LANGUAGE ACCESS WORKGROUP

Report to the Legislature
December 2021

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Executive Summary

The 2021 Language Access Workgroup (LAW) was established by Section 501(3)(g) of the 2021 budget bill (ESSB 5092) to reconvene the Language Access Workgroup in order to make expanded recommendations on:

- standards, training, testing, and credentialing for spoken and sign language interpreters for students' families and
- for collecting information related to language access services in schools and school districts.

Recommendations Table

Recommendation	Audience			
	OSPI	PESB	Legislature	Other
Recommendation 1. The LAW recommends the use of a phased in approach for interpreter credentialing, moving from minimum employment requirements to a certificate.		✓	✓	
Recommendation 2. Phase 1: Minimum Employment Requirements 2a. Age 2b. & 2c. Education 2d. Training 2e. Testing	✓	✓	✓	
Recommendation 3. Phase 2: Certification 3a. Age 3b. & 3c Education 3d. Training 3e. Testing	✓	✓	✓	
Recommendation 4. Code of Professional Conduct. The LAW recommends that the State adopt a code of professional conduct for interpreters working with families and communities in educational settings outside of the classroom, to be established in the Washington Administrative Code (WACs), and includes a process for lodging a complaint against the interpreter for violating the code.		✓	✓	
Recommendation 5. Dual-Role Staff The LAW recommends that school staff can interpret for meetings and events in the school but cannot interpret for the family of a student with whom they work with directly.				✓

Recommendation	Audience			
	OSPI	PESB	Legislature	Other
Recommendation 6. Remote Interpretation See Options 1-4				✓
Recommendation 7. Going Beyond the Minimum Standards The LAW recommends that schools and districts make a good faith effort to honor the request of the individual receiving the services, even if the requests go beyond the required minimum standards.				✓
Recommendation 8. Statewide Solution See Options 1-3			✓	✓
Recommendation 9. Pipeline Support See Options 1 & 2		✓	✓	
Recommendation 10. Language Access Advisory Committee In order to guide, monitor and adjust implementation, the LAW recommends the establishment of a permanent language access advisory committee.			✓	
Recommendation 11. Parent/Guardian Information Recommendation 11a. The LAW recommends that schools continue to collect family preferred language for communications with the school and school district through the Home Language Survey (HLS). Recommendation 11b. The LAW recommends that OSPI update the HLS templates. Recommendation 11c. The LAW recommend that schools and school districts do not ask for student's birth country on any form that also includes questions about language access needs. Recommendation 11d. The LAW recommends that the questions: 1. Is the parent or guardian Deaf or hard of hearing and needs a sign language interpreter?	✓		✓	✓

Recommendation	Audience			
	OSPI	PESB	Legislature	Other
2. Is the parent or guardian blind or deafblind and needs communication assistance? be added to the Home Language Survey. The form should include a space to describe the requested language and/or other communication assistance. Recommendation 11e. The LAW recommends that OSPI provide training to school and district staff on appropriate use of the HLS, including best practices. Recommendation 11f. The LAW recommends that parent/guardian preferred language access information provided on the HLS be required to be reported by the district annually to OSPI in aggregate (number of parents/guardians and number of languages) to be displayed on the publicly available Report Card site.				
Recommendation 12. Language Access Services Recommendation 12a. The LAW recommends that for all meetings reported in Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) add data elements regarding language access services provided. Recommendation 12b. The LAW recommends that the ongoing language access advisory committee continue to monitor and suggest modifications to the CEDARS data collection as it is implemented. Recommendation 12c. The LAW recommends that the Legislature provide funding to the Language Access Technical Assistance Program at OSPI create standardized and translated forms for feedback on interpretation and translation services. Recommendation 12d. The LAW recommends that the Legislature require that aggregated summaries of feedback including language and response rates are made publicly accessible by the school district twice a year. Recommendation 12e. The LAW recommends that the ongoing language access advisory committee	✓		✓	✓

Recommendation	Audience			
	OSPI	PESB	Legislature	Other
continue to monitor data collection and reporting requirements on interpreter qualifications as the interpreter credentialing system rolls out. Recommendation 12f. The LAW recommends that the Legislature require that each year the school board must review the funds spent by the district and individual school buildings on language access services in conjunction with a review of the language access needs as collected by the Home Language Survey. Recommendation 12g. The LAW recommends that the Language Access Technical Assistance Program at OSPI proactively provide guidance to districts on what funding sources can be used to pay for language access services.				

Background

The 2021 Language Access Workgroup (LAW) was established by Section 501(3)(g) of the 2021 budget bill (ESSB 5092) which instructed the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

> (g)…to reconvene an expanded work group under section 2, chapter 256, Laws of 2019. The activities of and resources provided by the language access technical assistance program must align with the recommendations in the October 2020 report of the language access work group created by section 2, chapter 256, Laws of 2019 in order to improve awareness and fulfillment of language access rights for families in educational settings. The work group under this subsection shall, by December 1, 2021, report to the appropriate committees of the legislature recommendations for
>
> - standards, training, testing, and credentialing for spoken and sign language interpreters for students' families and
> - for collecting information related to language access services in schools and school districts.
>
> Within the amounts provided in this subsection, the office must provide a report to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2021.

Workgroup Meetings

The workgroup met monthly a total of 6 times, including a special additional meeting, starting July 2021. A steering committee was formed that met each month which included:

- one staff from the Office of The Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

- one staff person from the Office of The Education Ombuds (OEO)
- one staff person from the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB)
- 3 representatives from community organizations that were selected by a vote of the workgroup membership and included: Heather White, Julieta Altamirano-Crosby, and Moses Perez

Additionally, the workgroup formed several subcommittees, which included non-member experts, that met between monthly meetings to review, research, and draft recommendations on specific topics for presentation to the workgroup. Final decisions were made by the whole workgroup in accordance with the agreed upon decision making protocol. Subcommittees included:

- Standards, Training, Testing and Credentialing Subcommittee
    - Members: Alexa Villatoro, April McArthur, Brian Stromberg, Carolyn Cole, Charlene Williams, Corey Grandstaff, Dr. Jamilyn Penn, Fanny Cordero, Heather White, Hodan Mohamed, James Wells, Joana Ramos, Jodi McBride, Dr. Julieta Altamirano-Crosby, Jisu Ryu, Maren Johnson, Milena Calderari-Waldron, Mohammed Akmoosh, Moses Perez, Ronise Barreras
- Data Collection Subcommittee
    - Members: Alessandra Roque, Carolyn Cole, Emily Fung, Hodan Mohamed, James Wells, Joana Ramos, Joy Sebe, Kaitie Dong, Moses Perez, Senja Yakovleff

Decision making process

The workgroup used a hybrid-consensus decision making process. This means that the group worked to reach full consensus where possible, using polls to gauge agreement. When full consensus was not reached, several options were proposed and voted on. The numbered options presented in the recommendations section represent instances where the workgroup was split on final language. The order of options does not indicate level of preference. Due to complications in the voting process, the number of votes for each option are not presented.

Workgroup Membership

Community or Organization (listed in alphabetical order)	Member Name
Administrative Office of the Courts Interpreter Program	James Wells
American Sign Language Interpreters	Heather White
Association of Educational Service Districts	Vacant

Community or Organization (listed in alphabetical order)	Member Name
Association of Washington School Principals	Vacant
C.I.E.L.O. Centro Integral Educativo Para Latinos En Olympia	Kindra Galan
Deaf community	Brian Stromberg
Department of Social and Health Services Language Testing and Certification Program	Jodi McBride
Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee	Julieta Altamirano-Crosby, PhD
The Governor's Office of Indian Affairs	Vacant
Horn of Africa Services	Dehabe Hassan
Interpreter	Fanny Cordero
Iraqi Community Center of Washington	Mohammed Akmoosh
Local 1671/AFSCME Council 28 (WFSE)	Milena Calderari-Waldron
Office of Equity	Karen A. Johnson, PhD., Director, Washington State Office of Equity represented by Carolyn Cole, Chief, Access, and Inclusion Planning, Department of Social and Health Services
OneAmerica	Alexa Villatoro
	Alternate: Alex Roque
Open Doors for Multicultural Families	Moses Perez
	Alternate: Emily Fung

Community or Organization (listed in alphabetical order)	Member Name
Paraeducators as selected by a state association of paraeducators	Vacant
Puget Sound Educational Service District's Family and Community Engagement Program	Matthew Gulbranson
Professional Educator Standards Board	Alexandra Manuel
	Alternate: Jisu Ryu
Somali Community	Hodan Mohamed
The Special Education Advisory Council	Joy Sebe, PhD.
State Board for Community and Technical Colleges	Dr. Jamilyn Penn
The State School for the Blind	Corey Grandstaff
Teachers as selected by a state association of teachers	Vacant
University Place School District	Yoshiko Schulz
Washington Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth (CDHY)	April McArthur
	Alternate: Rick Hauan
Washington State Coalition for Language Access	Jen Chong Jewell
	Alternate: Joana Ramos
The Washington State Commission on African American Affairs	Vacant
The Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs	Sina Sam

