

**APPENDIX B****ACCOMMODATIONS: VISUAL**

*Please refer to Appendix F for glossary definitions.*

Students with cochlear implants, similar to all students who are deaf or hard of hearing, require specific visual accommodations in order to appropriately access the curriculum and language of the educational setting. These students must maintain visual attention to the teacher, the interpreter, and their classmates to support understanding. Attending to visual information for learning can result in an overload of visual information, leading to fatigue. These accommodations are offered as a way to reduce the students' need to divide their attention between a teacher, peers, handouts, slides, etc.

The following guidelines are provided for educational planning teams to consider when designing specific accommodations to best suit an individual student's visual access needs when developing his or her IFSP/IEP/504 plan. As is developmentally appropriate, involve the student when making decisions regarding all accommodations. Additionally, appropriate accommodations for a student may change over time. As such, it is critical to monitor the student's access needs on an ongoing basis.

**LIGHTING**

- Stand away from windows when speaking as glare may make speechreading, seeing sign language, or seeing Cued Speech difficult.
- When activities require the dimming of lights, such as watching a film, ensure that appropriate lighting is available to spotlight either the interpreter or the person speaking so that the student maintains access to communication.
- Offer visual breaks throughout the day.

**SEATING/SIGHT LINES**

- Provide seating that reduces the distance between the student, the teacher, and the student's classmates so that the student can easily see both the teacher and the other students speaking.
- Gain the student's visual attention by flashing the lights (two or three times), tapping the student lightly on the shoulder, etc.
- Allow the student to switch seats if the teacher's or other speaker's location changes.
- Stand in front of a visually uncluttered background when teaching.
- Provide clear sight lines to the teacher, the interpreter, and the text support.
- Consider wearing solid-colored clothing to reduce visual distraction while teaching.
- Consider placing a mirror at the front of the classroom so the student can see the classmates in the back of the room (depending upon the age, maturity, and attention skills of the student).

## VISUAL ALERTS/PRINT/PICTORIAL SUPPORT

- Providing paper and pencil tasks (e.g., note taking) or other tasks such as locating materials (e.g., finding a page in a textbook) can draw visual attention away from where it should be so avoid them when possible. Provide “write time” to allow the student to visually disengage with the teacher or the video to write notes.
- Post a daily visual schedule in the classroom.
- Provide a printout of each morning’s announcements to the student.
- Provide the student with a copy of all outlines, notes, and PowerPoint slides.
- Consider using visual support (e.g., an iPad, a computer with Google images for vocabulary preview) when introducing new vocabulary.
- Avoid speaking while your back is to the class as speechreading cues are critical to supporting understanding.
- Provide visual alerts to signal the bell ringing for changing classes.

## TECHNOLOGY

- Provide access to captioned media for all films and videos. The website with information for school districts is [www.dcmp.org](http://www.dcmp.org).
- Consider providing CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation), which gives an immediate translation of the spoken word into English text.
- Consider incorporating an interactive whiteboard that utilizes touch detection for user input as well as other visual classroom technology tools (e.g., SMART Board) when possible.

## EDUCATIONAL INTERPRETING/TRANSLITERATION

If the student requires support from an interpreter or transliterator, provide teachers and classmates with guidance related to how to work with an educational interpreter. An in-service training given at the beginning of each year is recommended, during which this professional is introduced to the educational team and shares information regarding his or her role in the classroom. The educational team often needs to clearly define the role of this professional in facilitating classroom communication.

## RESOURCES

### *Students with Cochlear Implants*

*Students with Cochlear Implants: Guidelines for Educational Program Planning*—<http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu>

### *Sign Language Interpreters*

Classroom Interpreting for Students Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing—<http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu>

Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf—[www.rid.org](http://www.rid.org)

Classroom Interpreting website—[www.classroominterpreting.org](http://www.classroominterpreting.org)

### *Cued Speech Transliteration*

National Cued Speech Association™—[www.cuedspeech.org](http://www.cuedspeech.org)