



**NAETISL**  
National Association of Educational Translators and  
Interpreters of Spoken Languages

[www.naetisl.org](http://www.naetisl.org)

# BEST PRACTICES FOR LARGE MEETINGS

## INTERPRETERS

### PLAN & PREPARE

- Ask for **materials** beforehand, such as meeting agenda, speech notes, presentation slides, reports and acronyms.
- Know your **audience** and **topic**.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes **before** the meeting
- **Test** the technology you'll be using (virtually or in-person).



### TECH TIPS



Make sure the **talk system** works properly and have spare **batteries** just in case.



Have a **troubleshooting** plan and **backup** technology in case your virtual platform is not working.



**Communicate** if **volume** needs to be adjusted or the **speaker** is going too fast.



Make sure everyone is on the **correct channel** if using the talk system.



**Explain** the simultaneous feature if using a virtual platform.

### ASK FOR HELP



Meet with staff **ahead** of the meeting to go over meeting procedures.



If interpreting **in person**, request a **trained member** to help others with the talk system.



If interpreting **virtually**, assign a **co-host** so you can remain focused on the interpretation.



Ask the school to create **instructions** or slides explaining the process in the **families' language**.

### EXPLAIN

- Ask meeting organizers for 5 minutes to **explain the process** before starting.
- Meet with **the speaker** and ask them to speak at a moderate pace.
- Remind speaker to look out for a commonly agreed **signal** (e.g. raised hand) to indicate they need to slow down.
- Remind speakers to avoid **jargon, idioms, and humor** as they are difficult to interpret.
- Determine in advance the best way to incorporate you as the interpreter during a **Q&A** in virtual or in-person settings.
- **Greet** families in the language you are interpreting and remind them that you will interpret **everything** you will hear.
- Ask families to find you **after the meeting** if further **clarification** is needed.



### INTERPRET

- Speak **loud** and **clear** & **pace** yourself.
- Remain **professional** and take quick **notes** of information you may have missed.
- Work with a **buddy** and switch every 30 minutes. Interpreting simultaneously is mentally **exhausting!**
- Be prepared to switch from **simultaneous** to **consecutive** interpretation or **sight translation** during the session.



### STAY CALM

- **Breathe** and remain **focused**.
- If you **miss** something, **write** a quick note and follow up as needed.
- Remain **in the moment**.
- **Trust** your skills.



### DEBRIEF

- Provide **feedback** to school staff to improve future meetings.
- **Follow up** on information that was not clear to prepare for future meetings.
- Offer suggestions about the **equipment** used including the virtual platform, talk system, or microphone.



Brought to you by the [National Association of Educational Translators and Interpreters of Spoken Languages \(NAETISL.org\)](http://www.naetisl.org), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. We are dedicated to strengthening family engagement by connecting emergent bilingual families, school administrators, teachers, and educational translators and interpreters of spoken languages with information about language access and language justice in early childhood and K-12 settings.

Thank you to the NAETISL Members who contributed to the creation of this Best Practices Series.



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# BEST PRACTICES FOR LARGE MEETINGS

SCHOOL LEADERS AND EDUCATORS

## PLAN & PREPARE

- Identify interpreters versed in **education terminology**.
- Select interpreters with **experience** interpreting **simultaneously**.
- **Share materials** such as meeting agenda, speech notes, presentation slides, reports, and acronyms to be used with interpreters.
- Allow interpreters to arrive at least **10-15 minutes before** the meeting (virtual or in person).



## TECH TIPS



Make sure the **talk system** works properly and have spare **batteries** just in case.



Have a **troubleshooting plan** and **backup** technology in case virtual platforms do not work.



**Communicate** if **volume** needs to be adjusted or the **speakers** are going too fast for the interpreters.



Make sure all the families are on the **correct channel** if using the talk system.



**Explain** the simultaneous feature if using a virtual platform.

## KEEP IN MIND



Understand that the interpreters **cannot** **troubleshoot** technology issues for others while they focus on interpretation.



If interpreting **in person**, ask for a parent volunteer to **help** the interpreters with the **talk system**



If interpreting **virtually**, assign a **co-host** so the interpreter can remain focused on the interpretation.



Create **slides** in the families' **home language** explaining how to use the talk system or virtual platform

## EXPLAIN



- **Explain** your meeting objective and **clarify** terminology with interpreters.
- Allow interpreters to **explain the process** to families in their language prior to starting the meeting.
- Create a **slide** in the families' **home language** explaining where the interpreter will be and how to use the talk system (in-person) or virtual platform.
- Allow families to ask questions and **get acquainted** with the **technology** prior to starting the meeting.
- Determine in advance the best way to incorporate the interpreter during a **Q&A** in virtual or in-person settings.

## DURING THE MEETING

- Speak **clearly** and at a **moderate** pace.
- Be on the lookout for a commonly **agreed signal** (e.g. raised hand) from interpreters to indicate you need to **slow down**.
- Avoid **jargon**, **idioms** and **humor** as they are difficult to interpret.
- Allow interpreters to **switch every 30 minutes** to avoid fatigue and promote accuracy.
- Remind families where the interpreters will be (in person) after the meeting if **further clarification** is needed.
- If using a virtual platform, ask the interpreters to **stay after** the conclusion of the meeting in case families have a question.



## DEBRIEF



- Provide **feedback** to the interpreters to improve future meetings.
- **Follow up** on information that interpreters pointed out as needing clarification.
- Offer suggestions about the **equipment** used including the virtual platform, talk system, or microphone.

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