

CHAPTER 10



TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR ENSURING MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PARENTS

This is the tenth chapter of the English Learner Tool Kit, which is intended to help state and local education agencies (SEAs and LEAs) meet their obligations to English Learners (ELs). This tool kit should be read in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights' (OCR) and the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Dear Colleague Letter on "English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents," published in January 2015, which outlines SEAs' and LEAs' legal obligations to ELs under civil rights laws and other federal requirements. The Dear Colleague Letter can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ellresources.html>.

ENSURING MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PARENTS

KEY POINTS

- SEAs and LEAs have an obligation to communicate meaningfully with limited English proficient (LEP) parents and to notify LEP parents adequately of information about any program, service, or activity called to the attention of non-LEP parents.
- LEAs must have a process to identify LEP parents and provide them with free and effective language assistance, such as translated materials or an appropriate and competent interpreter.
- Appropriate and competent translators or interpreters should have proficiency in target languages; ease of written and oral expression; knowledge of specialized terms or concepts; as well as be trained on their role, the ethics of interpreting and translating, and the need for confidentiality.



Research shows that strong family-school relationships are an indicator of student success (Weiss, López, & Rosenberg, 2011). Communication with limited English proficient (LEP) parents in a language they can understand provides a foundation for students' academic success and creates a welcoming school community; it provides these parents with access to all the necessary information about their child's education.

SEAs and LEAs have an obligation to communicate meaningfully with LEP parents and to adequately notify them of information about any program, service, or activity called to the attention of non-LEP parents. Successful communication provides LEP parents the school-related information they need to make informed decisions about, and be helpful participants in, their

children's education. This may include but not be limited to information about language assistance programs, special education and related services, Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings, grievance procedures, notices of nondiscrimination, student discipline policies and procedures, registration and enrollment, report cards, requests for parent permission for student participation in district or school activities, parent-teacher conferences, parent handbooks, gifted and talented programs, and magnet and charter schools.

LEAs must develop and implement a process for determining (1) if parents and guardians have limited English proficiency; (2) what their primary language is; and (3) what their language needs are. An LEA may use a student registration form, such as the home language

You can access **Tools and Resources for Ensuring Meaningful Communication with LEP Parents** at <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oela/english-learner-toolkit/index.html>.

survey (HLS), to inquire about whether a parent or guardian requires oral and/or written communication in a language other than English. LEAs and schools should translate the HLS into languages that are common in the school and surrounding community. Schools should take parents at their word about their communication needs if they request language assistance. Schools should also understand that parents may not be proficient in English, even if their child is. SEAs and LEAs must provide language assistance to LEP parents effectively with appropriate, competent staff or appropriate and competent outside resources. To provide these services, LEAs may canvas staff to see if they are trained and qualified to provide effective language assistance, or obtain qualified interpreters and translators if staff is unqualified or if it would minimize the degree to which trained bilingual staff is called away from instruction and other duties to translate or interpret. Schools or LEAs may also use a language phone line to provide oral translation and interpretation services. Students, siblings, friends, and untrained staff members are not considered qualified translators or interpreters, even if they are bilingual. All interpreters and translators, including staff acting in this capacity, should be proficient in the target languages; have knowledge of specialized terms or concepts in both languages; and be trained in the role of an interpreter or translator, the ethics of interpreting and translating, and the need to maintain confidentiality.

Building strong relationships between families and schools or LEAs occurs over a period of time, and these relationships can be established and nurtured in numerous ways. It is essential to understand the cultures of LEP families and “integrate cultural traditions of families throughout the school” (Breiseth, 2011). Schools and LEAs can also foster relationships by inviting families to volunteer in the school and encouraging families to help children integrate their cultural and linguistic traditions into school assignments and other curricular and extracurricular activities.

The following checklist is intended to help SEAs, LEAs, and schools have meaningful communication with LEP parents. The checklist provides suggested questions only. Schools and LEAs should check their SEA’s policies and federal guidance to ensure compliance. SEAs may also have translated forms.

Family, Language, and Culture

- ★ How does the school honor and reflect the diversity of families, including their languages and cultures?

- ★ Are staff members trained in engaging diverse families and communities?
- ★ Are parent meetings and school events scheduled with interpreters present on dates and times that facilitate LEP parent participation?

