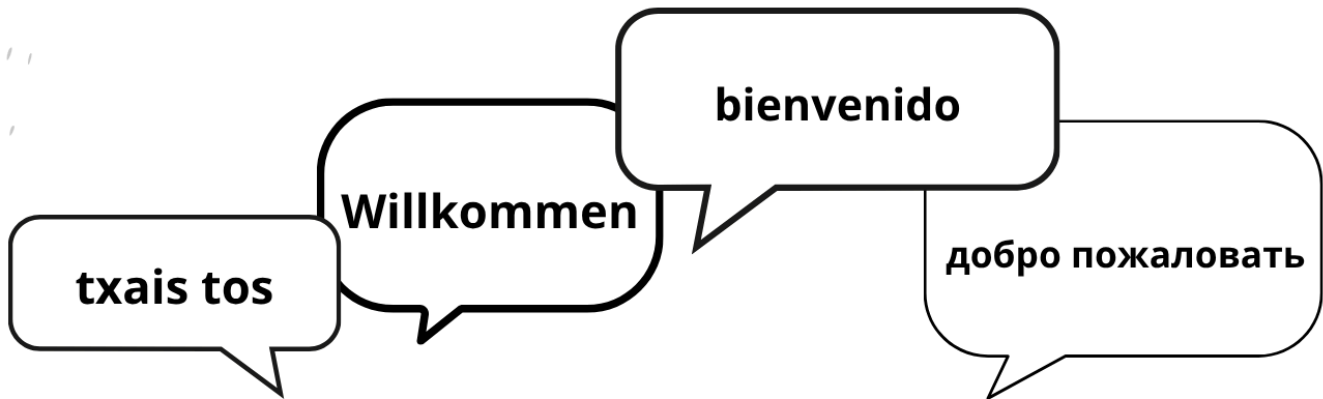




CAMBRIDGE-ISANTI SCHOOLS
EVERY STUDENT. EVERY DAY.



LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN

2026-2028



C-ISchools.org/LanguageAccess

Introduction

The Cambridge-Isanti School District Language Access Plan is designed to help ensure that all families, caregivers, and students can fully access the district's educational programs, services, and activities, regardless of the language they speak or whether additional communication support is needed due to a disability. Clear and effective communication between schools and families is essential to student success.

This plan describes how the district provides interpretation, translation, and other communication supports to respond to the diverse needs of our community. These services help ensure that families can receive and understand important information, ask questions, provide feedback, and participate meaningfully in their child's education.

Through this work, Cambridge-Isanti Schools is committed to creating welcoming and inclusive environments where every family can stay informed, connected, and engaged in their child's learning.

Purpose and Authority

The Cambridge-Isanti Schools Language Access Plan is grounded in federal and state laws, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 13166, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Minnesota Statute 123B.32. Together, these laws require school districts to provide timely and effective communication assistance so that students and their families can access important information, programs, services, and opportunities.

This plan:

- establishes the district's guidelines and processes for providing interpretation, translation, and other communication supports that promote access, and
- includes communication related to general school information as well as specialized programs and services, including special education, when applicable.

To remain responsive to the needs of our community and aligned with legal requirements, this plan will be reviewed and updated every two years by the Cambridge-Isanti School Board.

Summary of the Plan

The Language Access Plan provides a framework for offering interpretation services, including spoken language and American Sign Language (ASL), as well as translation and

other communication supports. The plan outlines how services are requested, how they are provided, and how staff work effectively with interpreter services to support clear communication. It also includes procedures for both planned and urgent needs and reinforces the district's commitment to ensuring language access across educational and administrative activities.

Key components of the plan include:

Interpretation Service Requests

Families may request an interpreter directly from any staff member, indicate their preferred language during online enrollment and registration, or staff may initiate services when a need is identified.

Cambridge-Isanti Schools provides interpretation services at no cost to families for spoken languages and American Sign Language (ASL). Services may be provided in person or virtually, including by phone or video, and are available for educational meetings, school activities, and support services.

Urgent or Unplanned Services

When interpretation is needed unexpectedly, staff may access on-demand services that provide immediate spoken language or ASL interpretation to support timely communication.

