

TTUSD Language Access Plan (LAP)

INTRODUCTION

According to reports, approximately 30% of families within the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District (TTUSD) speak a language other than English at home. It's inspiring to see families with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) advocating for their children's education and accessing resources with the help of district-provided interpreters. Effective communication and language proficiency are essential in fostering strong partnerships between families and educators. When these key factors are absent, parental involvement in their children's education may decrease, leading to poorer academic outcomes for students. Therefore, it is crucial to prioritize clear and effective communication channels to ensure our students' success. Due to these language barriers, families with limited English proficiency are less likely to actively participate in school activities or attend informational meetings to seek support for their students.

TTUSD is legally obligated to make its programs accessible to individuals with limited English proficiency. To achieve this, staff must take reasonable steps to ensure these individuals have meaningful access to programs. Effective communication plays a crucial role in providing high-quality access to resources. Relying on unqualified individuals to interpret educational information can lead to misunderstandings and devastating outcomes. Creating an organizational language access plan will ensure access to high-quality and appropriate language services and can guide staff members on what to do when an individual with limited English proficiency requires assistance.

What Is A Language Access Plan, And Why Is It Important?

A Language Access Plan (LAP) outlines how TTUSD will communicate with and provide services to individuals who do not speak English or have limited English proficiency. Examples of procedures outlined in an LAP include the use of school phones, mass communication tools, interpreters, translators, bilingual staff, signage, community liaisons, and the [Bilingual Services Ticket System](#). The LAP aims to eliminate language barriers and promote equal access to educational services.

By implementing the language access plans, TTUSD schools can ensure they meet the needs of students and families within the District while working collaboratively towards student, family, and school goals.

SECTION 1: Needs Assessment

When parents or guardians enroll their child in the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District, they initially complete a Home Language Survey, which provides the District with information about the language the child speaks most frequently at home and the language they first learned to speak. If students list languages other than English, they are assessed through the school District in English and the other languages mentioned. They are then classified as either an English Learner or Initially Fluent, depending on their performance on the assessments. If a student is classified as an English Learner, they will remain within that classification until they meet the reclassification criteria and are designated as fluent in English. To determine if parents of English learners and students with limited English proficiency need an interpreter or translation services, District and school staff can refer to the District's student databases for this information. These databases also indicate the parents' primary language, as reported on the Home Language Survey.

2022-23 Enrollment by EL status and Correspondence Language

22-23													
	District	DTE	NTS	KBE	TLE	TES	GES	ACMS	NTHS	THS	SHS	CSA	TRS
Students	4229*	60	311	394	308	470	525	561	504	897	52	9	13
CL = 01	1004*	1	97	144	42	189	11	112	161	184	18	1	3
EL	518	0	31	156	44	153	16	47	32	31	5	0	3
RFEP	638	1	85	21	6	62	6	88	150	189	24	1	5
23-24													
	District	DTE	NTS	KBE	TLE	TES	GES	ACMS	NTHS	THS	SHS	CSA	TRS
Students	4206*	62	316	399	305	514	502	530	507	898	48	8	12
CL = 01	1018*	1	91	151	44	182	13	118	173	187	21	0	4
EL	578	0	49	164	44	156	19	57	45	35	6	1	2
RFEP	562	0	60	12	7	36	3	94	149	177	19	0	5
*not including SELS													
**SELS reflects SPED numbers only													

Points of Contact

TTUSD is committed to providing language services to individuals with limited English proficiency at all points of contact, including when calling school sites, checking in at front offices, completing paperwork, enrolling students, and communicating with teachers, school administration, and various District departments that serve students and families. At each point of contact, TTUSD will ensure that its

services are linguistically accessible and appropriate. Each school site and department determines which language services would be appropriate for individuals interacting with staff. The following examples illustrate how language access services can be offered at each point of contact.

Incoming Calls

When contacting the District office, school sites, or departments, our automated system allows individuals to specify language preference by pressing a number (e.g., press 8 for Spanish). If a bilingual staff member is available to answer the call and assist, they will do so. However, if no one is available, the call is forwarded to the Bilingual Services Team.

Front Office

Bilingual front office staff is available to assist with appointment check-ins, provide directions, and provide any other school-related information. All front offices have signage in the most common languages within the District to help individuals with limited English proficiency navigate the reception area. Additionally, notifications are available in the most common languages to communicate the availability of interpreters. This ensures people with limited English proficiency receive prompt responses and can access the necessary information.

Written Communications

Written communications are widely used throughout the District to relay important information and gather family feedback. Additionally, many of the technology platforms implemented to create broader efficiencies are primarily in English. These communication methods can create barriers for our families and students with limited English proficiency, hindering their awareness and access to vital information or services necessary for a successful academic journey. To assist these individuals, the Bilingual Services Team provides written translations for all TTUSD schools and is available to help families navigate these technology platforms. To request these services, individuals can reach out to their individual school sites and will be connected with the Bilingual Services Team for assistance.