Language Identification Procedures

- ★ What is the process for determining parents’ language needs (e.g., HLS)?
- ★ Does the LEA or school have the HLS translated into the language(s) common to the community and have qualified interpreters available to help parents complete the survey accurately?

Interpretation and Translation Services

- ★ What is the process for providing language assistance to LEP parents or guardians?
- ★ How does the LEA inform LEP parents about the availability of free language assistance services, including qualified interpreters and translators?
- ★ What is the process for acquiring qualified and trained interpreters and translators?
- ★ What is the process for determining that the LEA staff is competent and appropriate to serve as interpreters or translators?
- ★ How does the LEA ensure that interpreters and translators have knowledge of all specialized educational terms and concepts?

Parent Notification

- ★ What procedures are in place for LEP parents to be informed of programs, services, and activities in a language they understand?
- ★ How does the LEA ensure that translated written communications—including information regarding progress reports, report cards, and permission slips—are provided in a language that LEP parents understand?
- ★ What is the process for providing translation or interpretation services, when needed, for parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings, and disciplinary proceedings?

Partnerships

- ★ What parent, school, and community partnerships exist at the SEA-, LEA-, and school levels?
- ★ What learning and leadership opportunities are available for LEP parents?

ENSURING MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT PARENTS

TOOLS

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The following set of tools is intended to assist schools, LEAs, and SEAs in working with families of ELs. The tools provide information on how to help families participate in their child's education and other school activities.

Tool #1, Establishing Family-School Partnerships, provides a framework for family engagement activities that help schools and families partner for improved student outcomes.

Tool #2, Tapping into the Strengths of Families and Communities, provides educators with ideas to establish and maintain strong parental engagement in schools.

Tool #3, Interpretation and Translation Resources, contains multiple resources for interpretation and translation.



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TOOL #1

ESTABLISHING FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

The U.S. Department of Education (ED), in partnership with the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL), developed the following framework to support family engagement activities that help schools and families partner for improved student outcomes. *Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships* (the framework) describes itself as a “scaffold for the development of family engagement strategies, policies, and programs.” The shortened framework provided below was excerpted from the entire framework, which discusses the goals and conditions needed for effective family engagement that supports student achievement and school improvement. The complete framework is available at <http://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partners-education.pdf>

DUAL CAPACITY-BUILDING FRAMEWORK FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships was formulated using research on effective family engagement and home-school partnership strategies and practices, adult learning and motivation, and leadership development. The framework's components include the following:

1. The challenges (e.g., lack of knowledge about developing partnerships, and personal, cultural, and structural barriers) faced by both the school/program staff and the families for building effective home-school partnerships.
2. The process conditions (e.g., linking partnerships to learning) and organizational conditions (e.g., systemic and sustained strategies) integral to the success of family-school partnership initiatives and interventions.
3. The areas (e.g., skills, knowledge, networks, beliefs, values, and self-efficacy) that staff and families need to create, implement, and sustain family-oriented policy and program goals.
4. A description of the capacity-building outcomes for school/program staff and families that support student achievement and school improvement.

The publication also presents three case studies from a school, a district, and a county. The case studies illustrate capacity-building strategies based on the framework.

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TOOL #1: ESTABLISHING FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS (CONTINUED)

Figure 2: The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships



Source: U.S. Department of Education and Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. (2013). *Partners in education: A dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partners-education.pdf>

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TOOL #2

TAPPING INTO THE STRENGTHS OF FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Schools are diverse communities, and educators can use the strengths families possess to support student achievement. It is important to understand and value the backgrounds and experiences of parents. This will help school staff identify strategies for developing and sustaining strong partnerships to help all children succeed in school.

BRIDGING FAMILIES' CULTURE AND SCHOOLS

The Regional Educational Laboratory for the Pacific (REL Pacific) developed a tool kit that focuses on practices and tools that provide an integrated approach for engaging families and the community with the schools. The tool kit consists of four parts. Below is the introduction from "Part 2: Building a Cultural Bridge," which focuses on using the strengths of families to actively engage them in student learning.

