



EIPA-RID Membership Agreement Frequently Asked Questions

March 2011 version

The first frequently asked questions document was posted in 2006, shortly after the Boys Town-RID agreement was reached. Those were posted for a lengthy period of time. This version updates those questions.

We hope the following questions and answers will clarify the details of this partnership.

1) What is the partnership?

RID appointed a task force to review the EIPA interpreting assessment tools. The task force, along with the assistance of psychometric consultants, found the tests to be psychometrically valid and reliable. The recommendation of the task force (accepted by the RID Board in June 2006) was to:

- 1) Grant certified member status to individuals who have passed the EIPA Written Test (EIPA: WT) and who have scored a 4.0 or higher on the EIPA performance test (score contingent on psychometric verification);
- 2) Review and revise, as necessary, the policies of the Certification Council (CC), the Certification Maintenance Program (CMP), and the Ethical Practice System (EPS) to assure integration of K-12 interpreters into the association;
- 3) Ensure that these individuals who are granted certified member status maintain the requirements of certified members including RID membership fees, certification maintenance, and ethical practices;
- 4) Review the tools regularly to ensure that psychometric standards for test development and validity and reliability are maintained;
- 5) Establish an Educational Interpreter committee or task force (EIC) of no less than five individuals that minimally includes a K-12 interpreter, a parent, a person familiar with educational practices and special education law, and a consumer of K-12 interpreting to assure appropriate identification and resolution of educational interpreting issues;
- 6) Implement these recommendations no later than December 31, 2006.

The agreement is to allow EIPA credentialed interpreters who have met the criteria noted above the opportunity to join RID under the same type of program that National Association of the Deaf (NAD) and American Consortium of Certified Interpreters (ACCI) interpreters were offered in the past.

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2) How were the discussions initiated between RID and Boys Town?

In 2004, then-RID President Angela Jones noticed increasing amounts of EIPA activity and buzz. There were presentations at RID state and regional conferences and more states were starting to recognize EIPA as the gatekeeper for sign language interpreter K-12 hiring. In early 2005, the executive director of RID requested permission from the RID Board of Directors to explore a collaborative effort with the EIPA. Stakeholders were contacted at the beginning of discussions with the administrators of EIPA. In March 2005, President Jones sent information to the affiliate chapter presidents, RID special interest group representatives, the National Council on Interpreting, and RID committee chairs. Following that, President Jones asked then-RID Secretary/Treasurer Cheryl Moose to contact the educational interpreters member section (then called the Educational Interpreters and Transliterators of RID Special Interest Group (EdITOR SIG)) specifically and discuss the process of bringing EIPA interpreters into RID. (EdITOR (now called the Interpreters in Educational and Instructional Settings (IEIS) Member section) was RID's group for interpreters and translators who work in the educational field). Secretary/Treasurer Moose and the EdITOR leadership shared several discussions and e-mails about the EIPA negotiations. RID brought this matter to the membership on pages 8-10 of the May 2005 issue of *VIEWS*.

3) Has the organization that supports the EIPA interpreters (Boys Town) and RID merged into one organization?

No: RID and Boys Town are working together in this endeavor. Each organization remains a separate and distinct organization. The membership agreement is making a way for EIPA evaluated interpreters to enter into RID's Certification Maintenance Program (CMP) and Ethical Practices System (EPS).

4) Once I join RID as an EIPA credentialed interpreter, am I considered RID certified?

When you join RID as an EIPA credentialed interpreter, you are put in the certified membership category of RID by virtue of your EIPA credential. **You are a certified member of RID, but not RID certified.** A certified member of RID is defined as a member holding valid credentials which are accepted by RID. You are a member holding valid EIPA credentials which are accepted by RID. Only persons who have received a certificate from Boys Town, which would be those who have achieved a 4.0 or higher on the newer video stimulus version of the test and passed the EIPA written exam, will be recognized as certified members of RID. RID will require a copy of the certificate in addition to the application.