School Programs

Students and families with Limited English Proficiency are entitled to language services to access school programs such as Food & Nutrition Services, Transportation, Special Education, and Early Learning, to name a few. The Translations and Bilingual Community Services team assists families in ensuring they

have the necessary information to be aware of and successfully utilize these programs. Interpreters are present at student-centered meetings, such as Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings and Student Success Team (SST) meetings. Additionally, Community Liaisons support targeted outreach to ensure families are aware of resources available to them.

Community Connections

The TTUSD Translations and Bilingual Community Services team offers language access at various levels while building trust with our community through authentic relationships and TTUSD Community Liaison support. These team members attend and offer support services at the majority of TTUSD-sanctioned events such as English Learner Advisory Committees (ELAC), parent workshops, back-to-school nights, and parent-teacher conferences. The department also helps connect families with regional community resources.

Educational Partner Engagement

Collaboration and two-way communication with community members are crucial to ensuring that the school District makes culturally and linguistically appropriate efforts. This feedback focuses on TTUSD's effectiveness and performance in ensuring meaningful access for individuals with limited English proficiency. Additionally, parent satisfaction surveys are conducted regularly to assess their experience accessing the organization's benefits, programs, information, and services through language support.

Involving families, students, TTUSD staff, community members, and regional organizations in communication and language services will ensure that TTUSD provides information about its programs in a way that resonates with the entire community. Including these stakeholders, TTUSD demonstrates its commitment to equity and inclusivity by meeting our community's language needs and building mutually beneficial relationships and connections.

SECTION 2: Language Services

Oral Language Services (Interpreters)

Interpretation involves oral communication from one language to another. It is reliant on the **spoken** word.

TTUSD's Bilingual Services team provides verbal interpretation services through trained staff interpreters, contracted interpreters, and qualified bilingual staff with specific training. Using untrained individuals, including bilingual staff, family members, or students, is strongly discouraged, as it may result in inaccurate or unreliable services. Those individuals are not always neutral parties and may have conscious or unconscious biases or personal interests that lead them to misinterpret what is being communicated. Minors are never to be used as interpreters, especially in emotionally charged situations, as it could be damaging for the child to be placed in the middle of these conflicts. Additionally, linguistic fluency does not guarantee competency in technical educational terminology, which can lead to misunderstandings or unintended misinformation.

Utilizing the TTUSD Translations and Bilingual Community Services team, a group of trained professionals who offer interpretation services, ensures equitable and reliable language services during all interactions. Families and TTUSD staff members can access these services through the existing ticket system, and the department's goal is to provide these services to the fullest extent possible within the annually allocated operational budget.

Interpretation services may be provided in person, virtually, or by phone. TTUSD Translations and Bilingual Community Services Team will provide interpretation services at the listed meetings, as well as at other necessary meetings.

1. Expulsion hearings and District discipline meetings
2. English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC) / District English Learner Advisory Committee (DELAC)
3. Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)
4. School Site Council (SSC)

5. Student Success Team (SST)
6. Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
7. Student Attendance Review Team (SART) and School Attendance Review Board (SARB)
8. Additional parent meetings organized by TTUSD departments
9. Parent-Teacher Conference week for elementary and middle school

Interpreter Testing and Qualifications

TTUSD's goal is to train interpreters to provide families and students adequate access to educational resources, support **communication autonomy** between people who speak different languages, and support the capacity of all parties in an encounter to be responsible for and in control of their own communication.

While certification is not a mandatory requirement for employment, our District strongly prefers candidates who have completed a professional interpreter training program. These programs, typically encompassing approximately 40 hours of instruction, equip aspiring interpreters with the essential skills and knowledge necessary to excel in community and school settings. Through a comprehensive curriculum, these programs delve into critical areas such as interpreting ethics, sight translation techniques, consecutive interpreting methods, and the nuances of working within diverse community environments, including legal, social service, and educational contexts.

Written Language Services (Translation)

Translation focuses on **written** communication and is the process of reworking text from one language to another while maintaining the context of the original message. When 15 percent or more of students enrolled in a school District speak a single primary language other than English, the District is required to provide all notices, reports, statements, and records in both English and their primary language to the guardian of any such student. The guardian may then choose to respond in either English or their primary language, and each District department is responsible for arranging these translations in advance. The TTUSD Translations and Bilingual Services Team then translates all documents that are physically distributed or electronically communicated to parents and the TTUSD community. Examples of these written communications include but are not limited to:

- Districtwide communications

- Registrations, applications, and special programs
- Standards and performance documentation (e.g., standard text on report cards)
- Conduct, safety, and discipline notifications
- Special education and related services documentation
- District transfers and discharges
- Parents' rights and responsibilities notifications

Bilingual Community Liaison Supports

Community Liaisons act as navigators, helping students and their families access essential services beyond the school walls. They achieve this through a multi-pronged approach:

- **Resource Identification:** Liaisons stay informed about the community's resource landscape, including after-school programs, tutoring services, healthcare providers (including mental health), legal aid, housing assistance, and food banks.
- **Needs Assessment:** Liaisons identify students facing challenges like academic difficulties, food insecurity, or emotional struggles through conversations with teachers, counselors, or directly with families. They can also assess family needs, such as language barriers or difficulty navigating complex application processes.
- **Targeted Referral:** Liaisons don't simply hand out resource lists. They take the time to understand each student and family's specific needs and make personalized referrals to the most relevant community programs or services. This may involve explaining the services offered and eligibility criteria, as well as assisting with the application process.
- **Follow-up and Support:** Liaisons often follow up with students and families to ensure they are successfully connected with the resources and to offer ongoing support throughout the process. They may also mediate communication between families and community organizations.

