

SIGNALS

News & Resources for Ohio Educational Interpreters

Interpreting & Sign Language Resources ♦ Summer 2008

Educational Interpreter Working Conditions

Survey Results Describe Salary, Benefits and More for K-12

Educational Interpreters in Ohio

When negotiating salaries, benefits and other employment conditions, interpreters and employers often want to know what is standard in the field and in the local area. Recognizing this information was lacking, the ISLR Advisory Committee formed a task force to collect this information. Three educational interpreters, Becky Costas, Sheryl Killen and Sarah McKinney, agreed to take on the challenge of surveying both interpreters and employers.

(See *SURVEY* on page 5)

SHARING SOLUTIONS

Visual Phonics as an Interpreting Tool

Using Hand Cues to Represent Phonemes

By Kimberly Halter, Akron Public Schools

Visual Phonics was developed by the International Communication Learning Institute to make a spoken language's phonemes visible to students who are deaf and hard of hearing. Visual Phonics is comprised of 45 hand cues that provide visual and kinesthetic information related to how the sound is verbally and physically produced. For example, the letter "p" makes the sound /p/ which is represented by a hand cue showing air being released from the lips and a written symbol. Visual Phonics was originally developed for use by teachers and speech-language pathologists for literacy and speech production lessons, but the hand cues can also be used to interpret those same lessons.

Using Visual Phonics Cues while Interpreting

Most of the deaf and hard-of-hearing students in the middle school where I work are in language arts classes using a phonics-based curriculum. When first



interpreting for deaf students in one of these classes, I sometimes felt in over my head. The class included many activities that required students to distinguish between different phonemes the teacher verbalized. For example, the teacher would ask the students to:

- ♦ Identify the beginning or ending sounds of words
- ♦ Identify short and long vowel sounds in words
- ♦ Write down the sounds, not the letters
- ♦ Write down only part of a word
- ♦ Identify rhyming words

(See *PHONICS* on page 5)

Upcoming Statewide ISLR Workshops

November 15, 2008

Demand-Control Schema

Presented by Mark Alan English


Ohio School for the Deaf

Columbus, Ohio

See page 4 for details

SIGNALS ♦ Summer 2008

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 Image from *Odyssey*,
Gallaudet University.
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ISLR Advisory Committee Report

The Advisory Committee (AC) met on April 19, 2008. AC members present included: Carol Black, Sue Lottier, Sarah McKinney, Julie Loedding, Mary Roark, and Pat Maille. Outreach Director Pam Brodie, ISLR Administrator Jean Parmir, and guest Diane Schmidt were also in attendance.

During the meeting, the committee discussed interpreters' duties when deaf students are in study hall; plans for EIPA test sites, Summer Institute, and online events; and proposed changes to Outreach professional development listings and website.

Outreach/ISLR provided updates on ASL Consultants at OSD, the ITP Writing Team for ODE Educator Preparation, the April regional workshop, the mentor program, the Working Conditions task force, and standardized testing accommodations. Members shared news about their regions.

There are openings on the Advisory Committee for Northwest, Southeast, and At-Large positions.

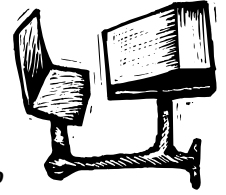
Positions are open to educational interpreters who have the ODE associate license, have worked 3 or more years in a pre-K - 12 setting, and are involved in community or professional activities. We would be happy to have representation from interpreters using SEE, Cued Language, or Oral transliteration.

The AC is especially concerned that we have no representation from the Northwest area, since Sue Lottier has served the maximum number of terms. See AC information at <http://www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org/ISLRAdvisory.aspx>, or contact ISLR (see back cover) for more information. ■

STUDENT DESK

Developing Peer Relationships

At the Drivers Education Camp for high school students from across Ohio this summer, students responded to the question:



What do you find helpful for an interpreter to do or not do so you can interact and possibly develop friendships with other students?

Responses included:

- ♦ I appreciate being able to call the interpreter over to interpret when I choose to talk to a hearing student and want easy communication.
- ♦ I don't like it when the interpreter chats with the hearing students. It makes me feel left out.
- ♦ I remember when I met the students who became my friends they wanted to learn sign language. They enjoy using sign language. Sometimes I can also understand by reading lips. I don't need the interpreter.