- It is critical to identify family strengths in order to engage with families as partners in their children's education.**
To identify and make use of family strengths, educators may need to shift from a deficit model—focusing on what families *aren't* doing—to a strengths-based model that acknowledges that families *want* to help their students succeed (Moore, 2011). For example, in the Chuukese population it is not unusual for the extended family or another interested community member to come to school functions when a child's parent is not available. Rather than seeing this as a case in which parents do not care about their child's education, educators can see the involvement of others as a reflection of a cultural strength—the community is interdependent and focused on group success. If the parent isn't available, another member of the community steps in to support the student. Of course, educators must avoid the pitfall of thinking that all family characteristics in a culture can be generalized. Instead, they must get to know each family better.
- Collaborating with families based on strengths develops strong relationships between home, school, and community.**
Educators can help families build on their strengths by asking them how they want to be involved and how the school and community can create opportunities for that involvement. When educators recognize parents' strengths, they are more likely to reach out to parents as true partners in their children's education (e.g., work together with them to set goals for their children's education, help them understand how to support their children's learning at home, acknowledge the importance of the home language). To make use of family strengths, the school and community need to offer diverse and culturally-appropriate approaches to engaging families. They need to provide opportunities for parents to be viewed as individuals, recognizing the diversity that occurs within and between cultural groups.
- Partnering with communities to promote family engagement helps schools and families support student learning.**
Family, school, and community have "overlapping spheres of influence" and if the three spheres, or areas of influence, interact and communicate with each other, it is more likely that students will receive common messages about student success (Epstein, 2010). By partnering with communities (e.g., businesses, faith-based organizations, community centers), families and schools can maximize their efforts to support student success (Epstein et al., 2002). Research shows that all students can benefit when all stakeholders work together.

References:

- Epstein, J. L., (2010). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(3),81–96.
- Epstein, J. L., Sanders, M. G., Simon, B. S., Salinas, K. C., Jansorn, N. R., & Voorhis, F. (2002). *School, family and community partnerships: Your handbook for action* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press
- Moore, T. (2011). Drawing on parents' strengths: The role of districts and schools in empowering families to be effective partners in learning. *Family Involvement Network of Educators (FINE) Newsletter*, 3(2).

Source: Regional Educational Laboratory for the Pacific. (2015). *Toolkit of resources for engaging parents and community as partners in education, Part 2: Building a cultural bridge*. Retrieved from http://relpacific.mcrel.org/resources/~media/RELPacific/Files/Part%202_Jan2015.ashx

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TOOL #3

INTERPRETATION AND TRANSLATION RESOURCES

The following tool is a sampling of resources for interpretation and translation resources from the U.S. Department of Justice's LEP.gov website. Not all resources on the website are listed below. It is important to note that the interpretation and translation resources included here are not necessarily endorsed by ED, DOJ, or the Federal Interagency Working Group on LEP. A more complete list of LEP information and resources can be found at http://www.lep.gov/interp_translation/trans_interpret.html.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
A Federal Interagency Website

LEP.gov
Mission Statement

A. Federal Resources

1. [Before You Hire—Ask Yourself: “What Are My Project’s Language Needs?”](#)— TIPS (Translation and Interpretation Procurement Series) for making language service hiring decisions. (PDF)
2. [TIPS on Hiring the Right Telephonic Interpretation Vendor](#) —TIPS to finding a high-quality telephone interpretation vendor. (PDF)
3. [TIPS for Working With Telephone Interpreters](#)—TIPS for planning, placing, and troubleshooting phone calls with telephone interpreters. (PDF)
4. [What Does It Mean to Be a Certified Linguist?](#)—TIPS for discovering vendor and linguist qualifications. (PDF)
5. [Top 10 Best Practices for Multilingual Websites](#)—Suggestions include providing prominent access on the English site and ensuring that the multilingual site and English site provide a comparable experience.
6. Lost in Translation, [Automated Translations—Good Solution or Not?](#)

B. The Difference Between an Interpreter and a Translator

1. “[T]he ordinary or common meaning of ‘interpreter’ does not include those who translate writings. Instead, we find that an interpreter is normally understood as one who translates orally from one language to another.” [Taniguchi v Kan Pac. Saipan, Ltd](#), 132 S Ct 1997, 2003-04 (May 21, 2012).
2. *What is the difference between a bilingual staff person and an interpreter or translator?* [DOJ Question 11, Commonly Asked Questions and Answers Regarding Limited English Proficient \(LEP\) Individuals](#)

