

Language Access Plan to Ensure Effective Communication with Multilingual Students and Families at Osseo Area Schools

OUR COMMITMENT

Osseo Area Schools is dedicated to ensuring that every family has timely and meaningful access to information and services. With more than 125 languages spoken in our district, we are committed to providing multilingual communication that promotes the inclusive participation of all community members. This Language Access Plan provides information about tools, processes, and resources available for students, families, and staff at Osseo Area Schools. This plan aligns with [Minnesota Statute 123B.32](#) and federal civil rights laws to ensure students and families can participate fully in their education.

PURPOSE

A Language Access Plan (LAP) is a comprehensive document that outlines a school district's commitment and strategies to ensure equitable access to services for individuals who speak a language other than English or require additional assistance due to a disability.

What is language access?

- Language access means providing individuals who communicate in a language other than English with **timely and reasonable access to the same information and services** as English-speaking individuals.
- Meaningful access:
 - Language assistance that results in accurate, timely, and effective communication at no cost to the individual.
 - For English Learners, meaningful access denotes access that is not unreasonably restricted, delayed, or inferior, as compared to access to programs or activities provided to English-proficient individuals.

DEFINITIONS

To ensure clarity for our community, we use the following definitions:

- **Interpretation:** The process of converting a *spoken or signed* message from one language into another.
- **Translation:** The process of converting *written* text from one language into another while maintaining the meaning of the original message.
- **Language services:** Resources and services that facilitate timely and meaningful communication between the district and families who prefer communication in a language other than English.

- **Language Access Plan (LAP):** A document describing the services, processes, and procedures our district uses to ensure effective communication with all students and families.
- **Preferred language:** The specific language a family indicates they prefer for all school-to-home correspondence.
- **Multilingual learner:** A broad category for students who speak, understand, or are exposed to multiple languages, including students who are currently receiving English Learner (EL) program services and those who never qualified for that support.
- **Bilingual staff:** Employees who are speakers of more than one language. They may use their language skills to assist with basic interactions as part of their regular work. They're not necessarily trained or certified as interpreters for formal meetings.
- **Vital documents:** Records containing critical information for accessing district programs and services, such as enrollment forms, Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), and health and safety notices. [Full definition](#)
- **Trained or certified interpreters:** Professionals who have completed specialized training to ensure accuracy and confidentiality. These individuals are prioritized for academic and special education meetings.

LANGUAGE IDENTIFICATION

During enrollment, all families complete the [Minnesota Language Survey \(MNLS\)](#), which identifies a student's language experiences through parent/caregiver responses. This data is stored in the student's profile within the district's student information system. Families also identify their preferred language for school communications and whether they would benefit from interpreter support. This enables schools to identify families who need language assistance and provide appropriate language services. Families can update their preferred language at any time.

Parents/caregivers: Preferred language: During enrollment, parents and guardians specify their preferred language, which is recorded in their profile within the district's student information system. This enables schools to identify families who need language assistance and provide appropriate language services. Families can update their preferred language at any time in ParentVue or by contacting the Administrative Professional at their child's school.

STAFF PROCEDURES

Enrollment Center staff collect information from students and families about their language preferences for written and oral communication and whether they would benefit from interpreter support upon enrollment. They enter that information into Synergy. Parents can update that information annually via the back-to-school verification process in ParentVue.

Consider how you can incorporate assisting families with updating their language and interpreter support preferences annually at school events and conferences. Many families do not update this information via the back-to-school verification process in ParentVue, so we do not have updated information for many families.

- Site Administrative Professionals (OAPs) can update Language to Home and Interpreter Needed preferences in Synergy when families indicate an update is needed.
 - Use report U-TRNSL8: Parent Interpreter Languages as needed to determine who needs interpreter services and families' language preferences.
- Multilingual Community and Communication Specialists can update the Interpreter Needed field in Synergy.
- Site Administrative Professionals, ML Specialists, Administrators, and teachers can all update the parent's primary language field on the Parent/Guardian tab of the Student screen in Synergy. Insert how to document/video here.

Before communicating, ensure you have the most accurate language profile for the family.

- **Initial Verification:** Confirm and update language preferences with families during **Open House** or your **first meeting** of the year.
- **How to Check:** Reference **Synergy** to view the "Language to Home" preferences on the Student page and "Interpreter Needed" and parent language fields in the Parent/Guardian tab on the Student page.
 - Insert demonstration video here to show how to locate this information.
- **How to Update: *Staff:** Your building **OAP** can update these preferences directly in **Synergy**.
 - **Families:** Parents/Guardians can update their own language preferences and interpreter needs through **ParentVUE**.

NOTICE OF LANGUAGE SERVICES

Osseo Area Schools is proud to provide language services throughout the district. These services are actively being shared to ensure families and staff are aware and have the resources and training to use them effectively.

