

Working with an Interpreter:

Tips for Classroom Teachers



Educational Interpreters



- Interpreters render the message faithfully either by signing what the speaker says or by voicing for a person who is signing.
- They provide language and academic support.
- They need time to prepare for the assignment - this may include getting a copy of texts, assignments, and/or lesson plans ahead of time.
- Interpreters place themselves in the classroom in a position that allows for visual access to both the speaker and the interpreter.
- They adjust to the speaker's pace.
- They indicate which person is talking.
- Interpreters attend professional development to improve their skills.
- They follow an interpreter Code of Professional Conduct.
- They have responsibility for continuing education.

An educational interpreter's primary purpose is to provide **ACCESS** by *facilitating communication* for students.

Teachers



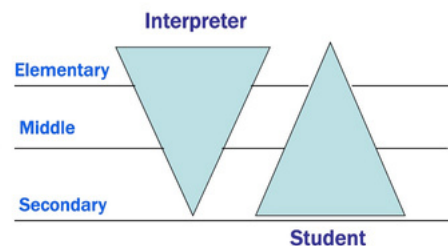
- Remember to give a copy of notes to the interpreter and the student **before** the lesson; a student cannot watch an interpreter and take notes at the same time, so a copy is necessary for them to have access.
- Be as explicit as possible when explaining visual elements and do not use vague terms like "this" or "that."
- Monitor academic as well as behavioral performance of the student and should apply consequences for behavior in a manner similar to same-grade peers, unless otherwise specifically outlined in the student's IEP.
- Speak at a normal rate and prosody.
- Speak **directly** to the student, as opposed to attending to the interpreter, avoiding terms like "tell him/her..."
- Wear amplification components as necessary.
- Support a classroom of inclusion and awareness for all students with disabilities.
- Have open conversations about classroom routines, rules, and expectations.
- Allow time for students to read slides before you start talking about them. See Pacer Spacer from DeafTEC.

Students



- Respect the interpreter as an adult on campus.
- Ask the teacher for clarification when they do not understand an academic concept.
- Acquire amplification from the appropriate adult daily (if applicable).
- Follow district and/or school Code of Conduct regarding interaction with adults.
- Require instruction in how to use an interpreter - see Florida's Expanded Skills Standards for elementary, middle, and high school for more information on standards addressing these and many other skills associated with teaching students who are DHH.
- Require different strategies for language and literacy when their primary mode of communication is American Sign Language (ASL) - See RMTC-DHH's ASL page: <https://www.rmtcdhh.org/resources/asl>

Inverted Pyramid of Responsibility*



*From Handbook for Personnel Serving Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing; Louisiana Department of Education

Deaf-Conscious Considerations in the Classroom

Observe these recommendations and teach peers to be conscious of their peers.

To get the attention of a person who is deaf, tap them on the shoulder.

Walk around two people who are signing - never in between them.

Never ask an interpreter to NOT sign something - this is considered very rude.

Look at the person signing and not the interpreter when conversing.

Resources

Florida's Educational Interpreter Project -
<https://www.usf.edu/cbcs/csd/services/eip.aspx>

EIPA Classroom Interpreting -
<https://classroominterpreting.org/>

FLDOE Educational Interpreter Technical Assistance -
<http://bit.ly/FLDOEInterpTAP>

DeafTEC Access/Support Services: Interpreting -
<http://deaftec.org/classact/challenges/support-services/interpreting>

<http://rmtcdhh.org>

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