



# Best Practices for Interpreted Sessions

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STAFF MEMBERS

Based on key principles to comply with language access requirements, and recommendations made by the AAITE Best Practices Committee, and from interpreter associations as NAJIT, ATA, and RID\*.

*\*American Association of Interpreters and Translators in Education, National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators, American Translators Association, Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf.*



### BEFORE THE SESSION/EVENT

When planning your session, please keep the following in mind:

#### **SCHEDULE INTERPRETERS EARLY:**

Request qualified interpreters at [stvra.in/translationrequest](http://stvra.in/translationrequest) as soon as the date and time are confirmed.

#### **CONSIDER THE MEETING OR EVENT DURATION:**

Consecutive interpretation requires additional time. If your meeting runs long, interpreters may not be able to stay beyond the scheduled time due to other assignments. Be prepared to schedule a follow-up session if needed.

**ESTIMATE EQUIPMENT NEEDS** (for simultaneous interpretation): Determine how many participants will require interpretation equipment in advance.

#### **INTERPRETER PLACEMENT MATTERS:**

For presentations, position the interpreter near the speaker in an area with clear audio. Avoid placing them near doors, in areas with background noise, or where children are playing.

For individual meetings, seat the interpreter in a way that supports direct communication between participants.

#### **ASSIGN SUPPORT STAFF DURING THE EVENT:**

Have someone available to welcome families, distribute equipment (if needed), and handle questions so the interpreter can remain focused on interpreting.

**PROVIDE SESSION DETAILS IN ADVANCE:** Include relevant context, topics, and any necessary documents when you submit the request form. Share any materials or documents that may require sight translation.

**BRIEF THE INTERPRETER(S):** Share any relevant background or potential concerns before the session begins, and allow time for questions.

**CHECK YOUR EQUIPMENT:** If your school is providing interpretation equipment, make sure it is fully functional ahead of time.

## DURING THE SESSION/EVENT

To ensure clear and accurate communication, please follow these recommendations during the session:

### **SPEAK CLEARLY AND AT A MODERATE**

**PACE:** This allows the interpreter to process and accurately convey the message.

**SUPPORT DIRECT COMMUNICATION:** Allow the interpreter time to position themselves in a way that fosters direct communication between all parties.

**ADDRESS THE PARTICIPANTS DIRECTLY, NOT THROUGH THE INTERPRETER:** For example, say "How can I help you?" instead of "Ask her how I can help her."

**AVOID SIDE CONVERSATIONS:** Interpreters are required to interpret everything that is said during the session. Unnecessary conversations may compromise confidentiality or clarity.

**USE PLAIN AND SIMPLE LANGUAGE:** Clear, jargon-free language helps ensure that LEP participants fully understand the conversation.

**EXPLAIN ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS** when they are first used; this helps ensure accurate interpretation and comprehension.

**RESPECT THE INTERPRETER'S ROLE:** Do not ask the interpreter to summarize, explain, or filter messages. The interpreter must render all messages completely and accurately, without editing or adding personal commentary.

**MAINTAIN PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES:** Do not ask the interpreter to remain with the family while you consult with others, or to offer assistance outside of their role as an interpreter. Interpreters are present solely to facilitate communication.

## AFTER THE SESSION/EVENT

To support accurate documentation and to maintain professional boundaries, please keep the following in mind:

### **DO NOT DEBRIEF WITH THE INTERPRETER ABOUT THE SESSION'S CONTENT.**

Interpreters are not participants in the meeting and should not be asked to give opinions, summaries, or impressions about what was said.

**MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY:** Interpreters are bound by confidentiality and are not to be included in team discussions after the meetings.

**DO NOT ASK INTERPRETERS TO FOLLOW UP WITH FAMILIES ON THEIR OWN.** Any follow-up communication should be scheduled through official interpretation request channels to maintain transparency and ethical boundaries.

### **REPORT ANY ISSUES OR CONCERNS.**

If you experience challenges or have feedback, please communicate with the Interpretation Services Coordinator at [bustillos\\_martha@svvsd.org](mailto:bustillos_martha@svvsd.org).

Scan the QR code or visit [stvra.in/TranslationServices](http://stvra.in/TranslationServices) to learn more about Translation and Interpretation Services in St. Vrain.

