



Parental/Guardian Rights to Language Access of Essential School Information

New Bedford Public Schools is a multilingual district: more than half of all NBPS students come from a household where a language other than English is spoken in the home. All parents have the right to information about their child's education in a language they understand. The New Bedford Public Schools Department of Educational Translation and Interpretation Services (ETIS) centralizes and standardizes language access throughout the district by implementing and coordinating translation and interpretation services. **When your child enrolls in school, the District will ask you about the language you would prefer to use when communicating with the school.** This helps your school identify your language needs so they can provide an interpreter, translated documents, or an oral interpretation of written documents.

What you can Expect from your School and School District

You are an important part of your child's education! The school will communicate with you—in the preferred language you selected—about your child's education. This often includes translated documents and a language interpreter for meetings and conversations. **You have the right to these services even if you speak some English and even if your child can speak or read in English.**

The school will communicate with you in your preferred language regarding essential information and opportunities for your child. This includes information about:

- Registration and enrollment in school
- Grades, academic standards, and graduation
- School rules and student discipline
- Attendance, absences, and withdrawal
- Parent permission for activities or programs
- Public health, safety, and emergencies
- School closures
- Opportunities to access programs or services-including advanced placement and English Learner Education programs
- Special Education and services for students with disabilities
- Rights to request translations and/or interpretations
- Parent/guardian and student handbooks
- How to file a complaint about language access services
- Rights/responsibilities of parents/guardians
- Benefits/services available to parents and students
- Promotional materials and activities

Requesting Translation or Interpretation Services

When you are made aware of a meeting or event at your school, notify the meeting coordinator or school clerk of your need for interpreter services and the preferred language of interpretation. They will then arrange for a qualified interpreter to be present at the meeting. If there is a document with essential information sent home in a language that is not the preferred language you have selected, please notify the school immediately and your preferred language will be updated in our information system to ensure future documents are properly translated.

Formal Meetings and Conversations with School Staff Requiring Interpretation

When you talk with teachers or school staff, the school will offer an interpreter if you need one. This includes parent/guardian–teacher conferences, meetings about Special Education, or any other conversations about your child’s education. The school will use only highly qualified and trained interpreters who are fluent in English and in your preferred language. The school will not use students, other children, family, or friends as interpreters.

The interpreter should be neutral and should communicate everything said during the conversation. They should not omit or add to what anyone says. The school will make sure interpreters understand their role and the need to keep information confidential.

Essential Written Information Translations

The school will translate essential information into the most common languages spoken in your school district. **If you receive information that is not translated into your preferred language, please let the school know if you would like it explained orally in your preferred language.**

Other Interpretation Services

Lionbridge is an additional service provided by the district that can be used by parents and school staff for interpretations in over 350 languages on the phone. Parents, teachers, or other school staff can call the number (800) 444-6627 and enter the code, select their preferred language, and a qualified interpreter will be accessible.

Addressing Concerns and Complaints

If you have any questions or concerns with accessing our interpretation and translation services or you were not offered the interpretation or translation services requested, you have several options.

1. Speak with the School Principal or another administrator at your child’s school. A discussion with your school’s principal is often the best first step to address your concerns.
2. Contact the Educational Translation and Interpretation Department (508) 997-4515 to share your concerns or for more information about your rights and the services that we can provide.
3. File a formal, written complaint with Educational Translation and Interpretation Department Services. You can do this in one of three ways:
 - a. Send by mail to 455 County Street, New Bedford, MA 02740- (PRAB-Room: 216)
 - b. Send by email to translations@newbedfordschools.org
 - c. Deliver in person to the Paul Rodrigues Administrative Building at 455 County Street.

Under state and federal Civil Rights laws, you have the right to access information in the most recently indicated preferred language.

Ask the main office at your child’s school for a copy of the district’s translation and interpretation policy and procedures.