

“How would having dedicated representations enable Professional educational Interpreters positively impact the success of students?”

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Title/Topic:

How would having dedicated representations enable Professional educational Interpreters positively impact the success of students?"

Background Rationale:

A Professional Educational Interpreter is an extremely important member of a school community. An interpreter enables all students and teachers and the entire school community to be able to interact with each other. Interpreters convey the message as clear and concise as they can to the Deaf and hard of hearing students as much as possible. Interpreters support and collaborate with the Deaf and hard of hearing students by translating and facilitating communication between two languages. Interpreters take the English language, process the information, and translate it into the American Sign Language (ASL). Sometimes expanding and explaining more in depth helps the Deaf and hard of hearing student understand what is being conveyed and taught by teachers. The impact of school-based interpreters must be understood. Parents and caregivers of Deaf and hard of hearing students rightly expect that their student will have the same educational opportunities that all other students enjoy, without restriction. All students, including students that are Deaf or hard of hearing have the right to equal access to education. Even though some Deaf or hard of hearing students are educated in self-contained classrooms, there are some Deaf students and hard of hearing students that are mainstreamed into general education classes. To honor and achieve the goal to have these students in a less restrictive environment according to their learning abilities, they need to have complete accessibility such as, being able to comprehend and understand the academic content that is being taught, and a highly qualified interpreter that will assist with communication. These elements are both necessary and expected.

The need for positive understanding between those who make decisions regarding interpreters' roles in a school setting is imperative. There must be a clear understanding that interpreters are not teachers, tutors, or paraprofessionals. Another struggle is interpreters are seen as babysitters, behavior monitors, and problem solvers, and that is not the job of an interpreter. Each student that they serve in this role as interpreter deserves the interpreter's full and undivided attention so that the goal of educational equity can be fulfilled. Any other focus deprives the student.

Literature Review:

The classroom interpreter must be equipped with proper lighting and ample, accessible space to sit or stand so that the Deaf or hard of hearing student can clearly see the interpreter. In 1995, this was incorporated by the Kansas State Board of Education. The actions of interpreting utilizes facial expressions, body language, and both verbal and nonverbal cues. These are all important factors of communicating to the Deaf and the hard of hearing students. Other students in the classroom also pick up the sign language that they are exposed to as well, and this exposure encourages and enables them to communicate more effectively with their classmates.

According to the state of Ohio, interpreters must be highly qualified in the facilitation of English and American Sign Language. To become an interpreter, they are required to attend an Interpreting Training Program (ITP). They must obtain an Associate Degree or better and they also must be educated and knowledgeable in the Deaf culture. Interpreters also must follow the Code of Professional Conduct standards that are upheld by the Registry of Interpreter for the Deaf (RID, 2005). Interpreters are also required to constantly update their credentials and are required to have an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) required by the state of Ohio. Comparatively, teachers are required to have an IPDP, but are under a different contract. Paraprofessionals are not required to have an IPDP and they are not required to have a degree.

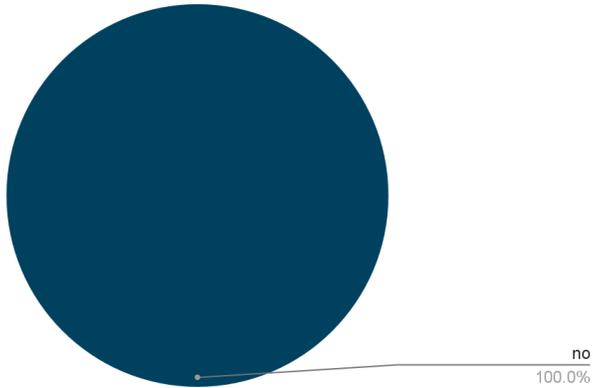
Design/Tools/Process:

More professional educational interpreters need to be hired. Due to not having enough interpreters, there is no coverage when interpreters are absent. Also, since there are not enough interpreters, there is no flexibility when it comes to classroom scheduling, supporting with IReady, specials or supporting Deaf and hard of hearing students in the cafeteria. There are different grade levels of the Deaf and hard of hearing students and all of the students are not with their resource teacher all day. There are some Deaf and hard of hearing students who are mainstreamed all day and then you have some Deaf and hard of hearing students that are self-contained. Mainstreamed students have a full-time interpreter that supports him or her in every curriculum and that interpreter follows that student all day. Another reason more interpreters need to be hired is because interpreters cannot assist with the district's request of getting 40 minutes weekly on I-Ready for Math and Reading. As a result, this requirement is not being met on a weekly basis.

