

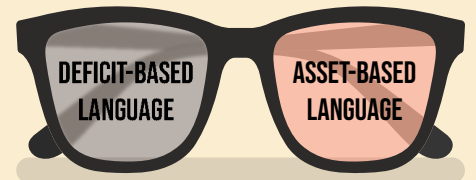
# YOUR LANGUAGE IS A GIFT

## Recommendations for Asset-Based Language

### WHAT DOES ASSET-BASED MEAN?

You may have received documents from your school describing your student as an **English Language Learner (ELL)**. While your child is learning English, we suggest using the term **multilingual student** to highlight the languages that your child speaks as gifts rather than barriers.

The language we use affects how the world sees your child. The examples below show how Susanna's languages can be viewed as a gift or a barrier.



### LOOKING AT YOUR LANGUAGE AS A BARRIER (DEFICIT-BASED)

- Susannah is confused between two or more languages
- Susannah only knows a few letter sounds in English
- Susannah's accent is so heavy that she must not understand English
- You should only speak to Susannah in English because speaking other languages will slow down her English development



### LOOKING AT YOUR LANGUAGE AS A GIFT (ASSET-BASED)

- Susannah uses all of her languages to make meaning
- Susannah knows a few letter sounds in English AND foundational skills in her home language(s)
- Susannah's accent is an indication of her gift of speaking multiple languages
- Speaking to Susannah in her home language will help to:
  - learn and value both her home language and English
  - maintain her connection to her family and culture