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STUDENT DESK

This column is a chance for us to hear directly from Deaf students about their experiences working with interpreters in the classroom. Submissions are welcome as text or video. Contact us (see back cover) if we could assist. ■

IN SIGHT

Dream Educational Interpreting Course

If you were creating a course on educational interpreting for an interpreter training program, what is one topic you would include in the curriculum? What would you want the students to understand about that topic?

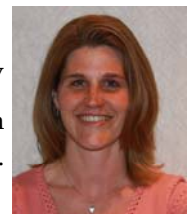


Linda Howard, Akron Public Schools

- ♦ Child development — language, social and mental development at different ages/stages, what is age appropriate
- ♦ Working with highly visual students who use more gestures than signs — how to use what they know and what to do to help them develop language.

Sheryl Killen, ESC of Franklin County

The Gish Model (also called top-down processing) has been helpful to control my frustration.



Cindy Koontz, Berea City Schools



How to develop a good working relationship with any teacher to create a successful learning experience for the deaf/Deaf student(s). Interpreting students would need to understand how to use tact and personal skills to get what they need from the teacher without offending, belittling or otherwise threatening the teacher. ■



THE BUZZ

Gish Processing Model

"Gish It!"

Term: Gish processing model

Synonyms: Gish approach to information processing, top-down processing, goal-to-detail processing, interpreting at the discourse level.

Definition: The Gish model, based on work by Sandra Gish, suggests that we approach a message to interpret by focusing on the main points, then considering how the sub points fit in, and then finally the details as possible. Sometimes this is also discussed as interpreting on the discourse level as much as possible, meaning you interpret what a whole paragraph or more means rather than what individual sentences, phrases or words mean.

An analogy to the interpreting process often used to explain this is chopping down a tree and then trying to rebuild it from the pieces to look as much like the original tree as possible. You want to focus on the big pieces of the trunk and major branches to recreate a recognizable looking tree. If you miss some twigs (or even some smaller branches) or they end up in the wrong places, you still have a tree. But if you are so busy getting the twigs just right and worrying over the smaller branches, you are likely to end up with a bush rather than a tree. When interpreting, what is most important is that the overall message is accurate, not the little details, so we should focus on understanding and communicating the big picture.

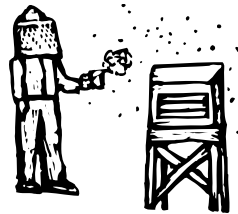
More Info: Resources on this subject:

- ♦ "I understood all the words — but I missed the point" by Sandra Gish in *New Dimensions in Interpreter Education* published by the Conference of Interpreter Trainers in 1986. Available through the State Library from OhioLink www.ohiolink.edu.
- ♦ *Self-Paced Modules for Educational Interpreter Skill Development* by Boinis, Gajewski Mickelson, Gordon, Krouse and Swabey. See pages 52 –77. Contact Minnesota Resource Center at 507.332.5491.
- ♦ *Information Processing* video series, presented by Sandra Gish. These are available to download for free from www.ncrtm.org
- ♦ *Processing Models* by David Bar-Tzur at www.theinterpretersfriend.com. See "Workshops to Go!" at the bottom of the home page.

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THE BUZZ

Do you hear colleagues using terms you aren't familiar with? Does it seem like interpreting concepts are being renamed? This new column, "The Buzz," is intended to let everyone in on the joke with a brief definition and additional resources on buzzwords in the interpreting community. If you have a term to suggest, contact us (see back cover). Submissions can be anonymous. ■



"At first people refuse to believe that a strange new thing can be done, then they begin to hope it can be done, then they see it can be done — then it is done and all the world wonders why it was not done centuries ago."
 ~ Frances Hodgson Burnett

ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT

Conference of Interpreter Trainers

CIT is a Professional Organization for Interpreter Educators

Organization: Conference of Interpreter Trainers (CIT)

Mission: Encourage interpreter educators to provide high quality instruction.

