



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 the Lionsgate Academy 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

At Lionsgate Academy, we strive to create a welcoming and supportive environment for all students and staff that affirms their personal culture and beliefs. Lionsgate engages in ongoing, continual reflection on our policies and practices under the lens of DEIB.

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

Lionsgate Academy'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

Language assistance services offered by the district:

- School website provides tab that instantly translates website into stakeholder's home language
- Onsite interpreters, Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) and telephone interpreting services available upon request from a variety of Lionsgate Academy vendors
- Onsite interpretation at family conferences
- Official paperwork translated using TransAct

Language assistance can be requested by families during the registration process, at enrollment meetings, through the Minnesota Home Language Survey, through a student's case manager or by contacting Alicia Reyes at alicia.reyesjohnson@lgamn.org or 612-314-5894.

Implementation

Ryan Rehnstrand, Director of Student Services and Alicia Reyes, District EL Lead, will be responsible for overseeing, developing, and modifying the language access plan, and establishing and implementing operational procedures. Information on language assistance services will be disseminated to staff through a staff newsletter and ELL tab on the staff homepage.

Identification and Assessment of Language Assistance Needs

Language Assistance

Language assistance needs can be determined during the registration process, at enrollment meetings, through the Minnesota Home Language Survey, using the student's IEP and/or through input from a student's case manager.

Timeline

Language Access Plan implemented during the 2024-25 school year. Plan to be revisited and revised yearly.

Notice of Services

Families can request language assistance during the registration process including the Minnesota Language Survey and enrollment meetings or by contacting their student's case manager.

It is a requirement of Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.32, Language Access Plan Required, that a district's plan be included in their Parent Handbook.

Training for Staff

Lionsgate Academy provides language access training opportunities to all staff, which includes at least:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Resources for accessing/requesting interpretation
- How to work effectively with interpreters.

Plan Maintenance

This plan will be reviewed annually. It will be revised, if needed, based on data collected by Lionsgate Academy during its delivery of information and services to limited English speakers throughout the year. This language Access Plan is available on the Lionsgate Academy website.

Community Engagement and Partnership

Lionsgate Academy is proud of the relationships that case managers build with families. Case managers serve as the main point of contact for families in regards to a student's needs. As such, families are asked if there are outside service providers that need to be included in the process. Families are asked to sign a Release of Information (ROI) so that Lionsgate Academy can actively communicate with an outside organization.

Emergency Communication Protocol

Lionsgate Academy uses School Messenger to send out emergency or urgent texts and emails to families. This could be in regards to school closures for weather or other important information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Translation Services

Lionsgate Academy may use AI translation services for efficient and cost effective translation of communication, including school newsletters, emails and texts.

MDE recommends that when AI is used to translate documents and flyers, these materials should explicitly provide a call back number so students and parents can contact someone at the district if they have questions.

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

Case managers serve as the main point of contact for families in regards to their needs.

Language preferences will be noted by a student's case manager. Lionsgate Academy's student information system will be updated to reflect a families preferred language. District correspondence will reflect the families preferred home language.

Language assistance needs can be determined during the registration process, at enrollment meetings, through the Minnesota Home Language Survey, using the student's IEP and/or through input from a student's case manager.

Staff can use various AI translation services to respond to correspondence (i.e. voicemails, texts and emails) from individuals with language assistance needs, noting in the correspondence which service was used.

If an interpreter is needed, case managers fill out a google form to request an in-person, virtual or phone interpreter. The District EL teacher reserves an interpreter from a 3rd party vendor and creates a purchase order for the finance department in order to facilitate payment.

For documents, staff will use various AI translation services, provide information in both home language and English and make a notation of which translation service was used.

Staff assistance for interpretation or translation will be requested only for time sensitive information or when/if an outside vendor is unavailable.

A professional interpreter should be used in all formal meetings with school staff including IEP meetings and caregiver/teacher conferences.

Language access complaints can be directed to Alicia Reyes, Lionsgate District EL Lead, at alicia.reyesjohnson@lgamn.org or Ryan Rehnstrand, Director of Student Services, at rrehnstrand@lgamn.org.

Contact Information

Questions or comments can be directed to Alicia Reyes, Lionsgate District EL Lead, at alicia.reyesjohnson@lgamn.org or Ryan Rehnstrand, Director of Student Services, at rrehnstrand@lgamn.org.