



Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Professional Interpreters in Education

We believe that our English Learner families have the right to be supported by interpreters who have been specifically trained to work in educational settings in order to have full access to the education process. This Code of Ethics for Professional Interpreters in Education was developed with the input and collaboration of Certified Medical Interpreters, Parent Engagement Facilitators, School Administrators, SeSo, Inc. and University of Georgia Professional Interpreter in Education Certificate course participants. We would like to thank the National Council on Interpreting in Healthcare Code of Ethics and the Minnesota Department of Education for providing the initial framework for this effort. This abbreviated version of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Professional Interpreters in Education can be used to introduce bilingual school personnel, community interpreters, medical interpreters and legal interpreters to the unique roles and responsibilities of educational interpreters, and the specific ethical standards that should guide their practice. This document can also be used to help bilingual school personnel identify relevant considerations when professional obligations conflict or ethical uncertainties arise, and to provide ethical standards to which the general public can hold professional interpreters in education accountable. For an expanded version of this Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Professional Interpreters in Education, please contact us at sesoincga@gmail.com

CONFIDENTIALITY: The interpreter must protect the privacy of families, students and school personnel. All information learned in the performance of their professional duties, including identifiable information, must be kept confidential.

ACCURACY: The educational interpreter will not add, omit, change, summarize, or substitute information. Linguistic and cultural accuracy must be respected and word-for-word interpretation must be avoided. Interpreting is an intense activity that requires not only knowledge and skills in both languages that are being interpreted and their respective cultures, but also the ability to provide spontaneous responses to information being exchanged verbally at an unpredictable rate of speed and register. The interpreter is responsible for clarifying information and unknown terms to protect the accuracy of the information.

IMPARTIALITY: The interpreter strives to maintain impartiality and refrains from counseling, advising, or projecting personal opinions, biases, or beliefs. Any prior personal or professional involvement with any party is disclosed to the multidisciplinary educational team whether or not the interpreter believes impartiality will be an issue.

RESPECT: The interpreter treats all parties, including the multidisciplinary educational team, parents, students and other interpreters, with respect and professionalism.

PERSONAL BOUNDARIES: Dual roles within the school setting are very common. The educational interpreter must be aware that roles may shift and overlap within a single encounter and that stepping out of the interpreter role should only occur when it is critical to communication.

ADVOCACY: When student educational access and outcomes would be compromised, or the student's health, well-being, or dignity are at risk, the interpreter may be justified in acting as an advocate.

CULTURAL AWARENESS: The educational interpreter promotes and maintains respect for the cultural beliefs and practices of all parties involved in the interpreting encounter, and continuously strives to develop awareness of potential cultural conflicts.

PROFESSIONALISM: The interpreter must at all times act in a professional manner, arriving prepared for the assignment and presenting the appropriate demeanor. Interpreters accurately represent their credentials such as training, certifications, certificates, and work experience.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: The interpreter must seek opportunities to further his/her knowledge and skills and to mentor interpreters new to the educational field.

