



WASHINGTON STATE

Office of the Education Ombudsman

www.waparentslearn.org

Language Access Resources and Tips

- Watch Language Access 101 and **Tips for Working with Interpreters** videos at the **Washington State Coalition for Language Access (WASCLA)** site: <http://www.wascla.org/> WASCLA also offers a directory of professional interpreters and translators.
- **Phone interpretation** – Schools and school districts can establish an account with several phone interpretation companies that have Washington state contracts. Once the account is set up, users can access interpreters 24 hours a day and pay per minute (between 0.85 and 0.95 cents p/m). School staff can call limited English speakers in a 3-way call with an interpreter on the line. Language Line www.language.com Language Link www.cts.language.com Pacific Interpreters www.pacificinterpreters.com
- **Let Everyone Participate** - a website from the Federal government that has the latest policies and guidelines from the Federal government. This site also offers demographic information, opportunities for *technical assistance* and help with specific questions. <http://www.lep.gov/>
- **The Department of Justice** has posted the full text of the **Executive Order 13166**, which is the order from the President requiring that federally conducted and federally assisted programs and activities take steps to improve access to their services for people with limited English proficiency. This site also has memos that offer specific guidance on how to implement this Executive Order. <http://www.justice.gov/>
- **The National Health Law Project** has good resources, reports, and current information on language access topics. See www.healthlaw.org and click on Language Access.

New Reports

- **The English Learner Dropout Dilemma**
A new report from the California Dropout Research Project at the University of California–Santa Barbara finds that ELL students are mostly at-risk and marginalized in U.S. schools; their exclusion from the population of high school graduates increases the economic and civic disparities that confront the U.S. today. To address these issues, the report offers solutions in three areas: (1) targeted reforms at the programmatic level; (2) comprehensive reforms at the school level; and (3) systemic reforms to education in general. The report also recommends concerted efforts by policymakers and educators to shift from a compensatory, deficit-oriented approach to an additive, academically centered design of ELL education programs and a paradigmatic shift to view ELL students and families as resources rather than problems. Access the report at http://www.cdrp.ucsb.edu/pubs_reports.htm.

- **For Each and Every Child**
A report to U.S. Secretary of Education Arnie Duncan by the National Equity and Excellence Commission. It examines the disparities in meaningful educational opportunities that give rise to the achievement gap, with a focus on systems of finance, and recommend ways in which federal policies could address such disparities. The commission is comprised of 27 members from a range of backgrounds, including education, law, tax, government, business, and civil rights.
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/eec/equity-excellence-commission-report.pdf>
- **Communicating More for Less: Using Translation and Interpretation Technology to Serve Limited English Proficient Individuals** is a report from the Migration Policy Institute that reviews multi-lingual communication options and advances in translation and interpretation technology that help breakdown language barriers.
http://www.migrationinformation.org/integration/language_portal/index.cfm

Involving LEP Families: Tips for schools

The following best practices are used by schools across the nation to involve limited English proficient (LEP) parents in schools.

1. **Family Heritage Day** – All students and school staff celebrate their heritage with food and family tree research and presentations. Helps ELL families blend in.
2. **A Parent Center at the school** – A designated space where parents can gather to meet other parents, take classes, etc.
3. **The Cut & Chat** – A group of parents that meets and works somewhere in the school helping teachers with projects. ELL parents ease into volunteering without the pressure of going into the classrooms.
4. **The Cultural Celebration** - Ask a group of parents from a particular country to help organize an event celebrating their culture. They can plan the event and help teachers and students learn history, geography, music, foreign language, and other information about different countries.
5. **Guided School Building Tours with an Interpreter** – Schools in other countries are not like American schools. ELL parents need to visualize where their children learn.
6. **Home Visits** - ELL parents feel welcomed and honored to have teachers visit them.

Cultural Competence Recommended Reading

- “Kiss, Bow or Shake Hands” by Terri Morrison
- “Multicultural Manners” by Noreen Dresser
- “Understanding and Working with Parents and Children from Rural Mexico” by B. Annys Rothenberg
- “Non-western Educational Traditions” by Timothy Reagan
- “Educating Second Language Children” – Fred Genesee, Editor
- “American Cultural Patterns: A cross-cultural perspective” by Edward Stewart and Milton Bennett
- Uncomfortable neighbors: Cultural Collisions between Mexicans and Americans by James V. Tiffany