

Standards of Practice for APSEA Educational Interpreters

Standards of Practice for APSEA Educational Interpreters provide a framework of principles that describe the knowledge, skills and values inherent in providing interpreting service to students who are deaf or hard of hearing. These standards, which are distinct from position descriptions and specific associated duties, are applicable to sign language interpreters, oral interpreters and language acquisition support workers.

Based on the rationale that an educational interpreter must be trained to work and perform competently in K-12 mainstream settings in which deaf and hard of hearing students receive interpreting services, these standards convey a collective vision of experience and professionalism that guide daily practice. This document will:

- foster a common understanding of what it means to be a member of the profession;
- outline the competencies expected of individuals working as educational interpreters;
- guide professional judgment and actions, and
- guide professional growth plans

These Standards of Practice for APSEA Educational Interpreters draw heavily upon the existing research on interpreting. A recommended reading list is available at the end of this document. APSEA gratefully acknowledges the following individuals, organizations and sources whose work has provided the foundation for these Standards:

- Bonnie-Lyn Barker & Cindy Huff, *The Interpreted Education*
- Brenda Schick, *EIPA Guidelines of Professional Conduct for Educational Interpreters*
- Carol Patrie & Marty Taylor, *Outcomes for Graduates of Baccalaureate Interpreter Preparation Programs Specializing in Interpreting in K-12th Grade Settings*
- Distance Opportunities for Interpreter Training Center, National Distance Learning Center for Interpreter Education, University of Northern Colorado
- National Consortium of Interpreter Education Centres, *Language & Interpretation Outcomes Competencies*
- Ohio School for the Deaf, Center for Outreach Services, *Interpreting and Sign Language Resources, Ohio Guidelines for Educational Interpreters*
- University of North Florida, College of Education and Human Services, *Exceptional and Deaf Interpreter Education, Exit Competencies*

Standards of Practice for Educational Interpreters

Standard 1: Foundations

The educational interpreter applies theories of interpretation, translation and cognitive processing models to their practice; understands the factors that affect the education of deaf and hard of hearing children in inclusive settings.

Standard 2: Linguistic Fluency

The educational interpreter demonstrates advanced comprehension and expression in ASL and English.

Standard 3: Interpreting Competency

The educational interpreter accurately interprets in either simultaneous or consecutive mode, while maintaining appropriate regard for culture and ethics.

Standard 4: Professional Presence

The educational interpreter understands and demonstrates responsibility to the self, consumers and others in the educational setting through strength-based self-evaluation, flexible boundaries, alliance-building, and trust formation.

Standard 5: Ethical Practice

The educational interpreter applies critical thinking and reflection to all aspects of their practice.

Standard 6: Collaborative Learning Environment

The educational interpreter supports and contributes to an accessible learning environment that facilitates deaf and hard of hearing students' active engagement in learning, independence, self-advocacy and social interactions.

Standard 7: Reflective Practice

The educational interpreter is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates her/his practice and actively seeks opportunities to grow professionally.

Standard 1: Foundations

The educational interpreter applies theories of interpretation, translation and cognitive processing models to their practice; understands the factors that affect the education of deaf and hard of hearing children in inclusive settings.

Knowledge:

The educational interpreter knows and understands:

- various linguistic, cross-cultural and interpretation theories and the implications of each as they relate to interpreting practice
- the role and function of an educational interpreter within the APSEA and school teams
- various approaches to language and communication used by deaf and hard of hearing students
- child & language development
- the role of world knowledge as it applies to social contexts at various grade levels
- factors that influence the deaf and hard of hearing students' educational experience
- that diversity exists among all learners
- the history of deaf education in Canada
- the EIPA Guidelines of Professional Conduct for Educational Interpreters, APSEA and school policies & procedures, and the AVLIC Code of Ethics

Application:

The educational interpreter is able to:

- articulate professional and ethical decision-making in a manner consistent with theoretical models and best practices
- articulate the implications of hearing loss on a child's language development
- articulate age-appropriate language development milestones for ASL and English
- apply knowledge of students' APSEA Service Plan outcomes into everyday practice
- use a variety of sign and spoken communication to meet the diverse language and communication needs of students
- remain flexible, adapt and collaborate within the school setting
- identify and discuss the major historical eras, events and figures in the deaf community, and the resulting implications for interpreting e.g., audism, Deaf President Now, Clerc, Milan
- articulate the legal responsibilities of an adult in an educational setting
- apply knowledge of current guidelines, policies and human rights legislation into everyday practice

Standard 2: Linguistic Fluency

The educational interpreter demonstrates advanced comprehension and expression in ASL and English.

