

LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

POLICY:

The Board of Directors is committed to improving meaningful, two-way communication and promoting access to district programs, services, and activities for students and families with limited English proficiency (LEP) free of charge. To that end, the Board of Directors requires the District to implement and maintain a Language Access Plan tailored to the District's current LEP family population.

At a minimum, the District's Language Access Plan will incorporate the procedures that accompany this policy and address:

Parent/Guardian Identification

The District will accurately and in a timely manner identify LEP parents/guardians and provide them information in a language they can understand regarding the language service resources available within the district.

Oral Interpretation

The District will take reasonable steps to provide LEP families competent oral interpretation of materials or information about any program, service, and activity provided to non-LEP families and to facilitate any interaction with district staff significant to the students' education. The District will provide such services upon request of the LEP families and/or when it may be reasonably anticipated by district staff that such services will be necessary.

Written Translation

The District will provide a written translation of vital documents for each limited English proficient group that constitutes at least five percent of the District's total parent/guardian population or 1,000 persons, whichever is less. For purposes of this policy, "vital documents" include, but are not limited to, those related to:

- registration, application, and selection;
- 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/guardian permission in activities or programs;

- opportunities for students or families to access school activities, programs, and services;
- student/parent/guardian handbook;
- the District's Language Access Plan and related services or resources available;
- school closure information; and
- any other documents notifying parents/guardians of their rights under applicable state laws and/or containing information or forms related to consent or filing complaints under federal law, state law, or board policy.

If the District is unable to translate a vital document due to resource limitations or if a small number of families require the information in a language other than English such that document translation is unreasonable, the District will still provide the information to parents/guardians in a language they can understand through competent oral interpretation.

Staff Guidance

School administrators and other appropriate staff as determined by the Superintendent or designee will receive guidance on meaningful communication with LEP parents/guardians, best practices for working with an interpreter, how to access an interpreter or translation services, language services available within the district, and other information deemed necessary by the Superintendent or designee to effectuate the Language Access Plan.

The Superintendent is authorized to establish procedures and practices for implementing this policy.

Cross References:

Policy No. 5090: Student Nondiscrimination

Legal References:

Chapter 28A.642 RCW Discrimination prohibition
Chapter 49.60 RCW Discrimination – Human Rights Commission
Chapter 392-400 WAC Discipline
WAC 392-400-215 Student rights
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

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PROCEDURES:

The following procedures are intended to implement and establish meaningful, two-way communication between the District and families with limited English proficiency and promote access for such parents/guardians 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. A person with LEP may have difficulty in one or more of four domains of language: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Staff are urged to remember that LEP may be context-specific—e.g., a parent/guardian may have sufficient English language skills to understand, communicate and/or exchange basic information with a teacher but they may not have sufficient skills to communicate detailed, specific information needed in a particular context, like an IEP meeting, a 504 meeting, or a student discipline hearing. Likewise, a family may have stronger oral communication skills in English but prefer written communication in their first language.
2. **“LEP parent(s)”** refers to the parents/guardians of a student or students enrolled in the district who have limited English proficiency, even if the student is proficient in English. This term does not include family members of the student other than their parents/guardians.
3. **“Primary language”** means the primary language spoken by a student’s parents/guardians or the predominant language spoken in the student’s home. Parents/guardians may have more than one primary language and/or dialect.
4. **“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.

5. **“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. The District will take reasonable steps to utilize interpreters who are both fluent in English and have demonstrated language proficiency through certification or who are employed by a particular vendor or service contracted to provide interpretation services.
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.

B. Parent/Guardian Identification

1. Upon student enrollment and periodically through a student’s education, schools will utilize a survey to identify parents/guardians who need language services and the languages in which they may need assistance. The survey will be translated into the most commonly known languages spoken in the district and will be included in the standard enrollment packet provided to all district parents/guardians.
2. Schools will make every effort to determine within thirty (30) days of a student’s enrollment the primary language spoken by the parents/guardians of each student enrolled in the school; and if such language is not English, whether the parents/guardians require language services in order to communicate effectively with the school or district.
3. Schools will maintain an appropriate and current record of the primary language spoken by a student’s parents/guardians, and such record will be available to the District.

C. Interpretation and Translation Services

1. Each school and the Educational Service Center (ESC) will provide free interpretation services to all parents/guardians who require language services in order to communicate effectively during any interaction with the District significant to the student’s education. Additionally, each school and the ESC will provide free translation of vital documents as required below in Section 8.
2. All interpretation and translation will be provided by competent and fluent speakers of that language as demonstrated by certification or

similar means. 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 and that they have been trained in the role of an interpreter or translator, the ethics of interpreting and translating, and the need to maintain confidentiality.

In the event the District cannot provide an interpreter that is either certified or employed by a vendor to provide interpretation services after taking reasonable steps to do so, the District must still take reasonable steps to ensure that the interpreter utilized is trained regarding the role of an interpreter, the ethics of interpreting and translating, and the need to maintain confidentiality.

3. Parents/guardians may voluntarily choose to decline the District's offer of an 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.