Community or Organization (listed in alphabetical order)	Member Name
The Washington State Commission on Hispanic Affairs	Dr. Randy Nunez
	Alternate: Maria Siguenza
Washington State Parent Teacher Association	Andrew Estep
Washington State School Directors' Association	Abigail Westbrook

Workgroup Staff

As required by ESSB 5092, the Language Access Workgroup is staffed by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO)

- Danielle Eidenberg, Senior Education Ombuds, OEO
- Heather Rees, Research and Policy Development Program Manager, Center for the Improvement of Student Learning, OSPI
- Maria Flores, Executive Director, Center for the Improvement of Student Learning, OSPI
- Sarah Albertson, Managing Attorney, Equity & Civil Rights, OSPI
- Yordanos Gebreamlak, Senior Education Ombuds, OEO

Acknowledgements

The 2021 Language Access Workgroup would like to acknowledge with gratitude the following:

- The constituents - families, communities, students – who continue to advocate and share their stories and feedback
- Representative Tina Orwall, for her continued support of this issue and for creating this opportunity
- Members of the original Language Access Workgroup who were unable to continue on the workgroup and on whose work this report is founded
- The spoken and sign language interpreters who helped us create accessible meetings (especially Daniel Mroz, Laurie Reinhardt, and Catherine Thomas)
- Youth from OneAmerica for their activism
- The staff of interpreter training programs at University of Arkansas and University of Georgia

- Additional expert members of subcommittees including: Charlene Williams, Ronise Barreras, Senja Yakovleff
- Joy Sebe of Open Doors for Multicultural Families for her advocacy
- All workgroup members and staff for their time and dedication
- Everyone who deeply cares about family engagement and is working to make language access a reality for families

Introduction

As established in the 2020 Language Access Workgroup Report, language access for families and communities is an essential right which enables family and community engagement, establishes trust and builds community, and embraces diversity, benefits which impact all of society. However, the workgroup finds that despite civil rights laws which ban discrimination on the basis of disability and national origin that have been in effect for decades[1], language access has not been taken seriously. A culture of noncompliance has developed in many institutions including schools, rooted in racism, anti-immigrant prejudice, and ableism.

Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized how lack of language access results in disparate impacts in health outcomes, economic impacts, and of course access to education. During the school closures of 2020-2021, parents supported the public education system as their student's primary teacher. Open and effective communication with the school was necessary for access to resources from textbooks to school lunches. Family feedback collected by Open Doors for Multicultural Families demonstrated how the system has and continues to fail to meet language access needs[2]. The recommendations presented here have been developed with this feedback in mind and with the input of the voices of those who have been historically marginalized on the basis of language. Any implementation efforts must also include their voices.

The 2021 Language Access Workgroup Report presents a series of recommendations focused on two specific approaches for improving language access for families and communities:

1. A system of standards, training, testing, and credentialing for spoken and sign language interpreters for students' families and
2. collecting information related to language access services in schools and school districts.

This report is meant to build on the work of the 2020 report and its recommendations. The workgroup did not review or edit previous recommendations made in additional areas.

[1] Civil Rights Act, 42 USCS § 2000e (1964); Washington Law Against Discrimination, Chapter 49.60 RCW; Washington Equal Education Opportunity Law, Chapter 28A.642 RCW

[2] Perez, M., Kaur, M. & Sebe, J. (2021). *Family Feedback Report on Language Access in Schools. Open Doors for Multicultural Families*. https://www.multiculturalfamilies.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/2021-ODMF-Family-Feedback-Report-on-Language-Access-1.pdf

In the scope of this workgroup and report, language access here includes plans, policies, procedures, and services meant to establish meaningful, two-way communication between the district/school and parents with limited English proficiency (LEP), who are Deaf, blind or need other communication assistance, and promote access for such parents to the programs, services, and activities of the district/school. It does not include English Language Learner (ELL) supports, dual-language programs, bilingual initiatives and other services or efforts targeted to students.

The recommendations presented are based on the current state of systems, policies, procedures, laws, and data collections that currently exist as of this report publication. The workgroup recognizes that the landscape will and should continue to change and that the recommendations here will need implementation that is flexible enough to accommodate these changes. Specifically, the workgroup recognizes the need for a statewide, systemic solution for language access that go beyond the scope of public education.

Language access in public education exists within a framework that includes a system built on local control, guided by state and federal laws and requirements. These federal and state laws offer the foundation upon which customized best practices can be built. The recommendations presented here seek to establish a system for effective language access that includes both enforceable requirements and the necessary incentives, assistance, and tools to implement these best practices.

Recommendations

Standards, Training, Testing and Credentialing

Introduction

In Washington State and nationally, there is currently no consistently used or required test or other tool for schools and school districts to use to determine if an interpreter meets the standard for a qualified and competent interpreter. This iteration of the Language Access Workgroup was tasked with recommending standards, training, testing, and credentialing for spoken and sign language interpreters for students' families. All four of these elements must work together to create the system that supplies schools and school districts with the ability to procure and provide qualified and competent interpreters to all families.

The workgroup considered how a system for educational interpreters might function informed by and integrated with current interpreter training, testing, and credentialing including:

- The Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) interpreter certification and authorization
- The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) interpreter certification and registration
- National health care spoken language interpreter certification
- National Interpreter Certification for American Sign Language (ASL)

- Training and testing available in other states

It should be noted that DSHS shared that the Language Testing & Certification (LTC) program could not establish a new program of testing for the purpose of credentialing interpreters and translators to serve in education settings. Additionally, at the present time, and for the foreseeable future, there will not be any new interpreters credentialed by the LTC program due to the suspension of testing since March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This issue must be addressed, as it will impact the development of a pool of interpreters who are eligible to become credentialed to serve our schools.

In addition to state credentials, the LAW also learned of new national efforts to develop testing and assessment for educational interpreters that Washington may tap into in the future. The American Association of Interpreters and Translators in Education (AAITE) and the National Association of Educational Translators and Interpreters of Spoken Languages (NAETISL) have recently begun work to create systems specially for the education sector.

The following recommendations are made based on the tools, systems, and policies currently in place with the recognition that these are constantly changing, and any new system must be flexible enough to accommodate future changes.

Background: Educational Employment Policy

In Washington State, policy regarding the employment of school and district staff is set, implemented, and monitored by the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). These policies also apply to personnel who are contracted to serve in schools. Spoken and sign language interpreters who are contracted, either as freelancers or though an agency, are not currently subject to these employment policies but could be, as a tool for establishing and enforcing minimum quality standards for interpretation. There are two mechanisms for this policy that were considered for use by the workgroup: minimum employment requirements and certification. The differences between these two systems are summarized in the table below:

TABLE 2 MINIMUM EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS & CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

	Minimum Employment Requirements	Certificates
Who sets the policy?	Professional Educator Standards Board	Professional Educator Standards Board
Who monitors? Who checks that requirements are met?	Local school districts	The state. The OSPI certification office handles inquiries on certificate applications, forms, and processes

	Minimum Employment Requirements	Certificates
Is there an enforceable code of conduct?	No, because there is no certificate to suspend or revoke	Yes
Can initial training or education be required?	Yes	Yes
Can ongoing professional learning be required?	No	Yes. Can be required for certificate renewal. For example, 100 clock hours (or the equivalent in credits or Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) are required every five years
Is data collected / accessible by the state?	Depends. Not currently collected but potentially possible.	Yes, certified educator and staff data are collected by the state. Those data are stored in the e-certification system and accessible through S275 personnel reports.

Background: Tiered Interactions

The following recommendations are based on the concept of a tiered system of interpreter practice linked to successive levels of training and qualifications which was initially recommended by the first Language Access Workgroup in their 2020 Report.

