



# ROCKDALE ISD TRANSLATION PLAN

Interpretation and Translation Services for  
Limited English Proficient Parents/Guardians

# Purpose

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Rockdale ISD recognizes the importance of effective and meaningful communication with parents/guardians with limited English proficiency in order to support the goal of engaging and involving families further in their children's education and to ensure they have equal access to information communicated to all parents.

For the purpose of this plan, interpretation is defined as spoken information provided in another language. Translation is defined as a written version of a document provided in a different language than the original version of the document.

In order to support linguistically diverse families, RISD will:

- Develop and annually update (by November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year) a district plan for translation and interpretation that would be utilized at each individual school site;
- Provide families the opportunity to request written and/or oral communications in a language other than English, and inform families of the availability of these services at no cost to them;
- Identify families who have requested written and/or oral communications in a language other than English and maintain this information in a manner that is easily accessible to district and school staff;
- Ensure the availability and accessibility of interpreters and translators, and maximize available resources by providing guidance on determining the mode of communication that best serves families in any given situation;
- Ensure the quality of the interpretation and translation services are being provided by the district;
- Conduct regular surveys to assure families they are receiving communications in the language they have requested.

# Federal Law

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Under relevant statutory and case law, in order to avoid discrimination on the basis of national origin against persons with limited English proficiency, recipients of federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education must take appropriate steps to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency receive the language assistance necessary to allow them meaningful access to services, free of charge.

# Notification of Interpretation and Translation Services

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Families with a household communication language preference other than English are informed by each school upon enrollment of the availability of translation and interpreting services at no cost to them. This information is also posted on the district website and linked on school websites.

## Effective Language Assistance to LEP Parents

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Schools must communicate information to limited English proficient parents in a language they can understand about any program, service, or activity that is called to the attention of parents who are proficient in English. This includes, but is not limited to, information related to:

- ✓ Registration and enrollment in school and school programs
- ✓ Language assistance programs
- ✓ Parent handbooks
- ✓ Report cards
- ✓ Gifted and talented programs
- ✓ Student discipline policies and procedures
- ✓ Special education and related services, and meetings to discuss special education
- ✓ Parent-teacher conferences
- ✓ Requests for parent permission for student participation in school activities

## Translation and Interpretation Resources

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The District ESL Coordinator identifies, and maintains a contact list of district employees who are qualified and approved to serve as interpreters and translators as well as outside individuals that provide contracted translation and/or interpretation services. This contact list is shared with all staff via email annually and as updates necessitate.

The district's Federal Programs department will provide guidance, training, and technical assistance to staff on the process of ascertaining the need and the best means for providing interpretations and/or translations. In general, **written materials** routinely provided to parents/guardians in English must also be provided in high frequency preferred household communication languages. Current district demographics necessitate Spanish translations as a routine practice. A document is considered of particularly vital importance when it contains information that is critical for obtaining educational benefits or is required by law. In addition, when determining the priority of a particular document for translation, the district will consider the importance of the program, information, encounter, or service involved and the consequence to the family if the information in question is not provided accurately or in a timely manner.

The Rockdale ISD website, [www.rockdaleisd.net](http://www.rockdaleisd.net), links to Google Translate and will

translate the website content as well as most linked documents into the selected language. All messages on School Messenger are sent in Spanish to families who have that as their preference. The Rockdale ISD Student Handbook and Code of Conduct have been professionally translated and are available on the website and in all district offices. All campuses and departments have access to Smore with a translate component to create parent newsletters and notices. All Rockdale ISD instructional staff use Talking Points as a two way communication system. Talking Points allows staff to communicate with families in their home languages.

## Training of Interpreters and Translators

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Any person who is providing services as an interpreter or translator must be proficient and competent in the languages being interpreted or translated and must have knowledge of the ethics and professional responsibilities involved in providing such language assistance services. The role of the interpreter is to ensure that accurate and effective communication occurs between all parties involved. The role of the translator is to ensure that the written word is accurately and meaningfully transcribed from the source language to the target language.

In addition, all interpreters and translators providing services in the district must read and sign the **Interpreter Confidentiality & Non-Disclosure Agreement** kept on file in the Federal Programs Department.

All interpreters and translators who are involved in the special education process must have knowledge of and be able to use special education terms and have demonstrated proficiency in the language being interpreted or translated. Interpreters and translators requested for special education meetings must be requested through the District's Special Education Department.

## Guidance Regarding Use of Family, Friends, or Children as Interpreters

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The use of family members and friends for the provision of language assistance is not acceptable. The use of such individuals raises issues of confidentiality, privacy, or conflict of interest, and, in many circumstances, such persons are not competent to provide quality, accurate interpretations. The district will not rely on such individuals to provide Limited English Proficiency parents/guardians with meaningful access to important programs and activities. Even when the Limited English Proficiency parent/guardian chooses to provide his/her personal interpreter or translator, the district should always ensure that a district interpreter/translator is present. This is to ensure that the interpretation/translation given is accurate. The use of minor children raises particular concerns about competency, quality and accuracy of interpretations. Children under the age of 18 years old cannot be bound to confidentiality regulations under FERPA. It is also not advisable to use such children to convey information about their own educational and/or complex information. Accordingly, minor children can never serve as interpreters or translators.