Knowledge:

The educational interpreter possesses:

- near-native to native fluency in ASL and English
- the ability to participate effectively in formal and informal conversations on practical, social, educational and professional topics, in both languages
- advanced writing and public speaking skills in English/ASL
- the ability to adapt and expand upon a message i.e. reconceptualization
- good control of both ASL and English grammar such that errors rarely interfere with understanding, and accents are unobtrusive
- an understanding of the importance of engaging the cultural norms of the community from which either language derives
- an understanding of the transition from language learning to transliterating and interpreting, within educational contexts

Application:

The educational interpreter:

- understands and communicates information at a normal rate of speech or sign
- demonstrates native-like fluency in both languages of the profession e.g. expressing concepts/messages accurately
- employs a broad vocabulary that supports one's own language availability
- appropriately incorporates lexical production, non-manual signals/grammatical markers, discourse structure, use of space, prosody and receptive fluency, in ASL
- when conversing and interpreting in ASL, accurately uses spatial grammar, non-manual signals and articulates signs (handshape, movement, location and palm orientation) and within acceptable community variation
- demonstrates appropriate rhythm and flow in either language

Standard 3: Interpreting Competency

The educational interpreter accurately interprets in either simultaneous or consecutive mode, while maintaining appropriate regard for culture and ethics.

Knowledge:

The educational interpreter knows and understands:

- the relationship between interpretation & transliteration theories and how they apply to the overall task of interpreting e.g. approaches to the process and analysis of the message
- the factors that influence cognitive processes that occur simultaneously (comprehension, analysis, working memory, formulation, production and self-assessment of one's work), and strategies for managing these
- how to negotiate meaning in ASL and English while interpreting in a manner that conforms to recognized linguistic, cultural and social norms of those present
- the function and meaning of various discourse features of the educational setting in both languages e.g. metalinguistics and differences between young and mature discourse
- when to employ simultaneous or consecutive interpretations
- the benefits to using mind-mapping techniques and demand-control schemas
- the importance and value in taking ownership and responsibility for one's interpretation

Application:

The educational interpreter:

- delivers consecutive and simultaneous interpretation and transliteration, encompassing appropriate linguistic and cultural mediation
- consistently recognizes and represents all discourse features of the teaching environment e.g. scaffolding, sequencing, reconceptualization, metacognitive questions, reciprocal teaching & feedback
- uses appropriate economy/processing time to and from ASL and English
- appropriately and consistently incorporates nonmanual linguistic information, vocabulary choice & prosody
- identifies where breakdowns occur and applies strategies for seeking clarification in an appropriate manner/at the appropriate times, and determines/asks questions to gain further meaning
- demonstrates appropriate use of demand-control schema strategies
- regularly practices mind-mapping techniques
- makes adjustments to their interpretation based on consumer feedback and observations of consumer language use
- has manual dexterity and is generally free of distracting mannerisms
- when transliterating, completely and clearly articulates the speaker's message at a comfortable rate of sign or speech; incorporating natural gestures and role-shifting to represent sequencing, speaker and time changes

Standard 4: Professional Presence

The educational interpreter understands and demonstrates responsibility to the self, consumers and others in the educational setting through strength-based self-evaluation, flexible boundaries, alliance-building, and trust formation.

Knowledge:

The educational interpreter knows and understands:

- the implications of an interpreted interaction
- that the student's academic and personal performance is separate from, but can impact the interpreter's work
- the effect of an interpreter's own schema on interpreted settings, and how their decisions influence their actions and interpretations
- their own knowledge and experiences that consciously and unconsciously influence their judgments about a discourse situation and stakeholders
- their role as a communicator, ally and advocate in the deaf and hard of hearing student's interpreted education
- the role of the educational interpreter in supporting and fostering student/consumer independence and self-advocacy
- the personal and professional demands that occur while interpreting
- the importance of sharing ideas, strategies and best practices with colleagues and team members
- the importance of keeping current of the latest research on best practices in educational interpreting
- various professional conflict resolution strategies

Application:

The educational interpreter:

- demonstrates effective interpersonal skills, time management and reliability in day-to-day interactions
- clearly articulates the role of the educational interpreter and the impact of access in a deaf/hard of hearing student's education, to a number of audiences
- embraces diversity, equity and equality of opportunity in the school setting and in the profession
- consistently models mutual respect and regard with the deaf and hard of hearing student
- demonstrates self-awareness and discretion by monitoring and managing personal and professional behaviours
- when it supports student self-advocacy and independence, comfortably withdraws from an interpreted interaction
- effectively manages power, position and professional interactions with all stakeholders i.e. deaf/hard of hearing student, colleagues and other students in the educational setting
- demonstrates sensitivity to historic oppression and marginalization of minority populations
- identifies and implements strategies to support an effective interpretation e.g., strategies to prevent injuries, reduce stress, ensure personal safety, etc.
- appropriately articulates cultural norms for deaf and hearing cultures to all stakeholders

Standard 5: Ethical Practice

The educational interpreter applies critical thinking and reflection to all aspects of their practice.