Members: interpreting instructors, ASL instructors, mentors, presenters

Services:

- ♦ Standards & curricula for interpreter training programs
- ♦ Standards for educators
- ♦ Professional development, including biennial conferences
- ♦ Networking and information sharing opportunities

Web Site: www.cit-asl.org

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ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT

This new column highlights different organizations related to interpreting and Deafness. To suggest an organization, contact ISLR (see back). ■

RESOURCE RICHES

Deafness Collection Donation

West Central Ohio SERRC Donates to State Library

In their conversion to State Support Team 6, the West Central Ohio SERRC closed their library. With the assistance of Linda Sakemiller of the Allen County Educational Service Center, their interpreting-related materials were donated to OSD for the Deafness Collection at the State Library of Ohio. And now they are available to us all. Many thanks to Linda and the new State Support Team 6! ■



IVA D'LEMA

Transliterate or Interpret?

Iva's most recent challenge which she shared in the last edition was:

We have a new interpreter in our school. She is strongly advocating that all of the interpreters use more ASL with our students so the students understand concepts more clearly. But the students in our school are hard-of-hearing, speak clearly, and English is their native language. Plus the IEPs for these students specify we are to transliterate. Would ASL really be better for the students? What do I do?

Iva and others in this situation could:

- **Transliterate, incorporating features of ASL as useful.** Some features of ASL can be used within a transliteration while still conveying the message primarily in English word order. For example, using space, listing, role shifting, indexing, inflected verbs and classifiers within a transliterated message can contribute to a clear message. As an experiment, you could try incorporating more features of ASL into your transliteration and see whether this helps the student understand more easily. For a resource on this subject, see *Transliteration: Show Me the English* by Kelly (available to borrow from the State Library).
- **Use ASL in conversation with the student.** You can expose the student to ASL by using it in conversation when you are not interpreting. This might also be a good way to see if the student seems to comprehend better using some ASL features.
- **Discuss language preferences with the student.** If the student is old enough and understands the difference between signing forms, you may want to include them in the discussion.
- **Follow the IEP.** Teams make decisions about students, not individuals. An IEP constitute a legal agreement and cannot be changed without the involvement of the team. Before you incorporate more features of ASL into your transliteration, consider the team's intention when specifying transliteration and whether you can add ASL features without violating the spirit of the IEP.
- **Discuss each student's language needs with the IEP team.** You are a member of the IEP team and your knowledge of interpreting, deafness and the student are valuable. Starting with more casual conversations and later at an IEP meeting, share what you know about communication options and your observations of the student's language needs.
- **Keep in mind that different deaf students have different needs.** Using ASL may not clarify a message for all students, particularly those who have a strong English language base and can understand and use spoken English. Students who don't have strong ASL skills may miss content if they have to translate the message back to English in their minds to understand.

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PLEASE HELP IVA!!!

Iva has another dilemma! Send your thoughts to ISLR by September 15th to be included in the next edition. You do not need to send a polished response, just an idea or two. Or do you have a dilemma that Iva could share in *Signals*? Submissions may be edited. Individuals who contribute to this column will not be identified with their comments. Contributors are acknowledged on an annual basis. ■

Y'all are just so smart! How lucky I am to have you as a resource. So can I pick your brains again?

My annual evaluation is pointless. My supervisor uses the same form to evaluate me that she uses for the aides and openly admits she has no idea what I do. I would love to get real feedback on how I am doing — both what I am doing well and what I could do better. What could I do to get more useful feedback?



ISLR WORKSHOPS

November Workshop on Demand-Control

Approach to Analyze Interpreting Decisions

Is classroom interpreting stressful or rewarding? Karasek's Demand-Control Theory showed that it is the interaction between the control options that a worker has and the demands of their job that make it stressful or rewarding. Dean and Pollard have adapted D-C theory to apply specifically to interpreting. With their Demand-Control Schema, interpreters can assess their work and decisions. This approach is useful for self-analysis, peer discussions and mentoring; it also provides a useful tool for analyzing the dilemmas that are presented in the interview portion of the National Interpreter Certification evaluation.

On Saturday, **November 15th**, Mark Alan English will present on the Demand-Control Schema at OSD in **Columbus** from **9 am to 4 pm**. He has worked extensively for seven years with the developers of the Demand-Control Schema, most recently working with faculty at interpreter training programs to implement DC-S in their curricula. Registration information to come. ■



(SURVEY – Cont'd from page 1)

Interpreters completed the Interpreter portion of the survey at Summer Institute in June, 2007. Interpreters also had the opportunity to complete the survey online for a number of months. A total of 101 interpreters completed the survey.

