

Procedure Language Access

The following procedures are intended to implement Policy 4218, establish meaningful, two-way communication between the District and parents with limited English proficiency, and promote access for such parents and families to the programs, services, and activities of the District.

A. Definitions

1. Persons with "**limited English proficiency**" are individuals who are unable to communicate effectively in English either verbally or in writing, or both, because their primary language is not English and they have not developed fluency in the English language.
2. "**Primary language**" means the primary language spoken by a student's parent or guardian, or the predominant language spoken in the student's home.
3. "**Language services**" refers to a broad spectrum of services used or required to facilitate communication and understanding between speakers of different languages, and typically includes interpretation and translation services.
4. "**Interpretation**" means the act of contemporaneous communication between a speaker of English and a speaker of another language wherein the words of one person are communicated to others orally in a different language.
5. "**Interpreter**" means a spoken language or sign language interpreter working in a public school, as defined in RCW 28A.150.010, to interpret for students' families, students, and communities in educational settings outside the classroom.
6. "**Translation**" means the written communication between a speaker of English and a speaker of another language where in the written words of one person are communicated to others in writing in a different language.
7. "**Qualified Interpreter**" means an interpreter who is able to interpret effectively, accurately, and impartially, both receptively and expressively using necessary specialized vocabulary.

B. Language Access Program

The District's language access program will be developed, implemented and evaluated using guidance from OSPI and other entities as identified in RCW 28A.300.130 and using input from staff, students, families and community members, as appropriate. The District's language access program will include completion of the following activities:

- Adopting a language access plan that outlines how the District will identify language access needs, allocate resources, establish standards for providing language access services, and monitor the effectiveness of the language access program;
- Administering the self-assessment for evaluating the provision of language access services;
- Reviewing, annually, the District's language access policy and procedure to incorporate necessary updates;
- Collaborating with community-based organizations on how to work effectively with interpreters and;
- Publishing, at least annually, information about the school district's language access plan, policy and procedures, and language access services, including the need for, and spending on, language access services. Published information will include notice to

families about their right to free language access services and the contact information for any school district language access coordinator and any building points of contact for language access services. The information will be translated into common languages understood by students' families.

C. Identification of Parents/Guardians Needing Language Access Services

- Upon student enrollment, schools will utilize a survey to identify parents or guardians of students with limited English proficiency who need language access services and the languages in which they may need assistance.
- Schools will maintain an appropriate and current record of the primary language and use that information to inform its language access plan and program.

D. Interpretation and Translation Services

1. Each school and District office will, upon request, consistent with this policy and procedure, provide free oral interpretation services to parents/guardians with limited English proficiency who require language services in order to communicate effectively during any interaction with the District significant to the student's education. Additionally, the District office will provide free translation of vital documents as required below in Section 8.
2. The District will take reasonable steps to ensure that interpreters and translators have the knowledge in both languages of any specialized terms or concepts to be used in the communication at issue.
3. Parents may voluntarily choose to decline the District's offer of a trained interpreter and choose instead to rely on an adult friend/companion or relative for language and interpretation services, but school staff may not suggest this as an alternative to providing appropriate language and interpretation services.
4. Students and other minor children under the age of 18 should not serve as interpreters for school staff and parents during any formal or informal meeting or process except in special or emergency circumstances where no other option is available.
5. The District will facilitate staff access to appropriate interpretation and translation services in order to communicate with parents/guardians with limited English proficiency consistent with federal and/or state law and this policy and procedure. If no interpreter can be present, District staff should utilize a language bank, resource line or online service to communicate with parents.
6. Appropriate District staff will be informed of when and how to access interpretation and translation services available within the District and the administrator responsible for ensuring the availability of such services.
7. Appropriate district staff, as determined by the superintendent, will receive guidance and information regarding:
 - the availability of translation and interpretation services within the District and how to access those services;
 - the rights of parents and families with limited English proficiency under state and federal law to language access services provided by the District;
 - effective ways to communicate with parents/guardians with limited English proficiency regarding the District's available language services;

- the process for reporting concerns or complaints.

8. **Interpretation Services:** Whenever requested by a parent/guardian, or whenever school staff or District officials can reasonably anticipate that interpretation services are necessary to meaningfully communicate with parents or guardians regarding important information about the student's education or school activities, the District will provide interpretation services in accordance with this procedure.

Upon five days' notice that such services are required, the District will provide interpretation services at public meetings organized or sponsored by the District (e.g., board meetings).

9. **Translation of Vital District Documents:** The District will identify vital documents that are distributed or electronically communicated to all or substantially all parents containing important information regarding a student's education, including but not limited to:

- required registration and application materials;
- academic standards and student performance;
- safety, discipline, and conduct expectations;
- special education and related services, Section 504 information, and McKinney-Vento services;
- policies and procedures related to school attendance;
- requests for parent permission in activities or programs;
- student/parent handbook;
- the District's Language Access Plan and related services or resources available; and
- school closure information.

The District may translate additional documents if such documents are deemed "vital". The District will provide a written translation of vital documents for each language group that constitutes at least 5 percent of the District's total enrollment

Written translations of vital documents by machine/computer translation programs will not be used or issued to parents/guardians with limited English Proficiency without prior review by a District-approved translator.

The District will provide a notice in appropriate language(s) that free translation and/or interpretation services are available and how to request a free translation or interpretation of the document.

10. **Translation of Student-Specific Documents:** The District will take all reasonable steps to provide parents and guardians, in a language they can understand, a translation of any document that contains individual, student-specific information regarding, but not limited to, a student's:

health;

safety;

legal or disciplinary matters; and

entitlement to public education, eligibility for special education services, or placement in the English Language Learner Program.

11. **Alternatives to Translation:** When translation for a document otherwise required to be translated is unavailable or cannot be done, such as in an emergency situation, a school or District office will provide an attached notice to parents or guardians in appropriate language(s) that free interpretation services are available and how to request a free interpretation of the document.

E. **Providing Information to Parents/Guardians**

1. The District will take steps to ensure that, at the time of enrollment, information regarding available interpretation and translation services and the District's complaint process is provided to any parent (s) when there is reason to believe that the student's parent(s) may have limited English proficiency. The District will take reasonable steps to provide information required by this section in the primary language spoken predominantly in the home.
2. Schools and District offices will post a sign in primary languages spoken in the District concerning the rights of parents to translation and interpretation services and how to access such services.

Adoption Date:

Classification: **Priority**

Revised Dates: 9/27/17; 9/14/22