5) What privileges do I have as a certified member of RID? Will there be limitations on voting?

Discounts on testing fees, RID conference registration, products and publications apply to certified members. Certified members may also vote on all issues, including those dealing with certification.

6) How do CEUs apply to me? What do I do to earn CEUs; how many do I have to earn; and how long do I have to earn them? Will the CEU requirement for Professional Studies be specific to educational interpreting or general Professional Studies?

When you join RID, you will receive a packet of information regarding the Certification Maintenance Program (CMP). If you don't receive this packet, please contact the education department at the national office (cmp@rid.org). You have a four year CMP cycle which commences on the date that you pay for your RID membership.

During that four year cycle, you must earn eight (8.0) CEUs (continuing education units). One CEU equals ten hours, so it equals out to eighty hours in four years. When your four year cycle is over and you have earned the required number of CEUs, you begin a new cycle. EIPA evaluated interpreters who join RID under this program will be required to engage in approved professional development activities at the rate of eighty hours over a period of four years (one hour of training equals .1 CEU).

CEU requirements will include a mix of general and specific educational requirements.

7) As an EIPA credentialed interpreter, am I required to participate in the CMP program?

EIPA credentialed interpreters who are members of RID are required to participate in this program.

8) What is the status of EIPA testing?

EIPA testing will continue to be administered by Boys Town and will be monitored by RID to ensure a continued maintenance of validity and reliability. For more information about EIPA testing, go to <http://www.classroominterpreting.org/EIPA/performance/index.asp>

9) If I have RID certification already and meet the requirements for the recognition of my EIPA credentials, will I have to pay additional fees for the CMP program?

No: we will add your EIPA certification to your membership record.

10) If I have RID certification already and meet the requirements for the recognition of my EIPA evaluations, is it possible for RID to record my CEUs for EIPA and RID certifications on one record?

Yes.

11) Will the costs for EIPA credentialed interpreters be different than current RID Members?

Since the process began in the middle of a fiscal year (July 1 – June 30), for the remainder of that fiscal year, there were different rates. Otherwise, the rates will be the same rates as for current RID certified members.

12) What about EIPA credentialed interpreters who are currently RID associate members?

Those individuals have the option to drop their associate member status at any time and convert over to certified member status of RID. They will then be subject to the same rates as for other EIPA credentialed interpreters at the time. Dues paid for associate member status in RID will be applied to their certified member status rate.

13) Who should I call about joining RID if I am an EIPA credentialed interpreter?

All EIPA credentialed interpreters are encouraged to fill out the special application for EIPA credentialed members, which will be located on the RID web site. For questions related to membership and certification, please e-mail membership@rid.org. For all other questions, contact the communications department at publications@rid.org.

14) Are there differences between the EIPA Guidelines for Professional Conduct and the NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct Compliance?

Yes: all interpreters are required to adhere to the appropriate code of professional conduct governing ethical behavior within the profession.

15) What if I have comments about this agreement?

The RID Board of Directors encourages your feedback on this as well as any other RID programs and actions. Should you have comments about this development, please forward them to the RID National Office via e-mail to admin@rid.org. All comments will be forwarded to the RID Board of Directors.

16) Does the EIPA have deaf people assessing their tapes?

The EIPA does have deaf input and involvement. Every EIPA rating group has a deaf evaluator.

17) How does this impact tiered licensure in states where RID certified is the top tier...would EIPA be considered a generalist certificate, enabling holders to present credentials in order to interpret in venues other than the K-12 arena?

The status of a certification will stay the same as it was prior to persons becoming a part of the RID Certification Maintenance Program (CMP) and Ethical Practices System (EPS). The merit of the certification tool does not inherently change when someone becomes a member of RID.

18) Is EIPA nationally recognized?

The EIPA is recognized by more than one-half of the states in the nation. Several state departments of education have endorsed EIPA credentials and have worked with legislators to codify the endorsement of the test in state statutes.

19) What proof is there that this is the way RID should go? Are there any conflicts?