Data available from the Ohio Department of Education listed 91 districts and agencies employing licensed interpreters. Becky, Sarah and Sheryl contacted each one of these 91 employers, some several times, to find the right contacts and conduct phone surveys.

Through their contacts with employers, they learned that 23 of these organizations no longer employ interpreters. Of the 68 remaining, 57 completed the survey. Eleven employers did not respond. An 84% response rate to a survey is generally unheard of (30% being considered a good return). Due to the committee's dedication, we have information from the vast majority of employers of educational interpreters from across Ohio.

One area learned about was the starting pay of interpreters. Fifty-two employers shared their starting pay for interpreters.

When converted to annual salaries (some were shared as an hourly figure), starting salaries ranged from approximately \$11,000 to \$43,000,



Sarah McKinney, Sheryl Killen, & Becky Costas consulting about their SI presentation.

with the average being \$23,000 (see chart at bottom of page). When converted to hourly rates, the range was \$11.63 to \$30.55 per hour with the average being \$17.76. There was no correlation between district size and the salary and benefits provided.

The committee presented on their findings at Deaf Educators Network this spring and at Summer Institute (SI) this summer. Their written report is now available online at www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org/workingconditions.aspx. Additional data will also be made available at a later point. You will also see more information from the survey in future editions of *Signals*.

Many thanks to Sarah McKinney, Becky Costas and Sheryl Killen for the countless volunteer hours they devoted to this project to benefit their peers. Thanks also to Jackie Miller and the students at Washington State Community College for their data entry work. ■

(PHONICS – Cont'd from page 1)

As an interpreter, these activities were challenging. Fingerspelling sometimes gave the student the answer and sometimes didn't help. As we know, not all English words are spelled phonetically (like the word "phonetically" that sounds like it starts with an "f")!

Using Visual Phonics in those instances proved to be a perfect fit. It is easy to transition from a signed interpretation into Visual Phonics for a word or two and then back to sign language. One can show what the words sound like using Visual Phonics. I've cued an entire word using Visual Phonics and I've cued isolated phonemes, too.

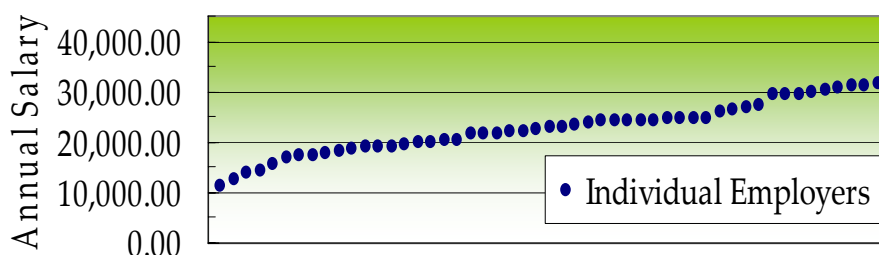
For example, in an activity for identifying rhyming words the teacher may say, "Lake. They swam in the lake." Then the teacher would say the possible choices: "like," "lack," "slack," and "shake." In that instance I would sign the word "lake," interpret the sentence with the word "lake," and then use Visual Phonics to hand cue the sounds in the word "lake." I would then sign and cue the four choices.

In my experience, it is important to both sign (or fingerspell in some cases) words and then cue them in Visual Phonics in order for the students to make the connection between the signed word and the spoken word. The same applies to using Visual Phonics for individual phonemes. Often I would show the sound the letters made and then which letters correspond to that sound. For example, the two letters "sh" make one sound and therefore have one Visual Phonics hand cue.

This year I also interpreted for speech therapy sessions. The student's goals included improving

(See PHONICS on page 6)

Educational Interpreter Annual Salaries in Ohio





(PHONICS – Cont'd from page 5)

her speech production skills; at first I wondered how an interpreter could be helpful. The therapist wanted the student to voice endings of words, making the words sound distinct from one another. This is where it was useful for me to use Visual Phonics within my interpretation.

