



School District 622

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Ready for tomorrow

Language Access Plan

*to Ensure Effective Communication
with Multilingual Students and Families*



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Section 1: Policy Directives

This section sets forth the laws, standards, and operating principles that will govern the implementation of ISD 622's language access plan.



Policy Foundation

Federal

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.
- Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA) requires states and school districts to provide equal educational opportunity to students learning English by taking appropriate actions to overcome language barriers.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) upholds language access rights for bilingual families by requiring that students be tested in their home language and that Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) be written in the appropriate home language. IEP meetings must be conducted in the family's home language using a highly trained and qualified interpreter.

State

- Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.32 states:
 - Subd. 1. Language access plan required. Starting in the 2025–2026 school year, during a regularly scheduled public board hearing, the school board must adopt a language access plan that specifies the district's process and procedures to render effective language assistance to students and adults who communicate in a language other than English. The language access plan must be available to the public and included in the district's handbook.
 - Subd. 2. Plan requirements. The language access plan must include how the district and its schools will use trained or certified spoken language interpreters for communication related to academic outcomes, progress, determinations, and placement of students in specialized programs and services; and how families and communities will be notified of their rights under this plan.
 - Subd. 3. Regular review. The board must review the plan every two years and update the plan as appropriate.
 - Minnesota Learning for English Academic Proficiency (LEAPS) Act of 2014, Chapter 272, H.F. No. 2397, Article 1. The law has three principal goals for all English Learner (EL) students: 1) academic English proficiency; 2) grade-level content knowledge; and 3) multilingual skills development.
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District 622's Commitment to Ensuring All Families Have Equitable Access



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ISD 622 is committed to ensuring that all families have equitable access to their child’s education. Families are entitled to:

- Interpretation and translation services for school-related communications such as meetings, newsletters, updates, crisis, and events.
- Professional interpreters for special education due process meetings, disciplinary hearings, conferences, and enrollment meetings.
- Notification of their rights to language assistance, provided through handbooks, district website, and school communications.
- Access to translated vital documents—such as enrollment forms, consent forms, special education due process documents, report cards, suspension paperwork, and other student-related communications that include academic or anecdotal information—in their preferred language.
- Opportunities to provide feedback about the quality and availability of language access services.

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Definitions

- **American Sign Language (ASL)** – A visually perceived language based on a naturally evolved system of articulated hand gestures and their placement relative to the body, along with non-manual markers such as facial expressions, head movements, shoulder raises, mouth morphemes, and movements of the body.
 - **Relay** – Telephone accessibility services to people who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or speech disabled.
 - **Screen Reader** – Software programs that allow blind or visually impaired users to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display.
 - **Interpretation** – The act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language). Interpreter must retain the same meaning as the original message without omitting information, summarizing or otherwise altering the message and without adding the interpreter's own thoughts or opinions.
 - **Interpreter** – A person who provides interpreting services.
 - **Simultaneous Interpretation Equipment** – Equipment that allow a group of people to listen through headsets to information interpreted into their primary language. This method is most appropriate for large group settings and meetings where multiple languages are being interpreted simultaneously.
 - **Language Assistance Services** – Oral, expressive, written, and technological supportive services that help students and families communicate effectively with school staff. These services ensure students and families can participate fully in school services, activities, and programs.
 - **Limited English Proficient (LEP)** – Individuals whose primary language is not English and who have limited ability to communicate effectively in English, including writing, reading, speaking, and listening comprehension. Federal law uses this term to refer to the intended beneficiaries of language access services.
 - **Emergent Multilingual Speakers** – Individuals whose primary language is not English and who have limited ability to communicate effectively in English but are in the process of developing their English language proficiency. Language access industry leaders and advocates prefer the use of this term when referring to the intended beneficiaries of language access services.
 - **English Learner (EL)** – A status assigned to students whose primary language is not English, who lacks the necessary skills to understand, speak, read, and write in English but are receiving English language development instructions in a public school or charter setting.
 - **Home Language** – The language that is most commonly used in the home by members of a family, or the language that parents use when speaking with their children.
 - **Primary Language** – An individual's native tongue or the language in which an individual most effectively communicates.
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Definitions