C. National Interpreter and Translator Associations and Organizations

1. [Regional and State Interpreter Associations](#) (Word document)
2. [Interpreter and Translator Training and Certificate Programs](#) (Word document)
3. [The American Association of Language Specialists](#)
4. [The American Literary Translators Association](#)
5. [The American Translators Association \(ATA\)](#)
6. [ATA Affiliated Chapters and Groups](#)
7. [ATA Other Interpreter and Translator Groups](#)
8. [The Association of Language Companies](#)
9. [National Association of Judiciary Interpreters & Translators](#)

Source: LEP.gov. (n.d.). Interpretation and translation. Retrieved from http://www.lep.gov/interp_translation/trans_interpret.html

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RESOURCES

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American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (n.d.). Collaborating with interpreters: Overview. Retrieved from <http://www.asha.org/PRPSpecificTopic.aspx?folderid=8589935334§ion=Overview>

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association outlines several roles and responsibilities for providing culturally-competent materials and translation or interpretation services when working with non-English speakers. The article is written for speech and language pathologists; however, it provides suggestions that LEAs may wish to consider when working with interpreters and translators.

Breiseth, L. (2011, August). *Engaging ELL families: 20 strategies for school leaders with questions for reflection and checklists*. Washington, DC: Colorín Colorado. Retrieved from http://www.colorincolorado.org/pdfs/articles/Engaging-ELL-Families_A-Checklist-for-School-Leaders.pdf

This guide offers 20 ideas to help school leaders strengthen home-school partnerships; engage staff, parents, and students; create a culture of respect in the community; and advocate and allocate resources for EL families. The guide has six sections: (1) connecting with EL families, (2) communicating important information, (3) parent participation, (4) parents as leaders, (5) community partnerships, and (6) creating a plan of action.

Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services (BRYCS). (2015). Interpretation—Serving refugee and immigrant children. Retrieved from <http://www.brycs.org/clearinghouse/Highlighted-Resources-Interpretation-Serving-Refugee-and-Immigrant-Children.cfm>

This Web page contains resources about using translators and interpreters in various settings related to services for adults and children.

Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services. (n.d.). Federal requirements to provide interpretation/translation in the schools. In *Refugee children in U.S. schools: A toolkit for teachers and school personnel*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/Interpretation-Translation-FAQ.pdf>

This chapter of the BRYCS tool kit on refugee children provides information about federal laws and regulations on national origin discrimination, and translation and interpretation for students and parents. Educational glossaries are included, along with other resources on etiquette for translators, suggestions for improving LEP services, and the effective use of interpreters for parent-teacher conferences.

Center for Parent Information and Resources. (2015). English language learners (ELL) resources. Retrieved from <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/topics/ell/>

The Center for Parent Information and Resources provides assistance to parents of ELs. The resources provide information on using interpreters effectively, ensuring EL students have equal access to high-quality education, and the education rights of immigrant children, among other topics. The page provides links to all resources.

Colorín Colorado. (n.d.). For families. Retrieved from <http://www.colorincolorado.org/families/>

The Colorín Colorado is a bilingual website that provides parents and families with information to help their children become good readers and successful students. This page for families contains reading tips and activities, suggestions for choosing books to read with children, ideas for getting involved at a child's school, and more.

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Colorín Colorado. (n.d.). Parent outreach. Retrieved from <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/c44/>

Parents of ELs may feel apprehensive about getting involved at school because they lack English skills or knowledge of U.S. culture and the public school system. This resource provides information about how to reach out to the parents of ELs and involve them in their children's learning, both at school and at home.

Detzner, D., Xiong, B., & Eliason, P. (2010). Helping youth succeed: Bicultural parenting for Southeast Asian families. Retrieved from <http://www.extension.umn.edu/family/families-with-teens/resources-parents/bicultural-parenting/background/>

This paper provides an overview of Southeast Asian parenting and child-rearing practices, as well as background information about the "cultural values and beliefs that influence parents, especially regarding family life and interpersonal relationships." It also includes a review of gender roles in the family; parent-child relationships among Cambodian, Hmong, Lao, and Vietnamese families; and issues confronting Southeast Asian parents and youths in the United States.

