Video Remote Interpreting
Draft 1

| Effective Date: |
| Authorized By: |

1. **Purpose:**

    1.1. VRI may be implemented for distance learning, mainstream classroom settings, teleconferences, staff meetings, and other situations where an in-person interpreter is unavailable. While VRI is not a complete substitute for in-person interpreting, it provides essential communication access when an interpreter is needed but may not be available on-site.

    1.2. To provide VRI services, USDB interpreters are required to comply with all expectations outlined in this VRI policy. Interpreters assigned to online students who meet established criteria shall coordinate with their supervisor to determine eligibility for telework and must complete the Interpreter Telework Agreement.

2. **Definitions:**

    2.1. **Video Remote Interpreting (VRI)** refers to the use of technology to provide remote interpreting services in sign language or spoken language. In VRI, the interpreter is located at a different site from the client and facilitates communication through a video and audio connection.

3. **Limitations**

    3.1. While VRI provides valuable communication access, it has inherent limitations. Users may experience restricted access to visual and auditory cues, including communication from others in the environment. Younger students or those less experienced with virtual setups may require additional support to adapt effectively.

Contextual information, such as environmental or content-related cues, may be less accessible. Additionally, technology-related factors, including device battery life, internet connectivity, or software functionality, can impact the effectiveness of VRI.

4. Strategies

4.1. To ensure effective VRI services, devices should be connected to a reliable internet source and positioned to provide clear visibility of the interpreter. Teachers and staff are encouraged to provide presentations or lesson materials in advance to allow interpreters to prepare and facilitate effective communication. Minimizing background noise and visual distractions, while ensuring a clean and professional backdrop, helps maintain clear communication and aligns with professional standards.

5. VRI in Educational Settings

5.1. Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) can be an effective and appropriate method for providing interpreting services in educational settings. In cases where students live in rural areas or when qualified interpreters are limited or not available onsite, virtual interpreting services may be implemented to ensure access to communication and instruction.

5.2. Virtual interpreting services function similarly to in-person services. The interpreter collaborates with local teachers, administrators, and support staff to prepare for classroom content and ensure effective communication access. Using video technology, the interpreter facilitates communication, interprets classroom content, and incorporates visual information as part of the interpretation process.

5.3. While VRI is not the preferred method for providing interpreting services, it can serve as an effective alternative when necessary.

6. Technology

6.1. For students receiving virtual interpreting services, a Zoom account is set up through USDB for services. The district is responsible for providing the necessary technology to ensure smooth integration with district security protocols. It is recommended that students have a dedicated device used solely for interpreting services. An iPad is

preferred, as it typically offers portability, high-quality video, and ease of navigation.
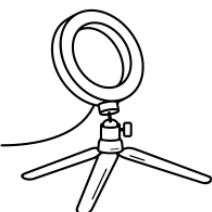
7. **Managing VRI for Students**
   7.1. At the beginning of the school year or when initiating VRI services, the interpreter should introduce themselves, observe the classroom setup, and work with staff to explain how virtual interpreting functions and how to manage the technology effectively.
   7.2. Maintain regular communication with teachers, administrators, and on-site TODs.
   7.3. Teachers are encouraged to share lesson plans or provide access to learning platforms in advance so interpreters can prepare and deliver effective interpretation.
   7.4. Teachers are encouraged to notify interpreters as early as possible about assemblies, field trips, or special events to determine the best arrangement, including the possibility of sending an in-person interpreter when able.
   7.5. Teachers are encouraged to use microphones and position students near the instructional area to improve audio and visual access.
   7.6. Utilize video platform features, such as screen sharing for classwork or visuals and a whiteboard to enhance accessibility and comprehension.
   7.7. Manage platform settings to optimize performance, accessibility, and the overall VRI experience.
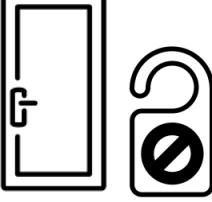
Best Practices for Virtual Work
This resource provides the guidance you need to be prepared and successful in a virtual setting. Here, you'll find best practices for technology, workspace setup, professionalism, and team collaboration to ensure smooth and effective assignments. Following these tips will help you maintain high-quality interpreting while protecting confidentiality and staying engaged throughout the meeting.

	Computer Use a laptop or desktop that has a webcam. If you are unfamiliar with the technology, do a test run before the online meeting begins.

	Internet Connection Make sure you're connected to a strong, reliable internet. Test your device's connectivity before the meeting so everything runs smoothly.
	Background Use a plain, neutral-colored background (a wall or backdrop). A solid dark color is best; blue is preferred for consistency. Avoid fake backgrounds or the blur effect, as they can cause hands to disappear. If needed, USDB can provide a backdrop.
	Webcam You'll need a camera – your computer's built-in one is fine, but an external webcam is recommended for better quality. Position the webcam so you are centered in the frame. Avoid sitting too high, too low, or too far from the camera.
	Headset Use a headset with a microphone, if possible, to reduce background noise, improve sound quality, and prevent audio feedback. Be sure to test your speaker/microphone before the meeting begins.
	Attire Virtual meetings are still a professional space. Dress professionally, just as you would for in-person assignments.
	Lighting Avoid sitting directly in front of or beside a bright light source. Experiment with natural light, lamps, and camera placement until you are well-lit on screen.

AVOID DISTRACTION	**Distractions** Give your full attention to meetings, both in and out of the hot seat. Avoid email, web browsing, texting, eating, or any other distracting behavior.
	Teaming Coordinate with your team before the meeting to decide how and when interpreter switches will happen. This could be signaled in the chat or by announcing when you're swapping. Even with your camera off, remain available and support your team through messaging.
	Environment Ensure your workspace ensures privacy and protects confidentiality. Avoid situations where you might be interrupted.