

## **So, you have an interpreter in your classroom . . .**

### **The role of the educational interpreter**

An Educational Interpreter, while working under APSEA guidelines, will fulfill the following employment duties and responsibilities:

- Will interpret for students who are deaf or hard of hearing, hearing students and staff.
- Will ask teachers for materials and lesson plans prior to each class. Any materials photocopied for the students should also be copied for the interpreter (instead of 24 copies, please make 25). A textbook should be made available to the interpreter in order for the interpreter to sufficiently prepare for the course content. Any additional resources, such as videos that are not closed-captioned or scripts for plays, should be given to the interpreter in advance.
- Will need to explain unfamiliar sign language vocabulary to the student who is deaf. If the subject content is made available to the interpreter before it is taught then the interpreter will have time to research appropriate sign selections. The new vocabulary can then be previewed by the student.
- Will tutor under the guidance of the classroom teacher or itinerant teacher.
- Will interpret APSEA-related programs.
- Will help in developing sign clubs.

### **Roles in which the educational interpreter *cannot* participate**

An Educational Interpreter while working under APSEA guidelines and following the NSGEU/NBPPA Contractual Agreement is *not* permitted to:

- Supervise students in the classroom.
- Monitor students during Lunch Programs.
- Accept morning, recess, lunch or after school duty.
- Teach curriculum-based courses or make decisions regarding student programs.
- Work in isolation with a student.
- Give Personal Care.
- Accept an EPA/TA role.
- Discipline students. When the teacher says, “no talking” the interpreter will sign “no signing.” If you notice the student is still signing, it might be best to ask the student why he or she is still ‘talking’. Remember the student may be asking for sign clarification, which is important; however, children are still children. The student could just be ‘testing the waters’.
- Be responsible for the actions or behaviour of the student. If the student misses an assignment or is late for class, it is solely the responsibility of the student.

*Any programming decisions are decided by the Classroom Teacher and the APSEA Itinerant Teacher.*

## Some helpful hints

An Educational Interpreter:

- Will sit or stand near the teacher/speaker.
- Will convey the mood and intent of the message.
- Will interpret the message from voice to sign and sign to voice striving for message equivalency.

Teachers:

- Please remember to address the student/person who is deaf directly.
- Please avoid saying to the interpreter “tell him/tell her” when talking to the student who is deaf.
- When a student and interpreter appear to be having a conversation after the lesson, the interpreter will be clarifying the interpreted message.
- **Everything said in the room will be interpreted.** Please avoid phrases such as, “do not interpret this.” Interpreters are ethically bound to interpret all remarks that would be audible to a person with normal hearing. It is important to understand the interpreter is not being uncooperative. It is the interpreter’s job to be the ‘ears’ of the student who is deaf. This is a fundamental obligation for the interpreter.

Please try to accommodate the class interpreter to the best of your ability. An interpreter who is prepared for class is confident, able to proceed with little interruption in class and will interpret more accurately. This interpreter has trained extensively for the interpreter role and is not a classroom helper, she/he is a professional Educational Interpreter in your classroom.

Please note the following may not apply to all students . . .

Some students who are deaf, not having access to language, may not have the level of language necessary to access the interpretation. In this situation, the interpreter will report to the classroom teacher and the itinerant teacher, any educational concerns.

For example in a Grade 8 Classroom, the classroom teacher and itinerant teacher would be informed of the following:

“During the interpretation the concept of multiplication did not appear to be comprehended by the student.”

The classroom teacher and the itinerant teacher would then work collaboratively with the student to meet this educational need. Interpretational services may also be required.

The preceding outline is to help all parties of the educational team including interpreters, educators and students in understanding the role of the interpreter. If this role is to be changed, it will be necessary to obtain permission from the respective Provincial Supervisors.

For further information, please contact:

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