Table 3. Tiered Interactions for Spoken Language Interpretation

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Tier 1 interactions are spontaneous, unannounced meetings or communication scenarios that occur in schools when a Tier 3 or Tier 2 interpreter is not available. The urgency or spontaneity of an interaction does not waive or modify the requirement to utilize interpretation of the appropriate tier level. For example, if a spontaneous meeting begins to involve a topic that requires a Tier 2 or Tier 3 interpreter, the interpreter and school staff will need to stop and engage the services of a Tier 2 or Tier 3 interpreter, potentially via remote interpreting.	**Tier 2 interactions are meetings and other school gatherings that do not have a legal context.** Interpreters should have the ability to interpret in simultaneous mode as appropriate for meeting type. Examples of Tier 2 interactions: • Enrollment activities • Parent-teacher conferences • School events such as Curriculum Night, Open House, etc. • School-based community events	**Tier 3 interactions are specialized meetings with potential legal impact.** Interpreters should have the ability to interpret in simultaneous mode as appropriate for meeting type. The list below, which may expand over time, details the types of specialized meetings that require the highest level of interpretation skills: • Meetings and discussions likely to involve topics that implicate a student's legally protected status involving a disability. This includes special education, individual educational plans (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, behavior intervention plans, and functional behavioral assessments. • Meetings and discussions that have the potential to result in restricting or excluding a student from a class, program, or school; including, for example, meetings involving law enforcement or school resource officers (SRO), disciplinary meetings and hearings, truancy meetings and hearings, and any communication about harassment, intimidation, bullying, discrimination, safety plans, behavior intervention plans, physical restraint and seclusion of students, risk assessment, truancy. • Meetings and discussions likely to directly involve a student's English Learner (EL) status. • Meetings regarding highly capable programing • School Board meetings

Table 4. Tiered Interactions for Sign Language:

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Tier 1 interactions are spontaneous, unannounced meetings or communication scenarios that occur in schools when a Tier 3 or Tier 2 interpreter is not available. In this context when an in-person interpreter is not available, Deaf participants may choose request to write notes, use an app such as Transcribe, use video remote interpreting (VRI) or to request to schedule a meeting with an in-person interpreter. The urgency or spontaneity of an interaction does not waive or modify the requirement to utilize interpretation of the appropriate tier level. For example, if a spontaneous meeting begins to involve a topic that requires a Tier 2 or Tier 3 interpreter, the school staff will need to stop and engage the services of a Tier 2 or Tier 3 interpreter, potentially via video remote interpreting.	**Tier 2 interactions are meetings and school gatherings that do not have a legal context.** Examples of Tier 2 interactions: • Enrollment activities • Parent-teacher conferences • School events such as Curriculum Night, Open House, etc. • Community events, such as plays	**Tier 3 interactions are high stakes meetings with potential legal impact.** The list below, which may expand over time, details the specialized meetings that require the highest level of interpretation skills: • Meetings and discussions likely to involve topics that implicate a student's legally protected status involving a disability. This includes special education, individual educational plans (IEPs), Section 504 Plans, behavior intervention plans, and functional behavioral assessments. • Meetings and discussions that have the potential to result in restricting or excluding a student from a class, program, or school; including, for example, meetings involving law enforcement or school resource officers (SRO), disciplinary meetings and hearings, truancy meetings and hearings, and any communication about harassment, intimidation, bullying, discrimination, safety plans, behavior intervention plans, physical restraint and seclusion of students, risk assessment, truancy. • Meetings and discussions likely to directly involve a student's English Learner (EL) status. • Meetings regarding highly capable programing • School Board meetings

Additional guidance on the Tiers:

- At Tier 3, interpreters should have the ability to interpret in simultaneous mode, however there is always a need for flexibility in considerations for the interpreting mode at a given meeting.

- When use of simultaneous interpreting is being considered for a specific encounter, in addition to requirements for interpreter skills, it is also necessary to determine if the logistical requirements are able to be met for the participation of all parties (parents, school, interpreter).

- Schools must have access to, and provide, all necessary technology, equipment, devices, and logistical support for on-site simultaneous interpretation and video conferencing, as appropriate. Practical needs include a dedicated IT person for technical assistance clear instructions and support for all attendees on how to use equipment, use of interpretation channels for remote meetings, and access to stable, broadband internet.[3]

- There is no one interpreting delivery modality that fits all situations, and a district's Language Access Plan should include an outline for a decision-making process to meet current and future needs.

Recommendations for Standards, Training, Testing and Credentialing

Recommendation 1. The LAW recommends the use of a phased in approach for interpreter credentialing, moving from minimum employment requirements to a certificate.

The overarching goal of a phased-in approach towards a certification process includes verifying interpreter qualifications to meet the communication needs of schools and families. Among the qualifications are age, education, training and testing for both spoken and sign language interpreters for each phase. See Table 5.

Additional considerations include the need to develop a process that is as streamlined as possible in order to promote the creation of a well-qualified pool of interpreters serving the education sector. A costly and difficult process may discourage interpreters from pursuing the necessary qualifications to interpret in education settings and reduce the overall number of available interpreters, ultimately creating additional barriers to language access.

[3] See American Translators Association (ATA). (2021, August 30). *ATA Position Paper on Remote Interpreting.* www.atanet.org/advocacy-outreach/ata-position-paper-on-remote-interpreting/ for more information on remote interpreting.

Recommendation 2. Phase 1: Minimum Employment Requirements[4]

Phase 1 includes implementation of minimum employment requirements with qualifications for age, education, training and testing for both spoken and sign language interpreters.

Age

Recommendation 2a. In Phase 1, the LAW recommends a minimum age requirement of 18 years for both spoken and sign language interpreters.
Note: Schools may not rely on or ask students, siblings, or other children to interpret for parents or guardians regardless of their age or language skills. It continues to be a practice at some schools to rely on children to interpret between parent and school personnel. This is harmful to children and families and cannot be condoned as a language access measure. A first step in moving toward a credentialed, professional workforce of interpreters in the education sector is a requirement that interpreters must be at least 18 years of age.

Education

Recommendation 2b. In Phase 1 for spoken language interpreters, the LAW recommends a minimum education requirement of a high school diploma or equivalent.
Accepted equivalent education should include acceptance of proof of education from outside of the United States.

Recommendation 2c. In Phase 1 for sign language interpreters, the LAW recommends a minimum education requirement of an associate's degree from a recognized interpreter training program OR proof of a valid certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID).
Certification from the RID is recognized as a pathway to meet the educational requirement because, while certification from the RID generally requires a bachelor's degree, it also includes additional educational pathways that should be recognized by this system.

Training

Recommendation 2d. LAW recommends the Legislature should provide funding to OSPI Language Access Technical Assistance Program to develop and maintain training modules on interpreting in the PreK-12 education system including code of ethics, terminology, protocols, policies, procedures, and governance structure.

The initial training should be required for sign language interpreters UNLESS they hold a valid RID certification (excluding Ed:K-12).
The workgroup did not come to a consensus on the initial training for spoken language interpreters.

[4] See Background: Educational Employment Policy for explanation of minimum employment requirements and how they function.

Option 1: That spoken language interpreters in school settings outside of the classroom be *required* to complete an initial training.

Option 2: That it is *suggested* that spoken language interpreters in school settings outside of the classroom complete an initial training.

The training modules should be available to interpreters free of charge and include information about interpreting in the PreK-12 education system including code of ethics, terminology, protocols, policies, procedures, and governance structure. Governance structure includes the authority and responsibility that exists at the various levels of the education system, including classroom teachers, school and district administration, school boards, Educational Service Districts (ESDs) and state agencies. Due to the time it would take to develop this training, any training requirements should be phased in as the training becomes available. Existing relevant trainings can serve as a resource in development of a Washington-specific training[5]. Existing relevant training programs, which issue documentation to students who successfully complete the course and exams, may also be considered to be accepted in lieu of the Washington-specific training, provided that they align with Washington State laws and regulations.

Testing

Recommendation 2e. The LAW recommends that for Phase 1, sign language interpreters serving at Tier 2 meetings are qualified if they have one or more of the following:

For hearing interpreters:

- **have Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Certification**
- **are on the Washington State Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) Interpreter list**
- **are Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) ASL Advanced or Master level**
- **have an Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) score of 4.0 to 5.0**

For Deaf interpreters:

- **have RID Certification**
- **are on the Washington State ODHH Interpreter list**
- **BEI ASL Intermediary Levels 3, 4 or 5**

Tier 3 meetings, sign language interpreters are qualified if they have one or more of the following:

For hearing interpreters:

- **RID Certification**

For Deaf interpreters:

- **have RID Certification**
- **are on the Washington State ODHH Interpreter list**

[5] See Appendix A. Information on Existing Interpreter Trainings

- **BEI ASL Intermediary Levels 4 or 5**

Note on hearing and Deaf interpreters: Hearing interpreters are hearing individuals who are bilingual in sign language and have the necessary training to serve as an interpreter between spoken English and American Sign Language or other signed languages. Deaf interpreters are Deaf individuals who are part of the Deaf community, are proficient in American Sign Language or other visual or tactile communication forms and have the necessary training on interpretation skills. Deaf interpreters work in tandem with a hearing interpreter to ensure that the message is conveyed successfully to and from the Deaf consumer.

While the LAW did not reach consensus on recommendations for spoken language interpreter testing requirements, the workgroup recommended both of the following as potential options:

Option 1: For Phase 1, spoken language interpreters are required to have proof of oral language proficiency test at Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) level 3 for English and the Language Other Than English (LOTE) OR hold recognized interpreter credentials to be defined by PESB.

Option 2: For Phase 1, spoken language interpreters serving at Tier 1 meetings are required to have oral language proficiency test at ILR level 3 for English and the language other than English (LOTE) OR be Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) certified or registered, Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) certified or authorized, or DSHS recognized[6].
To serve at Tier 2 and 3 meetings, spoken language interpreters are required to be AOC certified or registered, DSHS certified or authorized, or DSHS recognized[7].

