



The SEAC Position on Language Access

Collaboration with families is a high leverage practice in improving outcomes for students. Many sources have stated that family engagement is an indication of student success and lifelong learning (National PTA). The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) supports the development and implementation of an inclusive and equitable plan for promoting diverse engagement of family, community, and natural supports through trauma-informed collaborative engagement which aims to increase knowledge, system improvement, and acknowledge all parties' unique expertise.

The SEAC acknowledges in all education settings, culturally and linguistically diverse families continue to experience barriers to meaningful and equitable family engagement practices in Local Education Agencies (LEAs). The SEAC acknowledges this population to include families who are deaf or hard of hearing.

The SEAC recommends legislation that supports:

- Technical assistance to LEAs to fully develop and implement language access plans with a cultural proficiency component
- Training for families to understand their rights to language access in schools
- Establishing an education terminology glossary available in non-English languages
- Increased capacity for the State Education Agency (SEA), Educational Service Districts (ESDs), and LEAs to engage in a system of accountability for tracking families access to qualified interpreters and translated documents that improves upon the practices currently utilized in current Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) Monitoring Activities through five year Consolidated Program Reviews
- Collaboration between the SEA and LEAs with community organizations who serve culturally and linguistically diverse families.

The SEAC further acknowledges special education navigation is challenging and poses additional barriers for families when English is not their first language or if they are deaf or hard-of-hearing. The SEAC is dedicated to improving student outcomes and believes that meaningful and equitable language access practices are an essential component of addressing opportunity gaps.

Other Resources:

OSP–Special Education–SEAC:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/SEAC/default.aspx>

SEAC Email: SEAC@k12.wa.us

OSPI–Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/waOSPI>

OSPI–Twitter: <https://twitter.com/waOSPI>

OSPI-Special Education: 360-725-6075