who is speaking
- Conveys classroom environmental sounds

### **Message Clarity**

- Seeks clarification for missed information

### **Ethics**

- Fosters student independence
- Displays ethically appropriate behavior

## **KNOWLEDGE**

### **Interpreter Technical Training**

- Sign Communication Systems (SEE, Cued Speech, Oral)
- Models of Interpreting (Helper, Conduit, Facilitator of Communication, Bi-Bi)
- ASL/Semantic/Grammar
- English Language
- Communication Assessment (Deaf/Blind, Cued Speech, SEE, PSE, CASE, Oral)
- Certification
- Basic Special Education (i.e. additional handicapping conditions)
- Sign-to-Spoken English/ Transliterating/ Interpreting
- Models of Processing in Interpreting, Simultaneous, Consecutive (Colonomos, Cokeley)
- General Liberal Arts
- Vocational Education

### **Interpreter Professional Training**

- **Professionalism in Interpreting**
- CTD/RMI
- History of Interpreting
- Deaf Culture and Heritage
- Certification
- Ethical Consideration (Code of Ethics)
- Training Students to Use Interpreting Services

### **Regulations**

- ADA
- Testing Modifications
- State Laws and State Education Department Regulations/Federal Laws
- IEP and Implementations

### **School**

- Advocacy
- Adapting Physical Environment of Optimal Inclusion
- In-Service Content/Process (Staff and Students)
- Mandated reporting
- School Policies and Procedures
- Extra Curricular Activities (Theater, Sports)
- Special Testing/Counseling

### **Support Services**

#### **Additional Support Services**

- Functioning as Team Member
- IDEA Implementation (Including IEP and Interpreter Multiple Roles)
- Relationships with Team Members
- Role of Team Members
- Teaching Sign Language

### **Other classroom/learning assistance**

- CART
- CAN
- C-PRINT
- Audiological/Physiological

### **Etiology of Hearing Loss**

- Educational Amplification
- Educational and Social Impact of Hearing Loss

### **Closed Captioning/Open Captioning**

- History
- Technology
- Resources Available

### **Other classroom/learning assistance**

- CART
- CAN
- C-PRINT

**Psychological**

- Educational and Social Impact of Hearing Loss
- Advocacy
- Child Adolescent Development
- Psychology of Education
- Practice of Education

Continuing Education Topics for Interpreters  
*adapted from the New York State Education Department. 1999.*

## Appendix G

### **Knowledge and Skills Needed by Educational Interpreters**

(Adapted from the *Kansas State Board of Education*, 1995)

#### **Knowledge**

- General background in liberal arts, science and mathematics to allow understanding of content and vocabulary in major curriculum areas throughout the elementary and secondary levels, including knowledge of signs for specialized terminology
- Awareness of current events and issues likely to be discussed in an educational setting
- Proficiency in English
- Proficiency in the communication mode(s) used by students
- Knowledge of research and best practice in interpreting
- General background in philosophies and techniques for educating children with hearing impairments, and legislation, regulations and practices affecting the education of individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Knowledge of environmental factors that affect the interpreting situation (e.g. lighting, positions in relation to media, auditory or visual distraction)
- Knowledge of techniques and material to explain appropriate use of interpreting services to students, staff, faculty, and administrators
- Awareness of political and social events and issues important to members of the Deaf Community
- Awareness of organizations within the Deaf Community
- Knowledge of factors leading to Cumulative Trauma Disorders (CTD) and techniques for reducing fatigue and physical stress
- Understanding of and ability to articulate roles and responsibilities of an educational interpreter

#### **Interpreting Skills**

- Ability to reflect the affect of the speaker or signer
- Application of interpreting skills to a variety of educational situations (e.g., classrooms, staff meetings, field trips, assemblies, sports)
- Ability to interpret in a variety of situations (e.g., one-to-one, small/ large groups)
- Ability to interpret between American Sign Language (ASL) and spoken English
- Ability to transliterate between one or more forms of Manually Coded English and spoken English
- Ability to transliterate orally
- Ability to use cued speech
- Ability to accommodate students with multiple disabilities
- Ability to interpret for students who are deaf-blind

