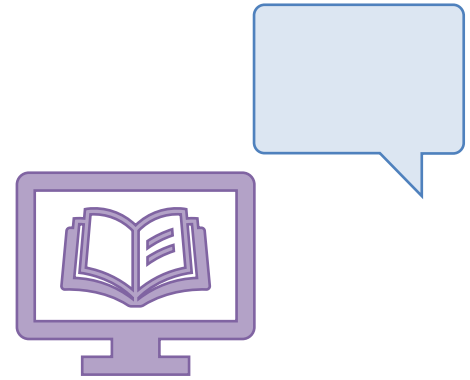


Language Access Guide

Know Your Rights

What are Language Access rights?

The Language Access Act of 2004 makes sure that people who don't speak much English can still get help and be involved in public services and programs in the District. This law lets them get information and support in a language they understand. This law applies to DC Agencies and DCPS schools.



Special Education + Language Access

SPECIAL EDUCATION means extra help and special teaching that schools have to provide for students with disabilities at no cost. Besides special teaching, schools also need to offer other services like transportation, counseling, or therapy to help the student do well.

Every student in special education has the right to get important documents and information about these services in the language they understand best.

Language Access During Identification & Evaluations



- ◆ **For students whose main language is not English:**
 - Schools must identify and test all students who might need special education services. These tests, called evaluations, can be done in the student's preferred language or in English. Parents can also tell the school which language they think the tests should be in.
- ◆ **For parents whose main language is not English:** You can get notices and information about evaluations in your native language. These include:
 - Consent to evaluate
 - Assessment forms
 - Evaluation reports

Language Access in IEPs and Team Meetings

RECEIVING A COPY OF THE IEP: A copy of the student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) must be given to you and translated into your native language.



PARTICIPATING IN IEP MEETINGS

- ◆ Before each IEP Team Meeting, your child's school must send you a written notice about the time, place, purpose, and list of everyone who will be at the meeting. **If you don't speak or read English, the notice should be in your native language.**
- ◆ If you need someone to help you understand and communicate during IEP Team meetings, the school **must** provide an interpreter for you at no charge.
 - This could be a person from the school, a phone interpreter, or a professional interpreter in person, as long as you ask for one ahead of time.



Language Access Resources

- ◆ DCPS' Language Policy can be found here: dcps.dc.gov/page/language-access-families
 - Special Education Family Guides: dcpsspecial.ed.wixsite.com/home
- ◆ If you think the school has not provided you translation you need, you can contact:
 - D.C. Office of Human Rights—Language Access Program: ohr.dc.gov/page/LAportal/about
 - Bread for the City: breadforthe.city.org/services/
- ◆ Other Language Access Resources
 - DC Language Access Coalition: dclanguageaccesscoalition.org/
 - Many Languages One Voice (MLOV): mlovdc.org/programs

A digital version of this guide and the resources listed above can be found here:



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