

The Day-One-Ready Checklist

What has to happen this summer so communication access works on the first day of school.

Access that's ready on day one doesn't happen in August. It's the result of a handful of steps taken over the summer, while qualified interpreters are still available and there's time to test everything. Use this to see where your district stands and what's left before the first bell.

1 Know your students LATE SPRING / JUNE

- ☐ Every Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing student's communication access is named specifically in their IEP: the service, frequency, and qualification standard.
- ☐ You know which students need ASL interpreting, CART captioning, TypeWell/C-Print, or a blend.
- ☐ New or incoming students who may need access are flagged early, not discovered in September.

2 Confirm your coverage plan JUNE / EARLY JULY

- ☐ You know exactly who is providing each student's access this year, by name, not "to be determined."
- ☐ Any gaps between what you have and what you need are identified now.
- ☐ There's a written backup plan for absences, not just a primary provider.

3 Reserve and recruit JULY

- ☐ Providers are reserved for the school year before summer schedules fill up. (The strongest K-12 interpreters commit their year early; reserving now is how you get first claim on them.)
- ☐ Credentials are verified and matched to your state's educational requirements and each student's grade and subjects.
- ☐ A dedicated team is being built for continuity, so your student isn't meeting a stranger every few weeks.

4 Set up the technology, if any service is virtual JULY / EARLY AUGUST

- ☐ The classroom setup is identified and the equipment is ready.
- ☐ The connection is tested in the actual room, before the first day, not during a lesson.
- ☐ Your IT team knows what (little) is needed and there's a plan if a connection drops.

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5 Brief and prepare AUGUST

- ☐ Providers are briefed on each student, the classes, and the classroom routine.
- ☐ Teachers know how the access works and who to contact if something's off.
- ☐ You have a single point of contact for questions once school starts.

6 Confirm the safety net BEFORE DAY ONE

- ☐ You know the plan for a same-day absence.
- ☐ You know how to add or adjust a service if needs change mid-year.
- ☐ Documentation of credentials, coverage, and schedules is on file and easy to produce.

How ready are you?

Most boxes checked: You're in good shape; spend the remaining time confirming the safety net.

About half: You're at the point where waiting starts to cost you. This is the window to lock coverage while providers are still available.

Only a few: Not a crisis, but this is the week to act. There's still time to do it right if you start now; after August, it becomes a scramble.

The single biggest predictor of a smooth first day isn't budget or district size. It's timing. The districts that never scramble in September are the ones that reserved in July.

Want help getting to day-one-ready?

Partners Interpreting handles Steps 2 through 6 for districts: reserving and vetting providers, building a dedicated team, testing the technology, and standing behind it with backup coverage and a single point of contact. A 20-minute consultation is a no-pressure way to map what your students need and what's left to do. You'll leave with a written quote your district can budget against, and reserving a team for Fall 2026 secures capacity while the paperwork is finalized.

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