

# **Arkansas Standards for Educational Interpreters and Transliterators**

## **Guidance for Arkansas Schools and Educational Interpreters**



Arkansas Department of Education  
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education  
Office of Special Education  
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## Introduction

Public agencies employing educational interpreters for deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or oral deaf persons must comply with the legal standards established by the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE). See [ADE, Office of Special Education, Procedural Requirements and Program Standards 26.02.2.3](#).

The standards for educational interpreters and transliterators in Arkansas, as well as the timelines to meet the standards for those educational interpreters/transliterators under provisional status, are set forth in this document. All educational interpreters and transliterators employed by or contracted with a school district must obtain the minimum standards within the applicable required timeframe.

This guidance does not replace or take away any responsibilities of other federal and state statutes that are to be adhered to by public school institutions and/or the individuals employed as educational interpreters.

The communication preference of a student should be determined prior to enrollment in the educational setting if possible, and that determination will drive the selection of appropriate related services. The [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(IDEA\)](#) states that interpreting services are related services (IDEA, 20 USC § 1401(26); 34 CFR § 300.34(c)(4)). These services could include oral transliterations, Cued Speech transliterations, manual codes of English, or American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting. ASL services are typically referred to as interpreting and other English-based sign systems or visual representations of English are referred to as transliteration.

The fundamental role of an interpreter, regardless of specialty or place of employment, is to facilitate communication between persons who are deaf and/or hard of hearing and others. Educational interpreters facilitate communication between students who are deaf and/or hard of hearing and others, including teachers, service providers, and peers within the educational environment. The educational interpreter/transliterators is a member of the educational team and should attend meetings where educational issues are discussed concerning students for whom services are provided by that interpreter.

## Standards for Sign Language Interpreters/Transliterators

Sign language/spoken English interpreters are highly skilled professionals that facilitate communication between hearing individuals and individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Interpreters/Transliterators are licensed by the [Arkansas Department of Health \(ADH\)](#).

### Minimum standards:

- I. Must hold a valid interpreter's license issued by the [Arkansas Department of Health](#);
- II. Must have a high school diploma or equivalent; and
- III. Hold at least a:
  - a. 3.0 on the [Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment \(EIPA\)](#); or
  - b. [Quality Assurance Screening Test \(QAST\)](#) 3/3 (transliterating /interpreting).

### Provisional standards:

Provisional standard timelines are cumulative for all employment within educational settings and may not be repeated from school district to school district.

- I. Must obtain minimum standards within 2 academic years of employment if, at the time of employment, he or she:
  - a. is a qualified interpreter licensed by [ADH](#), or
  - b. is eligible to apply to be a qualified interpreter licensed by [ADH](#) and applies within one month of employment to obtain licensure; and
  - c. Holds at least a:
    - (1) 2.5 [EIPA](#); or
    - (2) [QAST](#) 2/2 (transliterating /interpreting).
- II. Must obtain minimum standards within 3 academic years of employment if, at the time of employment, he or she:
  - a. is a qualified interpreter licensed by [ADH](#); or
  - b. is eligible to apply to be a qualified interpreter licensed by [ADH](#) and applies within one month of employment to obtain licensure; and
  - c. Holds at least a:
    - (1) 2.0 on [EIPA](#); or
    - (2) [QAST](#) 1/1 (transliterating /interpreting).

### Preferred standards:

The preferred standard of educational interpreters for all employment within educational settings exceeds the minimum standard.

- I. Meet minimum standards, and
- II. Possess a baccalaureate or associate's degree, and
- III. Obtain a passing score on the [EIPA](#) written assessment, and
- IV. Hold credentials with the [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf \(RID\)](#).

## Standards for Oral Transliterators

Oral transliterators, also called oral interpreters, facilitate spoken communication between individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and individuals who are not, specifically for individuals who utilize Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) as their primary mode of communication and may or may not know or use manual communication modes or sign language.

### Minimum standards:

- I. Must hold a valid interpreter's license issued by [Arkansas Department of Health \(ADH\)](#).
- II. Must have a high school diploma or equivalent; and
- III. Hold at least a:
  - a. 3.0 on the [Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment \(EIPA\)](#), or
  - b. [Quality Assurance Screening Test \(QAST\)](#) 3/3 (transliterating /interpreting).

### Provisional standards:

Provisional standard timelines are cumulative for all employment within educational settings and may not be repeated from school district to school district.

