



SPECIAL EDUCATION DIVISION
TRANSLATION/ INTERPRETATION DEPARTMENT

**INTERPRETATION FOR REMOTE IEP MEETINGS
GUIDE FOR CASE MANAGERS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS
2020-2021**

III. Recommendations for Effective Communication during the Meeting

We are very pleased to have the opportunity to support IEP teams by offering remote interpreting services. As many of you may have already noticed, online meetings can present unique communication challenges. Effective communication in online meetings requires greater focus from participants, minimizing distractions, and good use of the functions and tools available on each platform.

Remote meetings can be particularly challenging for interpreters. We will always do our very best to provide precise, effective communication for teams, and case managers/ service providers can help us perform at an optimum level by leading their teams in applying best practices for online meetings:

- Set up and check all necessary equipment before beginning a meeting (devices charged/ plugged in/ synchronized); place your device at an angle where the camera is slightly above eye-level.
- Participants should mute their microphone when they are not speaking to reduce the amount of background noise.
- To avoid talking over one another, teams can implement a system of “raising hands” either as a physical gesture to the camera or using the icons in the chat or reactions to allow participants to take turns speaking and minimize interruptions.
- As presenters, please be mindful of speaking clearly and using a moderate rate of speech, especially if you are reading from a document.
- During screen sharing, please scroll slowly through the document and ask your interpreter for a signal to move on to each new section.
- Your interpreter will work with the team to signal when then need a pause to clarify or if the parent has a question or a comment to share. (Your team may want to designate a team member to keep an eye on the interpreter’s video feed.)
- Ethical guidelines for interpreters require that we interpret everything that is “said” during a meeting, including gestures/ actions if the parent does not have a video connection, as well as messages in the chat.
- Plan for a concise agenda with a meeting duration of about 60-90 minutes to avoid “burn out” for participants, parents, and your interpreter.
- Schedule follow-up sessions through the interpreter if needed.
- Implement practices to protect the privacy/ personal information of families and their students. (Ask IT for help and guidance regarding best practices.)
- Now more than ever, “patience is a virtue”. Staff and families may be facing a multitude of disruptions and difficulties; they deserve our care and understanding. Communication challenges are sure to present themselves during remote meetings, but we will all work together to make sure families are able to get the information/ services they need to support students.

Please contact Mario Garcia, the SPED Interpretation/ Translation supervisor, if you have any questions or require urgent support: 619-362-4430.