



# NAIE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INTERPRETERS IN EDUCATION

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## Educational Interpreter Code of Ethics



### Scope and Philosophy

[In ASL Here](#)

The scope of the current document applies to the provision of sign language, cued language, and oral language interpreting or transliterating in educational settings. While it is best practice to utilize “educational interpreter” as the official title of employment, the National Association of Interpreters in Education (NAIE) asserts that this Code of Ethics applies to each individual who provides any type of interpreting in an educational setting, regardless of official job title. As such, the term “educational interpreter” has been utilized to refer to all individuals providing sign language, cued language, and oral language interpreting or transliterating services in educational settings. The ethical guidance articulated in this document reflects principles of social justice, and is designed to support educational interpreter decision-making in order to promote deaf student autonomy, right to freedom of expression, and access to education.

The NAIE recognizes and embraces the diversity of hearing levels, communication modalities, cultural, and other identities among students who utilize interpreters in educational settings. Within this code of ethics, the term “deaf” has been utilized to collectively denote these students. The NAIE believes that the following tenets provide direction to interpreters to assist in fostering beneficence and preventing potential interpreter-caused linguistic, psychological, social, and emotional harm to the students they serve. The Code of Ethics is intended for use along with the NAIE Professional Guidelines for Interpreting in Educational settings and the RID-NAD Code of Professional Conduct, as well as with school employee codes of conduct.

### Tenets

- 1) Interpreters respect student autonomy.
- 2) Interpreters provide access to language and communication in the educational environment at all times.
- 3) Interpreters maintain confidentiality of information pertaining to their work.
- 4) Interpreters support and participate on the educational team.
- 5) Interpreters continually develop their knowledge, skills, and professionalism to ensure they are qualified for all aspects of their role.
- 6) Interpreters avoid perceived or actual conflicts of interest.
- 7) Interpreters engage in ethical professional practices.

## Core Values and Illustrative Behaviors

### 1) Interpreters respect student autonomy.

Core Values: Interpreters value deaf students' freedom, independence, self-determination, and personal responsibility for their education.

- a) Interpreters respect the student's right to express themselves in their language of choice.
- b) Interpreters facilitate all communication in the school environment, both in and out of class (e.g. extracurricular activities).
- c) Interpreters adapt their service delivery to the cognitive and maturational level of students.
- d) Interpreters understand and respect the student's learning process, including working through academic challenges (e.g. misunderstanding, errors).
- e) Interpreters explain and model developmentally appropriate options for interpreting services to students and staff, and encourage students to make decisions.
- f) Interpreters support the student's right to have a different interpreter for sensitive situations (i.e. medical, legal, or other personally sensitive situations).
- g) Interpreters respect the diversity of student identities and cultures.
- h) Interpreters respect the student's right to self-advocate.

### 2) Interpreters provide access to language and communication in the educational environment at all times.

Core Values: Interpreters value deaf students' access to clear communication.

- a) Interpreters prioritize interpreting over any other duties.
- b) Interpreters avoid performing dual roles.
- c) Interpreters recognize the need and advocate for the involvement of deaf interpreters or other native language models.
- d) Interpreters provide access to incidental learning.

### 3) Interpreters maintain confidentiality of information pertaining to their work.

Core Values: Interpreters value deaf students' privacy and ownership of their personal and academic information.

- a) Interpreters adhere to the federal, state, and local laws governing educational settings (e.g. HIPAA, FERPA, mandatory reporting, ADA, IDEA).
- b) Interpreters maintain confidentiality of all IEP or 504 plan information.
- c) Interpreters adhere to school and district policies and procedures for professional conduct.
- d) Interpreters use professional discretion when posting on social media to maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

4) Interpreters support and participate on the educational team.

Core Values: Interpreters value collaboration, informed consent, data-driven decision making, and accountability.

- a) Interpreters adhere to IEP directives, objectives, and goals as set by the educational team.
- b) Interpreters contribute language, communication, and access-related observations and concerns to the IEP or 504 team.
- c) Interpreters clarify their role and responsibilities to school personnel as needed.
- d) Interpreters find resources they may provide to the educational team that encourage positive identity development.
- e) Interpreters collaborate with classroom teachers, deaf educators, and school staff.
- f) Interpreters respect all consumers in the educational environment.
- g) Interpreters support classroom teachers and other school personnel in creating environments that ensure visual access to materials and to interpreters' signing.

5) Interpreters continually develop their knowledge, skills, and professionalism to ensure they are qualified for all aspects of their role.

Core Values: Interpreters value education, knowledge, professional competence, and accept the responsibility for continued growth toward excellence.

- a) Interpreters engage in professional development that enhances both skills and theoretical knowledge.
- b) Interpreters participate in ongoing training to develop and enhance ethical decision-making.
- c) Interpreters are familiar with lesson objectives and prepare appropriately for effective interpretation.
- d) Interpreters work with their supervisors and other interpreters to give and receive feedback that promotes professional development.

6) Interpreters avoid perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

Core Values: Interpreters value integrity, trust, informed consent, transparency, and impartiality in the provision of their professional service.

- a) Interpreters faithfully render the message regardless of their own beliefs, creed, philosophy, or bias.
- b) Interpreters inform the student's IEP or 504 plan coordinator in writing and in a timely manner of situations that affect their ability to provide effective interpreting for students due to perceived or actual conflicts of interest.
- c) Interpreters avoid interpreting for their own children to maintain impartial and effective services.

7) Interpreters engage in ethical professional practices.

Core Values: Interpreters value honesty, accountability, professionalism, and responsibility in carrying out the requirements of their work.

- a) Interpreters represent their interpreting credentials accurately.
- b) Interpreters recognize the different language and communication systems used in schools and know their own proficiency with each system.
- c) Interpreters carefully review the job description and ensure they understand the language and other requirements for the position before deciding to accept an educational interpreting job.
- d) Interpreters fulfill their contractual obligations.