



# Advocates for Children of New York

Protecting every child's right to learn

## Special Education Information in my Language

*This tip sheet is for parents who speak a language other than English and who have students with disabilities in New York City public schools.*

### Do I have a right to translation and interpretation services?

If you **speak a language other than English and your child receives special education services**, you have the right to ask for translations of your child's special education documents. You also have the right to have interpreters present at special education meetings with your child's school and at other meetings with the Department of Education (DOE).

**All parents** who speak a language other than English have a right to free translation and interpretation services in order to communicate with their child's school and other DOE offices, even if their child does not have a disability.

### In which languages can I receive translation and interpretation services?

The DOE must provide translation of special education information in the nine most common languages when parents request it.

The DOE may provide interpretation to parents in person or over the phone. Over-the-phone interpretation is available to all schools and DOE offices in more than 300 languages.

**The nine most common languages spoken by parents are:**

Arabic • Bengali • Chinese • French  
• Haitian Creole • Korean • Russian  
• Spanish • Urdu

### Which special education documents will the DOE translate for me?

If you request it, the DOE will translate:

- IEPs (or Individualized Education Programs);
- Section 504 plans; and
- Evaluations.

The DOE will also translate the following documents without you needing to request them:

- Letters inviting you to special education meetings (for example, IEP meetings, social histories);
- Letters asking for your consent (for example, consent to evaluate your child, consent for your child to receive special education services);
- Prior Written Notices;
- Related Service Authorizations (RSAs);
- Nickerson (PI) Letters;

- Information about special education programs (for example, ASD programs, ACES programs, bilingual special education, preschool special education); and
- Procedural Safeguards Notice (information about your rights as a parent of a student with a disability).

The DOE should translate your child’s special education documents within 30 days after you request them.

## **How can I request translations of special education documents?**

- Fill out the IEP Translation Request form online at [www.schools.nyc.gov/IEPhello](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/IEPhello) (for IEPs only);
- Call (718) 935-2013;
- Email [Hello@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:Hello@schools.nyc.gov); or
- Ask for a translation of a specific document at your child’s school or at any other DOE office where you have a meeting to talk about your child’s special education, for example, at a Committee on Special Education (CSE). If you are making the request at your child’s school, you should direct it to the principal, school psychologist, or parent coordinator. You should make the request in writing. It is a good idea to keep a copy of the written request for your own records, with the date you made the request.

### **NOTE:**

The DOE should translate your child’s special education documents **within 30 days after you request them!**

## **When will the DOE provide me with an interpreter?**

The DOE will provide an interpreter for you at:

- Social history meetings;
- IEP meetings;
- Section 504 meetings;
- Impartial hearings;
- Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) meetings;
- Committee on Special Education (CSE) and Committee on Preschool Special Education (CPSE) meetings; and
- Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) meetings.

## **Who should be my interpreter at special education meetings?**

The interpreter at your special education meetings should be a neutral person. The interpreter should attend the meeting only to serve as the interpreter and should not have other roles. You should not be told to bring your own interpreter. Your child should not be asked to interpret for you.

## **Who can I contact if I am having problems receiving translation and interpretation, or if I have not received translated special education documents 30 days after I requested them?**

- Email [Hello@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:Hello@schools.nyc.gov);
- Call (718) 935-2013;
- Learn how to file a complaint at [www.schools.nyc.gov/hello](http://www.schools.nyc.gov/hello);
- Call 311; or
- Call AFC’s Helpline: 1-866-427-6033, Monday through Thursday from 10am to 4pm.

**Advocates for Children of New York, Inc.**  
 151 West 30th Street, 5th Floor, New York, NY 10001  
 Jill Chaifetz Education Helpline: 1-866-427-6033 (toll free)  
 Monday through Thursday, 10am to 4pm  
[www.advocatesforchildren.org](http://www.advocatesforchildren.org)

*This Tip Sheet does not constitute legal advice. This Tip Sheet attempts to summarize existing policies or laws without stating the opinion of AFC. If you have a legal problem, please contact an attorney or advocate.*

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