- **Sight Translation** – The oral interpretation of a written document. This occurs when an interpreter reads a document and then provides a complete oral interpretation of the information that it contains.
- **Remote Interpreting** – Interpreting that is provided via telephone or video call.
- **Translator** – A person who provides translation services.
- **Translation** – The restating of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language).
- **Vital Document** – Materials deemed vital to ensuring access to educational services, programs, and activities, or contain information required by law to translate or provide in audio format

Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice

ISD 622's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Educational Interpreters of Spoken Languages is derived from the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Educational Interpreters of Spoken Languages. These standards ensure that interpreters provide accurate, impartial, and professional language access services in educational settings, with a particular focus on supporting emergent multilingual students and families in both general education and special education contexts.

Interpreter Training

ISD 622 requires all interpreters to complete formal training that incorporates the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Educational Interpreters of Spoken Languages. Interpreters are prepared to facilitate communication among families, students, teachers, administrators, and support staff. In addition, interpreters participate in ongoing professional development and complete a structured onboarding process to ensure they are fully equipped to provide accurate, impartial, and effective services in educational settings.

ISD 622 ensures that any interpreting agency we work with follows a code of ethics consistent with the district's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

When an Interpreter is Needed

Interpreting services are required whenever language supports are needed for educational services to reduce communication barriers in the educational system. This includes:

- Meetings between families, school personnel, and community members.
 - Special education due process meetings.
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District 622 aligns with federal requirements, including:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which protects the right of individuals to receive information in a language they understand.
- U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) guidance (Jan. 7, 2015) defining Limited English Proficient (LEP) parents as those whose primary language is not English and who have limited proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, or writing.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) [CFR 300.322(e) and 300.304(c)(ii)], requiring that parents and students receive information in their home language and that evaluation procedures be conducted in the child's native language.

Special Education Focus

- Interpreters do not provide professional opinions about student evaluations; these discussions must be led by the due process team.
- Whenever possible, the same interpreter is assigned to a family throughout the evaluation process to build trust and maintain continuity.
- All interpretation in special education settings takes place in close collaboration with the special education due process team to ensure accuracy and consistency.

General Principles

- **Confidentiality** – Interpreters must treat all educational information as confidential and adhere to legal reporting requirements, including mandated reporting of suspected abuse.
- **Accuracy** – Interpreters must convey messages completely, accurately, and in the correct cultural context without adding, omitting, summarizing, or altering content.
- **Impartiality** – Interpreters must remain neutral, refrain from providing advice or personal opinions, and disclose any conflicts of interest.
- **Professional Boundaries** – Interpreters must perform only their interpreting role during encounters and avoid dual roles unless clearly communicated to all parties.
- **Cultural Awareness** – Interpreters must respect and maintain awareness of the cultural beliefs and practices of all parties.
- **Respect** – Interpreters must treat all participants with respect, collaborate professionally with colleagues, and recognize their own cultural biases.
- **Advocacy** – Interpreters may intervene only when a student's health, safety, or educational access is at immediate risk, and must do so transparently.
- **Professionalism** – Interpreters must be adequately trained for each assignment, define their role at the start of sessions, arrive prepared, present professionally, request additional support when needed, and maintain self-care to ensure accurate interpretation.
- **Continuing Education** – Interpreters are expected to continually develop skills, maintain language proficiency, stay informed about educational laws and policies, and participate in district-sponsored training opportunities.

District 622 requires all interpreters, including staff with dual roles such as cultural liaisons, paraprofessionals, and administrators, to adhere fully to this Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice when performing interpreting services.



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Section 2: The Plan



Overview

District 622's Language Access Plan provides a blueprint for bringing the district into compliance with state and federal language access requirements. The plan identifies how the district will address language service and resource needs identified in its local self-assessment and outlines steps to increase the district's capacity to provide timely, accurate, and culturally responsive language assistance.

