

	<p>LANGUAGE ACCESS</p>	<p>Policy No. 4218 January 23, 2023 Page 1 of 2</p>
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The Seattle School Board recognizes that to support student success it is critical that families can participate in their students’ education. To promote that participation for families who have limited English proficiency, the District will develop and adopt a plan for implementing and maintaining a language access program that is culturally responsive, provides for systematic family engagement developed through meaningful stakeholder engagement, and is tailored to the District’s current population of students and families who have limited English proficiency. The Board of Directors is committed to improving meaningful, two-way communication and promoting access to District programs, services, and activities for students and their parents and families. The Board recognizes that students and their family members who speak multiple languages are assets to the community and is committed to providing equitable access for families to participate in their students’ education by addressing language barriers, free of charge.

At a minimum, the District’s plan for a language access program will adhere to the principles of an effective language access program for culturally responsive, systematic family engagement, which are:

- **Accessibility and equity.** This means that schools provide access to all; two-way communication is a priority and is woven into the design of all programs and services.
- **Accountability and transparency.** This means that the language access program and decision-making processes at all levels are: Open, accessible, and usable to families; readily available; continuously improved based on ongoing feedback from families and staff; and regulated by a clear and just complaint process.
- **Responsive culture.** This means that schools are safe, compassionate places where each family’s opinions are heard, needs are met, and contributions are valued. School staff are humble and empathetic towards families.
- **Focus on relationships.** This means that schools seek to understand families without judgment on an individual level, building trust through respectful relationships that recognize the unique strengths that each family and student possesses.

The Superintendent is authorized to establish accompanying procedure to implement this policy and a Language Access Program, to go into effect in the 2023-24 school year. This program shall include the identification of families needing language access services, oral interpretation, written translation, and staff responsibilities.

The District will provide effective communication for students' families who are deaf, deaf and blind, blind, hard of hearing, or need other communication assistance according to 4205 – Accessing Communication Auxiliary Aids and Services for District-Sponsored Programs, Events and Activities.

Review and Update

The Board will periodically review, evaluate, and further update this policy based on pertinent data, including the data collected according to the accompanying procedure.

The Board will also review spending on language access services as part of the annual budget process and consider whether budget adjustments are needed to effectively engage with families who would benefit from language access services.

Adopted: October 2017

Revised: January 2023 (Per Policy No. 1310); October 2022

Cross Reference: 0010; 2110; 2161; 3210; 4129; 4130; 4205

Related Superintendent Procedure: 4218SP

Previous Policies:

Legal References: Chapter 28A.155 RCW; Chapter 28A.642 RCW Chapter 49.60 RCW; WAC 392-400-215; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Management Resources: *WSSDA Policy & Legal News*, June 2022; July 2016