Erekson, J., Kim, Y., & Lycke, K. (2015, March). Five principles with twenty examples for engaging ELL families. *ASCD Express: Ideas from the field*, 10(13). Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol10/1013-erekson.aspx>

This discussion looks at three approaches to parental engagement: (1) invite families to school activities; (2) empower learners by studying the funds of knowledge families bring from their varied class and cultural backgrounds; and (3) develop teacher-parent collaborations where teachers focus on a specific set of home-friendly strategies. The authors provide tables and explanations for implementing their proposed strategies.

Grantmakers for Education. (2013, April). *Educating English language learners: Grantmaking strategies for closing America's other achievement gap*. Portland, OR: Author. Retrieved from http://edfunders.org/sites/default/files/Educating%20English%20Language%20Learners_April%202013.pdf

This report presents an overview of ELs, the history of grants on their behalf, and how philanthropy can impact the education of English learners. The report also details four case studies of grants in action in three states—California, Illinois, and Texas—

and includes information about successful parent programs in EL communities.

Harry, B., & Waterman, R. (2008). *Building collaboration between schools and parents of English language learners: Transcending barriers, creating opportunities* (Practitioner Brief). Tempe, AZ: National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems. Retrieved from http://www.nccrest.org/Briefs/PractitionerBrief_BuildingCollaboration.pdf

This brief discusses barriers between schools and parents of ELs. It offers concrete suggestions to (1) inform school staff about school-initiated efforts to build partnerships with parents; (2) overcome language barriers; (3) provide access to comprehensible information about U.S. schools and culturally and linguistically diverse families; (4) address concerns related to special education placement and referral; (5) reduce immigrant isolation; and (6) raise awareness of EL concerns related to undocumented legal status.

Mathis, W. (2013, March). *English language learners and parental involvement*. Boulder, CO: National Education Policy Center (NEPC), School of Education at the University of Colorado-Boulder. Retrieved from http://www.greatlakescenter.org/docs/Policy_Briefs/Research-Based-Options/07-Mathis-ParentalInvolvement.pdf

This multi-part brief summarizes relevant findings in education policy research for engaging the families of English learners. The author recommends two-way communication with EL families; as well as the involvement of these families in the life of the school, community collaboration, school governance, and their child's schoolwork.

National Charter School Resource Center. (2014). *Engaging English learner families in charter schools*. Houston, TX: Safal Partners. Retrieved from <http://www.charterschoolcenter.org/resource/engaging-english-learner-families-charter-schools>

This paper highlights several practices for engaging EL families. Section I describes "practices employed by charter operators to reach out to EL families and involve them in the activities of their charter schools." Section II provides an overview of funding strategies used by schools to finance their family engagement, and Section III discusses the implications of the findings.

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Omniglot. (n.d.). The difficulties involved in Spanish-English translation. Retrieved from <http://www.omniglot.com/language/articles/spanishenglishtranslation.htm>

The article discusses difficulties involved in translating from Spanish-to-English and English-to-Spanish. The author states that, although they are both Romance languages, grammatical and syntactical constructs in English and Spanish, such as general word order, make it very challenging for translators to translate correctly between the two languages. The article concludes by adding that “[h]igh proficiency is required in both the languages for performing flawless and authentic English-Spanish translation and Spanish-English translation.”

Payton, B. (2014, February). New funding law puts focus on translation for non-English speakers. *EdSource*. Retrieved from <http://edsources.org/2014/new-funding-law-puts-focus-on-translation-for-non-english-speakers/57514>

This article discusses how four districts in California (Oakland, San Jose, West Contra Costa, and Fresno) are instituting updated translation services to ensure proper communication with non-English speaking parents. This follows passage of a new California funding law. The districts offer “real-time meeting interpreting through headsets, bilingual PowerPoint presentations, translated written materials,” and other translation formats at the LEA level.

Regional Educational Laboratory for the Pacific. (2015, January). *Toolkit of resources for engaging parents and community as partners in education* (Parts 1–3). Retrieved from <http://relpacific.mcrel.org/resources/tools>

Part 1 of this toolkit, on building trusting relationships with families and community through effective communication, provides tools that help school staff become aware of “how their beliefs and assumptions about family and community engagement influence their interactions with families,” as well as how the demographic characteristics of the families can inform family engagement with these schools. Part 2, on building a cultural bridge, focuses on tapping the strengths of families and community members to help families become active in the school community in support of student learning. Part 3, on building trusting

relationships with families and community through effective communication, “discusses cross-cultural and two-way communication as ways to enhance family and community engagement.”