Knowledge:

The educational interpreter knows and understands:

- the cultural norms of ASL, English and contact varieties of each language
- the value of developing one's understanding and knowledge of ethical practice
- issues of power and how they may apply in an interpreted interaction
- professional boundaries and how they apply in various situations
- professional codes of ethics and conduct that govern the interpreting profession and how they contribute to the process of ethical decision-making
- the value of sound professional judgment
- ethical practices for confidentiality related to student and peer information
- their role in sharing observations about the student's ability to use interpreting services with the appropriate people such as the school and APSEA program planning team

Application:

The educational interpreter:

- holds the needs of consumers primary when making professional decisions
- conducts themselves in a manner that supports the deaf/hard of hearing student's autonomy in the classroom
- regularly and consistently upholds the tenets of the EIPA Guidelines for Professional Conduct and the AVLIC Code of Ethics
- refrains from working outside their scope of practice, limiting their expertise to interpreting
- consistently communicates their observations about the interpreting service with the appropriate school personnel and members of the APSEA program planning team
- applies critical thinking and reflection skills to ethical decision-making in their work
- applies appropriate strategies for introductions, turn-taking, and follow-up
- demonstrates respect for ASL, English and contact varieties of ASL while conversing and interpreting
- demonstrates professional integrity by avoiding conflicts of interest

Standard 6: Collaborative Learning Environment

The educational interpreter supports and contributes to an accessible learning environment that facilitates deaf and hard of hearing students' active engagement in learning, independence, self-advocacy and social interactions.

Knowledge:

The educational interpreter knows and understands:

- the importance of building and maintaining respectful and collaborative partnerships with all students and colleagues
- how to establish appropriate working conditions that foster effective interpretation within an educational setting
- the development of the deaf and hard of hearing student's interpreter use skills, at various grade levels
- the continuum of APSEA services and their role in supporting an inclusive environment that respects the dignity of the deaf/hard of hearing student
- the value of working with itinerant and classroom teachers to promote the social and educational development of deaf and hard of hearing students through meaningful inclusion
- the various communication repair techniques used by deaf and hard of hearing students, and the applications to interpreting
- the factors behind visual distractions and eye strain, and the impact it has on an accessible educational environment
- how technology can be used to promote learning, independence, interaction and accessibility

Application:

The educational interpreter:

- creates and maintains professional relationships through effective interpersonal communication e.g. negotiation, problem-solving and conflict management
- regularly collaborates with the deaf/hard of hearing student and school/APSEA team members to ensure student success
- consistently supports the deaf/hard of hearing student's self-advocacy and independence in collaboration with the itinerant and classroom teachers
- regularly collaborates with the classroom teacher and student to create a setting that allows for optimal interpretation e.g. appropriate line-of-sight or sideline-placements, lighting and student/teacher positioning
- uses appropriate interpreting strategies when working with diverse populations
- encourages the deaf/hard of hearing student to be an active participation in their own learning i.e. Davino's inverse pyramids of educational interpreting
- regularly encourages and accepts student feedback on the interpreting service, adapting their interpretation as needed
- incorporates the use of technology and equipment specific to interpreting e.g. smartboards, powerpoints, microphones and FM systems
- accurately communicates their observations about the classroom/interpreting service & the interpreter role to school and APSEA personnel

Standard 7: Reflective Practice

The educational interpreter is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates her/his practice and actively seeks opportunities to grow professionally.

Knowledge:

The educational interpreter knows and understands:

- the importance of engagement in critical self-evaluation and ongoing professional learning specific to the field
- that to be effective, she/he must remain current in evidence-based practice
- the value of increasing and maintaining proficiency in one's work to meet the language and access needs of deaf and hard of hearing students
- the benefits of participating in professional learning communities and organizations related to the interpreting field for her/his professional growth
- contemporary theories of performance assessment and peer review
- the value in mentoring student interpreters in the field
- the value in being mentored and working collaboratively with other educational and community interpreters to maintain and improve one's own practice & fluency
- the value of technology in support of continuing education, networking and peer support
- the importance of sharing knowledge of the work i.e. ideas, strategies and practices, and its impact on the deaf and hard of hearing student's education

Application:

The educational interpreter:

- reflects on practice to improve interpretation and guide professional growth
- ensures her/his professional development plan includes activities to remain current with evidence-based practices
- actively seeks opportunities for mentorship, networking and professional growth
- communicates with their supervisor and the educational interpreter consultant about their professional development goals and planning
- participates in professional learning communities and related organizations
- provides knowledge on educational interpreting and its impact on an interpreted education to a number of audiences
- accepts opportunities to mentor student interpreters
- seeks opportunities to work collaboratively with other interpreters and community members to maintain and improve one's own practice and fluency
- demonstrates effective use of resources in face-to-face and online resources/courses
- employs preventative care techniques to avoid cumulative motion injuries
- keeps current in latest applications of research in the field of deaf education and interpreting

KEY SOURCES AND RECOMMENDED READING

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