This plan also serves as a roadmap for staff to set priorities and deadlines, assign responsible personnel for policy and procedure development, hire or contract language services, ensure quality control, provide notice of services, train staff, and conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Description of Services

District 622 offers a comprehensive range of language assistance services designed to support communication between families, students, and school staff across academic, administrative, and extracurricular contexts. The Office of Educational Equity Department (OEE) leads the interpreting and translation requests for District 622.

Identification of Language Needs

Language support needs are identified during enrollment and recorded in the district's student information system, Infinite Campus. At that time, families provide their primary home language, note any additional languages spoken at home, and indicate whether they require interpreter services. An interpreter flag is then added in Infinite Campus to ensure that staff are aware of each student and family's interpretation and translation needs.

Families may update their language preferences at any time, including annually through the parent portal.

The Enrollment Center follows the district's Student Language Summary procedures, which outline how Home Primary Language, Parent Preferred Communication Language, and Contact Language Preference are entered and maintained in Infinite Campus.

Identification of Language Needs

Students with visual impairments or other accessibility needs (e.g., enlarged text, assistive technology) are identified during enrollment or through staff observations. Staff can contact Nikki VanOeveren (nvanoeve@916schools.org) for guidance on providing appropriate support.

Families may request communications or materials in their preferred language at any time.

In addition to self-reported information, school staff play an active role in identifying needs. Administrators and office coordinators are trained to ensure interpreter flags are applied whenever staff observations indicate that a family requires language assistance.

The district regularly reviews its most common languages—currently Spanish, Hmong, Somali, and Karen—to guide interpreter staffing, translation priorities, and community outreach. Less common languages are supported through the interpreter pool and contracted agencies.

Assessment of language assistance needs is ongoing and includes:

- Monitoring Infinite Campus data for emerging language groups.
- Reviewing interpreter and translation request patterns across schools.
- Gathering input from cultural liaisons and family engagement events.
- Updating technology systems as needed to improve data collection and management.

This comprehensive approach ensures that the district remains responsive to both current and emerging language needs, providing equitable access to information and services for all families.

Spoken Interpretation Services

- Interpreting services are provided for enrollment and intake meetings, caregiver conferences, special education (IEP/504) meetings, behavior or safety discussions, health or medical meetings, transition planning, and other academic or administrative interactions.
- District 622 Cultural Liaisons provide support for families who speak Spanish, Somali, Hmong, and Karen. Liaisons are available for both scheduled and urgent needs, ensuring families understand school processes, policies, and resources. The district utilizes internal staff and external agencies for language supports needed outside the district supported languages listed above.
- Telephone and video interpretation services, including the Language Line, are available when in-person support is unavailable, particularly for urgent or same-day requests. These services ensure families can access immediate assistance in their home language while maintaining confidentiality and accuracy.

Written Translation Services

- District 622 provides translations of key formal school documents such as enrollment forms, consent and intake forms, special education due process documents, required ESSA parent notifications, and other essential materials.
- Informal communications, such as newsletters, announcements, and digital updates, may be provided in families' primary languages using tools such as Google Translate, Canva, Messenger XRE, Smore, and the district website.

Staff Coordination and Access

- All school administrators and office staff are trained annually on district guidance for requesting language services. They are responsible for submitting interpreter and translation requests on behalf of teachers and other staff, ensuring consistent and equitable access to services.
 - Families may request interpretation or translation support at any time by contacting school staff, who coordinate with Cultural Liaisons or external language service providers as needed.
 - Additional support and guidance regarding language assistance services are available from the district office via equity@isd622.org.
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Implementation

Oversight of the Language Access Plan is the responsibility of a district-wide committee that includes staff from the departments of Multilingual Learning, Equity, Student Services, Enrollment, Communications, and Technology. This cross-departmental team ensures that the plan is fully integrated into daily operations and responsive to the needs of students and families.

Day-to-day coordination is managed by the district's Language Access Coordinators, Ibrahim Abukar and Lynn Pham. They are responsible for overseeing interpreter and translation services, monitoring plan implementation, and supporting site-based staff in carrying out language access procedures.