Rowe, D., & Fain, J. (2013, July). The family backpack project: Responding to dual-language texts through family journals. *Language Arts*, (90)6, 402–416. Retrieved from <http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Resources/Journals/LA/0906-jul2013/LA0906Family.pdf>

This article describes parent and child responses to a home book-reading program designed to provide prekindergarten students and their families with access to dual-language books and audio recordings in English as well as their home language. The authors emphasize that “family literacy practices are a foundation for initiating preschoolers into literacy” and understanding interactions, values, and beliefs of various cultures.

San Francisco Unified School District, Translation and Interpretation Unit. (2014, October). *SFUSD glossary of educational terms*. San Francisco, CA: San Francisco Unified School District. Retrieved from <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/assets/sfusd-staff/services/files/translation-interpretation-glossary.pdf>

SFUSD created this glossary of terms to facilitate effective communication between families and school staff. The glossary covers a wide range of educational terms in English, Chinese, and Spanish and is designed to help schools translate documents into predominant languages as well as those that are less common in their school communities. Additional information about translation and interpretation can be found at <http://www.sfusd.edu/en/family-and-community-support/translation-and-interpretation.html>.

Shamseddine, R. (2011). *Interpreting in a classroom setting*. Washington, DC: Bridging Refugee Youth and Children's Services. Retrieved from <http://www.brycs.org/documents/upload/classroominterpreting.pdf>

This document provides information about interpretation in the classroom setting. It includes recommendations on seating arrangements, pre-interviews with the interpreter, and the roles of both the teacher and interpreter.

The EL Tool Kit contains examples of, adaptations of, and links to resources created and maintained by other public and private organizations. This information is provided for the reader's convenience and is included here to offer examples of the many resources that educators, parents, advocates, administrators, and other interested parties may find helpful and use at their discretion. The U.S. Department of Education does not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of this outside information. Further, the inclusion of links to items does not reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed, or materials provided.

- Sperling, J. (2011, January). *Communicating more for less: Using translation and interpretation technology to serve limited English proficient individuals*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy. Retrieved from <http://www.maine.gov/education/esl/webinars/documents/LEPtranslationtechnologyJan2011.pdf>
- This report discusses how advances in interpretation and translation technology can cut costs by reducing redundancy and saving resources. The document may assist practitioners in understanding and identifying which services would best meet their language access needs.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2008, June). *Preparing to serve English language learner students: School districts with emerging English language learner communities* (Issues & Answers, REL 2008–No. 049). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory-Appalachia. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=REL2008049>
- This report offers suggestions for helping to overcome the challenges of newly enrolling or rapidly increasing EL student populations. Information is provided on encouraging parents to participate in their children's education, as well as reaching out to social services to assist district and school staff in addressing student needs for housing and other support. The appendices provide links to resources and sources of guidance.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2015). *I have a question. What parents and caregivers can ask and do to help children thrive at school: A parent checklist*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/parent-checklist.pdf>
- This checklist was developed by the Department of Education in collaboration with America Achieves, National Parent Teacher Association, National Council of La Raza, and United Negro College Fund and provides questions for parents to ask educators about their child's education. The questions focus on five areas of school performance: "(1) quality; (2) ready for success; (3) safe and healthy; (4) great teachers; and (5) equity and fairness." In addition, there are possible follow-up questions, developed by teachers, on how parents can support their child's success in school, as well as a list of resources on a variety of educational topics. The checklist is available in both English and Spanish.
- U.S. Department of Education & Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. (2013). *Partners in education: A dual capacity-building framework for family-school partnerships*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ed.gov/documents/family-community/partners-education.pdf>
- This paper provides guidance on how to build successful family-school partnerships. The ideas presented are "designed to act as a scaffold for the development of family engagement strategies, policies, and programs."
- U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, & Too Small to Fail. (2015). *Talk, read, and sing together every day! Tip sheets for families, caregivers, and early learning educators*. Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/early-learning/talk-read-sing>
- Six tip sheets are the result of a commitment made at the White House Summit on Early Education, which focused on increasing the quantity and quality of words that children learn. The tip sheets—made specifically for families, caregivers, and early educators—provide guidance on how to enrich a child's early language experiences as much as possible. Each tip sheet is available in English and Spanish.
- U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, & U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division. (2015, January). *Dear colleague letter: English learner students and limited English proficient parents*. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-el-201501.pdf>
- This document provides guidance to assist SEAs, LEAs, and all public schools in meeting their legal obligations to ensure that ELs can participate meaningfully and equally in educational programs and services. This guidance provides an outline of the legal obligations of SEAs and LEAs to ELs under the civil rights laws. Additionally, the guidance discusses compliance issues that frequently arise in OCR and DOJ investigations under *Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* and the *Equal Educational Opportunities Act*, and offers approaches that SEAs and LEAs may use to meet their federal obligations to ELs. A discussion of how SEAs and LEAs can implement their *Title III* grants and sub-grants in a manner consistent with these civil rights obligations is included. Finally, the guidance discusses the federal obligation to ensure that limited English proficient parents and guardians have meaningful access to SEA-, LEA-, and school-related information.

