



SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Anthony Q. Davis, Superintendent of Schools

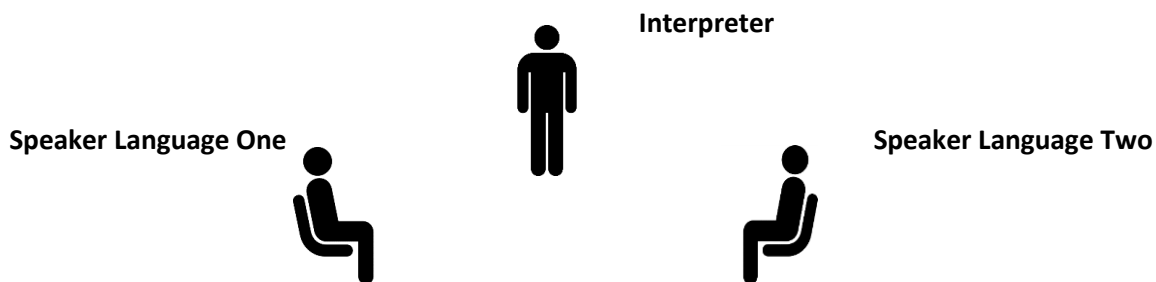
ENL, World Languages & Bilingual Education Department

Lyda Ragonese, Director

Communicating Through an Interpreter

Preparing for a Meeting: If you prepare for a meeting with an interpreter by following the three suggested steps below, you will create an environment for a successful meeting using interpretation for support.

1. **Request an interpreter:** Request an interpreter at minimum one week in advance. This will help ensure that the coordinator of interpreters has time to secure an interpreter. This will also help ensure that the interpreter has time to prepare for the meeting if necessary.
2. **Allow for appropriate timing:** Expect that a meeting during which individuals are communicating through an interpreter will take twice as long, as everything will need to be said twice.
3. **Set up the space:** Provide an environment conducive for a meeting by ensuring the space is quiet, and that seating is arranged in a manner that allows the individuals meeting to face each other, and the interpreter to sit to the side. The diagram below is an example of an appropriate way to set up the space.



Meeting Strategies: By engaging in the strategies below, your meeting with the support of an interpreter will foster more successful communication between all parties involved.

1. **Make eye contact:** Look at the person you are meeting with. This sounds simple, but participants may feel inclined to make eye contact with the interpreter, rather than the individual with whom they are meeting.
2. **Monitor speech:** Use a conversational tone and volume during the meeting. Say only two to three sentences at a time, so that the interpreter is not forced to summarize what is said. Refrain from having additional conversations while an interpreter is interpreting for one individual in the meeting. This will make it difficult for the interpreter to capture everything that is shared.
3. **Ask questions:** If something seems unclear to you or the other individual(s) in the meeting, it is appropriate to ask questions. The interpreter will interpret the questions and responses of all individuals.

You can expect that interpreters assigned to requests in Syracuse City School District will meet the guidelines on the following page.

Guidelines for Interpreters

It is expected that all interpreters adhere to the following guidelines:

- Arrive on time for all appointments. It is suggested that the interpreter arrives several minutes early to each appointment to familiarize themselves with the setting and prepare to begin the meeting on time.
- Clarify your role in each appointment as an interpreter, and state the language for which you will be interpreting.
- Serve as a liaison between two (or more) people.
- Relay messages back and forth between each speaker in a meeting. Do not add additional messages, opinions, or ideas.
- Remain loyal to the comments made by each speaker. Do your best to interpret the full meaning of a comment, rather than providing a word by word interpretation. If you feel unable to accurately interpret a comment, ask the speaker providing the comment to further clarify or explain.
- Be inclusive. Do not communicate with either speaker without interpreting what is said to the other.
- Do not attempt to interpret something that you have not understood or heard clearly. Ask specific questions or ask the speaker providing the comment to repeat themselves.
- Maintain confidentiality. Everything that is said in any interpretation session is completely confidential. You should not repeat anything shared in any meeting outside of the setting of that meeting.