Interpreter Best Practice

Cambridge-Isanti Schools ensures that families who speak a language other than English or who have a disability are provided appropriate communication supports, including qualified interpretation services, to meaningfully participate in all aspects of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process, including meetings, evaluations, placement decisions, and due process procedures.

To protect privacy and ensure accurate communication, students, staff, or children under age 18 may not serve as interpreters unless they have been trained and approved by Cambridge-Isanti Schools or the Minnesota Department of Education. Staff should also avoid using machine translation (i.e., Google Translate, DeepL, etc.), artificial intelligence tools (i.e., ChatGPT, Gemini, etc), or unqualified individuals for translation or interpretation. AI-supported translation.

The plan also provides guidance for staff on working effectively with interpreters. This includes preparing for meetings, communicating clearly during interpreted conversations, and remaining mindful of cultural considerations.

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Definitions

Bilingual Staff are fluent in multiple languages, but may not be trained interpreters. They can assist with simple tasks (helping with forms/relaying basic messages) but should not interpret or be pulled from their primary duties.

Communication Supports refer to services that assist individuals in accessing and understanding information, including interpretation, translation, and supports related to disabilities.

English Language Development (ELD) is a program in Cambridge-Isanti Schools that provides academic English language support to multilingual learners.

English Language Services (EL) refer to various services and resources facilitating communication between speakers who communicate in a language other than English, in a timely and meaningful way.

Interpretation is rendering a spoken or signed communication from one language to another.

Language Access Plan is the document that describes how our district will provide services, processes and procedures to render effective language assistance to students and families who prefer to communicate in a language other than English.

Multilingual Learner (ML) is any language learner who regularly interacts in languages in addition to English. These students may also be English Language Learners.

Preferred Language is the language in which parents or guardians request services, resources, and communications from schools and the district.

Qualified Interpreters are trained professionals who follow the National Code of Ethics and Standards to facilitate communication between individuals who do not share a common language.

Translation is converting written text from one language into written text in another, maintaining the original material's intended meaning. For languages that rely on an oral tradition (i.e., Somali), an oral interpretation may be used in place of written translation.

Vital Documents refer to materials essential to a family and caregiver's ability to access Cambridge-Isanti School's services.

Language Identification

Parents/Guardians: Preferred Language

During the enrollment process, parents and guardians are asked to identify their preferred language. This information is recorded in the district's student information system and helps schools identify families who may benefit from language assistance services.

Families may update their preferred language at any time by contacting their child's school, ensuring the district can continue to provide appropriate communication and support.

If families require assistance at any time during the enrollment process due to language differences or questions, please contact: Melissa Stebbins, mstebbins@c-ischools.org

Students: Multilingual Learner (ML) Identification

All families complete the Minnesota Language Survey during enrollment. This survey provides a consistent, districtwide and statewide way to understand a student's language experiences and identify students who may benefit from English language support. This helps ensure schools meet state and federal requirements to provide language services that meet student needs and serve their Civil Rights. Multilingual Learner (ML) instructional support is framed as a "civil right" under the [Lao v. Nichols Supreme Court decision](#) (1974) based on the 1965 Civil rights act.

Therefore, the identification of a student as a Multilingual Learner (ML) is a civil rights determination. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (EEOA), districts have an obligation to identify students who need language assistance and provide them with meaningful access to the curriculum.

If the survey indicates that a student may be a Multilingual Learner (ML), the district will qualifying assessment results or administer a state-approved language proficiency assessment. This process helps determine whether a student is entitled to English Language Services (EL), ensuring students have meaningful access to instruction that develops academic language and the full educational program.

If a student qualifies for EL, families are notified within the required timeline using the district's Parent Notification Form. This notification explains the type of support provided, the amount of time students receive EL, and a family's right to decline services if they choose.

Additional information about English Language services is available in the district's Language Instruction Education Program.

Notice of Language Services

Cambridge-Isanti Schools is committed to providing language assistance services so that all families can access important information and stay connected to their child's education. Families are informed about available language services through a variety of district communication channels, including school newsletters, printed flyers, the district website, the Community Education brochure, and the student handbook. Examples include the following:

Point to Your Language Document

A laminated document is kept at each school's front desk to help individuals identify their preferred language. This allows staff to quickly recognize language needs and arrange appropriate interpretation or translation services.