The EL Tool Kit contains examples of, adaptations of, and links to resources created and maintained by other public and private organizations. This information is provided for the reader's convenience and is included here to offer examples of the many resources that educators, parents, advocates, administrators, and other interested parties may find helpful and use at their discretion. The U.S. Department of Education does not control or guarantee the accuracy, relevance, timeliness, or completeness of this outside information. Further, the inclusion of links to items does not reflect their importance, nor is it intended to endorse any views expressed, or materials provided.

U.S. Department of Justice. (2014). Limited English proficiency (LEP): A federal interagency website. Retrieved from http://www.lep.gov/interp_translation/trans_interpret.html

This website provides links to resources for implementing and understanding translation and interpretation services.

Vietnamese American Young Leaders Association of New Orleans (VAYLA). (2011). *ESL: Lost in the system, 21 Asian and Latino families speak out on barriers to educational access in New Orleans Public Schools*. Retrieved from <http://vayla-no.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/ESL-Lost-In-The-Sytem-2013.pdf>

The first section of the report contains the personal testimony of youth leaders and their peers as well as accounts of how they worked to create change. The second section reflects the challenges encountered by parents and families seeking school support for their children. In the final section, youth leaders and staff members provide recommendations to improve learning “for limited-English proficient students and families and to create a school system that truly values them.”

Waterman, R., & Harry, B. (2008). *Building collaboration between schools and parents of English language learners: Transcending barriers, creating opportunities*. Tempe, AZ: National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems. Retrieved from http://www.nccrest.org/Briefs/PractitionerBrief_BuildingCollaboration.pdf

This brief discusses the barriers to parental involvement and offers concrete suggestions for creating positive relationships between schools and parents of ELs.

Weiss, H., Lopez, M., & Rosenberg, H. (2010, December). *Beyond random acts: Family, school, and community engagement as an integral part of education reform*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project. Retrieved from http://www.nationalpirc.org/engagement_forum/beyond_random_acts.pdf

“This publication advocates family, school, and community engagement (FSCE) as a strategy to support student success.” It is the precursor to a forum that “sought to serve as a catalyst for reframing what FSCE should look like in the twenty-first century.”

Wessels, S. (2014). Supporting English and Spanish literacy through a family literacy program. *School Community Journal*, (24)2, 147–164. Retrieved from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1048612.pdf>

This article reports on a qualitative research study that explored the effects of an eight-week bilingual family literacy program for Latino, English-learning families. Data from the study showed (1) that maintaining the first language is important; (2) that practicing what has been taught helps to sustain language; and (3) the importance of time. The article also discusses implications of the study's findings for educators.

Wisconsin Early Dual Language Learner Initiative. (n.d.). *How to use interpreters effectively* (Facts & Tips Series, Topic #2.2). Retrieved from http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/Topic_2.2_How_to_use_interpreters_effectively.pdf

This fact sheet addresses how to establish guidelines for interpretation for young children and young dual language learners. Also discussed are the proper use of translation software and the reasons why school staff should meet with interpreters prior to holding meetings with families.

To access these and other relevant resources, and for additional information about ELs, please visit <http://www.ncela.ed.gov/>.