As with any initiative, there are pros and cons and varying viewpoints. After careful and long consideration (almost two years), hearing and addressing concerns from members, pondering all aspects of this possible partnership, and weighing considerable feedback from many sources, the RID Board of Directors determined that a partnership with Boys Town is beneficial for the profession and the association. The benefits for all interpreters outweigh the possible drawbacks to such a partnership.

20) Why doesn't RID have contacts [with state departments of education] established, and how will the EIPA accomplish this?

RID has historically been an association primarily concerned with community-based, adult consumer interactions. Our contacts have been with officials of the federal government since this is where the majority of legislation originates for this area. The EIPA is just the opposite. Their work has primarily been with the various states since education is primarily a state and local legislative matter, with well over 90% of the funding for some coming from those levels. Accordingly, those involved with the development and administration of the EIPA have worked with each state department of education to determine the levels of assessment acceptable for the test. Their contacts at the state level are abundant.

21) Is the motive behind this partnership to increase member numbers and to increase revenue? Where is that in the mission of RID?

RID seeks to represent all of the profession and to provide more international, national, regional, state, and local forums as well as an organizational structure for the continued growth and development of the profession. To a number of members, interpreters in the educational setting have been organizationally disenfranchised since their introduction into the profession, and many feel it is time to recognize their importance to the profession and to the Deaf community.

22) How does the EIPA partnering with RID accomplish increasing the exposure of RID members in other areas of the profession to the difficulty of the educational interpreter's job and hopefully raise the respect level of all for each other?

As you know, RID members talk to each other, not only at the local level, but also at conferences, workshops, in any setting where they meet. Educational interpreters will become a larger presence not only informally, but also in presentations at state and national conferences, in state and national publications, and on state and national committees along with other leadership positions. Such a presence will change the association in many ways over time.

23) I have heard this agreement was put on the fast track, and I am wondering why the rush?

There was no fast track. The 'timeline' published in the February 2006 issue of *VIEWS* (President's column – page 5) illustrates that this partnership was something that had been in the works for a long time, much longer than the time period that occurred in bringing the NAD certified interpreters into the CMP and EPS programs, which we believe has been a very successful and positive partnership.

24) What's in it for them (EIPA)? Why would/should we do this?

To many, the interpreting field is fragmented. Interpreters need to have a stronger voice speaking for them at all levels of government and to the public. This is one way to lessen that fragmentation; to increase the influence and voice of the profession at all levels in the nation, not only to governments, but to the public as well.

25) Why are we considering mixing diagnostic measures/tools with certification measures? Doesn't doing so water down our certification? Have there been discussions about EIPA being established as another Specialist Certificate?

Many names are given to the various tests/tools/assessments/etc. that are spread throughout the nation. Testing is but one step in a certification process. Whenever there is a certification maintenance tool in place to ensure that there is ongoing learning/development, and where there is an enforcement mechanism that ensures ethical conduct in place in addition to the tests/tools/assessments/etc., there is a certification process in place. RID believes that we have all the functioning elements in place on a national basis that constitutes interpreter certification. That is not to say that others do not have those in place. RID's exists on a nationwide basis, and we believe that it is an excellent, time-proved system. Some of the other tools in place around the nation could meet the testing aspect for certification when joining with the other elements of the system we have in place.

If the EIPA was only a specialty certificate it would require taking a generalist test first. RID has had little to no success marketing our testing system to those working in the educational setting: individual interpreters, states, departments of education, etc. Currently over 30 states are recognizing the EIPA as a credential for working as an educational interpreter. EIPA was and is moving forward with or without RID. It was determined that by working with Boys Town we could accomplish more than working alone. By getting EIPA credentialed interpreters into RID's Ethical Practices System and Certification Maintenance Program we are raising the bar and at the same time recognizing the value in the EIPA and those who hold the credential.

26) Are we sure that we truly are offering something of benefit to this group rather than solely imposing more requirements on them? The move toward professionalizing this group will fail unless we bring something of value.