**Overall Skills**

- Ability to work with students of varying ages, maturation, communication and educational levels
- Flexibility
- Sensitivity to student's needs for independence and direct communication
- Diplomacy with families, administration, faculty, fellow interpreters, and other staff
- Ability to understand and follow instructions conveyed by the supervisor
- Reliability
- Supportive attitude toward the program where employed; constructive in his or her advocacy for quality
- Good interpersonal relationships with staff, particularly with those providing services to students who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Professional dress appropriate for the situation (e.g., classroom field trip, IEP meeting)

**Additional Skills**

Skills may be acquired with special training beyond that provided in interpreter preparation programs. Such skills may include:

- Appraisal of students' ability to acquire information through signs or through speechreading
- Under the direction of a classroom teacher, the ability to provide tutoring in one or more subjects
- Ability to teach sign language to students and staff

Adapted from the *Kansas State Board of Education*, 1995

## Appendix H

### **Educational Interpreter's Sample Mission Statement**

Adapted from the Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, Maryland

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#### Mission

Our mission is to provide the highest quality interpreting and/or transliterating services possible to our students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. In pursuit of this goal, \_\_\_\_\_ Public Schools Interpreters/Transliterators will engage in continuing education and on-going professional development, including but not limited to, skills development, networking with peers, ethical concerns, advocacy of the Deaf, and issues specific to educational interpreting/transliterating.

#### PURPOSE

Our purpose is to promote the professional development of educational interpreters/transliterators and to ensure classroom success for every student in programs for students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. As educational interpreters/transliterators, our success is dependent not upon our individual ideas, but rather upon our collective will.

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## Appendix I

### Nebraska Resources

#### Nebraska Regional Programs For Students Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing "4 Regions.... 1 State of Mind"

##### **Central/Western Nebraska Partnership** [www.esu9.k12.ne.us/~cwp/](http://www.esu9.k12.ne.us/~cwp/)

Cherie Roberts, Coordinator [croberts@esu9.org](mailto:croberts@esu9.org)  
Rhonda Fleischer, Project Supervisor [rfleisch@esu9.org](mailto:rfleisch@esu9.org)  
ESU #9 PO BOX 2047  
Hastings, NE 68902-2047  
402-463-5611 Voice/TTY FAX: 402-463-9555

##### **Metro Regional Program for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing** [www.NebraskaMRP.com](http://www.NebraskaMRP.com).

Steve Srb, Coordinator [ssrb@esu3.org](mailto:ssrb@esu3.org)  
10310 Mockingbird Drive  
Omaha, NE 68127  
(402) 339-2090

##### **Northeast Regional Program for Children Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

<http://www.nebraskamrp.com./regions.htm>

Jill Hoffart, Coordinator [jhoffart@esu8.org](mailto:jhoffart@esu8.org)  
512 Philip Avenue  
PO BOX 139  
Norfolk, NE 68701  
(402) 644-2507 (402) 644-2506

##### **Southeast Nebraska Regional Program for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing** <http://SNR.LPS.ORG>

Jill Bird, Coordinator [jbird@lps.org](mailto:jbird@lps.org)  
Tanya Hilligoss, Program Specialist  
2745 S. 22nd Street  
Lincoln, NE 68502  
(402)-436-1896 V/TTY Fax: (402)-436-1897

