

	<p>SPEAKERS OF DIVERSE LANGUAGES</p>	<p>Policy No. 4218 October 4, 2017 Page 1 of 3</p>
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It is the policy of the Seattle School Board to promote and encourage the participation of all parents/guardians of District-enrolled students in the education of their child. The Board honors and values the participation of parents/guardians who are speakers of diverse languages, and is committed to improving meaningful communication and access to District programs, services and activities for such parents/guardians empowered by language access at no cost to parents/guardians, students, or families. The intent of this policy is to establish, implement, and maintain a language access plan in service of the District’s current population of parents/guardians who are speakers of diverse languages.

At a minimum, the District’s language access plan will incorporate the procedures that accompany this policy and address:

Parent/Guardian Identification

The District will identify parents/guardians who speak languages other than English accurately and in a timely manner, and will provide them information in a language they can understand regarding the language access resources available within the District.

Interpretation

The District will take reasonable steps to provide parents/guardians who are speakers of diverse languages with oral interpretation of information about any program, service, and activity provided to English-speaking parents/guardians. The District will provide interpretation in a language the parents/guardians understand in order to facilitate any interaction with District staff significant to their student’s education. The District will provide such services upon request of the parents/guardians and/or when District staff may determine that such services are necessary.

Translation

The District will provide written translation of vital documents for the top four language groups in the District other than English, or those for which the parent population is at least 1000 persons. For purposes of this policy, “vital documents” include, but are not limited to, those related to:

- Registration and enrollment in school;
- Grades, academic standards, student performance, and graduation;
- Safety, discipline, and conduct expectations;
- Student/Parent handbook;
- Policies and procedures related to attendance, absences, and withdrawal;
- Parent permission for activities or programs;
- School closure information;
- Opportunities to access programs or services—including highly capable, advanced placement, and English language learner programs;
- Special education and services for students with disabilities, Section 504 information, and McKinney-Vento services; and
- All other documents which notify parents of their rights under relevant state legislation, or which contain information or forms that pertain to “consent or filing complaints under federal law, state law, or District policy.”

If the District cannot translate a vital document due to resource limitations, or if the number of families that require the information in a language other than English is so small that translation of the document cannot be achieved within reason, the District will provide the information to the parents/guardians in a language they can understand by means of competent interpretation (reading and explanation of the document aloud).

Staff Guidance

All school administrators, particularly those who have the most interaction with the parents and guardians, such as enrollment staff, school secretaries, registrars, certificated staff, and other appropriate staff will receive guidance on meaningful communication with parents/guardians empowered by language access. Such staff will receive copies of the internal Language Access Guide, and have access to training on best practices for working with an interpreter, how to access an interpreter or translation services in a timely manner, language services available within the District, and other information deemed necessary by the superintendent to effectuate the language access plan.

Appropriate District staff will also receive guidance on the interaction between this policy and the District’s policy on effective communication with students, families, and community members with disabilities.

The Superintendent is authorized to establish procedures and practices for implementing this policy.

Adopted: October 2017

Revised:

Cross Reference: 2110; 2161; 3210; 4129; 4130

Related Superintendent Procedure: 4218SP

Previous Policies:

Legal References: Chapter 28A.642 RCW; Chapter 49.60 RCW; WAC 162-28-040; WAC 392-190;
WAC 392-160-015; WAC 392-172A-03100; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Management Resources: WSSDA Policy News: July 2016