For example, the student was asked to voice the words “cake” and “cape.” As in language arts class, I would sign the word “cake” and then cue it using Visual Phonics. The hand cues show the difference between the two end sounds and hints at how each is produced.

Visual Phonics also helped the student refine their speech production. For example, when saying the words “cake” and “cape,” the student tended to over-emphasize the /k/ and /p/ and produce an extra vowel sound at the end of the word. Using Visual Phonics, the student could see that in the words “cake” and “cape” the “e” at the end of the word is silent.

Visual Phonics v. Cued Speech

At first glance, Visual Phonics seems very similar to Cued Speech, especially since both use hand cues to show spoken language. Both can also be used to represent phonemes.

However, Cued Speech is fundamentally a communication system. Also, hand movements, hand positions, and mouth movements are used in combination to identify phonemes.

Visual Phonics is a tool designed for making phonics visible using a distinct handshape and movement for each phoneme which mimic how the sound is produced. It would be cumbersome as a communication system, similar to fingerspelling every word.

Learning Visual Phonics

I was introduced to the hand cues for Visual Phonics in a two-hour workshop given by one of our district’s speech therapists. We started with hand cues for vowel sounds first and then added consonants and consonant blends.

Typical Visual Phonics workshops are much longer as they are geared to teachers and speech-language pathologists teaching students connections between sounds, the Visual Phonics hand cues and symbols, and English words. As I simply needed to learn the cues and which phonemes they represent in order to interpret, this two-hour workshop was enough to start.

When interpreting using Visual Phonics cues, the most important thing is to understand phonics so you can identify the sounds in words. With practice and continual use, I didn’t find it difficult to learn Visual Phonics hand cues and began interpreting with them. The experience was similar to learning the manual alphabet. After I memorized the sounds and hand cues, I practiced by sounding out words and putting the hand cues with the phonemes.

As my first training was just a brief introduction, I am now planning to attend a two-day workshop on Visual Phonics offered by my school district in August.

Student’s Knowledge of Visual Phonics

Fortunately for me, the students I interpreted for had already been taught Visual Phonics. And this is the best scenario: for the student to learn Visual Phonics from a teacher of the deaf or speech language pathologist. The student needs to understand the hand cues and the

Resources on Visual Phonics

International Communication Learning Institute

Information about the system, training, trainers, and materials
<http://seethesound.org>

“**See That Sound**” Article by Waddy-Smith and Wilson about Visual Phonics from *Odyssey*, published by the Clerc Center
<http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/odyssey/Fall2003/see.pdf>

Visual Phonics Presentation Notes by Waddy-Smith and Wilson
www.unfdeafed.com/wwe/2005/2005_wwe03.htm

See-the-Sound of Chicago
Includes links to research related to Visual Phonics and training info
www.stsvisualphonicschicago.com

written symbols and how those correspond with spoken sounds, and then how those sounds correspond with written English letters.

However, for a student with more sophisticated language development who already understands the concept of phonics, it might be possible for an interpreter to introduce the hand cues. The interpreter could use expansions within their interpretation or even some kind of informal lesson, similar to introducing new sign vocabulary.

Conclusion

I’ve found Visual Phonics has many applications for interpreting in the educational setting. I highly recommend it to interpreters in language arts classrooms, especially in the elementary and middle grades. I’m glad I was introduced to the system and now have a way to effectively interpret for lessons I had previously found difficult. ■



Upcoming Events

ASL Exhaustively

August 8–9, 2008 in Columbus, Ohio
 More info: 614.995.1566 OutreachCenter@osd.oh.gov
www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org/outreach

Team Interpreting

Presented by Nancy Basil
 August 9, 2008 in Dayton, Ohio
 More info: (937) 222-8200 tgonzalez@mvglobal.com

Deaf Picnic

August 23, 2008 in Heath, Ohio
 More info: www.oad-deaf.org

DeaFestival

August 30, 2008 in Louisville, Kentucky
 More info: www.deafestival.org

OSDAA Fall Festival

September 7, 2008 in Westerville, Ohio
 More info: Harvey Crum 740.622.2449 tty/vp
www.columbuscolony.org/fallfestival.htm