"DSHS recognized" is defined in WAC as a person who is certified by:

(1) The Washington state administrative office of the courts (AOC) as a court interpreter; or

(2) The Administrative Office of the United States Courts as a federal court interpreter; or

(3) A national interpreter certification body as a health care interpreter and is recognized by the department; or

(4) A nonprofit organization that uses a credible certification program to certify professional interpreters and is recognized by the department; or

(5) Another state or U.S. territory or another country whose certification program is comparable to DSHS certification and based upon similar requirements.[8]

The workgroup also notes that 2 national organizations, the American Association of Interpreters and Translators in Education (AAITE) and the National Association of

[6] As defined in: WAC 388-03-030
[7] Ibid.
[8] WAC 388-03-030

Educational Translators and Interpreters of Spoken Languages (NAETISL), have begun to work towards creating a test and credential for school interpreters. It will be necessary to continue to follow these national efforts as they develop for consideration of how new national credential will fit into the Washington model.

TABLE 5. MINIMUM EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS (PHASE 1)[9]

Min Employment Requirements (Phase 1)		
	Spoken Language	**Sign Language**
Age	Min age 18	Min age 18
Education	High school diploma or equivalent	Associate's degree from an interpreter training program OR Hold a valid certification from the RID.
Training	Option 1: That spoken language interpreters in school settings outside of the classroom be *required* to complete an initial training. Option 2: That it is *suggested* that spoken language interpreters in school settings outside of the classroom complete an initial training.	Required modules on interpreting in the PreK-12 education system including code of ethics, terminology, protocols, policies, procedures, and governance structure UNLESS hold a valid RID certification (excluding Ed:K-12)
Testing	Option 1: For Phase 1, spoken language interpreters are required to have proof of oral language proficiency test at ILR level 3 for English and the language other than English (LOTE) OR hold recognized interpreter credentials as defined by OSPI.	Tier 2 – For hearing interpreters: • have RID Certification • are on the Washington State ODHH Interpreter list • are BEI ASL Advanced or Master level • have an EIPA score of 4.0 to 5.0 For Deaf interpreters: • have RID Certification

[9] See Background: Educational Employment Policy for explanation of minimum employment requirements.

	Min Employment Requirements (Phase 1)	
	Option 2: For Phase 1, spoken language interpreters serving at Tier 1 meetings are required to have oral language proficiency test at ILR level 3 for English and the language other than English (LOTE) OR be AOC certified or registered, DSHS certified or authorized, or DSHS recognized[10]. To serve at Tier 2 and 3 meetings, spoken language interpreters are required to be AOC certified or registered, DSHS certified or authorized, or DSHS recognized[11].	• are on the Washington State ODHH Interpreter list • BEI ASL Intermediary Levels 3, 4 or 5 Tier 3 – For hearing interpreters: • RID Certification For Deaf interpreters: • have RID Certification • are on the Washington State ODHH Interpreter list • BEI ASL Intermediary Levels 4 or 5

Recommendation 3. Phase 2: Certification[12]

Phase 2 includes implementation of minimum employment requirements with qualifications for age, education, training and testing for both spoken and sign language interpreters.

Age

Recommendation 3a. In Phase 2, the LAW recommends a minimum age requirement of 18 years for both spoken and sign language interpreters.
Note: Schools may not rely on or ask students, siblings, or other children to interpret for parents or guardians regardless of their age or language skills. It continues to be a practice at some schools to rely on children to interpret between parent and school personnel. This is harmful to children and families and cannot be condoned as a language access measure. A first step in moving toward a credentialed, professional workforce of interpreters in the education sector is a requirement that interpreters must be at least 18 years of age.

[10] As defined in: WAC 388-03-030
[11] Ibid.
[12] See Background: Educational Employment Policy for explanation of certification and how it functions.

Education

Recommendation 3b. In Phase 2 for spoken language interpreters, the LAW recommends a minimum education requirement of a high school diploma or equivalent.
Accepted equivalent education should make necessary accommodations to accept proof of education from outside of the United States.

Recommendation 3c. In Phase 2 for sign language interpreters, the LAW recommends a minimum education requirement of an associate's degree from a recognized interpreter training program OR proof of a valid certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID).
Certification from the RID is recognized to meet the educational requirement because it generally requires a bachelor's degree however, includes additional pathways that should be recognized by this system.

Training

Recommendation 3d. In Phase 2, for both spoken and sign language interpreters, the LAW recommends that continuing education be required in order to keep the interpreter certificate valid. Continuing education should be on topics relevant to education setting, including education terminology, interpreting skills or ethics.
Continuing education is required for professional development in the field of education interpreting.

Testing

Recommendation 3e. The LAW recommends that for Phase 2, sign language interpreters serving at Tier 2 meetings are qualified if they have one or more of the following:

For hearing interpreters:
- **have Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Certification**
- **are on the Washington State Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) Interpreter list**
- **are Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) ASL Advanced or Master level**
- **have an Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA) score of 4.0 to 5.0**

For Deaf interpreters:
- **have RID Certification**
- **are on the Washington State ODHH Interpreter list**
- **BEI ASL Intermediary Levels 3, 4 or 5**

Tier 3 meetings, sign language interpreters are qualified if they have one or more of the following:

For hearing interpreters:
- **RID Certification**

For Deaf interpreters:

- **have RID Certification**
- **are on the Washington State ODHH Interpreter list**
- **BEI ASL Intermediary Levels 4 or 5**

While the LAW did not have consensus on recommendations for spoken language interpreter testing requirements., the workgroup recommended both of the following as potential options:

Option 1: For Phase 2, spoken language interpreters are required to have proof of oral language proficiency test at ILR level 3 for English and the Language Other Than English (LOTE) AND hold recognized interpreter credentials as defined by PESB.

Option 2: For Phase 2, spoken language interpreters serving at Tier 1 meetings are required to have oral language proficiency test at ILR level 3 for English and the Language Other Than English (LOTE) OR be Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) certified or registered, Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) certified or authorized, or DSHS recognized[13].
To serve at Tier 2 and 3 meetings, spoken language interpreters are required to be Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) certified or registered, Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) certified or authorized, or DSHS recognized[14].

Table 6. Certificate Requirements (Phase 2)[15]

Certificate (Phase 2)		
	Spoken Language	**Sign Language**
Age	Min age 18	Min age 18
Education	High school diploma or equivalent	Associate's degree from an interpreter training program OR Hold a valid certification from the RID.
Training	Required initial training modules on PreK-12 – code of ethics, terminology, protocols,	Required modules on interpreting in the PreK-12 education system including code of ethics, terminology, protocols, policies,

[13] As defined in: WAC 388-03-030. See language included in Phase 1
[14] As defined in: WAC 388-03-030
[15] See Background: Educational Employment Policy for explanation of certificates and how they function.

	Certificate (Phase 2)	
	policies, procedures, and governance structure AND Required continuing education relevant to education setting, education terminology, interpreting skills or ethics	procedures, and governance structure UNLESS hold a valid RID certification (excluding Ed:K-12) AND Required continuing education relevant to education setting education terminology, interpreting skills or ethics
Testing	Option 1: Proof of oral language proficiency test at ILR level 3 for English and the language other than English (LOTE) AND hold recognized interpreter credentials as defined by OSPI. Option 2: For Phase 1, spoken language interpreters serving at Tier 1 meetings are required to have oral language proficiency test at ILR level 3 for English and the language other than English (LOTE) OR be AOC certified or registered, DSHS certified or authorized, or DSHS recognized[16]. To serve at Tier 2 and 3 meetings, spoken language interpreters are required to be OR be AOC certified or registered, DSHS certified or authorized, or DSHS recognized[17].	Tier 2 – For hearing interpreters: • have RID Certification • are on the Washington State ODHH Interpreter list • BEI ASL Advanced or Master level • have an EIPA score of 4.0 to 5.0 For Deaf interpreters: • have RID Certification • are on the Washington State ODHH Interpreter list • BEI ASL Intermediary Levels 3, 4 or 5 Tier 3 – For hearing interpreters: • RID Certification For Deaf interpreters: • have RID Certification • are on the Washington State ODHH Interpreter list • BEI ASL Intermediary Levels 4 or 5

[16] As defined in: WAC 388-03-030
[17] Ibid.

The following table illustrates the alignment of the tiers to the recommended phases of implementation through assignment policy.

Table 7. Alignment of Tiers to Phases

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Sign Language	Phase 1 and 2: Utilize a Tier 2 or 3 interpreter if available. Otherwise, participants may write notes, use an app such as Transcribe or use video remote interpreting (VRI).	Phase 1: interpreter must meet minimum employment requirements Phase 2: have conditional or full certificate	Phase 1: interpreter must meet minimum employment requirements Phase 2: interpreter must have full certificate
Spoken Language	Phase 1 and 2: Option 1: No requirements for Tier 1. Option 2: Meet minimum employment requirements	Phase 1: interpreter must meet minimum employment requirements Phase 2: have conditional or full certificate	Phase 1: interpreter must meet minimum employment requirements Phase 2: interpreter must have full certificate

Other Standards

Recommendation 4. Code of Professional Conduct.

