


Date: May 8, 2015

To: Superintendents, Special Education Directors and Sign Language Interpreters

From: Brenda Cassellius, Ed. D.  
Commissioner 

Re: Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA)

This memorandum is to update you on the current situation regarding the EIPA, which is one possible test for sign language interpreters working with students in Minnesota schools. There have been concerns expressed recently regarding two issues. The first is the need to employ and retain an adequate pool of interpreters for students so that these students can effectively access instruction. The second concern is having interpreters with appropriate skills to correctly communicate instructional content to students. There are concerns about what scores on the EIPA tests are appropriate and the availability of testing opportunities.

To address these concerns, the Division of Special Education has created a workgroup to gather stakeholder input. We are continuing to gather and review data and other information on the status of sign language interpreters in schools. Until that work is completed, a temporary solution was proposed by the state Deaf/Hard of Hearing Advisory Committee, which is incorporated into this memo. This temporary solution impacts both newly-hired interpreters and those who are currently working under an extension of the two-year provisional period. If those interpreters have achieved a score of 3.5 – 3.9 on EIPA at either the elementary or secondary level and passed the written test, these individuals can continue working as interpreters in public schools until another communication is provided. It is anticipated that this is a time-limited solution until we have an opportunity to fully explore the options available. Once a final determination has been made, another communication from the Commissioner of Education will be provided.

If you have further questions about this topic, please contact:

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