RID offers the voluntary opportunity for EIPA credentialed interpreters to be full members of this association without reservation. They can become members of our committees. They are members of our chapters. They are, in short, us. We are them. The profession and the association are the better as a result of that involvement. The same should hold true with the partnership that is forged with Boys Town. Any agreement that brings RID toward representing more of the profession is a good one.

27) Will placing EIPA credentialed, assessed interpreters in the certified category lead to misrepresentation of some interpreters. How is this going to be known to the general public? (a concern is that are we confusing our consumers with so many different certifications and categories that no one knows what it means to be certified anymore?)

The RID and Boys Town leadership is just as concerned by this prospect. The RID national office, the Board and the Educational Interpreting group are currently working on a comprehensive communication approach for not only interpreters but also for Deaf and hard of hearing consumers, agencies / institutions, and K-12 sites. Unfortunately, there is already much confusion in the marketplace about credentials since there are many state credentials as well as numerous RID and NAD credentials. RID is working toward enhancing the efforts to educate all audiences related to interpreting regarding credentials and certification. The RID national office, Board of Directors, and Educational Interpreting group are currently working on a comprehensive communications approach for not only interpreters but also for Deaf and hard of hearing consumers, agents/institutions, and K-12 sites.

28) Once someone has passed the EIPA written test and a performance test at 4.0 or higher and they join RID in the *certified member category*, what does that mean for them when trying to get work.

The EIPA certified interpreter has a certification that certifies him or her to work in the K-12 setting --depending on which EIPA certification(s) the interpreter has earned. [More information about the EIPA rating system can be found at this link:

<http://www.classroominterpreting.org/EIPA/performance/rating.asp>] Employers and interpreters alike need to recognize that the certification qualifies one to work in the K-12 educational setting. Advocating for oneself to one's employer or promoting oneself to one's potential employer is the responsibility of each professional interpreter. RID offers standard practice papers for this purpose. An interpreter can educate employers on the importance of being affiliated to one's professional association much like those in the teaching profession and that RID is the professional association for sign language interpreters. National certification is a tool to assist employers in making informed decisions about job-related skills. It is an indication that the interpreter was assessed by a group of professional peers according to a nationally recognized standard of minimum competence. All interpreters are required to adhere to the appropriate code of professional conduct governing ethical behavior within the profession.

29) Can EIPA credentialed members sit for any RID specialty tests?

Yes. The requirements that have been in place for years, for example, for the SC:L test, allow current certified members of RID, along with other prerequisites, to take the test. ED:k-12 current members can, so long as they meet the other prerequisites, sign up to take the test.

30) What does this agreement mean for EIPA interpreters working in non-educational settings?

All interpreters are required to adhere to the appropriate code of professional conduct governing ethical behavior within the profession.

31) Will EIPA credentialed interpreters have degree requirements? If so, will they be held to the same timelines that our current members and new members will be?

Since 2009, RID has required degrees, or successful evidence of experience required in the alternative pathways option, for those who are candidates for the interview/performance of the NIC. EIPA administrators support these efforts and believe in the importance of having quality interpreters in the classroom.

There is dedication on the part of EIPA regarding the quality of interpreting students receive. From Brenda Schick and Kevin Williams, who were instrumental in the set-up and establishment of the Boys Town tests *"It was not so long ago that certification for interpreters who worked with adults was unusual. As the profession has matured, certification has become expectancy and a requirement in many settings. With educational interpreters, we are just beginning to define minimal standards of competency. These standards are necessary, as interpreters in educational settings are the critical bridge between the educational program and the deaf child. The situation is slowly changing. More and more states are interested in ensuring the quality of educational interpreters and more parents are requiring some form of evaluation to ensure that their child has access to the classroom."* taken from :

<http://clerccenter.gallaudet.edu/Odyssey/Winter-Spring2001/ed-terp-performance.pdf>

We believe that, by working with the EIPA, we will eventually see degree requirements being set by state departments of education. Some states are already moving in that direction. With RID and EIPA teaming up, together we will continue to raise the bar for interpreters in classrooms across the nation.