##### **Nebraska Department of Education, Special Populations Office**

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SPED/sped.html>

##### **Boys Town National Research Hospital**

<http://www.boystownhospital.org/>

##### **Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

<http://www.nol.org/home/NCDHH>

##### **Nebraska Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf**

<http://www.nerid.org/>

## Appendix J

### Additional Resources

- American Annals of the Deaf <http://gspp.gallaudet.edu/annals/subscrib.htm>
- American Sign Language Teachers Association <http://www.aslta.org>
- American Society for Deaf Children <http://www.deafchildren.org>
- Conference of Interpreter Trainers <http://www.cit-asl.org>
- Deaf Education Website <http://www.deafed.net>
- Deaf Business Center <http://www.deafbiz.com/>
- Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment <http://www.nyedinterp.net/eipa.html>
- Gallaudet University Laurent Clerc Center <http://www.gallaudet.edu/>
- HandSpeak <http://dww.deafworldweb.org/asl/>
- Iowa School for the Deaf <http://www.iadeaf.k12.ia.us/index.htm>
- National Association of the Deaf <http://www.nad.org>
- National Technical Institute for the Deaf <http://www.ntidweb.rit.edu>
- Post-Secondary Education Programs Network <http://www.pepnet.org/>
- Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf <http://www.rid.org>
- Signing Exact English: SEE Center <http://www.seecenter.org>

#### Catalogs:

- Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf <http://www.agbell.org>
- Butte Publications, Inc. <http://www.buttepublications.com>
- Campus Connections <http://finweb.rit.edu/Bookstore/main.html>
- Central Institute for the Deaf <http://www.cid.wustl.edu/>

- Dawn Sign Press <http://www.dawnsigncom>
  - Gallaudet University Press <http://gupress.gallaudet.edu/>
  - Harris Communication, In. <http://www.harriscomm.com>
  - Hear-More, Inc. <http://www.hearmore.com>
  - Look Hear <http://www.adcohearing.com>
  - Modern Signs Press, Inc. (SEE Center) <http://www.seecenter.org>
  - NAD Publication <http://www.nad.org>
  - National Information Center of Deafness <http://nichcy.org/>
  - RID Publications <http://www.rid.org>
  - Sign Enhancers, Inc. <http://www.signenhancers.com>
  - Helen Keller Services for the Blind <http://www.helenkeller.org>
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## Appendix K

### Glossary of Commonly Used Terms

*The American with Disabilities Act (ADA)* – This Federal law guarantees full and equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities. It provides that employers must make reasonable accommodations for qualified employees with disabilities. It also bars discrimination in any activity or service operated or funded by state or local government.

*American Sign Language (ASL)* – A visual language native to many deaf people in North America and Canada, and a key element in Deaf Culture. Use of physical space, body movement and posture, rate and repetition are essential distinctive features of ASL. This signed language is linguistically distinct from English especially in syntactic features. Their differences make it impossible to simultaneously speak English and Sign ASL.

*American Sign Language Teachers Association (ASLTA)* – This national organization that sets standards and certifies people to teach sign language. This certification process is not affiliated with the Nebraska Department of Education but rather with the National Association of the Deaf.

*Certification* – National certification for sign language interpreters offered through the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), In. or the National Association of the Deaf (NAD). The certifications offered by the two organizations are separate; a task force is working collaboratively on a joint evaluation. RID certifications relevant to interpreters in the K-12 setting include Comprehensive Skills Certificate (CSC) –offered prior to 1989; Interpreting Certificate (IC)–offered prior to 1989; Transliterating Certificate (TC)–offered prior to 1989; Certificate of Interpretation (CI)–currently offered; and Certificate of Transliteration (CT)–currently offered. Special certifications for interpreters who are Deaf or hard of hearing include Reverse Skills Certificate (RSC)–offered prior to 1989; and Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI\_) or CDI-P)–currently offered. NAD certifications relevant for interpreters in the K-12 setting include Level 3–Generalist, Level 4–Advanced, and Level 5–Master.

*Code of Ethics* – The generally accepted guidelines and principles for professional behavior developed by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). There is also a code of ethics for Cued Speech interpreting.

*Conceptually Accurate Signed English (CASE)* – A signed message that is effective in conveying the meaning of the speaker while maintaining the English form (word order).

