



# Language Access Plan

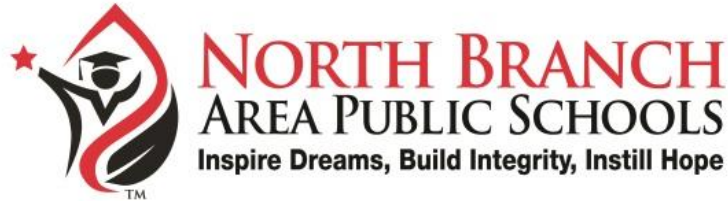
NBAPS is committed to ensuring meaningful access to all educational programs, services, and activities for all families, regardless of language background. This plan is adopted in compliance with the following federal and state requirements:

## Federal Requirements:

- **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964:** Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance, which is interpreted to require recipients to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to their programs and services by persons with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).
- **Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA):** Requires states and school districts to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by students in their instructional programs.
- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** Upholds language access rights by requiring that students be tested in their home language and that Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) be written and explained in the family's primary language, using a highly trained and qualified interpreter during the meeting.

## State Requirements:

- **Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.32 (Language Access Plan Required):**
  - **Adoption:** The School Board must adopt this plan during a regularly scheduled public board hearing.
  - **Plan Scope:** The plan specifies the district's process and procedures to render effective language assistance, including the use of trained or certified interpreters for communication related to academic outcomes, progress, determinations, and placement in specialized programs. It also requires the notification of families and communities of their rights.
  - **Public Access:** This plan is available to the public and included in the district's Parent and Staff handbooks.
  - **Review Cycle:** The School Board shall formally review the plan every two years and update it as appropriate.
- **Minnesota Learning for English Academic Proficiency (LEAPS) Act of 2014:** The district's LAP is aligned with the principal goals for all English Learner (EL) students: 1) academic English proficiency; 2) grade-level content knowledge; and 3) multilingual skills development.



## Definitions

The following definitions are used to ensure uniform application of this plan:

- **American Sign Language (ASL)** – A visually perceived language based on a naturally evolved system of articulated hand gestures and their placement relative to the body, along with non-manual markers.
- **Relay** – Telephone accessibility services to people who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or speech disabled.
- **Screen Reader** – Software programs that allow blind or visually impaired users to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display.
- **Interpretation** – The act of orally converting a communication from one language (source language) to another language (target language) while retaining the same meaning as the original message.
- **Interpreter** – A person who provides interpreting services.
- **Simultaneous Interpretation Equipment** – Equipment that allows a group of people to listen through headsets to information interpreted into their primary language.
- **Language Assistance Services** – Oral, expressive, written, and technological supportive services that ensure students and families can participate fully in school services, activities, and programs.
- **Limited English Proficient (LEP)** – Individuals whose primary language is not English and who have limited ability to communicate effectively in English, including writing, reading, speaking, and listening comprehension.
- **Emergent Multilingual Speakers** – Individuals whose primary language is not English and who are in the process of developing their English language proficiency (preferred term over LEP).
- **English Learner (EL)** – A status assigned to students whose primary language is not English, who lack necessary English skills but are receiving English language development instructions in a public school or charter setting.
- **Home Language** – The language most commonly used in the home by family members, or the language parents use when speaking with their children.
- **Primary Language** – An individual’s native tongue or the language in which an individual most effectively communicates.
- **Sight Translation** – The oral interpretation of a written document by an interpreter.
- **Remote Interpreting** – Interpreting that is provided via telephone or video call.
- **Translator** – A person who provides translation services.
- **Translation** – The restating of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language).
- **Vital Document** – Materials deemed vital to ensuring access to educational services, programs, and activities, or contain information required by law to translate or provide in audio format (e.g., enrollment forms, special education notices, disciplinary letters).



NBAPS is committed to equitable access to information and support for all families and provides the following language access services:

1. **Written Translation:**
  - Important district and school-level documents, including enrollment information, school policies, parent notifications, and special education paperwork, can be translated into families' primary languages upon request or when required by law.
  - Translation is completed by qualified personnel or through professional language services to ensure accuracy and clarity.
2. **Interpretation Services:**
  - Available for meetings such as parent-teacher conferences, Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meetings, disciplinary hearings, and other school-related events. Requests must be made in advance.
  - Telephone or video interpretation services are used when in-person interpretation is not feasible, ensuring real-time communication support.
3. **TransAct:** The district utilizes TransAct, a platform that provides legally compliant, pre-translated parent communication documents in multiple languages for consistent accurate communication.
4. **Language Line:** For immediate, on-demand needs, staff access Language Line, a 24/7 telephonic interpretation service. This supports front office staff, nurses, counselors, and administrators in quickly responding to non-English speaking students and families.
5. **Requesting Additional Language Assistance:** Students and parents/guardians with specific language access needs are encouraged to contact building-level administration to coordinate appropriate services in a timely and effective manner.

## Implementation

### *Leadership and Oversight*

- The Department of Teaching and Learning oversees the development, implementation, and ongoing improvement of the LAP, including establishing plan objectives, ensuring compliance, and aligning strategies with instructional and family engagement goals.
- At the building level, administrators and support services staff implement language access procedures in daily school operations, ensuring services are readily available and staff are trained.