The LAW recommends that the State adopt a code of professional conduct for interpreters working with families and communities in educational settings outside of the classroom, to be established in the Washington Administrative Code (WACs), and include a process for lodging a complaint against the interpreter for violating the code.

The Code of Professional Conduct is to include both ethical standards and standards of practice. Because enforcement of the Code of Professional Conduct will only be possible in Phase 2, once a certificate has been established, implementation of this recommendation should be delayed until Phase 2 is in place. During the provisional period, educators,

administrators, families, and community members will need to be informed about the code and the enforcement process. Under the current system, complains about violations of the Educator Code of Professional Conduct are filed with the Office of Professional Practices by PESB, school district superintendents, ESD superintendents and private school administrators.

Currently, codes of conduct and standards of practice exist for interpretation in other settings such as medical, social services and the courts. On the national level, a Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Educational Translators and Interpreters of Spoken Languages is available from the National Association of Educational Translators and Interpreters of Spoken Languages (NAETISL).

Additionally, some states also have codes for interpretation in educational settings.[18] It should also be noted that sign language interpreters who hold a certification from the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) follow the RID Code of Professional Conduct.

Formalizing a Code of Professional Conduct for interpreters of spoken and sign languages in educational settings outside of the classroom would help to educate school and district staff about standards of practice for interpreters who work in schools and assist them in their procurement and administration of interpretation services. It would additionally establish for family members and their advocates the level of professionalism they can expect from interpreters.

Recommendation 5. Dual-Role Staff

The LAW recommends that school staff can interpret for meetings and events in the school but cannot interpret for the family of a student with whom they work with directly (for example as the current classroom interpreter for the student or paraeducator supporting the student).

Using dual role staff means that the person interpreting is an employee of the school or school district whose primary role is not as an interpreter. As an employee of the school, the staff member may have a vested interest in the outcome of the interpreted conversation, resulting in a conflict of interest. Interpreters are required to be neutral parties and interpret only what is said. In order to address this ethical issue, school districts should adopt this recommended best practice regarding the use of dual-role staff in their language access policies and procedures.

Recommendation 6. Remote Interpretation

Remote interpretation is a vital part of the communication methods needed by families and schools, and its importance has been highlighted even more since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic and presents both opportunities and challenges to language access efforts. Careful consideration should be taken to make sure the remote interpretation is used in a way that is effective and accessible.

[18] See the Minnesota Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice for Educational Interpreters of Spoken Languages

The Language Access Workgroup was split on recommendation 6. All options are presented below:

Option 1.	**Option 2.**
The LAW recommends that: 1. Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) and Over the phone (OPI) should be limited to Tier 1. 2. Scheduled Virtual Interpreting (SVI) and Remote Simultaneous Interpreting (RSI) is an acceptable option for Tier 2 and 3 only in situations where a qualified interpreter is unavailable in-person (like rural setting) or emergency (like pandemic) The school or district must make a good faith effort to honor the preferences of the user, test all equipment and internet connection before the meeting and make other options available if the family does not have a strong internet connection.	The LAW recognizes that: Remote interpretation is a vital part of the communications methods needed by families and schools, and its importance has been highlighted even more since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure that high quality remote services are available on a regular basis, investments must be made to overcome the digital divides that impact families, schools, and interpreters. All parties must have access, logistically and financially, to reliable high-speed broadband or wifi services, cellular services, equipment including devices, software programs, headsets, etc., with training on how to use them with ongoing technical assistance services. The OSPI Language Access Technical Assistance Program shall seek out all avenues of support and funding for these services, including through collaborations with other agencies and programs. The distinct situations of language services preferences of families for spoken and signed languages must be an integral part of implementation, and one-size-fits all approaches must be avoided.

Option 3.	**Option 4.**
The LAW recommends adopting the position expressed in the American Translators Association (ATA) Position Paper on Remote Interpreting[19]: Remote interpreting may be used in place of on-site interpreting whenever qualified interpreters in the languages needed are unavailable, when meeting in-person is	The LAW recommends that: Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) and Over the phone (OPI) is a useful tool for Tier 1 interactions when an in-person interpreter is not available. All efforts should be made to limit the use of remote interpreting in tier 2 and 3.

[19] American Translators Association (ATA). (2021, August 30). *ATA Position Paper on Remote Interpreting.* www.atanet.org/advocacy-outreach/ata-position-paper-on-remote-interpreting/

Option 1.	Option 2.
not an option, or when the client requests that modality.	Remote interpreting may be necessary in situations where a qualified interpreter is unavailable in-person, emergency, or when requested by the client.

Recommendation 7. Going Beyond the Minimum Standards

In establishing the previous recommendations for setting standards for language access services and interpreters serving in education settings outside the classroom, the workgroup recognizes that there may be situations where individuals request specific services or service delivery that goes beyond any established minimum standards. For example, use of a Qualified Deaf Interpreter is never required by the minimum standards but may be requested by the individual.

The LAW recommends that schools and districts make a good faith effort to honor the request of the individual receiving the services, even if the requests go beyond the required minimum standards.

Additional Topics

Recommendation 8. Statewide Solution

The Language Access Workgroup recognizes that language access issues affect all aspects of an individual's life, not just access to educational services. Additionally, interpreters are often not limited to interpreting in one professional sphere but serve in a wide variety of settings. Any changes to training, testing, credentialing in one area can ripple out into the whole field of interpretation. Currently, the policies and laws governing language access to state government services are independent from one another, creating a complex system that is difficult for both interpreters and clients to navigate and an inconsistency in quality and experience. The workgroup supports the development of a statewide solution that would seek to improve language access for all Washingtonians.

The following recommendation is supported in part by the LAW:

1. Recommend support for the development of a statewide Universal Access and Belonging strategy led by the Washington State Office of Equity.

2. Recommend support for the Office of Equity's plans to create a Statewide Universal Access Plan that identifies policies, procedures, and practices, and required legislation, including but not limited to:
    a. A sustainable statewide testing and certification system for spoken and sign language interpreters, and translators that all agencies can use;
    b. Strategies for centering community voice and creating barrier-free access to and delivery of government services; and

c. Guidance and technical assistance to agencies to provide language and communication services.

Support for this recommendation falls into the following options:

- Option 1: Support for the entirety of the recommendation
- Option 2: Support for points 1 and 2, excluding 2a, 2b and 2c.
- Option 3: Support for point 1, 2, 2b, 2c, excluding 2a.

Recommendation 9. Pipeline Support

The workgroup recognizes that implementation of a system of standards, training, testing, and credentialing will only be possible if there is a pipeline of qualified individuals wishing to enter the field of interpreting in educational settings. Implementation of these standards may result in an increased need for qualified interpreters that will be difficult to meet with the current supply of interpreters. An intentional effort must be made to support the pipeline of folks both entering the interpreting profession and pivoting to interpreting for the preK-12 system.

Option 1:
The LAW recommends increasing the number of interpreters through resources for those wanting to become interpreters. These may include grants and scholarships, mentorship opportunities, and continuing education/professional development opportunities. Efforts should be focused on underrepresented languages, areas that have low access to interpreters, demonstrated financial need, diversifying interpreter recruitment and expanding training programs.

Option 2:
The LAW supports option 1 with the addition that training, initial certification and certification renewal must be free for interpreters.

Recommendation 10. Language Access Advisory Committee

In order to guide, monitor and adjust implementation, the LAW recommends the establishment of a permanent language access advisory committee.

Roles and tasks include:

- Making recommendations for general improvement language access for students' families
- Conducting family and community engagement
- Certificate development and maintenance
- Training development
- Evaluating effectiveness of language access policies, procedures, and programs
- Addressing supply and demand including preparation programs
- Monitoring data collection and analysis
- Identifying research opportunities

Support for the committee should be provided by the Language Access Technical Assistance program at OSPI, with assistance from PESB to lead the technical working group on certificate development and maintenance. Membership should include representation from language access services users, both spoken and sign language, community organizations that provide direct services, advocacy organization, interpreters, preparation programs, schools, and school districts. Additionally, the committee should coordinate with other workgroups and committees focused on equity and access for students and families.

Data Collection

Introduction

The 2021 Language Access Workgroup was charged with making recommendations for "collecting information related to language access services in schools and school districts". Currently, very little information about language access services is collected at the state level. The following table summarizes the data we currently know to be collected at the state and local level:

TABLE 8. DATA COLLECTED

Data Element	Collection Mechanism	Level
Student's native or first language spoken.	Home Language Survey	Local and State
The primary language the **student** speaks at home.	Home Language Survey	Local and State
In what language(s) would your family prefer to communicate with the school?	Home Language Survey	Local ONLY
What is the primary language used in the home, regardless of the language spoken by your child?	Home Language Survey	Local ONLY

Data Element	Collection Mechanism	Level
"whether a qualified interpreter for the student's family was provided at any planning meeting related to a student's individualized education program or plan developed under section 504 of the rehabilitation act of 1973 and meetings related to school discipline and truancy,"	Unknown	Local ONLY

Examples of data that are not collected or not known to be collected include:

- The primary language used by each parent or guardian
- The number of parents or guardians who use a language other than English
- If the parent or guardian is Deaf, DeafBlind, blind, hard of hearing or need other communication assistance
- The number and type of requests for language access and fill rate
- The number of interpreted meetings
- Evaluation of interpreted meetings

HB 1130 (2019) took the first step to expand data collection starting with special education and high stakes/specialized meetings. It required that schools document "whether a qualified interpreter for the student's family was provided at any planning meeting related to a student's individualized education program or plan developed under section 504 of the rehabilitation act of 1973 and meetings related to school discipline and truancy," however, this information was not required to be reported to the state and is therefore unable to be reported at that level.

