

Language Access Plan

Section 1: Policy Directives

This section sets forth the laws, standards, and operating principles that will govern the implementation of New Century Academy (NCA) 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 allows 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

The purpose of this plan is to document the process and procedures planned or in place at New Century Academy to ensure meaningful access to agency services and information to limited English speakers (EL) or those who require additional assistance due to a disability in a language or format they can use and understand.

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

NCA will provide both oral and written language services to ensure that families with language access needs have full and equitable access to the school program, services, and communications. Oral translation services include interpreters for the enrollment process, IEP and 504 meetings, family conferences, school events, and on-demand support for urgent or unexpected needs. Written services include translation support for vital documents such as enrollment, progress reports, IEP or 504 plans, and other essential communications.

Implementation

NCA's EL coordinator, Director, and Admin Assistant will be responsible for overseeing, developing, and modifying the language access plan and establishing and implementing operational procedures.

Identification and Assessment of Language Assistant Needs

New Century Academy will determine parent/guardian language needs through the following procedures:

- 1. Enrollment Survey:** Upon registration, parents/guardians will identify their preferred language and request language support. Enrollment staff are trained in procedures for accessing qualified interpreters to support families to complete enrollment paperwork if needed.
- 2. Student Information System:** The preferred language for parents/guardians is available to all staff in JMC.
- 3. Teacher Communication:** Teachers are encouraged to inquire about communication preferences before pre-service conferences.

Timeline

This plan will be reviewed annually. It will be revised, if needed, based on data collected by NCA during its delivery of information and services to families with limited English proficiency throughout the year. This Language Access Plan is available on the New Century Academy website.

Notice of Providing Services

- The NCA website provides information to limited English speakers on where to quickly get help in a language and format they can use and understand.
- Qualified interpreters and Translation Services are available through NCA vendor contracts.
- Interpreter services may also be available through the Language Line.
- The school will use interpreters for communication related to academic outcomes, progress, determinations, and placement of students in specialized programs and services
- NCA will ensure meaningful participation in the IEP process by families who do not speak English or have a disability themselves.
- Families have the opportunity to appeal the accommodations of the access plan if their needs are not being met.
- NCA will notify students and families about available language assistance services and how they can request services during conferences, enrollment, teacher-parent meetings, school board meetings, and parent advisory council meetings.

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

Training for Staff

Training to prepare staff to support multilingual families includes In-person workshops, procedure guides for supporting multilingual families, and new staff onboarding.

Community Engagement and Partnership

Avalon seeks ongoing meaningful feedback from the community through surveys, conferences, and formal listening sessions with both students and families. Avalon also intentionally designs listening sessions and parent support groups to receive specific input from students and families representing historically underserved students in developing and implementing school improvement.

Emergency Communication Protocol

In the case of emergencies, such as severe weather, active shooter in school vicinity, federal immigration enforcement, transportation scheduling changes, or public health announcements, Avalon will provide translated communications to all families that have been identified as in need of language support. This includes mass notification systems such as email and text messaging. To support quick dissemination, Avalon will employ AI translation services.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Translation Services

AI translation tools will be limited to non-vital translations only, such as newsletters, general information, or other non-critical communications where perfect accuracy is not essential.

Avalon will not use AI translation tools for vital translations. When AI is used to translate documents and flyers, students and parents may contact a Coordinator, the Office Manager, or Director for assistance at 651-649-5495.

Federal law requires schools to provide professional translation services for all vital information to Limited English Proficient (LEP) parents. Vital documents and communications include:

1. Educational Rights and Responsibilities:

- Enrollment and registration materials
- Special education evaluations, IEP meetings, and related services
- English learner program notifications and services
- Gifted and talented program information
- Report cards and academic progress reports
- Student discipline policies and procedures
- Parent-teacher conference communications

2. Legal and Administrative Documents:

- Grievance procedures and nondiscrimination notices
- Parent handbooks and school policies
- Permission forms for student activities
- Legal notices and official school communications
- Any document that affects a parent's ability to participate in their child's education

Why This Matters

AI translation applications have significant limitations:

- They translate primarily word-by-word rather than contextually
- Important nuances and cultural meanings are often lost
- Complex sentence structures may be misinterpreted
- Technical or specialized terminology may be incorrectly translated
- Context-dependent phrases may be translated literally rather than idiomatically

Legal Requirements for Schools

Under federal civil rights law, schools must:

Provide effective language assistance to English Learner families. Use appropriate and competent translators and interpreters. Never rely on students, siblings, friends, or untrained school staff for translation. Provide services that are free to parents. Maintain confidentiality in all translated communications

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

Language Identification

During enrollment, parents and guardians specify their preferred language and it is recorded within the student information system, FinalSite. This information can be updated by contacting the school. Schools use this information to identify language services. All families also complete the Minnesota Language Survey (MNLS) during enrollment.

Services

Once identified, Avalon uses a variety of tools and strategies to meaningfully support families with limited language proficiency, including:

- Professional Interpreters (i.e. remote and in-person) are available for communications related to conferences, special education meetings and other vital communications between staff and parents/guardians.
- For in person meetings, staff members can request interpretation for a parent/guardian meeting by contacting the EL coordinator or Assistant Director, and provide the date, time, location, and meeting purpose.
- Written translation for vital communications like enrollment or other forms.
- ASL Interpretation at events, conferences, and other in-person meetings
- Language Line services for virtual or phone communications
- Translation of the district website is available via the translation widget located on every page.

Notification of Family Rights and Communications

The Language Access Plan will be included in all student and staff handbooks and published on the district website. Families can request services by contacting their Advisor, a Special Education Case Manager, Enrollment Coordinator, Assistant Director or Executive Director

Complaints about the district's language supports can be directed to our Executive Director, Carrie Bakken.

Contact Information

Jason Becker, Director

Elisabeth Mumford- SPED Director

Talitha Thuringer- Admin Assistant

Resources

Professional Document Translation Resources (Minnesota)

- [MDE Translated Documents](#)
- [Minnesota Translations](#)
- [JR Language Translation Services, Inc](#)
- [The Bridge World Language Center](#)
- [Global Translation and Interpreter, LLC](#)
- [University Language Center](#)
- [Parent Resource Center](#)

Professional Interpreter Resources (Minnesota)

- [Minnesota Department of Health Interpreter Search](#)
- [Interpreters in Minnesota](#)
- [University Language Center](#)
- [Parent Resource Center](#)