

Remote Interpretation

Resources & Suggestions



Before the Meeting:

- All Professional Interpreters in Education communicating with schools and parents through VRI (Video Remote Interpretation) and OPI (Over-the-Phone Interpretation), must abide by the same professional standards and ethics as onsite interpreters.
- Professional Interpreters in Education must safeguard the privacy of students, parents and school personnel as they do when interpreting onsite.
- Come prepared with the same interpreter tools you use in person (notepad, pen, water).
- Request documents ahead of time but be patient and flexible. Schools may not be able to share information with you. Explain that, as Professional Interpreters in Education, you rely on body language cues shared during face-to-face communication, and additional information prior to a meeting using video/phone is particularly important.
- Ask for the names and titles of attendees, including the student and parent. "Arrive" early, just as you do in-person.
- Let school personnel know what equipment they will need to ensure that the meeting will go smoothly.
- For VRI and OPI involving more than one teacher, it is important to remind parties that only one speaker is assigned to conduct the meeting at a time. A speakerphone, if used, must be in that individual's immediate proximity.
- If confidential or sensitive information needs to be shared with a parent, it is recommended that teachers use an individual headset, not a speakerphone, to speak and listen to the parent and the interpreter.
- Most of the time, as in the in-person setting, you will use consecutive interpretation. You may be asked to interpret simultaneously for area board meetings and thus preparation is key, as well as disclosure of your skills.

Check Your Equipment:

- You need good lighting and a professional background (solid is preferred).
- Become familiar with your audio/video features (mute, volume, microphone) to know how to troubleshoot.
- If possible, have a separate device to take notes, sight translate text sent to you ahead of time, or look up words.
- Check the noise in your environment to avoid interruptions. Eliminate background noise and interference (participate from indoors, in a room with closed door and windows to avoid extraneous noise).
- Be aware of video application updates as they may include additional security features to protect privacy.
- Close unrelated programs (email, browsers, or programs that may be running in the background).
- Make sure your device is fully charged or connected. Run a "test" meeting with someone remotely to make sure everything works. Have your computer on a firm surface.
- Cell phone or other devices must be on silence. Turn off all sound notifications (skype, WhatsApp, emails, etc.) while attending virtual meetings.
- Use individual headsets with high quality microphones and echo cancelling. It may be best to avoid wireless headsets as they may have some security vulnerabilities. Wired headsets are recommended.

During the Meeting:

- Your pre-session is still crucial! Ask participants for their names and titles and ask them to mute themselves to reduce ambient noise. Emphasize to all parties that you are their voice and that everything heard will be interpreted.
- As in face-to-face interpreting, remind parents that they can ask questions if something is not clear. In VRI and OPI, our focus continues to be empowering families to advocate for themselves!
- Remind families and teachers that you will not be reading the chat while you are video interpreting. Your focus should be on the spoken information provided by all parties. Families and school personnel must voice their questions through you.
- Intervene when necessary, just as you do in person. Conversations/terminology may be confusing and you may have questions throughout the meeting. Ask for clarification when needed.
- As a Professional Interpreter in Education using video or phone as your channel, you still manage the flow of communication and you still model proper speaking tone.

