

Lakeville Area Schools Language Access Plan

Purpose

Lakeville Area Schools is committed to fostering strong partnerships with all students and families by ensuring communication is accessible, understandable, and responsive to the linguistic diversity within our community.

Families play a vital role in their children's education. To support meaningful participation in school programs, services, and decision-making processes, the district provides language assistance to students and families whose preferred language for communication is not English.

This Language Access Plan outlines the district's commitment to providing interpretation, translation, and other language support services that promote equitable access to educational opportunities, district information, and school engagement. Lakeville Area Schools recognizes multilingualism as a valuable asset and seeks to create welcoming, inclusive learning environments where language differences do not limit access to educational programs, services, or family engagement opportunities.

Key Terms

American Sign Language (ASL) – A complete visual language used by many Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals to communicate through hand movements, facial expressions, and body language.

English Learner (EL) – A student whose primary language is not English and who qualifies for English language development services to support their English proficiency and access to academic instruction.

Interpretation – The oral or signed communication of information from one language to another. Interpreters convey messages accurately and impartially without adding, omitting, or altering information.

Language Access Plan – A district framework that outlines the services, practices, and procedures used to ensure meaningful communication and equitable access to information for students and families who prefer to communicate in a language other than English.

Language Assistance Services – Services and resources provided by the district to support effective communication with students and families who prefer to communicate in a language other than English, ensuring equitable access to school programs, services, and information.

Multilingual Learner (ML) – A student who uses or is developing proficiency in more than one language. This includes students currently receiving English language development services, former English Learners, and students who regularly engage with multiple languages in their home, school, or community.

Preferred Language – The language a student, parent, or guardian prefers to use when communicating with the school or district and receiving information, services, and resources.

Qualified Interpreter – A trained professional who provides spoken language or American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation to support effective communication between families and school staff.

School Success Liaison – An individual who serves as a bridge between schools and families by promoting cultural understanding, supporting meaningful family engagement, and helping schools better understand the communities they serve.

Simultaneous Interpretation Equipment – Technology used at larger meetings and events that enables participants to hear information interpreted into their preferred language in real time.

Translator – A qualified individual who converts written information from one language to another while preserving the original meaning and intent.

Translation – The process of converting written text from one language to another to ensure information is accessible and understandable for multilingual students and families.

Vital Documents – Written materials that contain essential information about a student's education, school services, programs, or legal rights and therefore may require translation or language assistance to ensure meaningful access for families.

Preferred Language and English Learner Identification

Preferred Language

During enrollment, families are asked to identify their preferred language for communication from the District. This information helps Lakeville Area Schools provide interpretation, translation, and other language support services to ensure families have meaningful access to information and educational opportunities. Families may update their preferred language at any time by contacting their child's school.

English Learner Identification

As part of the enrollment process, families complete the Minnesota Language Survey (MNLS). The survey helps identify students who may benefit from additional English language support.

If a student's survey responses indicate a potential need for English language development services, the district administers a state-approved English language proficiency assessment. Based on the results, students may qualify for English Learner services to support their English language development.

Families are notified of assessment results and eligibility for services and receive information about available language development supports, program options, and their rights regarding participation in services.

Family Rights and Notification

Lakeville Area Schools is committed to ensuring that students and families who communicate in a language other than English have meaningful access to district programs, services, activities, and information.

Students, parents, guardians, and family members have the right to:

- Receive language assistance services at no cost for school-related communications and activities.
- Request interpretation services for meetings, conferences, educational planning, and other school-related interactions.
- Receive translated vital documents and information when appropriate and available.
- Obtain information regarding their child's education, programs, services, rights, and opportunities in a language they can understand.
- Participate meaningfully in educational decision-making processes affecting their child.
- Raise concerns regarding language access services through district complaint and resolution procedures.

Information regarding language assistance services and family rights under this Language Access Plan will be communicated through enrollment materials, district and school websites, student and family handbooks, school communications, family engagement activities, and other district publications. Information about available language assistance services will also be provided upon request.

Interpretation Services

Qualified interpreters are available at no cost to families for school-related meetings, conferences, enrollment appointments, special education meetings, school events, and other educational activities.

