



Language Access Plan to Ensure Effective Communication with Multilingual Students and Families

Section 1: Policy Directives

This section sets forth the laws, standards, and operating principles that will govern the implementation of North Shore Community School's (NSCS) language access plan.

Policy Foundation

Federal

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.
- Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA) requires states and school districts to provide equal educational opportunity to students learning English by taking appropriate actions to overcome language barriers.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) upholds language access rights for bilingual families by requiring that students be tested in their home language and Individual Educational Plans (IEP) be written in the appropriate home language. IEP meetings must be conducted in the family's home language using a highly trained and qualified interpreter.

State

Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.32 states:

- Subd. 1. Language access plan required. Starting in the 2025-2026 school year, during a regularly scheduled public board hearing, a school board must adopt a language access plan that specifies the district's process and procedures to render effective language assistance to students and adults who communicate in a language other than English. The language access plan must be available to the public and included in the school's handbook.
- Subd. 2. Plan requirements. The language access plan must 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; and how families and communities will be notified of their rights under this plan.
- Subd. 3. Regular review. The board must review the plan every two years and update the plan as appropriate.
- Minnesota Learning for English Academic Proficiency (LEAPS) Act of 2014, Chapter 272, H.F. No. 2397, Article 1. The law has three principal goals for all English Learner (EL) students: 1) academic English proficiency; 2) grade-level content knowledge; and 3) multilingual skills development.

Definitions

American Sign Language (ASL) – A visually perceived language based on a naturally evolved system of articulated hand gestures and their placement relative to the body, along with non-manual markers such as facial expressions, head movements, shoulder raises, mouth morphemes, and movements of the body.

Relay – Telephone accessibility services to people who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or speech disabled.

Screen Reader – Software programs that allow blind or visually impaired users to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display.

Interpretation – The act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language). Interpreter must retain the same meaning as the original message without omitting information, summarizing or otherwise altering the message and without adding the interpreter's own thoughts or opinions.

Interpreter – A person who provides interpreting services.

Simultaneous Interpretation Equipment – Equipment that allow a group of people to listen through headsets to information interpreted into their primary language. This method is most appropriate for large group settings and meetings where multiple languages are being interpreted simultaneously.

Language Assistance Services – Oral, expressive, written, and technological supportive services that help students and families communicate effectively with school staff. These services ensure students and families can participate fully in school services, activities, and programs.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) – Individuals whose primary language is not English and who have limited ability to communicate effectively in English, including writing, reading, speaking, and listening comprehension. Federal law uses this term to refer to the intended beneficiaries of language access services.

Emergent Multilingual Speakers – Individuals whose primary language is not English and who have limited ability to communicate effectively in English but are in the process of developing their English language proficiency. Language access industry leaders and advocates prefer the use of this term when referring to the intended beneficiaries of language access services.

English Learner (EL) – A status assigned to students whose primary language is not English, who lacks the necessary skills to understand, speak, read, and write in English but are receiving English language development instructions in a public school or charter setting.

Home Language – The language that is most commonly used in the home by members of a family, or the language that parents use when speaking with their children.

Primary Language – An individual's native tongue or the language in which an individual most effectively communicates.

Sight Translation – The oral interpretation of a written document. This occurs when an interpreter reads a document and then provides a complete oral interpretation of the information that it contains.

Remote Interpreting – Interpreting that is provided via telephone or video call.

Translator – A person who provides translation services.

Translation – The restating of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language).

Vital Document – Materials deemed vital to ensuring access to educational services, programs, and activities, or contain information required by law to translate or provide in audio format.

Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) provides guidance on the Codes of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Educational Interpreters of Spoken Language that can be viewed on the [English Learner Disability Resources](#) webpage. This guide is only available in English because it was intended for language access practitioners.

Section 2: The Plan

Overview

North Shore Community School's language access plan provides a blueprint for bringing the district or charter into compliance with state and federal language access requirements, including how the district or charter will increase its capacity to address language service and resource needs identified in its self-assessment.

This plan is also a roadmap that will help staff navigate the process of setting deadlines, priorities, and identifying responsible personnel for policy and procedures development; hire, contract, assess, and ensure quality control of language assistance services; provide notice of services; provide training of staff; and conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Language Access Plan

Description of Services

North Shore Community School offers written translation, interpretation (i.e. remote and in-person), documents translated through TransAct, American Sign Language, and more based on family need. Families can request assistance by reaching out to the main office.

Implementation

Identification and Assessment of Language Assistance Needs

All families complete the Minnesota Language Survey (MNLS) at the time of enrollment to provide information about a student's language background. If responses suggest the student may be an English Learner (EL), the district administers a state-approved language proficiency assessment to determine eligibility for English language development services. Families are notified within the required timeline using the District's Parent

Notification Form if their child qualifies for EL services. This notification explains the type and amount of support the student will receive and informs families of their right to decline services.

Timeline

The plan will be implemented

Notice of Services

North Shore Community School's Language Access Plan is available on the district's website and is also disseminated through the Student Handbook.

Training for Staff

Staff will be informed of the Language Access Plan at the beginning of each year and steps to take if they receive a request from a family for language services.

Plan Maintenance

The plan will be reviewed annually to determine if the plan continues to meet the needs of our students and families, and what adjustments are needed.

Community Engagement and Partnership

NSCS will seek community support and available resources dependent upon the language requests of the family.

Emergency Communication Protocol

NSCS will ensure communications sent to families in case of an emergency or school weather closing are sent in the preferred language as identified by families.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Translation Services

Families can view all district and school websites in their preferred language by changing their preferred language in their browser settings or through the translate feature in their web browser. If families are in need of further translation services, this can be requested through the main office.

Section 3: Procedures

Overview

This section sets forth guidelines and steps for staff to coordinate, gather data, and deliver uniform services to students, families, and community members.

Procedures

Families identify their preferred language through the Minnesota Language Survey provided to families at the beginning of each year. The preferred language is entered into our Student Information System.

Office staff will communicate with families what services are available, and work with the Executive Director to ensure they receive the support needed. Based on the request or identified need, NSCS will connect with community resources to develop a plan and provide translation or interpretation services.

Language access complaints may be directed to the Executive Director. Complaints will be reviewed and an initial response will be sent within 24 hours.

Contact Information

For further assistance, please reach out to the main office at nscsinfo@nscsk6.org or by calling 218-525-0663 x100.