32) How will this information (what it means to be granted certified status) be disseminated to those interpreters who fall into this EIPA category? There are interpreters who have passed with a 4.0 saying, “well if RID accepts the EIPA it means the same as if I’d taken the RID test so I’m RID certified...great!” This causes great concern.

The RID national office, the Board and the Educational Interpreting Committee are currently working on a comprehensive communication approach for not only interpreters but also for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Consumers, agencies / institutions and K-12 sites. This approach will work to educate and properly inform all audiences as to what this agreement means. In addition, RID will also be working with Boys Town to contact EIPA credentialed interpreters.

33) How will this affect the education that children who are deaf in public schools receive?

Unfortunately, for the close to 90% of children who are deaf and are in public schools, there are many unqualified people in public schools who purport to be interpreters. There are, fortunately, also many interpreters with high levels of skills, but not nearly enough. In the absence of an ‘ADA-like’ lawsuit at the public school level to force the public schools in this country to even ‘allow’ something that looks like equal access to education, something must be done. RID is attempting to address the problem from the practitioner point of view. If we are ever to see an adequate supply of qualified interpreters in K-12 settings, we need to push from every direction we can to get it done. This is what RID can do. In the future, we hope to do even more with the EIPA and legislators to ensure that children who are deaf receive a first-rate education.

34) How should those EIPA credentialed interpreters who are certified members of RID be paid at the school district level?

The pay rates for educational interpreters, just as RID certified interpreters, cannot be established by RID. Rather, that decision belongs to the individual state and/or agency with whom the interpreter is employed.

In any case, the status of a certification/assessment/evaluation tool should stay the same as it was prior to persons becoming a part of the RID Certification Maintenance Program (CMP) and Ethical Practices System (EPS). The merit of the certification tool does not inherently change when someone enters the RID CMP and EPS. When NAD certified interpreters came into the RID CMP and EPS, the way that a state, or any other agency for that matter, evaluated the certification/assessment/evaluation tool should

have continued to be the same. The way that a state, district, or site currently evaluates the EIPA should continue the same way when EIPA members become a part of the RID CMP and EPS.

At the same time, we do hope that the merits of the RID CMP and EPS, with the systems that we have in place to better ensure that members, who are certified hold to a very high standard of practice, will result in better wages for those who hold and maintain certification status. That certainly has been the case over the years with those in the adult community. We are confident the same result will occur for those in the educational interpreting community.

35) Why was the decision to recognize EIPA not made by a membership vote?

The Board did consider the matter of placing this issue before the membership for a vote. However, through intensive analysis of historical voting patterns and precedence on membership matters, they determined that they would be exposed to a greater sense of the membership's opinion on this matter if they sought feedback through more meaningful channels that would reach a wider audience than previous voting matters have demonstrated to reach in the past.

Historically, the percentage of past mail referenda participation from the membership has been disappointingly low and arguably, not representative of the entire membership. This issue impacts more than just a small percentage of the membership, so RID sought channels of communication that would reach a greater audience than the mail referenda.

As stated earlier, precedence was also a factor in the Board's decision to not call for a membership vote. RID is an organization of professionals entrenched in strong tradition. When NAD interpreters joined RID, there was no call for a membership vote, and when ACCI members (under NAD), joined RID, again, there was no membership vote.

The RID Board stands behind its decision and the methods by which the association reached out to our members for over a year to collect and explore all of the feedback. These communication tools include the following: e-mail, articles in *IEWS*, Affiliate Chapter Leadership, RID Committees, 30+ e-mail discussion groups, 40+ state conferences, five regional conferences, as well as workshops, business meetings, and communication with the members and leaders of sister organizations. The consensus of opinion from all of these efforts was in support of the Board's decision and in fact, helped the Board and executive director to shape the negotiations to match the majority of members' vision for having EIPA interpreters held to the same standards as RID certified members who participate in our CMP and EPS systems.