The chain of command is structured to ensure accountability: site leadership and office coordinators identify needs and submit interpreter requests on behalf of staff; Language Access Coordinators manage requests and allocate resources; and the superintendent and cabinet members monitor effectiveness and address systemic issues. All administrators and office staff are provided training on language access procedures, including how to request services on behalf of staff and families. The district also works collaboratively with contracted interpreting agencies to expand language access services beyond what is available through internal staff and cultural liaisons.

To promote and advertise language assistance services, the district will:

- Maintain clear, accessible information about interpreting and translation services on the district website.
 - Provide district families with immediate access to translated content through an integrated website translation tool (Weglot), which allows all information on the site to be viewed in families' preferred languages.
 - Translate key policies, communications, and family-facing resources to ensure essential information is available in multiple languages.
 - Use digital communication platforms such as Smore, and Canva's translation tools to consistently share information in families' home languages.
 - Communicate the availability of services directly to families during enrollment, orientations, and through regular outreach efforts.
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Timeline

The district will implement the Language Access Plan according to the following schedule:

- 2024–2025: Conduct planning, complete the district-wide self-assessment, and draft the initial Language Access Plan.
- 2025–2026: Present the plan to the School Board for adoption and begin rollout across all school sites.
- 2026–2027 and beyond: Integrate the plan into student and family handbooks, establish an annual review and revision cycle, and ensure ongoing monitoring of effectiveness. The school board will review the plan every two years.

Notice of Services

The district is committed to ensuring that families are consistently informed of their right to free language assistance services for all educational purposes. Services will be advertised and communicated through:

- District and school websites, including translation-enabled features that allow families to access information in their preferred language.
- Direct communication to families through emails, newsletters, and enrollment materials.
- Outreach and support provided by District 622 Cultural Liaisons.
- Posted signage in schools and administrative buildings that clearly state the availability of free interpretation and translation services.
- Verbal reminders and written notices at parent-teacher conferences, family events, and district-wide meetings.

All notices will emphasize that interpretation and translation services are free of charge to families and are provided exclusively to support educational access.

Training for Staff

All district staff who interact with students and families will receive mandatory training on language access policies, procedures, and tools. Training includes:

- **Orientation and Onboarding** – Staff are introduced to the Language Access Plan, procedures for requesting interpreters and translations, and proper use of tools such as Language Line, Smore, and the district’s website translation features.
- **Interpreter Ethics and Standards** – Multilingual staff and Cultural Liaisons receive training on the district’s Interpreter Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, emphasizing accuracy, impartiality, confidentiality, and professional boundaries.
- **Role-Specific Guidance** – Staff are trained to distinguish when multilingual staff can provide routine language support and when a Cultural Liaison must be involved. Cultural Liaisons offer specialized support for families, including IEP meetings, special education evaluations, enrollment, and disciplinary meetings.
- **Ongoing Professional Development** – Training ensures staff remain current on policy updates, emerging tools, and best practices. Training will be delivered through multiple formats, including in-person professional development sessions.

This structured training ensures consistent and equitable language support across all district schools, reinforcing professional standards and promoting family engagement.

Plan Maintenance

The district maintains a continuous review process to ensure the Language Access Plan remains effective and responsive. Maintenance includes:

- **Annual Data Review** – Analysis of interpreter and translation requests, language usage trends, and service delivery metrics across schools.
- **Feedback Collection** – Surveys and feedback from families, staff, and community partners inform ongoing improvements to language access services. Feedback may be collected at parent-teacher conferences, enrollment events, and community meetings.
- **Policy Updates** – Updates are communicated to all staff and included in student and family handbooks.

This ensures the plan is dynamic, data-informed, and aligned with the district’s commitment to equitable communication for all multilingual students and families.