Boosting Bilingualism - Classified Employee Bilingual Stipend Program

At TTUSD, we recognize the value of bilingual employees who go the extra mile to serve our community in multiple languages. That's why we offer the Bilingual Stipend program.

Who qualifies? This program rewards employees whose positions don't require a second language but who consistently use one to directly assist students and families. The administrator (site principal or department head) will assess if the level of bilingual interaction qualifies for the stipend.

What it's not: This stipend is not for interpretation or translation services. We have dedicated professionals in our Translations and Bilingual Community Services department for those needs.

Benefits: The Bilingual Stipend Program provides an incentive for employees to utilize their language skills while promoting better access to services for our multilingual community.

SECTION 3: Notification Best Practice

Bill of Parent Rights and Responsibilities

Schools and offices are responsible for providing each parent whose primary language is covered under the California Department of Education (CDE) 15% rule a copy of the Bill of Parent Rights and Responsibilities, which includes their rights regarding translation and interpretation services.

A best practice for the District is to post these notices in the front office of all school sites and other areas where parents and staff interact and may need assistance.

- [Bill of Parent Rights and Responsibilities \(English\)](#)
- [Bill of Parent Rights and Responsibilities \(Spanish\)](#)

"I Speak" Buttons

The District also equips bilingual frontline staff with "Hablo Español" buttons to signal their language proficiency, making it easier for parents and students to identify someone who speaks their language.

SECTION 4: Training & Recruitment

The Coordinator of Translations and Bilingual Community Services is vital in bridging communication gaps, and it is responsible for the following:

Equipping Staff Through Training: The coordinator organizes ongoing training sessions for school personnel. These sessions focus on proper procedures and best practices in translation, interpretation services, language access, and TTUSD-related systems.

Building a Network of Interpreters: The coordinator recruits and qualifies bilingual employees to serve as on-call interpreters. This ensures a readily available pool of qualified personnel to support language access needs.

SECTION 5: Procedures for Requesting Services

Parents and members of the public who require language assistance contact the Community Interpreter/Liaison representative at their respective school sites. That team will make every effort to provide prompt and effective language assistance services.

It is the responsibility of District employees, school sites, and District departments to ensure they can communicate effectively with parents who are not proficient in English. To fulfill this obligation, they must obtain qualified interpreters and translators from the TTUSD Translations and Bilingual Community Services team. These requests must be made through the HelpDesk Ticket System with as much advanced notice as possible to ensure staff availability and capacity.

Requests shall be made as follows.

- **Translation requests are made** at least two weeks in advance. Documents 10 pages or longer may take more than three weeks to complete. Last-minute accommodations will be made when possible but cannot be guaranteed.

- **Interpretation requests** are made at least two weeks in advance. They are fulfilled on a first-come, first-served basis. All requests must include the following required information:
 - Name of requester/contact person and phone number
 - Purpose of meeting/event
 - Date, time, and location for the meeting
 - Projected duration of the meeting/event
 - Names of student and parents and their contact information

Requestors are asked to notify the TTUSD Translations and Bilingual Services Team immediately if the meeting has been changed, canceled, or rescheduled. This allows the team to reallocate resources and accommodate as many requests as possible.

SECTION 6: Evaluation

Monitoring, assessing, and revisiting the Language Access Plan is crucial for sustaining the effectiveness of TTUSD's language access program. The Translation and Bilingual Community Services team is responsible for the ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and updating of the program. This involves:

- Staying informed about new language access legislation at the state and federal levels.
- Surveying staff to gauge the effectiveness of the language assistance services they require.
- Conducting community satisfaction surveys and integrating feedback into future procedures.
- Observing and evaluating interactions with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals.
- Seeking input from community-based organizations and other educational partners to assess TTUSD's effectiveness in ensuring meaningful access for LEP individuals.
- Staying current on community demographics and needs.
- Exploring new resources, including funding opportunities, collaborations with other agencies, human resources, emerging technology, and other means of enhancing access for LEP individuals.
- Monitoring the HelpDesk Ticket System to analyze the allocation of sufficient resources to language access programs.

SECTION 7 Resources and Acknowledgments

Resources

[Ensure Access for Individuals with Limited English Proficiency --November 2017 \(PDF\)](#)

[Department of Justice Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964—National Origin](#)

[Discrimination Against Persons With Limited English Proficiency; Notice](#)

[Tools and Resources for Ensuring Meaningful Communication With Limited English-Proficient Parents](#)

[Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool for Federally Conducted and Federally Assisted Programs](#)

 [CRD-Language-Access-Implementation-Plan_ENG.pdf](#)

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- **Coordinator of District Communications and Parent Engagement** for the crucial role in ensuring effective communication and engagement with educational partners.
- **Coordinator of Translation and Bilingual Community Services** for championing this initiative.

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