To demonstrate that the Board took a careful and thoughtful approach to this issue, RID asked the executive director to undertake an extensive review of past membership votes regarding certification tests. The information that was available shows that the

only time members had voted directly on establishing specific certification tests was for what is now the CDI, SC:L, and OTC tests (C89.04-C89.06). No member votes were found for the establishment of the first testing system, which had no formal name; the components of the CSC system, which included, among others, the IC and TC tests; or the CI and CT system.

As you can see, historically, the decisions to establish which certification tests would be established and/or recognized have been made by the Board of Directors through the years.

To further validate the Board's action regarding this matter, legal counsel was consulted and it was determined that the Board was entirely within the power given to it by the membership to move forward in this matter.

Taking into consideration the following: historical membership voting matters, the considerable amount of input gathered from members for well over a year, a strong recommendation from a task force with extensive credentials and experience in the field, and analysis that the EIPA tools met every psychometric standard; the Board felt it had all the information needed to move forward with a decision that will hopefully have a positive impact on the profession as a whole.

The Board of Directors continues to respect and listen to those who differ with this decision. That input is important to the Board, and they weigh the thoughts of the membership.

Incidentally, in 2007, the membership passed a motion at the RID Conference that placed a formal procedure in place related to future similar actions.

36) How does RID's recognition of 4.0 and EIPA written test compare to the requirements across the nation?

RID is setting a higher standard than is required by most states that recognize the EIPA. There are only two states, California and Colorado, that require a 4.0 and above, with California investigating changing their requirement to a lower score. RID's requirement is a higher standard requiring 4.0 and EIPA written test.

37) How would deaf people benefit from having RID recognize the EIPA?

Most importantly, it's good for deaf students. With some deaf schools around the country closing and parents more reluctant to send their deaf children away to a residential school, they are looking to the public school system to serve their deaf child's educational needs. By supporting the profession of educational interpreting, RID is showing strong support for the need to upgrade the skills of the interpreting service providers for the nation's youth. Only by ensuring the students with access to highly qualified interpreters, can the nation assure them equal access to the curriculum and instruction in their classrooms. Under the No Child Left Behind act, students who are

deaf or hard of hearing are required to achieve to the same rigorous academic standards as their hearing peers. Without qualified interpreters, students do not have an equal opportunity to accomplish these goals.

38) With the decision to recognize the EIPA credential, how many EIPA credentialed interpreters would initially be eligible for membership in the RID certified category?

Needless to say, it takes a skilled interpreter to pass at a level of 4.0 or higher. This means that initially, some 500 interpreters who have passed both the EIPA Written Test and the Performance Test at a level of 4.0 or higher will be eligible into the certified membership category.

39) Has the contract between RID and Boys Town been signed?

Yes, the agreement has been signed. It is a fully-executed, legally-binding document.

The agreement reached between RID and Father Flanagan's Boy's Home, or Boys Town National Research Hospital, is a very simple contract.

The document illustrates that RID has examined the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) tools in great depth and determined that they are psychometrically valid and reliable educational interpreting assessment tools. It then indicates that RID seeks to recognize interpreters who have been evaluated by Boys Town at specified levels as nationally certified members of RID and that those who choose to do so would do so voluntarily and would be subject to the requirements of the continuing education arm and the ethical practices component of the association. They would also be entitled to all the benefits and privileges of certified members of the association.

The contract notes that RID does not seek to take over or usurp the EIPA tools. It clarifies that while RID has had in place a national certification system since 1972, one which has endured the test of time and is looked to as a very high standard for community-based adult interpreting, RID has had limited involvement in K-12 educational interpreting. Accordingly, rather than replicating the EIPA tools, the contract asserts that RID wishes to recognize the validity of the EIPA assessments.

The contract confirms that RID will from time-to-time need to review the EIPA assessment tools to ensure that they continue to meet the high standards of validity and reliability that they currently possess.

The remainder of the agreement includes multiple clauses that protect the rights of both organizations.