



Language Access Plan

*Grounded in Vigilant Equity, Authentic Inclusivity,
Holistic Engagement, and Vision 2031*

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At Hopkins Public Schools, we believe every family deserves a brilliant future. In alignment with our core value of Vigilant Equity, this Language Access Plan ensures that all families, caregivers, and students—regardless of language proficiency—can fully engage in our educational programs, services, and activities.

This plan outlines the systems, processes, and expectations that guide interpretation, translation, communication access, and linguistic support throughout the district. These services are not only legal requirements—they are a reflection of **Authentic Inclusivity** and **Holistic Engagement**, ensuring every learner and caregiver is seen, valued, and connected.

Through culturally responsive communication and accessible information, we support deep, reciprocal partnerships with families as essential co-creators in each student’s educational journey.

Purpose

Hopkins Public Schools’ Language Access Plan is grounded in federal and state laws, including:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Executive Order 13166
- Minn. Stat. §123B.32 (2025-26 requirement)
- LEAPS Act (2014)

These laws require the district to ensure timely and effective language assistance services for students and families with limited English proficiency.

Our commitment goes beyond compliance. Consistent with Vision 2031, Hopkins works to dismantle structural barriers—especially those related to language—so that every family can access, understand, and participate meaningfully in their child’s education.

This plan will be reviewed and updated **every two years** by the Hopkins School Board.

Family Rights

All families have the right to:

- Receive information about their child’s education in their preferred language.
- Request an interpreter—free of charge—for any school meeting, conference, or communication related to their child’s education, safety, services, placement, or well-being.
- Receive translated vital documents when the content affects access to services, rights, or major educational decisions.
- Participate fully in their child’s educational experience, including meetings, events, and decision-making processes.
- Families will never be asked to pay for interpretation or translation.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Interpretation	Converting spoken or signed communication from one language to another.
Translation	Converting written text from one language into another while preserving meaning. For oral-tradition languages (e.g., Somali), oral interpretation may substitute for written translation when appropriate.
Qualified Interpreter	A trained professional who follows the National Code of Ethics and Standards to accurately and impartially facilitate communication.
Vital Document	Any document essential to a family's ability to access educational programs, rights, or services, including (but not limited to): enrollment forms, special education documents, health/safety notices, discipline information, academic progress reports, and consent forms.
Preferred Language	The language in which a parent or guardian requests to receive communication from the district.
Multilingual Learner (ML)	A student who regularly uses languages in addition to English. These learners may also be classified as English Learners (EL).
American Sign Language (ASL)	A visual language involving hand shapes, movement, facial expressions, and nonmanual markers.
Remote Interpretation	Live interpretation provided by phone or video.
Simultaneous Interpretation Equipment	Technology enabling a group to listen to real-time interpretation through headsets—used for large meetings or multilingual events.

Language Identification Procedures

Preferred Language for Parents/Caregivers

During enrollment, parents/guardians identify:

- Their preferred language for communication
- Whether they need an interpreter
- Their preferred mode (phone, text, email, written letter)

This information is recorded in the district's Student Information System and is visible to all relevant staff. Families may update their preference at any time.

Student Identification (ML/EL Status)

Families complete the Minnesota Language Survey at enrollment.

If potential ML status is indicated:

- Recent proficiency data is reviewed
- A state-approved assessment is administered if needed at the students' school
- Families are notified in their preferred language of eligibility, services, and their right to refuse services

Tools and Resources for Language Access

Hopkins provides language assistance through three primary mechanisms:

Interpretation Services

When to Use In-Person Interpreters

Required for:



- IEP evaluations and meetings
- 504 meetings
- MTSS/Child Study
- Discipline conversations
- Behavior, safety, or crisis meetings
- High-stakes parent-school interactions

When to Use Phone or Video Interpretation

Appropriate for:



- Routine phone calls home
- Scheduling
- Quick clarifications
- Low-stakes conversations



How to Request an Interpreter

- Hopkins contracts with Weaving Cultures for interpretation:
- In-person interpreting (request at least 5 days in advance):
- Email info@weavingcultures.com or call 763-432-3225
- Provide: language, student name, date/time, location, virtual links if applicable



Phone interpretation:

- Call 763-703-2691
- Enter your building access code and the language code. These are available from your building administrative assistant.



American Sign Language

- Interpretation may be provided in person, by phone, or by video
- Individuals who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or speech disabled may use TTY or Minnesota Relay 711
- Persons who need alternative means of communication to access Hopkins information may contact the district office.
- Braille, large print, audio, or American Sign Language available.



Non-negotiables

- Do not use students, siblings, or untrained adults as interpreters.
- Do not rely on automated translation for any meeting involving rights, academic decisions, or safety.

Document Translation

Vital documents must be professionally translated into the languages most frequently spoken by Hopkins families (currently Spanish and Somali).