Multilingual Specialists: Our district's Multilingual Community and Communication Specialists support families with communication updates, interpreting and translation services, and other helpful resources and supports. These resources further explain the role and how to contact to reach out to them:

- [Multilingual Specialist flyer](#)
- Multilingual Specialist magnets and bookmarks
- These resources should be displayed in every front office and made available to students and families at school events.

School and district websites: Translate any page on district and school websites by clicking the button (globe icon with EN) at the top right of all webpages within the district.

Language services webpage via OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices: Learn about language services, find out how to connect with Multilingual Specialists, and view the district's Language Access Plan.

Multilingual learners webpage via OsseoSchools.org/MultilingualLearners: Find information about the Multilingual Learner Program (commonly known as EL), get details on how entering and exiting works, and answers to frequently asked questions.

Multilingual Facebook pages

- Español, facebook.com/ISD279Espanol
- Lus Hmoob, facebook.com/HmongISD279
- Oromoo, facebook.com/ISD279Oromoo
- Soomaali, facebook.com/ISD279Soomaali
- Tiếng Việt, facebook.com/VietNamISD279

School and district e-newsletters: Translate any district or school e-newsletter by clicking the translate button  at the top right corner of each e-newsletter.

Share this [document](#) with families at the beginning of the year so they know how to translate the e-newsletter on their device.

[District and school handbooks](#): Each back-to-school handbook will include information about our district's commitment to language services, family rights, and how to find more information on what's offered.

[We Are Glad You Are Here posters and flyers](#): Each school's main office area displays posters and flyers sharing that language services are offered. Community members can indicate their language by pointing to it. Staff will then access services.

These resources should be displayed in every front office and made available to students and families at school events.

[I Need Assistance cards](#): Each school has small cards for families to pick up in their school's main office or at various events. These can be kept and shown to district and school staff anytime language services are needed.

These resources should be displayed in every front office and made available to students and families at school events.



Point to Your Language Signs: Posters in each school's main office allow individuals to indicate their language. Staff members will arrange appropriate language services.

These resources should be displayed in every front office. Refer to the information in your site's Language Access Plan kit for additional details about what to display where.

INTERPRETER SERVICES

Spoken interpretation (verbal): Interpretation from qualified interpreters is available for communications related to academic outcomes, progress, determinations, and placement of

students in specialized programs and services, as well as parent/caregiver and teacher conferences, enrollment, informational meetings, and more. This is a free service.

- **In-person and video interpretation:** Qualified interpreters are available for parent-teacher conferences, special education (IEP) meetings, and other school appointments. Families may request these services through their school office or complete [this form](#) to schedule an in-person or video/online interpreter.
 - Information about how staff can arrange for interpreting services is included in the chart below.
 - **On-demand phone interpretation:** We use the *Language Line* to provide immediate support in over 200 languages. This service is available 24/7 for quick questions or phone calls between school staff and families.
 - Information about how staff can access Language Line interpreting services is included in the chart below.
 - Direct dial numbers that families can call to get an interpreter on the line are:
 - Español: 1-855-891-8364
 - Lus Hmoob: 1-844-577-9549
 - русский: 1-855-891-5321
 - Soomaali: 1-855-891-5322
 - Tiếng Việt: 1-855-891-8365
- These resources should be displayed in offices and available at school events.
- **Virtual meetings:** Interpretation can be added to virtual meetings (such as Google Meet or Microsoft Teams) by coordinating with school staff in advance.

STAFF PROCEDURES

Staff should refer to the Interpreting and Translating page on the staff portal, OsseoSchools.org/LanguageResources, for detailed information about how to access and work with interpreters. Staff can only work with interpreters on our list; they have completed required training and agreed to terms. **Never rely on students, siblings, or untrained staff to interpret.**

Trained interpreters **must** be used for communication related to academic outcomes, progress, determinations, and placement of students in specialized programs and services.

- Examples include IEP/504 meetings, disciplinary meetings, parent/family conferences, MTSS/Child Study meetings, enrollment/registration meetings, health & medical discussions, and family engagement events

Scenario	Action / Resource
----------	-------------------

Scheduled Meetings	1. Access the Interpreting/Translating page on the Staff Portal. 2. Locate interpreters you could work with on the district Interpreter List. 3. Coordinate with your site's Administrative Professional (OAP) for site-specific procedures and scheduling for interpreters. 4. Provide feedback forms to families and staff who worked with an interpreter to gather information about their experience. • Electronic feedback form (multilingual) • Paper forms are available on the Interpreting/Translating page on the Staff Portal. 5. Submit required verification paperwork.
Immediate Needs (Sick child, behavior, check-ins) <i>Insert image of Language Line staff badge</i> 	Use LanguageLine (access instructions listed below) to connect with an interpreter on the phone. You can also request an interpreter to join a Google Meet. 1. Dial 1-855-289-4540. 2. Select Desired Language: Press 1 for Spanish. Press 6 for all other languages. 3. The operator will ask for the following information and then connect you with an interpreter. • Access code: 845140 • Language needed • Staff member's full name Additional information is available on the Interpreting/Translating page on the Staff Portal.