*Contact Sign Language* – Also referred to as Pidgin Sign English or Manually Coded English denoting a contact variety of blended forms of English and American Sign Language often used when hearing people and people who are deaf do not know each other's language and wish to communicate (see Invented English Sign Systems).

*Cued Speech* – A system of using eight hand shapes in combination with four locations near the face to visually represent Spoken English (see Invented English Sign Systems).

*Cumulative Trauma Disorder* – Often referred to as Repetitive Motion Injury. This condition results from using a set of muscles repeatedly, especially resulting from repetitive movements of the hands and arms. Some examples of these are Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, tendonitis and tennis elbow.

*Dactylogy/Fingerspelling* – Mode of communication in which the letters of the alphabet are portrayed through various hand shapes. It is sometimes referred to as the Rochester Method because the Rochester School for the Deaf in New York used it instead of spoken or signed language until the late 1970's when they adapted total communication.

*Deaf-Blind Interpreting* – The use of special techniques in working with individuals who have both vision and hearing impairments.

*Deafness* – A hearing impairment that is so severe that the individual is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification. The Deaf Community embraces

*Educational Interpreter* – A person who is able to perform conventional interpreting tasks together with special skills necessary for the demands of the educational setting.

*Hearing Impaired* – General term encompassing individuals with any type of hearing loss, from mild to profound, including persons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

*Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)* – The Federal law which guarantees free and equal access to educational opportunities for students with disabilities within the public education systems of the United States.

*Individualized Education Program (IEP)* – A team-developed, written program that identifies therapeutic and educational goals and objectives needed to appropriately address the educational needs of a student with a disability. An IEP for a child with hearing impairments should take into consideration such factors as (1) communication needs and the child's and family's preferred mode of communication; (2) linguistic needs; (3) severity of hearing loss and potential for using residual hearing; (4) academic level; and (5) social and emotional needs, including opportunities for peer interactions and communication.

*Interpreting* – The process of rendering a message for American Sign Language into spoken English or from spoken English into American Sign Language making appropriate grammatical and cultural adjustments to maintain the message equivalence. In the field of sign language interpreting in the United States the two languages are usually American Sign Language and English. The term may also be used generically to refer to the use of an intermediary who is Deaf to convey a message between a person with a hearing impairment and others whether with ASL or a visual representation of English.

*Invented English Sign Systems* – Sign systems developed for educational purposes that use manual signs in English word order with added prefixes and suffixes. Some of the signs are borrowed from American Sign Language and others have been invented to represent elements of English visually. Signed English and Signing Exact English (SEE2) are two examples of invented systems.

*Language* – Any historically established system of communications, which is used to form, express, and share thoughts, feelings, and information within the culture that it defines.

*Manually Coded English (MCE)* – Any sign communication system using signs and fingerspelling in word order with varying degrees of English grammar and morphology, Some examples are Seeing Essential English (SEE1), Signing Exact English (SEE2), Conceptually accurate English (CASE), and Signed English. Cued speech is a manual representation of English that does not use signs.

**What is the difference between American Sign Language (ASL)  
and Manually Coded English?**

American Sign Language (ASL) is a distinct visual-gestural-kinesthetic language with unique grammatical, lexical and linguistic features. Educators have developed a number of signed codes that use ASL vocabulary items but modify them to match English vocabulary, and then put them together according to English grammatical rules. These codes include, but are not limited to, Signing Exact English (SEE) and Manually Coded English (MCE). Native speakers of English and native users of ASL often communicate using a mixture of both English and ASL vocabulary and grammar. This is referred to as PSE (Pidgin Signed English) or Contact Signing.

*Mime* – To act out situations without speech using gestures, facial expressions, and body movements.

*Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MDT)* - Shall mean a group of persons whose responsibility is to evaluate the abilities and needs of a child referred for evaluation and to determine whether or not the child meets the eligibility criteria for receiving special education and related services.