Multilingual Learners Supports Webpage

For more information about support for Multilingual Learners, including English Language Development (ELD) and resources available to students and families, please visit the district's Multilingual Learner Supports page.

Interpretation

Qualified and confidential interpreters are available to support communication related to student learning and school services. Interpretation may be provided for conversations about academic progress, educational decisions, placement in specialized programs or services, conferences, enrollment, informational meetings, and other school-related activities.

Cambridge-Isanti Schools offers two interpretation options to meet the needs of families and staff, including instant over-the-phone interpreting and on-demand video remote interpreting, for spoken languages and American Sign Language (ASL).

Family Access to Interpretation Services

Families may request interpretation services in person or over the phone through the main office at their child's school or by contacting their child's counselor, social worker, teacher, assistant principal, or principal.

Staff Access to Interpretation Services

The Staff Communication folder in Clever includes a Language Translation Help folder with resources to support staff in accessing language services. These resources include:

- Step-by-step instructions and direct links for using each available interpretation service

- A copy of the Language Identification (“Point to Language”) Card
- Previously translated documents for staff reference and use

Important Guidance

To ensure clear and accurate communication, untrained students, siblings, friends, or staff should not be relied upon to provide interpretation. Students and untrained adults should not serve as intermediaries in parent communication, as this may lead to misunderstandings.

For important meetings, such as Individualized Education Program (IEP) or student conduct, on-demand phone or video interpretation is not recommended. To support clear and accurate communication, schools should arrange for an in-person interpreter or schedule a video meeting with an interpreter through the district’s approved interpretation providers.

Translation

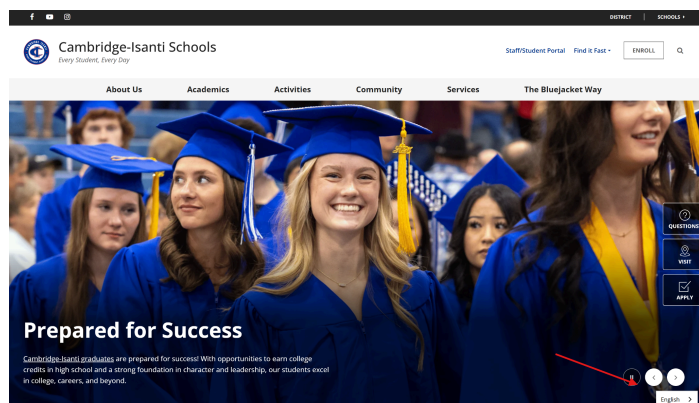
Translation services are available for requested documents in most languages. Cambridge-Isanti Schools also proactively translates many important district documents into Spanish and Hmong, including the student handbook, to help ensure families can access essential information.

Family Access to Translation Services

Families may request translation services by contacting their student’s school or emailing **dist-communications@c-ischools.org**.

Website Translation

Families can view the district website, including the mobile app, in their preferred language selecting the “language” button, the lower right corner on any page of our website.



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Digital Communication Translation

Cambridge-Isanti Schools uses email service which:

- Sends information in formats that can be translated into families’ preferred languages based on their device settings (including, but not limited to: district mass communications, email, Smore, and Skyward Qmlativ).
- Allows families to select their preferred language for viewing communications.

Staff Access to Translation Services

The Staff Communication folder in Clever includes a Language Translation Help folder with resources to support staff in accessing language services. These resources include:

- A document with helpful links that provide staff with access to hundreds of legally reviewed, federally compliant family and caregiver communications translated into multiple languages
- A folder containing Cambridge-Isanti Schools–specific translated forms and documents
- Step-by-step instructions and access to the form for requesting translation services
- Commonly used phrases to support basic communication

Procedural Guidance for Translated Documents

Staff are not to utilize unapproved automated translation tools (such as Google Translate).

If absolutely necessary, staff should include a brief notice indicating that translation is not available, due to time constraints, and how families can request assistance.

Please email dist-communications@c-ischools.org regarding translation requests for districtwide communications.

