

Language support practices from Ohio school districts

1. Identify the language needs of families at your school.

- Have a message frame in all of the places in the school where families interact with school staff, where parents can indicate their home language. For example, the front office or near student drop-off areas. Here is an [example](#).
- Review your school's [Language Usage Survey](#) results each year to assess the language needs of families. Leaders should share clear expectations with staff for how they should communicate with families who speak other languages.

2. Increase accessibility of language support services.

- Add a Google Translate button on the school website or mobile applications used to communicate with families.
- Pay for daily interpretation and translation using the general fund or special education funds. Title III is not an appropriate source of funding for meeting basic access needs in a school.
- Fund additional supports through Title III – such as supplemental interpretation for family engagement work.
- Provide translation of important documents: 504, progress reports, ETR, IEP, and Hearings/Appeals documents.

Other documents that schools often translate include: extended day learning opportunities (summer school information, after school application), immunization records, transcripts, event fliers, Gifted/Talented information, school choice options/applications.

- Provide additional options if there are many requests for interpretation, such as during parent-teacher conferences.
Offer conference calls or video calls (i.e. Zoom, Teams, Google Meet) with interpretation.

3. Optimize delivery of language support services.

- Have a single point of contact for interpretation/translation support, who can work with school staff and families to get the support they need to work together.
- Have a plan so that when interpreters are needed, they are easy to access by phone or in person.
- Track usage of interpretation/translation to see how the needs are changing over time. This may be helpful for justifying the use of additional funds or to make improvements.
- Provide an online storage space for translated documents that teachers can easily find and use with families.

4. Leverage community assets.

- Find family liaisons from each community where families come from (e.g., the Nepali community, or Central American migrant worker community) to attend school meetings to encourage and support participation from all families. This could be paid for using refugee funding (Jobs and Family Services).
- Partner with community organizations to provide language supports or identify reputable providers to partner with.