*National Task Force on Educational Interpreting* – A group representing seven major organizations serving the deaf, established in 1987 for the purpose of articulating the status of educational interpreting and developing a resource to the schools and school districts responsible for the education of their students who are deaf. The work of the Task Force is represented by a report entitled, *Educational Interpreting for Deaf Students*, published in 1989.

*Oral Interpreting* – The process of understanding the speech and/or mouth movements of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing and repeating the message in spoken English; also the process of paraphrasing /transliterating a spoken message with or without voice and with natural lip movements or natural gestures.

*Pidgin Signed English* – (see Invented English Sign Systems)

*Professional Development Plan* – A plan of work for the educational interpreter including long and short term professional goals and objectives which when met will both benefit the students they interpret for in the classroom and future students and adults that might enter the district.

*Regional Program* - The state has established four programs serving geographical regions of the state. The programs are designed to support school districts, educational service units, and parents in providing services to students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

*Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID)* – A national professional organization representing interpreters for the deaf, administering a national evaluation and certification system, maintaining state and national registries of certified interpreters, and advocating on behalf of interpreters and interpreting.

*Rule 51* – The state regulations and standards for special education programs. Title 92, Nebraska Administrative Code, Chapter 51.

*Signing Exact English (SEE2)* – A sign system that represents literal English, attempting to make visible that which is not heard and, supplementing what a child can get from hearing and speechreading. Since American Sign Language has different vocabulary, idioms, and syntax from English, Signed English modifies the vocabulary of American Sign Language (see Invented English Sign Systems).

*Signed English* – A signed English system devised as a semantic representation of English. American Sign Language signs are used in English order with sign markers being added to represent a portion of the inflectional system of English. Examples of Signed English include Conceptually Accurate Signed English (CASE), and Signing Exact English (SEE2) (see Invented English Sign Systems).

*Sign-to-Voice Interpreting* – The process of conveying a message through spoken English that was originally produced in American Sign Language, a signed system, speech or mouth movements.

*Sign Systems* – Constructed or invented codes for presenting English manually and visually. Examples include Signed English, Manual English, and Signing Exact English. (see Invented English Sign Systems).

*Simultaneous Communication* – A communication strategy in which the speaker signs and speaks at the same time. When a speaker uses simultaneous communication, he/she can only be using English because it is impossible to sign ASL and speak English at the same time.

*Speech* – Speech articulation, for most persons who lose their hearing before language is developed, is an approximation based on training and memory. Clear speech varies with each individual depending upon but not limited to (1) the age when hearing loss occurred; (2) how much hearing the individual has left; and (2) the amount of speech training received.

*Speechreading* – Also known as lip-reading is the act of receiving a language through watching the movements of the lips and throat. Effective transliteration includes rewording to produce mouth movements that are more clearly visible.

*Total Communication (TC)* – A communication philosophy in deaf education that includes adjusting communication to individual need, for the inclusion of any or all modes/methods of communication including, but not limited to, signed language (American Sign Language or Manually Coded English), speech, speechreading, residual hearing, fingerspelling, mime, gesture, reading, writing, and media.

*Transliterating* – A process of changing the form of a message from one code to another. In the field of signed language interpreting in the United States, this most commonly refers to working between spoken English and a visual form of English. The visual form is most often a manual code for English or speechreading.

*Voice to Sign* – The process of conveying a message in spoken English into a signed form of the message, which may include mouth movements of English or American Sign Language, depending upon the language preferences of the individual.

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The Nebraska Educational Interpreter Guidelines Committee recognizes and extends appreciation for contributions to this document from the following:

- Kansas State Board of Education Guidelines for Educational Interpreters, 1995
  - New York State Education Department Guidelines for Educational Interpreting
  - Ohio State Board of Education Guidelines for Educational Interpreters, 2000
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Nebraska Department of Education: Technical Assistance Document  
**Educational Interpreter Guidelines, 2002**