TRANSLATION SERVICES

Written translation (text/documents)

- **Vital school documents:** We prioritize the professional translation of documents that affect a student's legal rights, health or safety.
- **District and school websites:** Families can instantly translate any page on [OsseoSchools.org](#) by clicking the globe icon at the top right of the site.
- **Direct text messaging:** Teachers and support staff use TalkingPoints to send text messages to families in their preferred language. This allows families to reply in their preferred language, and messages are then translated back into English for the teacher.
- **E-newsletters:** District and school e-newsletters include a translation feature at the top of each newsletter.

STAFF PROCEDURES

Staff should refer to the Interpreting and Translating page on the staff portal, OsseoSchools.org/LanguageResources, for information about how to request translation services. **Never rely on students, siblings, or untrained staff to translate documents.**

Scenario	Action / Resource
Daily Messaging between Licensed Staff and Families	Required to use <i>TalkingPoints</i> for classroom-wide and individual family texts and/or short audio/video messages. • Instant Messages: Send immediately using machine-based translation. • Scheduled Messages (<i>Recommended whenever possible</i>): For group messages or non-urgent updates, schedule the message in advance. This allows for human translator review, ensuring significantly higher accuracy for families. • Translation for Attachments: You can attach English documents (up to 5 pages long) to a message. TalkingPoints provides an automated translation of the document for the family. <i>This should not be used for any legal documents (ex. IEP).</i> Required to utilize <i>Synergy</i> for classroom-wide emails. • Individual emails should go through Outlook.
School/site leaders and office team communication	Required to use <i>Mass Notification</i> for a large distribution email, text, and/or call. • Can additionally choose to send via TalkingPoints.
Document Translation *Turnaround Time: Plan ahead to allow sufficient time for translation. Requests for the district's top languages will be completed	The "Vital Document" Rule Does it need a formal translation request? Use the "YES" test: • Yields a Legal Right? (IEP, Section 504, Enrollment) • Essential for Health/Safety? (Medication forms, Crisis plans) • Signature Required? (Permission slips, Disciplinary notices) Action: If it meets the YES test, you must submit a translation request to the ML Department. Do not use AI/machine-based translation (e.g. Google Translate). Additional information is available on the Interpreting/Translating page on the Staff Portal. Non-Vital Document Translation • Staff can submit any document for translation via our translation request form.

within 3 business days .	TalkingPoints Translation for Attachments: You can attach English documents (up to 5 pages long) to a message. TalkingPoints provides an automated translation of the document for the family. <i>This should not be used for any legal documents (ex. IEP).</i>
---------------------------------	---

COMMUNICATING LANGUAGE SERVICE OFFERINGS

This Language Access Plan will be available on the district website via OsseoSchools.org/LanguageServices. Information on how to access services will be on the site and shared annually in the district's back-to-school updates via the Insider (staff) and Connect (parent/caregiver) e-newsletters, article area of district and school homepages, and district social media. See the [communication plan for further details](#).

Staff: All staff receive training through professional development sessions, video tutorials, and step-by-step guides.

[Complete role-specific training by the required deadlines annually. Contact the Language Access Champion at your school if you need resources or support.](#)

Families: Language services are offered to families who indicate a preferred language other than English. Information about language services is shared with all families through regular communication outlets (e-newsletters, websites, and social media pages), printed handouts, and in handbooks.

Community: Community-wide communication outlets such as the Have You Heard newsletter and district and school websites.

STAFF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure every family has the same access to information and services, our staff members hold the following responsibilities:

- **School Board:** Formally adopts the Language Access Plan every two years. They ensure the district has the resources and budget to meet all state and federal language access laws.
- **Superintendent and Cabinet:** Oversee the district-wide use of this plan. They ensure that all departments—from Transportation to Enrollment—prioritize clear, multilingual communication.
- **Multilingual Community and Communication Specialists:** * Act as a primary bridge between the district and multilingual families to build strong, supportive relationships.
 - Coordinate projects for electronic, print, and verbal communication to ensure they are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