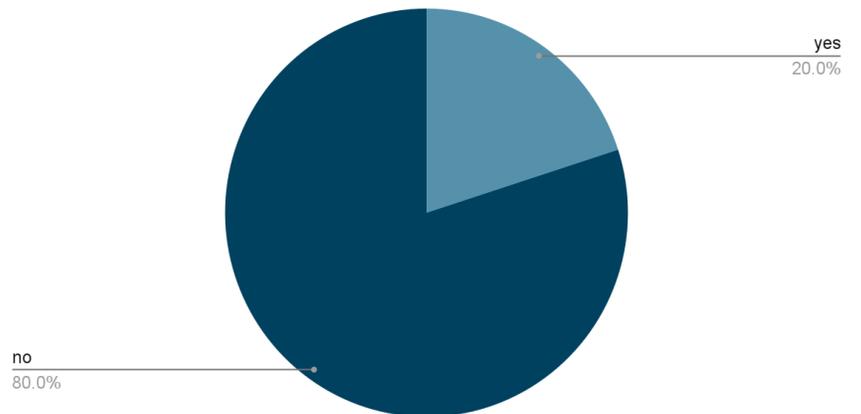
Data Analysis:

In the district thus far, we only have 5 staff interpreters. I conducted a survey and asked three questions that I thought were important and very relevant to my research. The first question that I asked was: Do you feel that you have the proper representation as an interpreter at TPS? 100% stated no. The second question that I asked was: Do you have enough vacation days to cover both Christmas break and Spring break? 80% answered no. The last question that I asked was; Do you agree that interpreters need their own Professional Development opportunities? 100% answered yes.

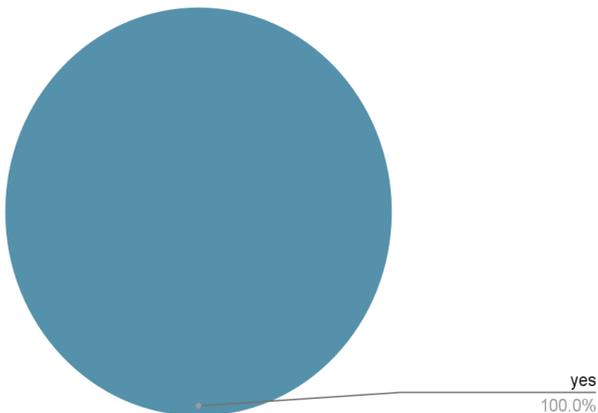
Do you feel that you have the proper representation as an interpreter at TPS?



Do you have enough vacation days to cover both Christmas break and Spring break?



Do you agree that interpreters need their own Professional Development opportunities?



Implications/Recommendations:

The district or state should support only employing and professionally developing these interpreters. Not having the proper representation only hurts the interpreter's profession. Professional interpreters need an advocator that is educated in Deaf culture. They need someone that has the working knowledge and that is experienced in the interpreting profession. Interpreters also need someone that is fluent in American Sign Language. That person would be able to advocate and support the interpreters and their profession in the proper manner. With having proper representation it would give the support that interpreters need to voice their concerns in an orderly manner. With these reasons in mind, hiring more Professional Educational Interpreters would accommodate and meet the needs of the Deaf and hard of hearing students. Educating and assisting administration in learning the role of an interpreter would help with establishing a healthier cohesive working environment as well. Many interpreters experience struggles with the district and with administration because they are not educated in the professional interpreters industry.

I would like to see a position created so that interpreters get the accurate and genuine representation that they deserve and have needed for quite some time. I feel creating a paid American Sign Language Club would be beneficial not only for administrators to learn sign language, but it will help parents and other students that want to learn how to communicate with Deaf and hard of hearing students by learning how to sign as well.

In conclusion, I have given reasons why it is important for professional educational interpreters to be present in the classroom settings. I gave facts about the role of professional educational interpreters. I conducted a survey on the interpreters that work in the district. I have explained why it is important for professional educational interpreters to have their own representation and why they need clear language in the contract. I even talked about why more interpreters need to be hired. With these considerable and important factors, this is why it is important for professional educational interpreters to have their own representation.

references

<https://rid.org/programs/ethics/code-of-professional-conduct/>

<https://education.ohio.gov>

<https://naiedu.org/state-standards>

<https://www.interpreters.com/ohio-interpreter-translator/>