The Language Access Workgroup identified purposes and goals of data collection:

1. **To understand language access needs in WA state**

   Having accurate data on language access needs is necessary to properly address those needs.

2. **To coordinate with state-level efforts such as allocation of funds, equity plans and emergency responses**

   The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for language access data and plans in order to properly respond to emergencies. Across the state we saw gaps in emergency responses and therefore families lacking access to services, meals, materials, notification of closures, etc.

3. **To recognize the full culture of the school and build trust and respect**

Language data must be collected, stored, and communicated in a way that explicitly protects undocumented students and parents.

4. **For Oversight and Accountability**

   They system needs regular and periodic information on types and quality of services including feedback on experiences with interpreters and school staff.

5. **To Promote Education / Awareness**

   Without accurate data on language access needs and services provided it is difficult to accurately convey the scope of need and importance.

With the purpose of achieving these goals, the Language Access Workgroup presents the following recommendations.

Data Recommendations

Recommendation 11. Parent/Guardian Information

Element: Preferred language for communications with the school and school district: Written & Oral (includes spoken and signed languages)

Currently, the Home Language Survey (HLS) is the form primarily used by school districts to identify each student's primary or first language for the purposes of screening determine eligibility for the State Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) . The template HLS provided by OSPI also includes information about the right to language access services and asks “In what language(s) would your family prefer to communicate with the school?”. The LAW makes the following recommendations to improve the quality of the data collected by this survey tool:

Recommendation 11a. The LAW recommends that schools continue to collect family preferred language for communications with the school and school district through the Home Language Survey (HLS).

Questions on family preferred language should include space to identify each individual adult member of the student’s household and their preferred language for both written and oral communication.

Recommendation 11b. The LAW recommends that OSPI update the HLS templates in the following ways:

a. **To include additional information about the purpose of the data collection and availability of language access services free of charge**

b. **To emphasize that the information will not be used to determine or report immigration or citizenship status by moving this section to the top of the form**

c. **To be written in plain language**[20]

d. **To have clearly separate sections for parent/guardian and student data**

e. **To remove the question "In what country was your child born?" from the HLS.**

Recommendation 11c. The LAW recommends that schools and school districts do not ask for student's birth country on any form that also includes questions about language access needs.

The LAW recognizes that questions about national origin and birthplace made by government agencies can create a "chilling effect" and serve as a disincentive for people not to complete and return school forms for fear of discrimination due to identification of family immigration or citizenship status. Including questions about birth country or immigration status on forms related to language access needs can decrease the accuracy and reliability of information collected. Any requests for information on the student's place of birth required to determine if school is eligible to receive funding should be asked elsewhere on enrollment forms. Additionally, the HLS should clearly state in plain language the intended use of the data being collected, and that the information will never be used to identify immigration status.

Element: Need for sign language or other communication assistance

Recommendation 11d. The LAW recommends that the questions:

3. **Is the parent or guardian Deaf or hard of hearing and needs a sign language interpreter?**
4. **Is the parent or guardian blind or deafblind and needs communication assistance?**

be added to the Home Language Survey. The form should include a space to describe the requested language and/or other communication assistance.

Examples of types of communication assistance include braille, captioning, large type, and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. Language access services are often perceived to be limited to oral and written languages, emphasizing the need for specific consideration of the needs of Deaf, DeafBlind, blind, hard of hearing parents or guardians.

Additional Parent/Guardian Information Recommendations:

Recommendation 11e. The LAW recommends that OSPI provide training to school and district staff on appropriate use of the HLS, including best practices, such as: not relying on children to deliver and bring back surveys, relationship building, how to talk to the parent, verifying the language, explaining utilization of data, and translation of the survey.

Recommendation 11f. The LAW recommends that parent/guardian preferred language access information provided on the HLS be required to be reported by the

[20] EXECUTIVE ORDER 05-03. Plain Talk. (March 24, 2005). https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/eo_05-03.pdf

district annually to OSPI in aggregate (number of parents/guardians and number of languages) to be displayed on the publicly available Report Card site.

Recommendation 12. Language Access Services

Element: Language access services provided (interpretation and translation) and type of encounter

Recommendation 12a. The LAW recommends that for all meetings reported in Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS) add the data elements:

i. **"Was a translated meeting notice provide? y/n"**
ii. **"Were translated documents requested? y/n" and**
iii. **"Were translated documents provided? y/n"**
iv. **If yes, in what language?**

v. **"Was a qualified interpreter requested? y/n"**
vi. **"Was a qualified interpreter provided? y/n",**
vii. **If yes, in what language and what delivery modality (on-site and remote – video, phone call, in-person)?**

Recommendation 12b. The LAW recommends that the ongoing language access advisory committee continue to monitor and suggest modifications to the CEDARS data collection as it is implemented.

Element: Feedback on the quality of language access services provided

Recommendation 12c. The LAW recommends that the Legislature provide funding to the Language Access Technical Assistance Program at OSPI create standardized and translated forms for:

i. **Language service users, both spoken and signed languages, to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the interpretation and translation services provided (ex: were they able to participate fully, how was the pacing, their experience of the meeting, correct language and/or dialect, professional manner, treated with respect and dignity, adequate time provided for the meeting, and interpreter skills: fluency in English and the language other than English (LOTE), knowledge of subject matter concepts and terminology).**

ii. **Interpreters to provide feedback on the ability of the school or district staff to conduct the meeting (ex: were translated documents provided, did staff speak directly to the client, pre-session, was adequate time provided for the meeting).**

Text or other electronic delivery of the evaluation forms may be used

Recommendation 12d. The LAW recommends that the Legislature require that aggregated summaries of feedback including language and response rates are made publicly accessible by the school district twice a year.

Element: Interpreter qualifications

Recommendation 12e. The LAW recommends that the ongoing language access advisory committee continue to monitor data collection and reporting requirements on interpreter qualifications as the interpreter credentialing system rolls out.

Element: Use of funds to pay for language access services

Recommendation 12f. The LAW recommends that the Legislature require that each year the school board must review the funds spent by the district and individual school buildings on language access services in conjunction with a review of the language access needs as collected by the Home Language Survey.

Recommendation 12g. The LAW recommends that the Language Access Technical Assistance Program at OSPI proactively provide guidance to districts on what funding sources can be used to pay for language access services.

Student and Student's Families Language Data

In addition to recommendations, the Section 501(3)(g) of the 2021 budget bill (ESSB 5092) included the requirement that the "report shall include, at a minimum, information regarding the different languages in which students and students' families prefer to communicate by each school district." Currently, student and family language data are collected by most districts using the Home Language Survey. Only student language data is stored in the state's educational data system, the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System (CEDARS).

Methods

Data on student preferred language was secured through a data request to the OSPI Student Information Department. Data requested included Element B18 – Student Language Spoken at Home for all student for the 2020-2021 school year, disaggregated by Local Education Agency (LEA).

Data on family preferred language was collected through the iGrants Form Package 447 the Equity Assurance Report. The form package included a Language Access Data Collection Guide to assist LEAs with completing the report. Data collection was separated into several sections:

Section 1: Data on Spoken Language Assistance

In this section, LEAs were given the option of selecting between several different data formats which were indicated to be the most common methods of data storage by school district data administrators who were consulted. LEAs could then fill out and upload the supplied data templates for each data format that they had. A fourth option for an additional data format was provided as well.

Questions included in Section 1:

1. Does the district collect and store the preferred language of each individual parent or guardian? I.e. This district collects and stores an unduplicated count of individual parent or guardians and their preferred language.

   Yes or No

   If yes, use this template to enter and submit below the number of parents or guardians who prefer to communicate with the school district in a language other than English.

   Template: Parent Language Template

2. Does the district collect and store the preferred language of each individual family unit? I.e. This district collects and stores an unduplicated count of families, which may include multiple parents or guardians, and their preferred language.

   Yes or No

   If yes, use this template to enter and submit below the number of families who preferred to communicate with the school district in a language other than English.

   Template: Family Language Template

3. Does the district collect and store the preferred language of the family of each student? I.e. This district collects and stores the preferred language of the family of each student, which may include duplicated numbers of families because a family may have several students enrolled in the district.

   Yes or No

   If yes, use this template to enter and submit below the number of students whose family prefers to communicate with the school district in a language other than English.

   Template: Student's Family Language Template

4. Does the district collect and store the language that students' families prefer to communicate with the school district in another form not included in questions 1-3?