- Advocate for scholars and families to ensure they have an equal voice in school activities and decision-making.
- Collaborate with community partners to manage family outreach and engagement activities.
- **Multilingual Learning (ML) Department:** Manages the quality of professional translation and interpretation services. They provide the necessary tools, standardized systems, and training for all district staff.
- **Community Relations team:** Ensure multilingual communications continue to be at the forefront of all messaging districtwide. Provide information on the tools to accomplish this as well as the direction for how to use them – specifically for our parent/caregiver audience.
- **Principals and site leaders:** Ensure their schools are welcoming and inclusive. Fulfill expectations and utilize provided resources – and then share with staff as applicable. These documents share further detail:
 - [Presentation](#) outlining various communication tools, and when and how to use them.
 - This [communication plan](#) outlines the annual to-dos surrounding multilingual notification to staff and families. School/site action steps are highlighted in light yellow.
- **Office teams (Assistant Principals, OAPs, Business/Resource Managers, etc.):** Ensure their schools are welcoming and inclusive. Fulfill expectations and utilize provided resources. These documents share further detail:
 - This [presentation](#) outlines various communication tools, and when and how to use them.
 - This [communication plan](#) outlines the annual to-dos surrounding multilingual notification to staff and families. School/site action steps are highlighted in light yellow.
- **Teachers and support staff:** Responsible for checking family language preferences in Synergy before communicating. They must use approved district tools (like TalkingPoints, the Language Line, or Synergy) to ensure families are informed about their child's academic progress and school events.
- **All staff:** Every employee is responsible for protecting the civil rights of students and families. This includes providing meaningful access to school programs and maintaining the privacy (FERPA) of family information during interpreted conversations.
 - [All staff must utilize established protocols and resources to provide multilingual communication as a standard practice.](#)
 - [Ensure that multilingual communication is simultaneous - not delayed or inferior to English communication - by using multilingual communication tools \(i.e. TalkingPoints, interpreters, translated documents, templates\)](#)
 - [Refer to information in Synergy to contact families in their preferred language.](#)

STAFF TRAINING

All staff will complete annual universal training to ensure every family has timely and meaningful access to information and services. The following employee groups will receive additional training each year that is specific to their role.

- Enrollment Center staff
- Front office staff
- Community Education staff, including building supervisors
- Principals and site leaders
- New Teachers and Education Support Professionals (ESPs)
- Educational Service Center Staff
- Nurses
- Student Management Specialists (SMSs)
- Student Services staff, including counselors, due process ESPs, SEBCs
- Multilingual Community & Communication Specialists

Training and implementation resources will be provided annually in kits for each site. Staff will utilize these resources and make them available to students and families.

Language Access Champion: Each school building will designate a Language Access Champion from within the school's communication or leadership team. This role serves as the primary on-site lead for ensuring the school effectively implements the Language Access Plan and remains in compliance with state and federal requirements.

- Training & Professional Development
 - Partner with leadership to deliver annual Language Access Plan training
- Conflict Resolution
 - If a breakdown in communication occurs, assist families and direct them to the formal district review/appeal process

Staff who want to work as interpreters in the district need to complete a 20-hour foundational course for community-based interpreters. State statute requires school districts to utilize trained or certified interpreters. Staff must complete this 20-hour foundational training course or show evidence of completion of other acceptable training/certification in order to provide interpreting services in Osseo Area Schools. Training is offered in collaboration with our Adult Basic Education program and includes the following topics.

- Interpreting [code of ethics](#)
- The interpreter's role and basic protocols
- Educational terminology and processes, including those related to Special Education programming and services
- Procedures for working in our schools

REVIEW

Feedback on language services is collected from families and staff through surveys and meetings, providing valuable insight to refine and enhance the plan. The plan will be reviewed and updated every two years.

Your rights and the review process

Families have the right to receive important school information in a language they understand. If you feel that your language needs have not been met, or if an accommodation was not provided, you have the right to appeal (request a formal review).

To file an appeal or provide feedback:

- **Step 1:** Contact your school's Principal to discuss your concerns.
- **Step 2:** If the issue is not resolved, contact the District Office at info@district279.org or via mail at 11200 93rd Ave N, Maple Grove, MN 55369.
- **Step 3:** The district will review your request and provide a response regarding the language assistance accommodations.

Internal Monitoring Process of Language Assistance Services

Sites and district divisions/programs will analyze data related to Language Assistance services multiple times a year in alignment with data dig cycles. The core Language Access Plan team will collect and review data from sites and programs. Data will be used to inform training for staff, measure progress related to our implementation goals, and make adjustments to the Language Access Plan.

Data to be collected and analyzed includes:

- ParentVue access and use: who has logged in within the past month/ three months, scheduled conferences; particular focus on reviewing access and usage data for multilingual families
- Physical site audits/walkthroughs: Review of signage, staff capacity to access language assistance services, etc. [Example](#)
- Digital access audits: Review of websites, translation library, communications sent from sites, departments each month/quarter, etc.
- Review of translation quality: accuracy, accessible language, cultural nuance, etc.
- Feedback from families: quality of interpretation services, ease of access, effectiveness of communication, family stakeholder survey data related to communication
- Multilingual communication tool use: TalkingPoints and Mass Notification messaging (staff and families), interpreter and translation request logs, multilingual webpage and Facebook page engagement