Community Engagement and Partnership

ISD 622 collaborates with community partners to strengthen language access and family engagement. The district:

- Works with cultural liaisons to communicate the LAP by bridging relationships with families and the school district.
- Engages families and community groups to gather input on language needs.
- Shares language access updates with families and community through newsletters, meetings, and outreach events.

This approach ensures families are active participants in improving language access and strengthens connections between the district and the multilingual community.

Emergency Communication Protocol

ISD 622 is committed to providing families with timely, accurate, and accessible information during emergencies, including severe weather, lockdowns, transportation changes, public health alerts, or federal enforcement actions.

Emergency messages are disseminated through the district's Messenger XRE system, which delivers information via email, text, and voicemail to ensure broad reach. All communications are provided in multiple languages, with priority given to each family's primary language, and supported through Smore for accessible translation.

District procedures are designed to ensure that families can receive and understand urgent information without delay and have clear guidance on next steps in their preferred language. Staff are trained to follow these protocols consistently to maintain effective and equitable communication during critical events.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Translation Services

The district uses AI-based translation tools to increase efficiency in day-to-day communication with families. Tools such as Google Translate, Smore auto-translate, and the district's website translation features provide families with quick access to general information in their preferred language.

AI-generated translations are used cautiously: they are not relied on for vital documents. All AI-translated materials include a callback phone number so families can contact district staff for clarification. District-wide standards guide the appropriate use of AI, ensuring translations are accurate, accessible, and consistently reviewed before being shared with families.



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Section 3: Procedures

This section outlines ISD 622's procedures for coordinating, tracking, and delivering consistent language assistance services to students, families, and community members. These procedures ensure equitable access to district programs, services, and communications in compliance with federal and state law.



Interpreter and Translation Requests

Staff respond promptly to all language assistance needs, following a structured process that ensures consistent, professional, and equitable service.

Step 1: Determine Level of Urgency

- Staff assess the situation to determine whether the request is routine, scheduled, or urgent/same-day, using district guidance.
- High priority meetings (e.g., IEPs, 504 meetings, behavior or safety-related discussions, enrollment, or transition meetings) always require professional in-person interpreters.
- Urgent or same-day needs (e.g., short clarifications, transportation changes, or unexpected events) may use multilingual staff, Cultural Liaisons, or Language Line when immediate support is required and no in-person interpreter is available.

Step 2: Submit Requests

- Scheduled Meetings: Submit the Interpreter Request Form at least 48 hours in advance. Cultural Liaisons are prioritized; agency interpreters may be assigned as needed.
- Conferences & Events: For meetings requiring multiple interpreters, submit requests at least 10 days in advance.
- Written Translation Requests: Submit via the Translation Request Form. Turnaround is typically up to 10 business days, depending on length and availability.

Step 3: Provide Support and Follow-Up

- Case managers and special education due process clerks review interpreter flags ahead of all scheduled special education due process meetings to ensure appropriate language support is available.
 - Cultural Liaisons provide in-person interpretation for Spanish, Hmong, Somali, and Karen families, including support for cultural context and navigation.
 - Language Line is reserved for brief, urgent needs only and is not used for high-stakes or planned meetings. Staff are trained in ethical and appropriate use.
 - Staff ensure that translated materials are accurate, culturally appropriate, and accessible to families.
 - All communications and appeals are filtered through the Office of Communications.
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Step 4: Manage Changes and Cancellations

- If a scheduled interpreter is no longer needed, staff promptly notify the Cultural Liaison (cc equity@isd622.org) or email equity@isd622.org for outside agency interpreters to avoid unnecessary charges.

This step-by-step process ensures families receive timely, appropriate language support while maintaining professional and ethical standards.

Tracking and Recording Language Preferences

- Families' primary language and interpreter needs are captured on enrollment forms and recorded in Infinite Campus. Interpreter flags alert district staff to families' language support requirements.
- Families may update their language preference at any time, including annually via the Parent Portal. Office coordinators and enrollment staff ensure all updates are accurately reflected in Infinite Campus.
- Staff are trained to ask open-ended questions when language needs are unclear (e.g., "What language would you prefer for school communications?"). Staff can then update the preferred language on their behalf

Informing Individuals About Available Services

- Staff, Cultural Liaisons, and district website tools provide families with comprehensive information about available language assistance services.
- Multilingual signage, translated documents, and embedded translation tools in newsletters (e.g., Smore) support family awareness.
- Families are consistently informed of their right to free language services across all district programs, activities, and communications.

