

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Language Access

The Board is committed to improving meaningful, two-way communication and promoting access to District programs, services, and activities for students and their parents and families. The Board recognizes that multilingual families and students are assets to the community and that the District seeks to address language barriers that exist and to do so free of charge. To that end and as required by law, the District will develop and adopt a plan for implementing and maintaining a language access program that is culturally responsive, provides for systematic family engagement developed through meaningful stakeholder engagement, and is tailored to the District's current population of students and families who have limited English proficiency.

At a minimum, the District's plan for a language access program will adhere to the principles of an effective language access program for culturally responsive, systematic family engagement, which are:

- Accessibility and equity. This means that schools provide access to all; two-way communication is a priority and is woven into the design of all programs and services.
- Accountability and transparency. This means that the language access program and decision-making processes at all levels are: Open, accessible, and usable to families; readily available; continuously improved based on ongoing feedback from families and staff; and regulated by a clear and just complaint process.
- Responsive culture. This means that schools are safe, compassionate places where each family's opinions are heard, needs are met, and contributions are valued. School staff are humble and empathetic towards families.
- Focus on relationships. This means that schools seek to understand families without judgment on an individual level, building trust through respectful relationships that recognize the unique strengths that each family and student possesses.

Identification of Families Needing Language Access Services

The District will accurately and in a timely manner identify parents/family members of students with limited English proficiency 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 parents/family members with limited English proficiency with competent oral interpretation of materials or information about any program, service, and activity provided to parents who do not have limited English proficiency and to facilitate any interaction with district staff significant to the student's education. The District will provide such services upon request 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 5 percent of the District's total parent population or 1000 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 permission in activities or programs;
- opportunities for students or families to access school activities, programs, and services;
- student/parent handbook;
- the District's Language Access Plan and Program and related services or resources available;
- school closure information; and
- any other documents notifying parents 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 District 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 in a language they can understand through competent oral interpretation.

District Language Access Liaison

The District designated Language Access Liaison will monitor and facilitate compliance with state and federal laws related to language access and family engagement. The Language Access Liaison's name and contact information will be provided so parents, school staff, and community members may contact them to inquire about language access services.

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 Language Access Liaison, will receive guidance on meaningful communication with parents/family members with limited English proficiency, 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 by the Language Access Liaison to effectuate the language access plan and program.

Appropriate district staff will also receive guidance on the interaction between this policy and the District's policy on effective communication with students, families, and community members with disabilities.

The District will provide effective communication for students' families who are deaf, deaf and blind, blind, hard of hearing, or need other communication assistance.

Legal References:

[Chapter 28A.155 RCW Special Education](#)

[Chapter 28A.642 RCW Discrimination prohibition](#)

[Chapter 49.60 RCW Discrimination – Human Rights Commission](#)

[Chapter 392-400 WAC Pupils](#)

[WAC 392-400-215 Student rights](#)

[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)

Adopted: October 12, 2022