NIC Nuggets

Presented by Hallenross & Associates
 September 20, 2008 in the Toledo area
 More info: LC1@ocrid.org

Ohio School for the Deaf Homecoming

September 20, 2008 in Columbus, Ohio
 More info: www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org 614.728.1424

Ohio American Sign Language Teachers Association (OASLTA) Workshops

September 26–27 in Dayton, Ohio
 More info: Donna Williams dmwilliams12849@yahoo.com
<http://ohioaslta.cfsites.org/>

Navigating Your Child's Future Workshop for Parents

October 4, 2008 in Columbus
 More info: www.deafinitiatives.org 800.985.3323

Deaf Adolescence Conference

October 5–8, 2008 in St. Louis, Missouri
 More info: 904-819 6216
www.flagler.edu/page1.aspx?id=2560

Clarke School Conference on Mainstreaming Students with a Hearing Loss

October 23–24, 2008 in Springfield, Massachusetts
 More info: www.clarkeschool.org 413.587.7313

OCRID 40th Anniversary

November 8, 2008 Location TBA
 More info: www.ocrid.org

Demand-Control Schema

Presented by Mark Alan English
 November 15, 2008 in Columbus, Ohio
 More info: 614.995.1566 EduTerp@osd.oh.gov
www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org/outreach

Visual Phonics Training

The International Communication Learning Institute will only sell Visual Phonics materials to people who have attended official training. Without training, there is no book or website available that shows the Visual Phonics hand cues.

To set up training, contact a trainer through the International Communication Learning Institute or See-the-Sound of Chicago.

The Center for Outreach Services at OSD is interested in providing support for those using or interested in Visual Phonics. Check future editions of *Signals* and our website for announcements. If you are interested in collaborating, contact us (see back cover).

Ohio EIPA Testing Opportunities

Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment

EIPA Written Test

Wright State University

Proctor: Greta Knigga 937.775.2075
greta.knigga@wright.edu

- ♦ August 9th, 10am and 1pm
- ♦ Sept. 6th & 20th, 10am & 1pm
- ♦ Nov. 9th & 22nd, 10am & 1pm
- ♦ December 6 & 20th, 10am & 1pm

Columbus State

Proctor: Alan Atwood, 614.287.5164,
aatwood@csc.edu

- ♦ October — Date & time TBA

Registration & more info:
classroominterpreting.org/EIPA

For more information about the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment, including ways to prepare and an application to take the EIPA performance test at OSD, visit www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org/EIPA.aspx. ■

EIPA Performance Test

Ohio School for the Deaf

Contact: Cindy Whicker 614.387.0128
whicker@osd.oh.gov

- ♦ 2008: Waiting list for slots from Boys Town (EIPA Administrator)
 - ♦ 2009: Slots available every month
- Application and information available online (see below).

Kent State University

Contact: Leah Subak 330.929.0389
leahsubak@kent.edu

- ♦ 2008: No available slots
- ♦ 2009: Slots available in May

Interpreting & Sign Language Resources

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614.995.1567 fax

EduTerp@osd.oh.gov

Visit our website!

www.ohioschoolforthe deaf.org/islr.aspx



ISLR Advisory Committee

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Northeast Representatives:

Lisa Petrucci, *Beachwood Schools*
Carol Black, *Canton City Schools*

Central Representatives:

Sarah McKinney, *Franklin Co. ESC*
Julie Loedding, *Columbus Public*

Southwest Representative:

Sherry Miller, *Dayton City Schools*
Mary Roark, *Jackson Local Schools*

Southeast Representatives:

Tammy Dearth, *East Muskingum*

Member-at-Large:

Patricia Maille

Email Advisory Committee members at ISLRAdvisory@osd.oh.gov (indicate who should receive the email & the message will be forwarded)

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About ISLR

The Interpreting and Sign Language Resources (ISLR) department at the Ohio School for the Deaf serves Ohio pre-K-12 schools, public school interpreters, and interpreting students. ISLR provides professional development for interpreters, including workshops across the state. Additional services include assessment of interpreting, ASL assessments, mentoring, and internships.

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Information in this newsletter is gathered from a variety of sources. ISLR does not endorse workshops or materials unless specifically stated. Submissions may be edited.