Document translation examples include:



- Enrollment and registration
- Consent forms
- IEP and Special Education materials
- Discipline notices
- Student handbooks
- Academic progress reports
- Health/safety notices

Digital & Web Translation



Hopkins ensures:

- Website content is viewable in multiple languages
- Broadcast tools support multilingual messaging
- Families receive districtwide communications in their preferred language



When Not to Use AI or Auto-Translation

For any document involving rights, safety, placement, discipline, or special education.

AI Translation Guidance

AI translation expands access to learning and strengthens partnership with multilingual caregivers when used with care, humanity, and cultural humility. This plan ensures AI is leveraged as a tool for authentic inclusivity, vigilant equity, and love—supporting multilingual students and families as essential partners in a thriving, globally competent learning community.

The purpose is to expand equitable, Tier 1 access to learning and communication for multilingual students and caregivers; the district will integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI)-supported translation tools as part of its comprehensive Language Access Plan. AI translation will be used to supplement, not replace, human connection, cultural responsiveness and bilingual staff expertise.

Our goal is to ensure that all students and families can fully participate in their learning journey in a way that honors their heritage language, cultural identity and voice.

AI Translation: Five Core Commitments

Practical, High-Level Commitments for Our Schools and Community

1. Use AI to expand access while preserving human connection and expertise.

AI translation helps students and families engage with everyday communication quickly, but it **never replaces bilingual staff, cultural liaisons, or professional interpreters**. Human relationships remain central to accuracy, trust, and cultural understanding.

2. Ensure accuracy, safety, and respect through human oversight.

All high-stakes, sensitive, or nuanced communication—including discipline, health, safety, special education, and consent-related information—must receive **human review** to ensure clarity and appropriateness. AI may support first drafts, but humans ensure correctness.

3. Protect privacy and uphold community trust.

Staff use only **district-approved AI tools** and follow clear guidelines about which information can be entered into AI systems. Safeguarding student and family confidentiality is non-negotiable.

4. Promote equitable participation through training, clear communication, and multilingual support.

We build staff capacity to use AI effectively, model clear and concise language for higher-quality translations, and support translanguage practices that allow students to use their heritage language as part of the learning process.

5. Strengthen family partnerships through appropriate AI use and continuous feedback.

District-approved AI tools may support real-time, two-way communication when interpreters are unavailable. We regularly seek feedback from multilingual families to improve translation clarity, cultural appropriateness, and overall communication equity.

Best Practices for Using Interpreters

Best Practices - Do:

- **Do speak directly to the student or family member**, not to the interpreter, to build trust and connection.
- **Do pause frequently** to allow the interpreter to convey your message accurately.
- **Do use plain, jargon-free language** to support accurate interpretation.
- **Do check for understanding** by asking the student or family to restate key points in their own words (through the interpreter).
- **Do brief the interpreter beforehand** if the meeting includes sensitive topics or specialized terminology.
- **Do look at the family when listening** to the interpreter - your nonverbal cues still matter.
- **Do provide written materials in advance**, if available, so the interpreter can prepare.
- **Do maintain confidentiality**, treating the interpreter as part of the professional team.
- **Do allow extra time** for interpreted conversations - they naturally take longer.

Best Practices - Do Not:

- **Don't use students, siblings, or untrained staff** as interpreters—this can compromise accuracy, privacy, and safety.
- **Don't speak too quickly or for too long** without pausing for interpretation.
- **Don't use idioms, slang, or cultural references** that may not translate clearly.
- **Don't ask the interpreter to add personal opinions** or summarize—request direct, accurate interpretation only.
- **Don't ignore the family during the conversation**—stay engaged and address them directly.
- **Don't discuss confidential information with the interpreter outside the meeting.**
- **Don't assume understanding** just because the interpretation occurred—always confirm.
- **Don't rely solely on automated translation tools** for complex or sensitive communication.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

- Ensure families can access information in their preferred language
- Use approved procedures to request interpretation/translation

Principals & Assistant Principals

- Ensure buildingwide compliance
- Communicate expectations to staff

Teachers

- Confirm family communication preferences
- Use appropriate channels for multilingual communication

Office Staff

- Support booking interpreters and translations

Counselors, Social Workers, Nurses, Special Education Staff

- Ensure language access for meetings related to services, health, or safety

Student Success Cultural Liaisons

- Support communication and cultural understanding
- Provide supplementary language support when appropriate
- Not a replacement for trained interpreters

EL/ML Teachers

- Support family communication related to the ML program
- Provide expertise, guidance, and connection to families

Communication With Families

Hopkins communicates information about language access through:

- Annual notifications
- The district website
- School newsletters
- Family handbooks
- Enrollment packets
- Event and meeting invitations

Families may request language services at any time through their school or the district.

Language Access Practices Review

Hopkins' IDL, Technology, and Communications teams will conduct an annual review of language access practices.

- Evaluation includes:
- Feedback from families
- Review of translation/interpretation usage
- Quality of multilingual communication
- Compliance with state and federal expectations

The plan is updated every **two years** and presented to the Hopkins School Board.

District Contact

For questions about this plan or to provide feedback:

Contact the District Office:

Hopkins Public Schools

1001 Highway 7

Hopkins, MN 55305

Families may also reach out through the district's contact form or their school's main office.