Students and other minor children under the age of 18 may not serve as interpreters for school staff and parents/guardians during any formal or informal meeting or process, except in emergency situations.

4. The District will facilitate staff access to appropriate interpretation and translation services in order to communicate with LEP parents/guardians consistent with federal and/or state law and this policy and its procedures. If no interpreter can be present, district staff should utilize a language bank, resource line, or online service to communicate with parents/guardians.
5. The following interpretation and translation services are currently available in the district:
 - a. Language Link - provides immediate or scheduled phone call interpretation or video conferencing option within their system's platform (1-888-338-7394, [directions here](#))
 - b. Refugee Services through Everett Community College - provides translation services, scheduled phone call or on-site interpretation services including interpreters joining a district-scheduled virtual meeting (risnwinterpretationandtranslationservices@everettcc.edu)

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.

District staff may contact the Teaching and Learning Department at (425) 335-1589 with questions or concerns or to obtain information or assistance regarding interpretation and translation services.

6. District administrators and other appropriate staff, as determined by the Superintendent, will receive guidance and information regarding:
 - a. the rights of LEP parents/guardians under state and federal law to language access services provided by the District;
 - b. the importance of meaningfully and effectively communicating with LEP parents/guardians;
 - c. the most effective ways to communicate with LEP parents/guardians regarding the District's language services;
 - d. the importance of utilizing competent translation and interpretation services when communicating with LEP parents/guardians;
 - e. the availability of translation and interpretation services within the district, whether through in-person interpretation, telephonic services, online services, or video-conferencing;
 - f. the mechanisms and processes for accessing translation and interpretation services when working with LEP parents/guardians, including ensuring the correct language service is being accessed; checking LEP parents/guardians understanding once interpretation has commenced; and proper vetting of translations for audience-appropriate content; and
 - g. the process for reporting concerns or complaints.
7. **Interpretation Services:** Whenever requested by parents/guardians or whenever school staff or district officials can reasonably anticipate that interpretation services are necessary to meaningfully communicate with parents/guardians regarding important information about their child's education or school activities, the District will provide interpretation services in accordance with this procedure.

Such interpretation services may be provided either at the location where the parents/guardians are seeking to communicate or by electronic means, such as telephone or video conferencing.

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

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

- a. registration and enrollment in school;
- b. district program information and applications (i.e., Highly Capable, Advanced Placement);
- c. academic standards and student performance;
- d. student conduct expectations and discipline notices;
- e. notice of rights and services for special education and related services, Section 504, and McKinney-Vento services;
- f. policies and procedures related to school attendance;
- g. requests for parents/guardians' permission in activities or programs;
- h. opportunities for parents/guardians to access school activities, programs, and services;
- i. student/family handbook;
- j. the District's LEP and related services or resources available;
- k. school closure information; and
- l. any other documents notifying parents/guardians of their rights under applicable state laws and/or containing information or forms related to consent or filing complaints under federal law, state law, or board policy.

The District will provide a written translation of vital documents for each LEP group that constitutes at least five percent of the District's total parent/guardian population or 1,000 persons, whichever is less. If the District is unable to translate a document due to resource limitations or if a small number of parents/guardians require the information in a language other than English such that document translation is unreasonable, the District will still provide the information to parents/guardians in a language they can understand, such as through oral interpretation of the document.

All documents and information posted or issued by the District for parents/guardians should contain 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.

9. **Translation of Student-Specific Documents:** The District will take all reasonable steps to provide parents/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:

- a. health;
- b. safety;
- c. legal or disciplinary matters; and
- d. entitlement to public education, eligibility for special education services, placement in the English Language Learner (ELL) Program, the Highly Capable Program, accelerated courses such as Advanced Placement, or any other non-standard academic program.

10. **Alternatives to Translation:** When translation for a vital document is unavailable or cannot be done, such as in an emergency situation, a school or the ESC will provide an attached notice to parents/guardians 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.

D. Providing Information to Parents/Guardians

1. Parents/guardians will be notified of this policy at the time they enroll their children in school and annually thereafter.
2. Parents/guardians will also be annually notified regarding the process for filing complaints through the District's nondiscrimination policy and procedures if they believe that such services have not been appropriately provided.
3. 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/guardian when there is reason to believe that the student's parents/guardians may have LEP (e.g., results of home language survey, a parent or guardian's request for an interpreter). The District will take reasonable steps to provide information required by this section in the parent/guardian's primary language.
4. Schools and the ESC will post in a conspicuous location at or near the primary entrance to the school or office a sign in primary languages spoken in the district concerning the rights of parents/guardians to translation and interpretation services and how to access such services.
5. To the extent practicable, the district website will provide information in designated languages concerning the rights of parents/guardians to translation and interpretation services under federal and state law and how to access such services.

E. The Collection and Analysis of LEP Data

1. The District will collect and periodically analyze data related to LEP so as to assemble a list of primary languages spoken predominantly in the homes of students and their parents/guardians. Such information will help to ensure the provision of appropriate language access services and assist the District in effectively planning and budgeting for services necessary to communicate with students and their parents/guardians.
2. Such data may be collected by family surveys.