



Model Policy: Translation & Interpretation

Purpose

The _____ School Board recognizes the crucial role that parents, guardians and families play in the education of their children. The Board encourages partnerships between the district administration, schools and families in order to share the responsibility of educating our students.

To that end, this policy is created to ensure that English learners and parents who speak languages other than English are provided appropriate translation and interpreting services so that families of all language backgrounds may fully participate in the education of their children.

The District must provide high quality communication to families that speak languages other than English so that those communications are equal to the communications provided in English.

Identification

The District must collect from parents/guardians a Home Language Survey to determine both student and parents' language needs. The survey will be provided to every household in the language most often used between parents and children.

To determine the need for interpreter or translation services for English Learner students and their parents/guardians, school staff should refer to the District's student database which will indicate the language needs identified in the survey.

Additionally, even if they are not identified by the Home Language Survey, parents who speak a language other than English may request translation and interpretation services for school-related communications at any time.

Translation and Interpretation

Translation is the conversion of written information from one language into equivalent information in another language.

Interpretation relies on the spoken word. It refers to the process of orally rendering communication from one language into another language.

In the case of families whose primary language is a non-written language, whenever feasible, interpretation shall be arranged in order to provide language accessible information.

Written translation will be provided of all school documents that are otherwise provided to English-speaking parents, from and to English, in the top five (5) languages other than English spoken by families in the District. Written translation will be provided for any other requested languages to the extent practicable. Where it is not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, documents will be orally translated for such parents. Parents may respond to these documents either in English or their primary language.

All notices, reports, statements, or records sent to families identified as speaking a language other than English that is not within the top (5) languages spoken by families in the District, the school shall use a cover page in the family's primary language explaining how a parent may receive interpretation of the form and should offer interpreters to ensure parents accurately report their language communications needs on the forms.

Personnel and Staff

All District staff must be trained in the following:

- The school's role is in facilitating the provision of language access services to non-English speaking parents and students
- How to access translation and over-the-phone interpretation services
- Resources and support available from the school and/or district for language access services

The school will only use competent interpreters who are fluent in English and in the requested language. The school shall make sure interpreters understand any terms or concepts that will be used during the meeting. Interpretation may be made available in person or, where that is not practicable, over the phone.

Any interpreter used by the District will be a neutral party and will communicate everything said during the conversation. Interpreters shall not omit or editorialize on the content of the conversation that they are translating. Schools shall make sure interpreters understand their role and the requirement that they keep information confidential.

Use of children as interpreters

Translation and interpretation services will be performed by appropriate and competent individuals only. Schools may not rely on or ask students, siblings, friends, or untrained school staff to translate or interpret for parents.

Except in the case of emergency where there is a clear and imminent danger, children shall not be used as interpreters for formal or official information.

A child may only be used as an interpreter for informal communication when there is no risk that confidential information may be disclosed.

Procedures for Requesting Services

Interpretation and translation services are available free of cost to all District parents, staff, and students, who may request services directly from the school.

Parents will receive translation and interpretation services as indicated in the preceding policies based upon the information provided in the Home Language Survey.

Additionally, parents, staff, and students may access language services for school related purposes in any of the following ways:

- Ask at the school or district office
- Ask a teacher
- Ask the (multilingual/multicultural resource center)
- Call (phone number) between (times/dates)
- Email a request to (email address)

Language Access cards will be provided to all parents upon student's enrollment, so that they can request services, even if they cannot communicate the request in English.