**Citywide Council on Special Education**

**RESOLUTION ON LANGUAGE SUPPORTS FOR**

**NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING FAMILIES**

WHEREAS, New York City public schools exist to serve all the city’s public school students;

WHEREAS, the Department of Education has two separate offices that exist to support Multilingual students and non-English speaking families - the Division of Multilingual Learners and the Office of Translation & Interpretation;

WHEREAS, leaders in those offices are working to expand and improve access;

WHEREAS, the Department of Education offers translation of their parent facing website in  close to 100 languages via google translate, and includes welcoming language on the home page regarding language access;

WHEREAS, parents have the right to receive information or communicate with a staff member at their school or Department of Education (DOE) office in their language;

WHEREAS, 20% of students receiving Special Education supports are also ELL students.

WHEREAS, On January 15, 2020 the US Department of Education entered into a Voluntary Resolution Agreement between the NYC DOE and the Office of Civil Rights to provide relevant documents pertaining to a student’s IEP translated in the parent’s preferred language.

WHEREAS, NYC schools are seeing more ELL students attending schools in higher concentrations than they have in the past, where currently 13 percent of NYC public school students are English Language Learners

WHEREAS, 154,276 ELLs enrolled in New York City public schools at some point during the 2018- 2019 school year;

WHEREAS, students and their parents communicate in over 180 different languages, including sign language, and Chancellor’s Regulation A-663 requires language services in the nine most common languages other than English spoken by parents of New York City school children;

WHEREAS, MLL students and families who speak a language other than English will not be served well, and are at a disadvantage, if they cannot access or understand communications, publications, announcements, resources, meetings and event invitations that come from the DOE, their school, their PA/PTA, their Superintendent or CCEC;

WHEREAS, Districts who are adopting Diversity Plans and embrace all types of students, require additional support for not only students but staff, where more teachers than before are trying to communicate with, and maintain relationships with families that do not speak English;

WHEREAS, robust parent engagement improves academic outcomes, and creates a welcoming community to all families;

WHEREAS, our teachers, parent coordinators and school leaders are working diligently to stay in regular contact with all of our families;

WHEREAS, if documentation and meetings are conducted only in English, non-English speaking families will likely not engage fully, feel unwelcome, and become disenfranchised, inevitably adversely impacting student success;

WHEREAS, further inequities exist, in that for non-English speaking students or family members to participate on a remote platform used for communication and teleconferencing, two devices are required to fully and actively participate in an online meeting - one device for interpreted audio and another for video;

WHEREAS, these language barriers and technology constraints place an undue burden on families that are already struggling;

WHEREAS, CCSE is actively seeking input from underrepresented families

WHEREAS, candidates are less likely to apply for a CEC ELL seat if they assume that CEC meetings will be conducted in English only;

WHEREAS even though every page on the NYC DOE website has a pulldown menu to select language 3, the InfoHub page on Translation and Interpretation Unit is not translatable 4;

WHEREAS, the following documents, that directly impact family engagement, student support and community empowerment, are available only in English:

*Chancellor’s Regulations only in English: A-170 Home Instruction Services, A-190 Significant Changes in School Utilization and Procedures for The Management of School Buildings Housing More than One School, A-411 Behavioral Crisis De-Escalation Intervention and Contacting 911, A-418 Sex Offender Notification, A-443 Student Discipline Procedures, A-501 Promotion Standards, A-750 Child Abuse and Maltreatment Prevention, A-820 Confidentiality and Release of Student Records; Records Retention, A-825 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Disclosure of Information to Institutions of Higher Learning and the Military English, A-830 Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedures for Filing Internal Complaints of Discrimination, B-801 School Based Budgeting, D-140 Process for the Nomination and Selection of Members of The Community Education Councils Including Filling Vacancies, D-150 Process for the Selection of Members of the Citywide Council on Special Education and the Citywide District 75 Council, D-170 Process for the Nomination and Selection of Members of the Citywide Council on English Language Learners Including Filling Vacancies, D-180 Extended Use of School Buildings*

WHEREAS, the DOE hasn’t translated the following documents or webpages, limiting parent engagement and support, causing disruption with schedules, and limiting access to health information:

* The CCEC member application, only available in English and Spanish,
* The NYC DOE COVID Technical Support for Families website page, only in English,5
* Notification of school closures in mid November announced only in English with no available translation until the next day, and
* The COVID exposure notifications from DOE, only in English.

3 <https://www.schools.nyc.gov/school-life/school-environment/hello>

4 <https://infohub.nyced.org/in-our-schools/translations/translation-and-interpretation>

[5 https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/learn-at-home/technical-tools-and-support/ipads-and-laptops/technical-support-for-families](https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/learn-at-home/technical-tools-and-support/ipads-and-laptops/technical-support-for-families)

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that CCSE asks the DOE to prioritize and complete translation of the above mentioned Chancellor’s Regulations before the end of this school year;

BE IT RESOLVED that the DOE send out future COVID-related information in all languages, on the same day;

BE IT RESOLVED that the DOE create pathways for school staff who speak, read and write in languages other than English (LOTE), and whose LOTE abilities would benefit their school populations, be given a stipend to assist with in-house translation and interpretation;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Family Leadership Coordinators of each District assist their respective Presidents’ Council, and that Parent Coordinators assist their PAs and PTAs with monthly meeting interpretation, interpretation of meeting minutes and flyer translations;

BE IT RESOLVED that the DOE provide training opportunities in language access initiatives not only to field support staff and administrators but to teachers and staff, as well as CCECs and their Administrative Assistants in computer software, such as Powerpoint and Microsoft Translate, that provide closed captioning translation and flyer translation;

BE IT RESOLVED that translation and interpretation services be adequately funded so that CECs may have interpretation services available to them at all open meetings;

BE IT RESOLVED that the current DOE Messages for Families page be used as the model for all future messaging, which is translated into ten languages and offers a sign language video;6

BE IT RESOLVED that the DOE survey teachers, administration and school staff to get feedback on needed language access and support to further communication with families, and report those finding to CECs annually;

[6https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/news/chancellor-s-message-for-families](https://www.schools.nyc.gov/about-us/news/chancellor-s-message-for-families)

BE IT RESOLVED that DOE present findings of the following list to CCSE as it relates to NYC schools, including High Schools, D75 schools and Charter Schools, if any, for the school years 2018-19 and 2019-2020:

• the number of distinct documents that have been translated into the covered languages and the general nature of such documents;

• the number of meetings at which it provides interpretation services and the languages for which it provides such services;

• its annual budget for language access services;

• the number of Department employees who provide language access services on a full time basis;

• the number of times interpretation services are provided by telephone, and the language in which such services are provided;

AND BE IT RESOLVED that the DOE review, update, and amend Chancellor’s Regulations A-663, Regulation of the Chancellor on Translations, last updated in June of 2009, including relevant services to support remote learning.

Cc: Chancellor Miesha Ross-Porter

 Chief Academic Officer Linda Chen

 Deputy Chancellor Austin, FACE

Deputy Chief Academic Officer Christina Foti

Director of Translation and Interpretation Kleber Palma

Presented and Adopted at a CCSE/CCELL joint meeting March 18. 2021