



## **INTERPRETING AND TRANSLATING GUIDELINES**

Belkis Engebritson & Rama Muzo,

Intercultural Community Resource Specialists

In an effort to recognize the needs of the Cedar Rapids Community, we are working to bridge any language or communication barriers that prevent families from being connected to their children's learning. This is why we will be providing interpreting and translating services in Spanish and Swahili.

**Interpreting:** conveying a spoken message from one language to another.

**Translating:** conveying a written message from one language to another.

### **TRANSLATION GUIDELINES**

It is our goal to keep families well informed about important school events (i.e. conferences, music programs) and information that can impact their children's education\*\*. By having the documents in the family's native language, we're acknowledging the importance of their input in their children's learning and their participation as active members of the community.

\*\*Please keep in mind that there are nearly 500 ELL students and only two community resource specialists. It is impossible to translate every document possible. Priority will be given to documents with the greatest impact to student education.

### **TURNAROUND TIMES**

When you plan to send a translated document home, please send the English document and the translated document on the same day. It is highly confusing for families to receive a document in English first and the translated document days later.

**Please plan accordingly.**

- Allow 5 working days for 1-2 page document.
- Allow 10 working days for documents larger than 2 pages.

### **PROCESS FOR REQUESTING TRANSLATIONS**

- 1) Download Translation Request Form.
- 2) Complete the form and attach an electronic copy of the original English document to be translated.
- 3) Submit the request to the Intercultural Community Resource Office.

For Spanish: Belkis Engebritson [bengebritson@cr.k12.ia.us](mailto:bengebritson@cr.k12.ia.us)

For Swahili: Rama Muzo [rmuzo@cr.k12.ia.us](mailto:rmuzo@cr.k12.ia.us)

**Please wait until after the turnaround time has expired before contacting the translators again.**

## **INTERPRETING GUIDELINES**

Many of the African & Hispanic families do not speak or understand English; therefore any oral communication with them would require an interpreter. Please do not assume that because the student speaks English that messages are getting through to the parents. If the parents do not understand or speak English, professional interpreting services should be requested.

**Please do not allow students to interpret for parents.**

In some cases, parents will bring family or volunteer community members to interpret for them. Volunteers are a key component to our efforts, and we appreciate their work. But teachers and staff need to be aware that interpreting is a delicate craft, and there are many ethical issues involved when interpreting the confidential information disclosed at Parent-Teacher conferences and IEP Meetings. Please let parents know that they are welcome to bring their volunteers, and also offer the district's professional interpretation services. Let them make an informed decision.

### **Working with Interpreters**

The interpreters will facilitate communication between parents and the school personnel.

Things to keep in mind while using an interpreter

- Always address the parents and not the interpreter
- Keep a pace that will allow breaks for interpretation
- Encourage interpreters to ask for clarification of any terms or ideas they don't quite understand, so they can explain it better to parents

Interpreting for parents is also a way for us to learn about a student, and a way to support and connect with families. We would like to be present to interpret in as many cases as possible. Planning and requesting interpretive services in advance helps organize the resources better and increases the potential to have services available when needed.

### **PROCESS FOR REQUESTING AN INTERPRETER**

**Requests for interpretation services should be made at least 10 working days in advance.**

- 1) Download Interpreter Request Form.
- 2) Complete and submit the request to the Intercultural Community Resource Office.
- 3) For Spanish: Belkis Engebritson [bengebritson@cr.k12.ia.us](mailto:bengebritson@cr.k12.ia.us)  
For Swahili: Rama Muzo [rmuzo@cr.k12.ia.us](mailto:rmuzo@cr.k12.ia.us)
- 4) You will receive a confirmation reply with the interpreter's name and phone number:
  - Intercultural Community Resource (ICR) Specialist, OR
  - other trained interpreter