



# Library Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

*Service, Education, and Community for Tennesseans*

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# More THAN Meets THE Eye

REVEALING THE  
COMPLEXITIES OF  
AN INTERPRETED  
EDUCATION

Melissa B. Smith

Title

**More Than Meets the Eye: Revealing the Complexities of an Interpreted Education**  
(<https://tndeaflibrary.nashville.gov/library/materials/more-than-meets-the-eye-revealing-the-complexities-of-an-interpreted-education>)

Sign language interpreters often offer the primary avenue of access for deaf and hard of hearing students in public schools. More than 80% of all deaf children today are mainstreamed, and few of their teachers sign well enough to provide them with full access. As a result, many K-12 interpreters perform multiple roles beyond interpreting. Yet, very little is known about what they actually do and what factors inform their moment-to-moment decisions. This volume presents the range of activities and responsibilities performed by educational interpreters, and illuminates what they consider when making decisions.

To learn about the roles of K-12 interpreters, author Melissa B. Smith conducted in-depth analyses at three different schools. She learned that in response to what interpreters feel that their deaf students need, many focus on three key areas: 1) visual access, 2) language and learning, and 3) social and academic participation/inclusion. To best serve their deaf students in these contexts, they perform five critical functions: they assess and respond to the needs and abilities of deaf students; they interpret with or without modification as they deem appropriate; they capitalize on available resources; they rely on interactions with teachers and students to inform their choices; and they take on additional responsibilities as the need arises.

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Tags

Educational Interpreting

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