   Yes or No

   If yes, please describe below the units and format in which this data is collected

and upload a spreadsheet of this data below. Do not submit any data which includes personally identifiable information. Include aggregated data only.

Section 2: Data on Communication with Parents with Other Communication Needs, Including Those Related to Disabilities

Questions in Section 2:

5. Does the district ask parent/guardians if they need communications assistance such as use of sign language, braille, captioning or other communication services or formats? If yes, describe the method of collection and storage, and the units and format in which this data is collected and upload a spreadsheet of this data below. Do not submit any data which includes personally identifiable information. Include aggregated data only.

   Yes or No

   If yes, please describe below the units and format in which this data is collected and upload a spreadsheet of this data below. Do not submit any data which includes personally identifiable information. Include aggregated data only.

Section 3: Data Storage

This section was intended to gather additional information regarding the method of collection and storage of information about the different languages in which students' families prefer to communicate with the school district in order to inform our understanding of the data submitted and any recommendations for future data collection.

Questions in Section 3:

6. Is any of the information submitted above collected stored electronically in the district's student information system (SIS) or another digital system?

   Yes or No

7. Use the text box below to add any additional information about the method of data collection, format, and storage that you would like to share.

Student's Families Language Data Results

Response rate

52% (n=151) of Local Education Agencies (LEAs), including school districts, charter schools and tribal compacts, submitted reportable data by the deadline of November 17, 2021.

List of LEAs that submitted data:

- Aberdeen
- Adna
- Anacortes

- Arlington
- Bainbridge
- Bellevue
- Bellingham
- Bethel
- Bickleton
- Blaine
- Boistfort
- Camas
- Carbonado
- Castle Rock
- Centerville
- Central Kitsap
- Central Valley
- Centralia
- Cheney
- Chewelah
- Chimacum
- Clover Park
- Colfax
- College Place
- Colton
- Colville
- Conway
- Cusick
- Dayton
- Dieringer
- East Valley Spokane
- East Valley Yakima
- Eastmont
- Ellensburg
- Elma
- Endicott
- Entiat
- Ephrata
- Evaline
- Everett
- Evergreen Clark
- Federal Way
- Ferndale
- Fife
- Franklin Pierce
- Freeman
- Granger
- Granite Falls
- Grapeview
- Green Mountain
- Highland
- Highline
- Impact Commencement Bay
- Impact Puget Sound
- Impact Salish Sea
- Issaquah
- Kelso
- Kittitas
- Klickitat
- La Conner
- Lake Quinault
- Lake Stevens
- Lake Washington
- Lakewood
- Lind
- Longview
- Lopez
- Lumen Public School
- Lyle
- Lynden
- Mabton
- Manson
- Mary M Knight
- Marysville
- Mead
- Medical Lake
- Mercer Island
- Methow Valley
- Monroe
- Moses Lake
- Mossyrock
- Mount Adams
- Mount Vernon
- Naselle-Grays River Valley
- Nooksack Valley
- North Beach
- North Franklin
- North Kitsap
- North Thurston
- Northshore
- Ocean Beach
- Okanogan
- Omak
- Onalaska
- Orcas Island
- Orondo
- Orting
- Othello
- Pioneer
- Port Townsend
- PRIDE Prep
- Prosser
- Pullman
- Puyallup
- Raymond
- Renton
- Richland
- Roosevelt
- San Juan Island
- Seattle
- Sedro-Woolley
- Shelton
- Skamania
- Skykomish
- Snoqualmie Valley
- Soap Lake
- South Bend
- South Kitsap
- South Whidbey
- Stanwood-Camano
- Steilacoom
- Sultan
- Sumner
- Sunnyside
- Tacoma
- Tekoa
- Tenino
- Thorp
- Toledo
- Tonasket
- Toppenish
- Tumwater
- Union Gap
- University Place
- Valley
- Vancouver
- Walla Walla
- Wapato
- Washington Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth
- Washougal
- Wenatchee
- West Valley Spokane
- West Valley Yakima
- Whatcom Intergenerational High School
- White River
- White Salmon Valley

- Willapa Valley
- Winlock
- Woodland
- Yakima
- Yelm

List of LEAs that did **not** submit data or submitted data in an unreportable format:

- Almira
- Asotin Anatone
- Battle Ground
- Benge
- Bremerton
- Brewster
- Bridgeport
- Brinnon
- Burlington Edison
- Cape Flattery
- Cascade
- Catalyst Public Schools
- Chehalis
- Chief Leschi Tribal Compact
- Clarkston
- Cle Elum Roslyn
- Columbia (Stevens)
- Columbia (Walla Walla)
- Concrete
- Coulee Hartline
- Coupeville
- Crescent
- Creston
- Curlew
- Darrington
- Davenport
- Deer Park
- Dixie
- Easton
- Eatonville
- Edmonds
- Evergreen (Stevens)
- Goldendale
- Grand Coulee Dam
- Grandview
- Griffin
- Harrington
- Hockinson
- Hood Canal
- Hoquiam
- Inchelium
- Index
- Kahlotus
- Keller
- Kennewick
- Kiona Benton City
- La Center
- LaCrosse
- Lake Chelan
- Lamont
- Liberty
- Loon Lake
- Mansfield
- McCleary
- Mill A
- Montesano
- Morton
- Mount Baker
- Mount Pleasant
- Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
- Naches Valley
- Napavine
- Nespelem
- Nine Mile Falls
- North Mason
- North River
- Northport
- Oak Harbor
- Oakesdale
- Oakville
- Ocosta
- Odessa
- Onion Creek
- Orient
- Oroville
- Palisades
- Pateros
- Paterson
- Pe Ell
- Peninsula
- Pinnacles Prep
- Pomeroy
- Port Angeles
- Prescott
- Pullman Community Montessori
- Queets Clearwater
- Quilcene
- Quillayute Valley
- Quincy
- Rainier Prep Charter
- Rainier
- Rainier Valley Leadership Academy
- Reardan Edwall
- Republic
- Ridgefield
- Ritzville
- Riverside
- Riverview
- Rochester
- Royal
- Satsop
- Selah
- Selkirk
- Sequim
- Shaw Island
- Shoreline
- Snohomish
- Southside
- Spokane International Academy
- Spokane
- Sprague
- St. John
- Star
- Starbuck
- Steptoe
- Stevenson Carson
- Summit Public School: Atlas
- Summit Public School: Olympus
- Summit Public School: Sierra

- Summit Valley
- Taholah
- Tahoma
- Touchet
- Toutle Lake
- Trout Lake
- Tukwila
- Vashon Island
- Wahkiakum
- Wahluke
- Warden
- Washtucna
- Waterville
- Wellpinit
- Wilbur
- Wishkah Valley
- Wishram
- Zillah

Common errors found when reviewing LEA submission of the report included:

- Selecting "yes" to questions 1-4 (meaning that they collect data in this format) but submitting no data
- Submitting blank data templates
- Submitting copies of enrollment forms and not data
- Submitting student data instead of parent/guardian data
- Submitting personally identifiable information for students or parent/guardians

When reviewing, it became clear that LEAs were unsure how to submit data about student's families who preferred English. LEAs did one of three things:

1. Included English users in full list of preferred languages
2. Reported the number of English users even when there were no other languages preferred
3. Reported no data when English was the only preferred language

Because of this inconsistency in data reporting, we are unable to determine the total number of families or parents/guardians in each LEA or in the state and therefore are unable to report the percent of the total that each language represents.

Data Summaries

Included below are several summaries of the data reported as Student's Families Preferred Language. Full data tables, including student language are reported in Appendix B - Student and Student's Family Language Data, a separate document that can be found on the OSPI website.

Data Summary A: Top languages

Preferred Language	# of Student's Families
English	210920
Spanish	53739
Vietnamese	3581
Russian	2884

Preferred Language	# of Parents or Guardians
English	141935
Spanish	23333
Unknown	3410
Vietnamese	1973

Preferred Language	# of Families
English	97561
Spanish	18621
Russian	1646
Vietnamese	1194

English & Spanish	2118
Chinese-Mandarin	1606
Somali	1388
Korean	1159
Chinese-Cantonese	1138
Arabic	1076

