



SPECIAL EDUCATION DIVISION
TRANSLATION/ INTERPRETATION DEPARTMENT

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

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:

- Please familiarize yourself with good webinar etiquette and help your team to practice it.
- Set up home office space to minimize distractions.
- 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.
- Participants should avoid excessive fidgeting when they are speaking, and turn off their video and microphone if they need to “step out” of the meeting for a moment to get something, (this reduces visual distractions for others in the meeting).
- Teams can implement a system of “raising hands” either as a physical gesture to the camera or using the chat feature to allow participants to take turns speaking and minimize interruptions.
- Presenters should be mindful of speaking clearly and using a moderate rate of speech, especially if they are reading from a document.
- Plan for a concise agenda with a meeting duration of about 1 to 1.5 hour(s) 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.