Staff Roles

Cambridge-Isanti Schools staff share responsibility for ensuring families have meaningful and timely access to information in their preferred language and in a way they are able to access based on disability-related communication needs. This includes teachers, school office staff, building administrators, district leaders, and members of the Teaching and Learning, Student Support Services and Special Education, Communications and Engagement, and Community Education teams.

Families and caregivers with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations or communication supports by contacting their child’s school, the Director of Student Support Services and Special Education, or District Communications. The district will work with families to identify appropriate supports so they can access information, participate in meetings, and remain engaged in their child’s education.

Support for Staff Training / Professional Development | *Training to prepare staff to support multilingual families includes:*

- In-person workshops
- Step-by-step guides
- Video tutorials

- New staff onboarding

Support for Families and Students | Cambridge-Isanti Schools has designated support systems in place for multilingual families, caregivers, and students, as well as families who need communication supports due to a disability.

Professionals

Licensed English as a Second Language teachers provide English language development instruction to help students access grade-level learning and participate fully in the classroom.

Comprehensive support includes:

- **Specialized Instruction:** Provide targeted lessons to strengthen multilingual learners' English skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
- **Progress Monitoring:** Monitor and report students' language development and academic growth to ensure students receive the support they need to succeed.
- **Family Support:** Support multilingual families in navigating the school system by sharing resources and guidance that help reinforce learning at home.

Family and Community Engagement

Family and Community Engagement is another key district team that supports the successful implementation of the Language Access Plan. These roles work together to help families access important information, connect with school staff and resources, and participate meaningfully in their child's school experience.

This work reflects the district's broader commitment to ensuring families are welcomed, communication is accessible, and strong partnerships are built between schools, families, and the community. The Language Access Plan is one part of this larger districtwide effort to help families feel informed, supported, connected, and able to fully participate in their child's education and the broader school community.

Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator

The Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator works in partnership with district and building teams to support family communication, engagement efforts, and access to information. This role helps coordinate communication systems, supports translated and accessible district messaging, and works to ensure families receive timely, clear, and welcoming communication.

Director of Community Education and Engagement

The Director of Community Education and Engagement works collaboratively with district and building teams to align family engagement, communication access, and outreach efforts across the district. This role supports the Language Access Plan by helping ensure communication systems, family support practices, and engagement opportunities are accessible, responsive, and connected to the needs of families. For more information, please contact Christina Thayer Anderson at canderson1@c-ischools.org.

Language Access Communication

Cambridge-Isanti Schools shares the Language Access Plan to ensure families, caregivers, and staff are aware of available language services and have the information needed to use them effectively.

- **Families and Caregivers:** Language services are offered to families who indicate a preferred language other than English. Information about available language services is shared through back-to-school materials, school newsletters, email communications, the Cambridge-Isanti Schools website, and the student handbook.
- **Staff:** Staff receive guidance and training through professional development opportunities and have access to a detailed step-by-step guide to support the use of interpretation and translation services.
- **Community:** The Language Access Plan is available on the Cambridge-Isanti Schools website for community access.

Language Access Review

Cambridge-Isanti Schools regularly reviews and evaluates the Language Access Plan to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our diverse community.

Feedback from families and staff is gathered through surveys, advisory groups, and other opportunities for input, helping the district identify ways to strengthen language access services.

The Cambridge-Isanti School Board will review and update the Language Access Plan every two years to ensure it remains responsive to community needs.

We welcome feedback about our language access services and are committed to providing high-quality support for all families. If you have suggestions, questions, or experience challenges accessing language services, please contact us by email at dist-communications@c-ischools.org or by mail at:

Cambridge-Isanti School District Office
Attn: District Communications
625 Main Street N.
Cambridge, MN 55008

Appeals Process

If a family, or a staff member or other advocate on behalf of a family, believes that the family's language access needs have not been met, or that the supports provided under this plan are not working, they may raise a concern or appeal using the following process:

Step 1: Contact the building principal to discuss concerns.

Step 2: If concerns are not resolved, submit a written appeal to the Office of the Superintendent.

Step 3: If concerns remain unresolved, the family may request a hearing with the School Board.