Russian	941
Korean	729
Arabic	619
Ukrainian	490
Cambodian	484
Somali	444

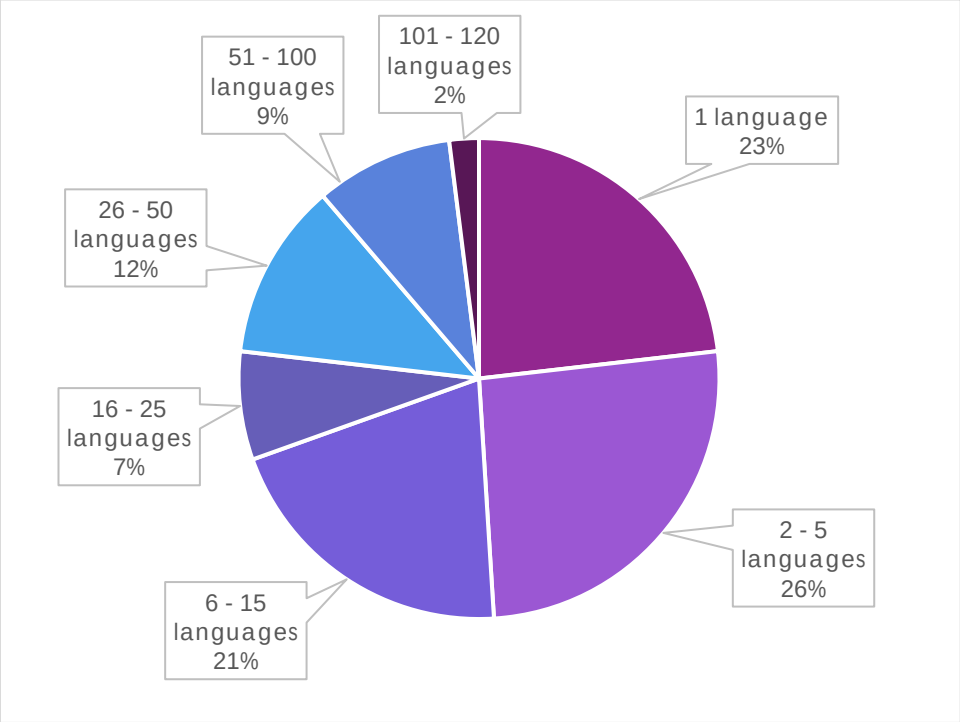
Chinese-Mandarin	542
Korean	462
Ukrainian	444
Hindi	379
Chinese-Unspecified	376
Chinese-Cantonese	317

Data Summary B: Top 20 languages by number of LEAs reporting that language:

*Not all LEAs reported the number of families or parents/guardians who preferred English

Language	Count of LEAs Reporting
Spanish	138
Russian	77
English*	71
Vietnamese	64
Chinese-Unspecified	59
Punjabi	57
Korean	56
Arabic	55
Tagalog	55
Japanese	51
Pilipino/Filipino	45
Ukrainian	45
Chinese-Mandarin	44
Thai	43
French	42
American Sign Language	40
Hindi	39
Urdu	37
Cambodian	36
Chinese-Cantonese	36

Data Summary C: Number of preferred languages reported by each LEA



LEAs with one reported preferred language:

- Adna
- Bickleton
- Boistfort
- Carbonado
- Castle Rock
- Centerville
- Chewelah
- Colfax
- Colton
- Colville
- Conway
- Cusick
- Eastmont
- Entiat
- Evaline
- Klickitat
- La Conner
- Lind
- Lopez
- Lumen Public School
- Lyle
- Mabton
- Manson

- Methow Valley
- Mossyrock
- Naselle-Grays River Valley
- Ocean Beach
- Okanogan
- Orondo
- PRIDE Prep
- Skamania
- Skykomish
- Tekoa
- Tenino
- Tonasket

LEAs with 2 to 5 reported preferred languages:

- East Valley Yakima
- Medical Lake
- North Franklin
- Pioneer
- South Bend
- Wapato
- Washington Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Youth
- North Beach
- Onalaska
- Orcas Island
- Othello
- Raymond
- South Whidbey
- Toledo
- Union Gap
- Willapa Valley
- Winlock
- Elma
- Ephrata
- Green Mountain
- Highland
- Impact Commencement Bay
- Mount Adams
- San Juan Island
- Whatcom Intergenerational High School
- Chimacum
- Dayton
- Endicott
- Freeman
- Granger
- Grapeview
- Kittitas
- Lake Quinault
- Roosevelt

- Soap Lake
- Sultan
- Sunnyside
- Thorp
- White Salmon Valley

LEAs with 6 to 15 reported preferred languages:

- Sedro-Woolley
- Lynden
- Nooksack Valley
- Omak
- Toppenish
- White River
- Arlington
- Central Kitsap
- Ellensburg
- Granite Falls
- Lakewood
- West Valley Spokane
- West Valley Yakima
- Valley
- Yakima
- Kelso
- Moses Lake
- Wenatchee
- Aberdeen
- Blaine
- Impact Puget Sound
- Port Townsend
- Centralia
- Impact Salish Sea
- Woodland
- Shelton
- Walla Walla
- College Place
- East Valley Spokane
- Prosser
- Washougal

LEAs with 16 to 25 reported preferred languages:

- Marysville
- South Kitsap
- Ferndale
- Longview
- Puyallup
- Mead
- Orting
- Stanwood-Camano

- Anacortes
- North Kitsap
- Yelm

LEAs with 26 to 50 reported preferred languages:

- Mercer Island
- University Place
- Pullman
- Snoqualmie Valley
- Franklin Pierce
- North Thurston
- Bellingham
- Lake Stevens
- Tumwater
- Steilacoom
- Bainbridge
- Cheney
- Sumner
- Mount Vernon
- Dieringer
- Issaquah
- Mary M Knight
- Monroe

LEAs with 51 – 100 reported preferred languages:

- Lake Washington
- Vancouver
- Renton
- Federal Way
- Bethel
- Northshore
- Everett
- Evergreen Clark
- Bellevue
- Camas
- Central Valley
- Richland
- Clover Park
- Fife

LEAs with 101 to 120

- Highline
- Tacoma
- Seattle

Data Summary D: Storage method

LEAs were asked "Is any of the information submitted above collected stored electronically in the district's student information system (SIS) or another digital system?"

Answer	Yes	No	Total
Count	227	54	281
Percent	81%	19%	100%

Method of storage is an important consideration for how this data might be collected and reported in the future. LEAs will need a consistent method for storing this information in their SIS.

Lessons Learned

The low response rate for voluntary reporting, data errors and inconsistency of reporting demonstrates that in order to have access to quality data on the number and languages preferred by student's families a required, routine, systemic data collection and reporting process is necessary. Implementation of such a data collection would also require an education component for school and district staff. In staff conversations with LEAs to assist in this data collection, many district staff did not perceive English as a potential "preferred language" because it is viewed as the default language.

The current structure of the Home Language Survey (HLS) contributed to the inconsistency of this data collection. The recommended changes to the HLS would also result in a more accurate data collection. The various student information systems used by LEAs would need to be updated to accommodate storage and reporting of this data. Student information systems are currently not in alignment on if and how they store family preferred language, resulting in the need to collect data in several formats for this data collection.

For data on a family's preferred language to be useful to inform language access program requirements, allocation of funding or other resources, a required, routine, systemic data collection and reporting process is necessary.

Future Work

The 2021 Language Access Workgroup recognizes that the work of providing language access is complex and ongoing. Implementation of these recommendations will need additional consideration and monitoring that goes beyond the scope of this workgroup. Therefore, the workgroup recommends the following as future work to be considered:

- Data collection:

  - To consult with equity data experts (such as demographers) to identify specific data points needed and how to collect them.
  - To identify what documents are translated, how and if and how they are vetted
  - To explore other opportunities to collect relevant language access data that can inform the work and increase understanding about the supply and demand for language access services.

- Work of the future ongoing advisory committee:
  - Making recommendations for general improvement language access for students' families
  - Conducting family and community engagement
  - Certificate development and maintenance
  - Training development
  - Evaluating effectiveness of language access policies, procedures, and programs
  - Addressing supply and demand including preparation programs
  - Monitoring data collection and analysis
  - Identifying research opportunities

Conclusion

The 2021 Language Access Workgroup is thankful for the opportunity to continue working together on this important issue and to make focused recommendations. In our limited time together, we were able to come up with ideas and solutions that we are excited about however, just as often, we discovered additional complexities and issues that must be addressed. The recommendations submitted in this report do not represent a one-time fix solution to the challenges and opportunities of language access. Tackling these will take additional time and resources that we hope will be provided to an ongoing Language Access Advisory Committee.

This work is important, not to us just as individuals, representing our various organizations and perspectives, but to our community as a whole. If we hope to achieve the goal of being an inclusive and welcoming state, we must continue to put in the work to make education accessible to all.

Appendix A. Information on Existing Interpreter Trainings

The following interpreter training programs are currently available and accessible resources. It may be possible to utilize these resources to supplement or inform a customized training program for Washington state.

Arkansas Bilingual Interpreter Credential in Education (ABICE)

- 40-hour course online and in-person
- Includes: ethics, acronyms, forms, self-analysis, test at the end

University of Georgia Professional Interpreter in Education Certificate and University of Georgia Professional Interpreter in Special Education Certificate

- 30-hour program
- Online course
- Cohort or asynchronous

University of Massachusetts-Amherst Interpreter and Translator in Education Workshops

- 35-hour program

Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) Interpreter Training Workshops*

- 6-hour program
- *note that the PSESD program was created to serve early childhood programs in Pierce and King Counties, and some districts utilize it also for training interpreters who serve parents of students in K-12 schools. While the program is very minimal, it should be explored if it could be enhanced to fulfill training needs identified by the LAW.