

# G-26: Administrative Procedures Interpretation and Translation Services



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## REFERENCES

[Board Policy G-26](#)

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## DEFINITIONS

**Interpretation:** 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.

**Language services:** 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

**Limited English Proficiency (LEP):** Persons with "limited English proficiency" ("LEP") 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 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.

**LEP parent(s):** Parent(s) or guardian(s) 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 parent(s).

**Parent:**

For purposes of these administrative procedures and the corresponding board policy, "parent" means:

- A. a biological or adoptive parent;
- B. a legal guardian or other individual legally authorized to make educational decisions for the child;
- C. an individual, with whom the child lives, who is acting as a parent in the absence of a natural parent or a guardian;
- D. a foster parent if the authority of the biological or adoptive parents to make educational decisions on the child's behalf has been terminated or specifically limited by a court order;
- E. in the absence of any individual qualified under parts A-D, a surrogate parent appointed pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; and/or
- F. a stepparent if the stepparent is present on a day-to-day basis with the natural parent and child, and the other parent is absent from the home. A stepparent who is not present on a day-to-day basis in the home of the child does not have rights under Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) with respect to the child's education records. Stepparents without guardianship of a child do not have the authority to enroll or register a child in school.

**Primary language:** The primary language spoken by a student's parent, or the predominant language spoken in the student's home. Parents may have more than one primary language and/or dialect.

**Translation:** 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.

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## PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

### I. Parent Identification

- A. Upon student enrollment and periodically through a student's education, schools will utilize a survey to identify parents who need language access 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.
- B. Schools must determine within thirty (30) days of a student's enrollment the primary language spoken by the parent of each student enrolled in the school, and if such language is not English, whether the parent requires language services in order to communicate effectively with the school or District.
- C. Schools will maintain an appropriate and current record of the primary language spoken by a student's parents, and such record will be available to the District.

### II. Right to Information

- A. All parents have a right to be provided information about their student's education in a language they can understand; this includes the right to translated documents and the provision of a language interpreter for meetings and conversations.

- B. 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.
- C. Parents have a right to these services even if they speak some English and/or their student can speak or read English.
- D. All language assistance services must be free to the parent and provided by appropriate and competent staff, or through appropriate and competent outside agencies (see Section IV, below).
- E. Vital information that must be translated includes:
  - 1. School/Program registration, enrollment, and selection;
  - 2. Fee schedule and fee waiver information;
  - 3. Grades, report cards, progress reports, academic standards, and graduation;
  - 4. School rules and student discipline;
  - 5. Attendance, absences, and withdrawal;
  - 6. Parent permission for activities and programs;
  - 7. School closures;
  - 8. Opportunities to access programs or services – including extended learning, advanced placement, and English Learner programs;
  - 9. Student/Parent handbooks;
  - 10. Parent-teacher conferences;
  - 11. Grievance procedures and notices of nondiscrimination;
  - 12. Special education and related services for students with disabilities;
  - 13. Section 504 information;
  - 14. McKinney-Vento services; and
  - 15. The district's language access plan and related services or resources available.

### **III. Interpretation Services**

- A. The district will provide interpretation services whenever requested by a parent or whenever school staff or district officials can reasonably anticipate that interpretation services are necessary to meaningfully communicate with parents regarding important information about their student's education or school or classroom activities.
  - 1. Interpreter services are available for school community council meetings, board meetings, and parent engagement activities.
  - 2. All requests should be submitted to the district's translation coordinator with as much advance notice as possible.
- B. Such interpretation services may be provided either at the location where the parent is seeking to communicate or by electronic means, such as telephone or video conferencing.
- C. Over-the-phone interpretation services are available to all schools and offices during regular business hours in over 100 languages. These services can be accessed by contacting the translation coordinator but are provided by a contracted vendor.
- D. Upon three 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).

### **IV. Translation of Vital District Documents**

- A. The district will identify vital documents which are distributed or electronically communicated to all or substantially all parents containing important information regarding a student's education, including but not limited to the information described in Section II.D. above.
- B. All school community council notifications and agendas should be printed in the school's major languages in order to effectively communicate with parents and encourage their participation.
- C. The District will provide a written translation of vital documents for each LEP group that constitutes at least 5 percent of the District's total parent population or 1000 persons, whichever is less.
- D. Any information posted or issued by the District for parents 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.
- E. When translation of a document otherwise required to be translated is unavailable or cannot be done, such as in an emergency situation, a school or district will provide an attached notice to parents 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.