Identifying Language Needs

- Staff accurately identify requested languages through enrollment forms, Campus flag, phone calls, in-person conversations, and open-ended questions.
 - Cultural Liaisons assist with verification of language needs for families and students.
 - Interpreter flags are regularly reviewed to ensure timely access to language services.
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Responding to Correspondence

- District staff respond consistently to multilingual correspondence, including emails, letters, and voicemails.
- Admin and office staff may request translation support through Cultural Liaisons or submit a Translation Request Form.
- Incoming correspondence requiring translation is routed to the appropriate staff or service to ensure accuracy, cultural appropriateness, and timely response.

Procuring In-Person Interpreters

- Staff submit Interpreter Request Forms at least 48 hours in advance for meetings and 10 days in advance for events requiring multiple interpreters.
- Cultural Liaisons provide interpretation for the district's most common languages: Spanish, Hmong, Somali, and Karen.
- External interpreters are procured for languages not covered by liaisons or when additional capacity is needed.
- All interpreter requests are logged for consistency, quality monitoring, and budget tracking.
- Staff promptly cancel unnecessary interpreter requests to avoid duplicate charges.

Procuring Telephone or Video Interpretation Services

- Language Line is the primary vendor for phone interpretation; staff receive ongoing training on access and proper use. Language Line video interpretation may be used to provide cost-effective support as capacity allows.
- In-person interpreters are required for high-stakes meetings; phone and video services are reserved for routine or urgent interactions.

Procuring Document Translations

- Vital documents are translated by Cultural Liaisons or approved vendors in the district's most common languages.
 - Staff submit requests via the Translation Request Form, with a typical turnaround of up to 10 business days.
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- Translations are reviewed for clarity, cultural appropriateness, and accuracy, including community or parent feedback whenever feasible.
 - The district website and communications include embedded translation tools to provide families with access to general information in their preferred language.

Receiving and Processing Language Access Complaints

- Families may submit complaints in writing, by phone, or through district staff.
- Language Access Coordinators review, document, and resolve complaints in coordination with district leadership.
- Families are notified of outcomes and any corrective actions taken.
- Complaint procedures are communicated in multiple languages through handbooks, websites, and staff guidance.

Programs Requiring Professional Interpreters

Professional interpreters are required for high-stakes meetings, including:

- Special education due process meetings
- Enrollment and placement meetings
- Behavior, discipline, or safety-related conversations

These requirements ensure families receive accurate, impartial, and professional support.

Use of Multilingual Staff

- Multilingual staff (Cultural Liaisons, Family Engagement Specialists, paraprofessionals, and educators) may provide informal language support for day-to-day interactions.
- Interpreters follow the district's Interpreter Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, which clarifies when professional interpreters must be used.

Staff Training and Monitoring

- Annual training is provided for all district staff who coordinate language services.
 - Multilingual staff providing in-house interpretation receive targeted training on interpreter ethics, terminology, and professional boundaries.
 - The district monitors staff qualifications and evaluates service quality through data review, feedback, and supervisory oversight.
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Contact Information

For questions, concerns, or requests related to the Language Access Plan, please contact:

Lynn Pham

Equity & Communications Director

Phone: 651-748-7485

Email: lpham@isd622.org

Ibrahim Abukar

Multilingual Learners Supervisor

Phone: 651-748-7453

Email: iabukar@isd622.org



Resources

- [ISD 622 Interpreter & Translation Request Guidance](#), including Language Line instructions
 - **Spoken Interpreter Requests:** Submit via the [Interpreter Request Form](#).
 - **Written Translation Requests:** Submit via the [Translation Request Form](#).
 - [Examples of vital documents](#)
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