



# Language Access Plan

Presentation to the School Board May 4, 2026  
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Kevin Sheridan, Educational Equity Coordinator

# Purposes of our Language Access Plan

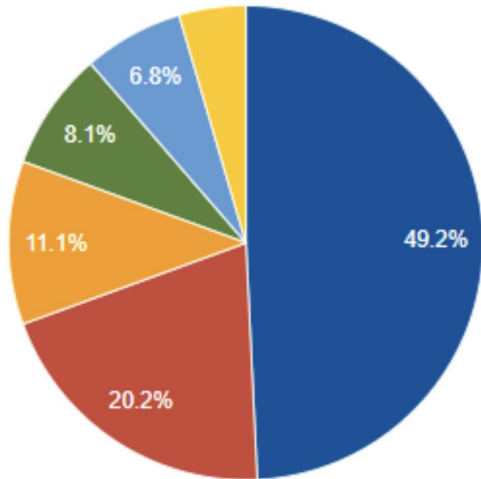
- To ensure that School District 197 provides timely, meaningful, and equitable access to information and services for families and community members in a language that they can understand.
- To remove language barriers and empower all families to engage in their children's education.
- To align with [Minnesota Statute 123B.32](#) and [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#), which require school districts to provide and utilize processes and procedures that effectively assist students and adults who communicate in a language other than English.

# Current Language Access Supports

- LanguageLine
- TalkingPoints
- ParentSquare
- Districtwide Translators/Interpreters

# LanguageLine

*An on-demand, audio interpretation service, allowing school staff to connect with an interpreter in seconds to help facilitate communication with families over the phone in more than 240 languages.*



■ Spanish ■ Somali ■ Amharic ■ Oromo ■ Pashto ■ All Other Languages

Language	Calls	Minutes	Avg Call Length (min)	Avg Connect Time (sec)
SPANISH	201	1,628	8	7
SOMALI	84	828	10	35
AMHARIC	32	271	8	8
OROMO	29	225	9	41
PASHTO	19	131	7	23
ARABIC	15	87	7	25
SWAHILI	6	53	9	23
VIETNAMESE	6	47	9	3
LINGALA	5	98	20	4
TIGRIGNA	5	48	10	29
URDU	3	25	8	4
FRENCH	2	13	7	89

# TalkingPoints

*A two-way texting platform designed for education, allowing school staff to communicate with families in over 150 languages via automated translation.*

- Messages can be in the form of an “announcement” or a “direct message”
- Messages are received in the language identified by the family
- Families can respond in their own language to any message and staff will receive it in English
- Families can also initiate a “direct message” to a staff member

# TalkingPoints

*A two-way texting platform designed for education, allowing school staff to communicate with families in over 150 languages via automated translation.*

## Direct Messages:

- **77,616** messages sent by teachers, principals and support staff
- **79,441** messages sent by families

## Announcements:

- **5,802** announcements sent by staff to a group (class, school community)

# ParentSquare

*A communications platform used primarily for one-way mass communication, sending important updates—such as attendance notifications and school-wide announcements like snow days—via phone call, text message, and email.*

- Messages are auto translated into families' preferred language
- **1,405** messages have been sent to families this year
  - Examples: school newsletters, community newsletters, snow day announcements, emergency-related notifications
  - District Communications uses this the most.

# Districtwide Translators & Interpreters

*Two full time Spanish speaking districtwide translators/interpreters serve staff and families in a variety of ways.*

- Regularly complete translation requests from staff in accordance with the district expectation that any written communication being sent broadly to families is provided in both English and Spanish.
- Serve as interpreters for Spanish speaking families during school conferences, Special Education meetings, back to school events, etc.

**Monica Merino Corona**  
Spanish Interpreter/Translator-  
District Wide



**Mary Pirela**  
Spanish Interpreter/Translator  
District Wide



# Language Access Plan Development

Spring 2024 - New legislation was passed

Fall 2024 - Language Access Network Training Sessions 1 and 2

Winter 2025 - Language Access Review Team convenes to assess current practices and services

Spring 2025 - Language Access Network Training Sessions 3 and 4

Fall 2026 - Feedback on current services gathered from families/Additional trainings

Winter 2026 - Draft of Language Access Plan was developed and reviewed by Team

Spring 2026 - Language Access Plan presented to School Board

Fall 2026 - Language Access Plan fully implemented

# Proposed Language Access Plan

- A more coherent organization of the language access tools and services that we provide for students and families
- A clear statement of our commitment to ensuring **every family has equitable access to information** by providing high quality interpretation and translation services

# Proposed Language Access Plan

MN Statute 123B.32 requires the plan to 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.

# Proposed Language Access Plan

Additions to our interpretation services:

- A new required training program for multilingual staff to act as “on call” interpreters
- An official posting process to ensure alignment to the new legislation

# What's Next

School Board approval in 2025-2026 required

Resolution before you