- I. Must obtain minimum standards within 2 academic years of employment if, at the time of employment, he or she:
  - a. is a qualified interpreter licensed by [ADH](#), or
  - b. is eligible to apply to be a qualified interpreter licensed by [ADH](#), and
  - c. applies within one month of employment to obtain licensure.

## Standards for Cued Language Transliterators

Cued language transliterators provide individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing with access to the auditory information by using a visual representation of spoken language utilizing eight (8) handshapes and four (4) hand locations near the face.

### Minimum standards:

- I. Must hold a valid interpreter's license issued by [ADH](#), or
- II. Must have a high school diploma or equivalent, and
- III. Must have a Transliterator Skills Certificate from the [Testing, Evaluation and Certification Unit](#).

### Provisional standards:

Provisional standard timelines are cumulative for all employment within educational settings and may not be repeated from school district to school district.

- I. Must obtain minimum standards within 2 academic years of employment if, at the time of employment, he or she:

- a. is a qualified interpreter licensed by [ADH](#), or
- b. is eligible to apply to be a qualified interpreter licensed by [ADH](#), and
- c. applies within one month of employment to obtain licensure.

### **Educational Interpreters in the Classroom**

The primary responsibility of the interpreter/transliterators is to provide access to communication for the student who is deaf. It is essential that the educational interpreter have sufficient knowledge of the content to interpret its concepts and vocabulary accurately and meaningfully. Preparation time to meet with the instructor, read lecture outlines and other required reading, and preview instructional media may be required.

Schools should guide students who utilize interpreters to become independent and knowledgeable consumers of interpreting services. Therefore, roles and responsibilities for the interpreting process are to be clearly outlined and explained.

The responsibilities of the educational interpreter and/or transliterator change as the communication and support needs for the student changes. For example, the interpreter for a student in kindergarten may sit closer to the student and share more responsibilities with the teacher for keeping the student on task. Conversely, the interpreter in the high school setting may sit closer to the teacher and assume no responsibility for the student staying on task. It is not appropriate for the interpreter to act as a note taker student when he or she is absent.

Interpreters/ transliterators are to provide services from the location that best allows the student full visual access to instruction. In some cases, changes of placement are required during the instructional period. All staff members should be aware that the student will need access to information in other activities of the school, (e.g., assemblies, field trips, dramatic presentations).

### **Educational Interpreters on the Educational Team**

The Educational Interpreter is an important member of the student's educational team. The interpreter should actively participate in programming committee meetings, especially regarding decisions related to communication issues. When participating in these meetings, the interpreter cannot simultaneously provide interpreting services for any participant who is deaf. When the student who is deaf is included in the meeting, another interpreter is needed to allow the student's interpreter to fully participate as a committee member. If another interpreter is not available, the interpreter should submit information in writing and may then act as interpreter for the meeting.

## **Legal Interpreting and Educational Interpreters**

The qualifications for providing interpreting/transliterating services in a legal situation differ from the qualifications of individuals licensed to be educational interpreters. This not only includes courtroom interpreting, but also all related investigations and contact with police or juvenile authorities. Potential legal ramifications may include the entire case being dismissed if the quality of the interpreting service is questionable.

For information and technical assistance regarding legal interpreting, contact the [Office of Court Interpreter Services \(OCIS\)](#).

## **Responsibilities of the Interpreter/Transliterators**

Responsibilities:

- Meet the classroom teacher(s) and student(s) and explain the role of an interpreter/transliterators, prior to providing services.
- Obtain teacher's editions of textbooks, course outlines, and other related materials, prior to providing services.
- Set aside time for planning with the teacher to discuss course content, lessons plans, upcoming tests, assignments, etc.
- Position oneself so the student can easily see the interpretation, the teacher and visual instruction. Consideration should be given to appropriate seating and lighting arrangements for the benefit of the student(s).
- Voice the student's questions, comments, responses, and presentations accurately.
- Ask for clarification when information is not clear.
- Remind the teacher(s) and student(s) to communicate directly with each other, as needed.
- Follow the [Educational Interpreter Code of Ethics](#) for interpreters as well as school district policies and procedures.
- Provide input regarding communication issues during programming meetings.
- Provide tutoring services only under the guidance of the classroom teacher(s).
- Wear solid colors contrasting to skin tones rather than bright, busy patterns.
- Provide professional guidance regarding qualifications and certifications if asked to interpret outside of educational settings.
- Maintain an interpreter's license issued by [ADH](#).