## Identification and Assessment of Language Assistance Needs

***NBAPS employs comprehensive proactive and responsive strategies, including:***

- **Written Communication:** District and building-level written communications are translated into each family's home language.
- **Oral Interpretation Services:** Provided during critical touch points such as Parent-Teacher Conferences, IEP meetings, and family engagement events. Services are available in person and virtually.
- **Community Engagement and Needs Assessment:** NBAPS hosts annual community engagement nights to gather direct feedback from multilingual families on current service effectiveness and additional support needs. The insights directly inform district planning.

NBAPS proactively advertises and notifies students and families about the availability of free language assistance services through:

- District website and school homepages.
- Included annually in the Student and Parent handbook, and shared during the enrollment process.
- District communications (newsletters, report cards, parent meeting notices) includes a standardized statement indicating that language assistance is available upon request.

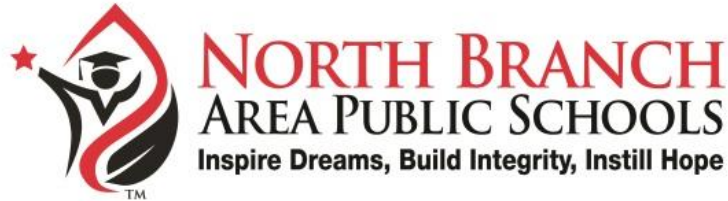
### ***Training for Staff***

NBAPS provides targeted, ongoing professional development coordinated through Instructional Coaches. Sessions cover interpretation and translation services, and legal obligations.

- Offered through professional development sessions, department/PLC sessions, and new staff orientation modules.
- The Director of Teaching and Learning collaborates with Staff Development Committees to ensure alignment with district goals.

### ***Plan Maintenance***

The plan is continuously monitored and updated. Feedback is a gift and used to make modifications to policies and procedures.



## ***Community Engagement and Partnership***

NBAPS actively collaborates with families, specifically targeting Spanish and Hmong-speaking families, to raise awareness of language access services. Direct feedback from families guides the refinement of the LAP and future professional development.

## ***Language Assistance Models & Tools***

NBAPS utilizes a tiered approach to translation and interpretation services, matching the appropriate technology or professional service to the specific communication need.

## **Digital & AI Translation**

For written communication and routine updates, the district employs ReachMyTeach, an AI-powered platform.

- Facilitates two-way dialogue (e.g., homework, progress updates) between staff and families whose home language is other than English.
- Used for newsletters, flyers, and non-vital school documents.
- Per MDE recommendations, all AI-translated materials include a clear call-back number, allowing families to seek further clarification from the district office if needed.

## **Live Interpretation**

For real-time spoken interactions, staff follow a standardized protocol to ensure immediate assistance:

- Staff first identify the family's preferred language via the student information system or direct inquiry.
- For telephone calls or in-person front desk requests, staff may utilize Language Line or ReachMyTeach virtual interpretation to facilitate a three-way conversation with a qualified interpreter.

## ***Responding to Requests from Individuals who are Deaf, Deafblind, Hard of Hearing, or Speech Disabled***

NBAPS is committed to providing equally effective communication to all individuals, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

When an in-person request for an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter is made, staff follow the process for requesting for a qualified ASL interpreter or visual interpreting service. For immediate, non-scheduled needs,



staff may utilize available video remote interpreting (VRI) services on a district device until an in-person interpreter can be secured.

### ***Tracking and Recording Language Preferences***

NBAPS uses the Student Information System (SIS) as the primary record for a student's and family's Home Language and Primary Communication Preference.

1. Language preference is collected during the initial enrollment process via the Home Language Questionnaire (HLQ) and is recorded in the SIS.
2. All staff who identify a discrepancy or receive a new language preference request notify the Building Secretary.
3. The Building Secretary is responsible for updating the primary communication preference in the SIS to ensure all automated and targeted communication (e.g., through ReachMyTeach) is delivered in the correct language.

### ***In-Person, Telephone or Video Interpretation Services***

Formal, planned events require the procurement of a highly qualified in-person interpreter.

1. The requesting staff member must request to the building administrator the need for in person-interpreter services
2. The request includes: date, time, location, purpose, duration, the specific language required, and the names/roles of all participants.
3. The building office staff are responsible for booking the interpreter from the district's approved vendor list.
4. Staff can use the on-demand video interpretation feature within the ReachMyTeach app for unscheduled, brief check-ins in the predominant home languages (Spanish or Hmong).
5. For pre-scheduled virtual meetings, staff notify the building office staff, who then schedule the interpretation service.
6. The building office staff confirm the booking and send the interpreter necessary preparatory materials without violating confidentiality.

### ***Translation of Documents***

NBAPS documents are categorized to determine the appropriate translation method.

1. Documents translated via this ReachMyTeach service must include a visible call-back number for parents to contact the district for further clarification (per MDE mandate).
2. The district will seek feedback from the stakeholder groups to review for cultural relevance and clarity.



## ***Roles and Expectations of Bilingual Staff***

Bilingual staff are a valuable asset but must be used judiciously to support, not replace, professional language services.

1. Bilingual staff are authorized to provide *in-house language support* for:
  - Reviewing translated informational documents (e.g., those from ReachMyTeach) for accuracy and cultural context.
  - Assisting families with general forms and navigating school processes during spontaneous, low-stakes interactions.
  - Conducting routine, non-critical communications with parents (e.g., homework reminders, positive updates).
2. Bilingual staff, regardless of proficiency, are not authorized to serve as the sole interpreter or translator for any highly sensitive student confidential documents or any meeting requiring a Required Professional Interpreter.

## **Contact Information**

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