



Valley School District

ACCESSING INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION SERVICES

Interpretation Services

Staff may be alerted of a parent’s or guardian’s (“parents”) need for language services through answers provided on student enrollment forms and the Home Language Survey, one-on-one interactions with the parent(s), student and/or family, by teachers or other staff, or a parent’s request.

Staff may need help with identifying the specific primary language or dialect spoken by the LEP parents. Do not make assumptions about the language spoken after hearing it for the first time. For example, there are distinct differences between Russian and Ukrainian dialects.

- Use the Language Identification Flashcard, Form #4218F2; provide the card to the parent to help him/her communicate the primary language spoken.
- Share the OSPI Multi-Language Welcome Poster, “We can help you in your language!” to help him/her communicate the primary language spoken.
- An interpreter may be able to identify the specific dialect or language. If the language is unknown, contact the Language Service representative for assistance (see below).

Once the primary language is identified, staff may need to learn about and understand basic cultural customs and traditions of LEP families before communicating with parents. Anticipate and be aware of any potential sensitivities that may exist about the parents’ language barriers. Parents may trust and prefer a friend or family member rather than an interpreter to help them communicate. Inquire what LEP parents prefer. Gather resources to help you with these initial conversations.

- Use [Google Translate](#) to translate a simple, written question or statement in the identified language to share with the parents. However, this tool should never be used to communicate complex messages, ideas or documents.

Prepare for the telephone call with the LEP parents when using interpretation services. Review the “Tips for Working with Telephone Interpreters” resource, Form #4218F3.

- Know the target language and/or dialect for interpretation before placing the call.
- Know how to use the conference call or three-way calling features of your phone.
- Prepare, in writing, what you will communicate to the parents (questions, information, etc.).
You will be speaking to the interpreter as if he/she is the LEP parent.
- Be prepared to rephrase or clarify the message throughout the call.

VSD uses **CTS Language Link** to access interpretation services over the phone. This service uses Interactive Voice Response (IVR) automation to select the language desired for interpretation.

STEP 1: Call **1-888-338-7394**

STEP 2: Enter the VSD Account No. **17421**, followed by the # sign.

STEP 3: Select **1** for Spanish Interpreter Select **3** for Vietnamese Interpreter

Select **2** for Russian Interpreter Select **4** for Somali Interpreter

Select 9 for all other languages, or to set up a third-party call through a Customer Service Representative. A third-party call is when CTS Language Link calls the LEP parent and then bridges the call together with you and the interpreter.

For further assistance, contact CTS Language Link: clientrelations@ctslanguage.com; 1-855-579-2704

Translation Services

School districts must ensure LEP parents can access vital information in a language they can understand. Vital communications are written and oral communications that contain information that is critical for accessing educational programs and opportunities. Staff should refer to this U.S. Dept. of Education/Office of Civil Rights [fact sheet](#) for a list of vital information and documents, and additional guidance.

As stated in section 4.6.1 of Procedure #4218P1, translated versions of vital documents should be provided to LEP groups constituting at least 5% of the district's total parent population. School staff must monitor limited English proficient student enrollment and parent populations and alert the district office if a growing need exists for professionally translated vital documents in commonly and locally spoken languages. **District staff will pursue professional translation services on an as-needed basis.**

For instances when professional translation is not warranted (i.e. a small number of parents require the information), staff should utilize oral interpretation of the document to help LEP parents understand the information. For example, a document could be provided to an interpreter prior to participating in a pre-arranged school conference to assist the LEP parent in understanding the crucial information contained therein.

Staff may utilize a computer-based translation tool such as [Google Translate](#) or similar software, to support short, basic, or initial written communications with LEP parents. For example: "I will use an interpreter for our next conversation on Tuesday," or when providing simple directions, such as "sign and return this form." However, staff should be aware of the limitations and potential inaccuracies of these translation tools.

Before using an online translation tool, staff should determine the importance of the written communication and whether a potential inaccuracy in or misinterpretation of the message will have significant consequences. The complexity of the communication, the use of technical or program-specific terms, and an increased frequency in the use of a form or document may indicate a need for professional interpretation or translation.

VSD often uses OSPI templates, and translated versions may be available via their website. Staff should seek out and use translated versions of key documents whenever available.

If a document must be shared with an LEP parent in English, staff should generate and attach a notice to the document directing the parent to contact the school for language services. Staff should copy and paste the message from Form #4218F5-Important Document to Translate Notice, in the appropriate language.

Another resource for staff is the "General Tips and Tools for Working with LEP Individuals" (Form #4218F4). This document is an excerpt from the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division's *Executive Order 13166 Limited English Proficiency Resource Document: Tips and Tools from the Field* (September 2004). This chapter provides more in-depth guidance, strategies and considerations.