- F. 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 in a language they can understand, such as through competent oral interpretation.

**V. Translation of Student-Specific Documents**

- A. The District will take all reasonable steps to provide parents, 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:
  - 1. health;
  - 2. safety;
  - 3. legal or disciplinary matters; and
  - 4. entitlement to public education, eligibility for special education services, placement in the English Language Learner Program (EL), extended learning programs, accelerated courses such as Advanced Placement, or any other nonstandard academic program.

**VI. Requesting Services**

- A. District Employee Requests
  - 1. Please request translation and interpretation services using the online forms available on the district's translation services webpage located at: <https://www.slcschools.org/departments/educational-equity-and-student-support/educational-equity/translation-services/>
  - 2. Each school and department shall have no more than two designated requesters in order to manage the number of requests and avoid duplicating requests and overburdening the translation coordinator.
  - 3. Employee should request the type of service (either translation or interpretation) that will provide the greatest understanding to the parent requester.
- B. Parent Requests
  - 1. Parents needing translation or interpretation services should contact the main office of their student's school.
    - a. Parents should feel free to request services to assist them in understanding their student's assignments and accompanying materials.
  - 2. Parents needing translation or interpretation services to access district level services should contact the district's translation office at: 801.578.8378 or complete the online request form located at: <https://www.slcschools.org/departments/educational-equity-and-student-support/educational-equity/translation-services/>.

**VII. Translators/Interpreters**

- A. The district will take reasonable steps to utilize interpreters who have demonstrated language proficiency through certification or who are employed by a particular vendor or service contracted to provide interpretation services.
  - 1. Interpreters and translators utilized by the district will at a minimum have knowledge in both languages of any specialized terms or concepts to be used in the communication at issue, and be trained on the role of an interpreter and translator, the ethics of interpreting and translating, and the need to maintain confidentiality.
  - 2. It is not sufficient for the staff merely to be bilingual. For example, a staff member who is bilingual may be able to communicate directly with limited English proficient parents in a different language but may not be competent to interpret in and out of that language, or to translate documents.
- B. The district may not rely on or ask students, siblings, friends, or untrained school staff to translate or interpret for parents.
- C. Parents 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.
  - 1. Students and other minor children under the age of 18 may not serve as interpreters for school staff and parents during any formal or informal meeting or process.
- D. The district will facilitate staff access to appropriate interpretation and translation services in order to communicate with LEP parents consistent with federal and/or state law, board policy, and these procedures.
- E. In the event of an impromptu phone or visit by a parent who need an interpreter, district staff should utilize a language bank, resource line or online service to communicate with parents.

**VIII. Notification to Parents of Available Services**

- A. District staff and parents will be annually notified of these procedures and the accompanying board policy.
- B. Staff will be regularly provided written guidance regarding how and when interpretation and translation services should be accessed, and such guidance will be updated as needed to reflect available services.

- C. Parents will also be annually notified regarding the process for filing complaints through the district's nondiscrimination policy and procedure if they believe that such services have not been appropriately provided.
- D. 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 LEP (e.g., results of home language survey, a parent's request for an interpreter). The district will take reasonable steps to provide information required by this section in the primary language spoken predominantly in the home.

**IX. The Translation Office**

- A. The district's translation office is responsible for coordinating all efforts related to language access within the district. It operates within the Educational Equity and Student Support department to ensure that language access is a key consideration in all parental engagement initiatives and communications.
- B. The translation office:
  - 1. Oversees and monitors the district's provision of language assistance services to LEP parents;
  - 2. Works closely with schools to ensure that the district's translation and interpretation services support the needs of the LEP parent population;
  - 3. Serves as primary contact for schools for ongoing guidance and support;
  - 4. Develops and provides Language Access Kits to schools. Kits include a multilingual welcome poster, a Language Identification Guide to help determine the language spoken by a parent, sample I Speak Card for parents, sample Multilingual Language Access flyer for parents, an information brochure about the services provided by the translation office, and an over-the-phone card for school resources officers that outlines how to obtain an interpreter; and
  - 5. Maintains outside language services vendor contracts.

**X. Training**

- A. All school administrators, particularly those who have the most interaction with the public such as registrars and enrollment staff, certificated staff and other appropriate staff as determined by the superintendent, will receive guidance on meaningful communication with LEP parents, best practices for working with an interpreter, how to access an interpreter or translation services in a timely manner, language services available within the district and other information deemed necessary to implement these procedures.