Lakeville Area Schools utilizes trained, certified, or otherwise qualified spoken language interpreters and American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters to support effective communication with students and families.

The district will utilize trained, certified, or otherwise qualified interpreters when communicating with families regarding:

- Academic outcomes and academic progress;
- Eligibility determinations, evaluations, and assessments;
- Placement decisions involving specialized programs and services;
- Multilingual Learner services;
- Special education and related services;
- Section 504 services;
- Gifted and talented programming;
- Intervention services; and
- Other educational programs or services that significantly affect a student's educational experience.

Interpretation services may be provided in person, by telephone, virtually, or through ASL interpreters, depending on the needs of the student or family.

To ensure accurate and effective communication, Lakeville Area Schools does not rely on students, siblings, friends, or other untrained individuals to interpret school-related conversations.

Families may request interpretation services by contacting their child's school. Schools will work with families to arrange language support and ensure they can fully participate in discussions and decisions regarding their child's education.

For larger meetings, presentations, and family engagement events, interpretation technology may be available to provide real-time language support and increase access to information for multilingual families.

Translation Services

Translation services are available for vital district, school, and student-related documents, including information related to educational programs, services, enrollment, student support, family engagement opportunities, and legal rights and responsibilities.

In addition to professionally translated materials, the district utilizes translation technology and multilingual communication tools to increase access to information across websites, newsletters, family communication platforms, and other district resources.

Families who need translated documents or information in a language other than English should contact their child's school.

School Success Liaisons

School Success Liaisons support students and families by helping bridge cultural understanding and strengthen connections between home and school.

School Success Liaisons may assist with:

- Communication between families and school staff
- Meetings involving parents, guardians, students, and school personnel
- Understanding school policies, procedures, and expectations
- Completing school forms and accessing resources
- Student mentoring and support
- Connecting families with school and community services

School Success Liaisons work alongside interpretation and translation services to help ensure families feel welcomed, informed, and connected to their school community.

Language Access Resources

Information about language assistance services, multilingual services, family resources, educational opportunities, and family rights under this Language Access Plan is available on the Lakeville Area Schools website at <https://www.isd194.org/>.

Families can access information regarding interpretation and translation services, School Success Liaison support, enrollment, student services, and other district resources online.

Families who need assistance accessing information in their preferred language are encouraged to contact their child's school.

Staff Responsibilities

All Lakeville Area Schools staff share responsibility for supporting effective communication with students and families who prefer to communicate in a language other than English.

Staff are expected to utilize available interpretation, translation, and language assistance services to ensure families have meaningful access to information, educational programs, services, and opportunities.

By partnering with interpreters, translators, and School Success Liaisons, staff help create welcoming and inclusive environments where all families can participate fully in their child's education.

Language Access Concerns and Resolution Process

Lakeville Area Schools is committed to ensuring that all students and families have meaningful access to information, services, and educational opportunities regardless of their preferred language.

Families who believe their language access needs have not been met should first contact their child's teacher, case manager, Office Manager, or school administrator. School staff will work with the family to better understand the concern and identify appropriate supports or accommodations.

If the concern is not resolved at the school level, families may contact the Student Services Department for additional assistance and review.

Families who believe they have been denied meaningful access to information, communication, or services due to a language barrier may submit a formal complaint in accordance with district policies and procedures. The district will review the concern, investigate as appropriate, and respond in a timely manner.

Lakeville Area Schools values feedback from students and families and is committed to continuously improving language access services throughout the district.

Plan Availability and Review

This Language Access Plan will be available on the Lakeville Area Schools website and may be shared through district and school communication channels, including family communications, enrollment materials, and other informational resources.

In accordance with Minnesota Statute 123B.32, the Lakeville Area School Board will review this Language Access Plan at least once every two years and make updates as needed. The review process will consider changes in legal requirements, district practices, community demographics, and feedback received from students, families, staff, and community members.

This Language Access Plan will be available on the Lakeville Area Schools website, included in district and school handbooks, and shared through district and school communication channels as appropriate.