

**WEST ALLEGHENY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

SECTION: **5585**

TITLE: **Parental Communication**

ADOPTED: **April 2021**

REVISED: **New Policy**

<p>1. Purpose</p>	<p>The West Allegheny School Board recognizes the crucial role that parents, guardians and families play in the education of their children. The Board encourages partnerships between the district administration, schools and families in order to share the responsibility of educating our students.</p> <p>To that end, this policy is created to ensure that limited English proficiency (LEP) parents are aware that they are entitled to free appropriate translation and interpreting services so that families of all language backgrounds may fully participate in the education of their children.</p>
<p>2. Guidelines</p>	<p>The District must provide communication to families that speak languages other than English so that those communications are equal to the communications provided in English.</p> <p>The District must provide parents/guardians a Home Language Survey to determine both student and parents' language needs. The Survey, included as Attachment 1, will be provided to every household in the language most often used between parents and children. The Survey includes a section to allow for LEP parents to list their requested translation and/or interpretation services from the District.</p> <p>Additionally, even if they are not identified by the Home Language Survey, parents who speak a language other than English may request free appropriate translation and interpretation services for school-related communications at any time.</p> <p>Under this policy, a parent does not have to be of limited English proficiency in speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending English in order to be considered LEP but, rather, it is only necessary that a parent be limited in at least one of these areas in order to be eligible to receive language assistance as needed.</p> <p>Generally, the District will accept a parent's assertion that he or she needs language assistance without requiring additional corroboration.</p> <p>LEP Parents who feel they have not been provided with adequate translation and interpreting services should follow the guidance in the Language Access Complaint Procedure included as Attachment 2.</p> <p>To determine the need for interpreter or translation services for LEP parents/guardians, school staff should refer to the District's student database which will indicate the language needs identified in the survey. If language needs are identified in the survey, parents will be provided with a copy of this policy in their designated language notifying the parents of the availability of free language assistance with respect to school programs and activities.</p>

The District Administration and each school in the District will maintain a centralized list of LEP parent(s) identified as needing language assistance services and the type of language assistance services they need. In accordance with FERPA, staff in the building that have a legitimate educational interest will be provided with information relevant to the particular student and their family's need for LEP services.

Each school in the District will maintain a log of the language assistance services provided to parent(s), which shall include the date of service, type of service (e.g., written translation or oral interpretation), purpose of the service (e.g., parent-teacher conference, IEP Team meeting, disciplinary proceedings), and the service provider.

Under this policy, when the children of LEP parent(s) transfer from one school to another school within the District, information regarding the language assistance needs of the parent(s) will be transferred in a timely manner to the school to which the child transfers.

District staff that are likely to interact with an identified LEP parent will be advised of the parent's potential need for language assistance, the circumstances under which they may need assistance (e.g., parent-teacher conferences, documents related to disciplinary actions, documents related to Individualized Education Programs (IEP) or Section 504 Plans, etc.), the type of language assistance they might need (e.g., translation services or interpreter services), and the means by which they may timely obtain such assistance for the parent. Staff, for purposes of this policy, will include, but is not limited to, administrators, teachers, counselors, school psychologists, and support staff.

It is the District's policy that it will continue to contract with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit who currently subcontracts with Transperfect Remote Interpreting Services to provide qualified translators and interpreters as needed. The District will consider whether these language assistance services are being provided in an effective and timely manner as part of its annual evaluation of this language assistance plan.

The District Administration will notify relevant District staff, on an annual basis, that the use of family members and friends for the provision of language assistance, particularly the use of minor children is generally not acceptable, unless LEP parent(s) have voluntarily chosen to provide their own interpreter or translator. The District may still need to provide its own interpreter or translator to ensure accurate interpretation or translation of critical information, especially in, but not limited to, situations where the competency of the LEP parent's chosen interpreter is in question.

The District will maintain essential District documents, including, but not limited to, registration and enrollment forms, student discipline policies and procedures, parent handbooks, grievance procedures and notices of nondiscrimination, and the procedural safeguards notice in the most prominent non-English language in the District.

The District will translate documents related to an individual student with an LEP parent including special education documents, disciplinary notices, and report cards/progress reports within fourteen (14) days of the document's creation.

When LEP parent(s) request a translation of other documents not included above, the District will provide parent(s) with a translation of this document in their requested language within thirty (30) days. When the District translates a document that is routinely provided to parents, the District will maintain a copy of the translated document in a central location for future use.

	<p>Additionally, the District will perform an annual evaluation of the effectiveness of this language assistance plan. This evaluation will be conducted by the Assistant to the Superintendent for Special Education and Student Services and will be completed by June 30th of each year. As part of this evaluation, the District will examine the frequency of encounters with LEP parent(s); the availability of resources for language assistance, including technological advances and sources of additional support, and the costs imposed; to the extent possible, feedback from LEP parent(s) on whether the District's language assistance services meet their needs; feedback from staff regarding their awareness and understanding of the district's language assistance plan and how it is implemented, including their role, if any; data on complaints made to the District regarding language access services; and data on whether language assistance services, including written translation, were provided in an effective and timely manner. Based on this information, the District will determine whether new documents, programs, services and activities need to be made accessible for LEP parent(s).</p>
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