

TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION

The School Committee through this policy seeks to provide effective translation and interpreting services to families whose primary language is not English in order to ensure access to all aspects of their children's education.

The Framingham Public Schools is committed to providing to the public, families, and students the information necessary to promote the education of their children. In doing so, this information should be provided to them in the language and in the form that persons best understand. This principle applies to circumstances where families and children in the household speak different languages or where students may reside in more than one place where another language may be spoken. The Framingham Public Schools will make a full faith effort to identify such students and families and to provide language translation or interpretation services as may be available. As established in the federal laws, these services are provided by competent staff at no cost to families.

The Framingham Public Schools must provide effective language assistance to English Learner families, such as by offering translated materials or a language interpreter. Language assistance must be free and provided by appropriate and competent staff, or through appropriate and competent outside resources.

The Framingham Public Schools should ensure that interpreters and translators have knowledge in both languages of any specialized terms or concepts to be used in the communication at issue, and are trained on the role of an interpreter and translator, the ethics of interpreting and translating, and the need to maintain confidentiality. It is not sufficient for the staff merely to be bilingual. For example, a staff member who is bilingual may be able to communicate directly with English Learner families in a different language, but may not be competent to interpret in and out of that language, or to translate documents.

FPS provides general information to families in the district in written and oral format. Written information is required to be sent out in English, Spanish and Portuguese. For oral interpretations in any additional languages spoken in the district, FPS staff and/or families can contact the Translation & Interpretation Office to coordinate a meeting and/or a phone call in the native language at the family's convenience.

The District's website shall have, at a minimum, the standard automatic translation options available online.

For oral or sign communication, for school and school-related meetings, families will be provided with oral interpretation in their language, or in a language they understand when the former is not possible. The interpretation must be arranged prior to the meeting or event. Even if the parent brings along his or her own person to assist in interpretation, the District must provide an interpreter.

Families will not be asked to sign a document in a language they do not understand. For those families who do not possess literacy skills or for whom there is not a written home language, information will be communicated orally, in full, prior to their signing any document.

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As it may be required by state and federal law, the Framingham Public Schools will make a diligent effort to provide students and families with access to important documents relative to the education of their children.

This policy shall be reviewed annually, with the District seeking input from groups such as but not restricted to: PTOs, Dual-Language Parents Advisory Council, the Framingham Special Education Parents Advisory Council, and the Bilingual Parents Advisory Council.

LEGAL REFS.: Title IV, Federal Civil Rights Act; EEOA: 20 U.S.C. 1730 (f);
MA General Laws, C. 76, S.5; and CMR 603 26.02 (2)

First Reading: October 21, 2020

Second Reading: November 4, 2020

SOURCE: Framingham