## **Responsibilities of the Teacher**

### Responsibilities:

- Meet the interpreter/transliterater and the student(s) to discuss communication needs, prior to the interpreter/transliterater providing services.
- Provide the interpreter/transliterater with teacher's editions of textbooks, course outlines and other related materials, prior to the interpreter/transliterater providing services.
- Introduce the interpreter/transliterater to the class and explain his/her role, prior to the interpreter/transliterater providing services.
- Set aside time for planning with the interpreter/transliterater to discuss course content, lesson plans, upcoming tests, assignments, etc.
- Speak directly to the student(s), not the interpreter/transliterater (Example, don't say, "Tell him to open his book" or "Ask her if she understands.")
- Treat the student(s) who is deaf or hard of hearing just as you would other students in your class.
- Pause for the student who is deaf to answer questions or make comments. Be aware of additional time needed by the student(s). Be aware that the communication process will be delayed due to the time required to process spoken English into signs.
- Use a moderate rate of speech that will allow the interpreter/transliterater to process and present information accurately.
- Notify the interpreters/transliteraters of changes in the school schedule, substitute teachers, guest speakers, field trips, etc.

## **NAIE Educational Interpreter Code of Ethics**

The National Association of Interpreters in Education (NAIE) upholds high standards of professionalism and ethical conduct for interpreters working in the educational system PreK through 12th grade. The Code of Ethics may be found at: <https://naiedu.org/codeofethics/>.



## **Educational Interpreter Performance Test Reimbursement Arkansas Department of Education Office of Special Education**

In an effort to assist local educational agencies in meeting personnel shortages, the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) Office of Special Education will make reimbursement available to Arkansas public school districts for the cost of the [Educational Interpreter Performance Test \(EIPA\)](#) based upon the following criteria, contingent upon available funding.

To qualify for reimbursement, districts must:

- Register and prepay all fees for individuals taking the EIPA Performance Test.
- Provide a copy of the individual's test results from EIPA with a signed "consent to share" form from the interpreter to the ADE Office of Special Education.
- Provide a copy of the receipt for testing from EIPA to the ADE Office of Special Education.

To qualify for reimbursement, the test results must reflect:

- For those taking EIPA for the **first time**, overall EIPA score must be 2.0 or higher for districts to be eligible for reimbursement.
- For interpreters **currently in provisional status**, test results must meet timelines as established by the Arkansas Standards for Educational Interpreters and Transliterations.
  - *Interpreters that begin initial Arkansas public school employment with a 2.5 EIPA score have two academic years of employment to meet the minimum standard of 3.0.*
  - *Interpreters that begin initial Arkansas public school employment with a 2.0 EIPA score have three academic years of employment to meet the minimum standard of 3.0.*
  - *These years are cumulative and may not be repeated from school district to school district.*

Contingent upon available funding, the ADE Office of Special Education will:

- Reimburse a district for up to 3 (three) EIPA Performance tests for any one interpreter unless the interpreter has already met the minimum standard of 3.0.
- Reimburse a total of up to eight EIPA Performance tests per year based upon first received, first eligible.

For additional information regarding the EIPA test reimbursement, please contact [Stacey Tatera](#), ADE Office of Special Education Deaf Education Specialist.

## **Agency Resources**

### **[Arkansas Department of Education](#)**

Four Capitol Mall Little Rock, AR 72201  
501-682-4475

### **[ADE Office of Special Education](#)**

Arkansas Department of Education  
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education  
1401 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 450 Little Rock, AR 72201  
501-682-4221

### **[Arkansas Deaf Educational Services](#)**

ADE Office of Special Education  
1401 West Capitol Avenue, Suite 450 Little Rock, AR 72201  
501-682-4221

### **[Arkansas Department of Health Interpreting Advisory Board](#)**

4815 West Markham Street Little Rock, Arkansas 72205  
501-661-2000 or 1-800-462-0599

### **[Arkansas Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf \(ARID\)](#)**

P.O. Box 46511  
Little Rock, AR 72214-6511

### **[ADE Procedural Requirements and Program Standards](#)**

### **[ADE Eligibility Criteria and Program Guidelines](#)**

### **[Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment \(EIPA\)](#)**

### **[National Association of Interpreters in Education \(NAIE\)](#)**

### **[Quality Assurance Screening Test \(QAST\)](#)**

Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

### **[CUED Language Transliterator Certification](#)**

### **[University of Arkansas Little Rock Interpreter Education Program](#)**

2801 S. University Avenue Little Rock, AR 72204  
501-916-6254