



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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November 7, 2011

Ms. Constance Denson-Hamilton
Equal Opportunity Specialist, Seattle Office
Western Division
United States Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
915 2nd Ave., Suite 3310
Seattle, WA 98174-1099

Dear Ms. Denson-Hamilton,

Thank you for the extension to provide you with this information. Below is the information to meet the reporting provisions of the Voluntary Resolution Agreement for OCR Reference Nos. 10111004, 10111080, and 10111116 as well as responses to the additional questions from your letter dated October 13, 2011.

First, pursuant to section IV B, please find attached a list of interpreters and translators available to schools as well as organizations that provide translation services. We are still in the process of developing a procedure for assessing and evaluating the qualifications of interpreters. We respectfully request permission to provide you with this information by January 1, 2012. We apologize for the delay.

Second, pursuant to section IV D, please find attached the following notices that were provided to staff:

- a) Every year, the District provides a School Staff Handbook to every administrator and teacher. That handbook is located online here: <http://www.pps.k12.or.us/files/admin-connection/School-Staff-HB-11-12.pdf> . On page fifteen it states:

Student and Family Support

The ESL/Immersion Department recognizes English Language Learners and their families may need additional support to understand and navigate the array of social and academic services available to them. In order to help students, ESL/Immersion works to identify at risk students, assists students in creating graduation plans, and provides programs for credit recovery. ESL/Immersion helps families by providing language support and linking families to available

social services (Family Support Centers). ESL/Immersion funds bilingual Educational Assistants, Parent Liaisons, Community Agents, and Equity Coordinators. In addition, the District funds the Interpretation and Translation Services Department (ITS).

Portland Public Schools is obligated to provide information to families in their identified correspondence language. When schools cannot provide that service with on-site resources, they can request help from:

Parent Liaison: ESL/Immersion Department, 503-916-6525

Interpretation & Translation Services: David Lee, 503-916-3427

(note: While the District no longer has Parent Liaisons, the Community Agents now provide those services to families. We will make the appropriate edits to the School Staff Handbook by January 1, 2012.)

- b) Additionally, in the handbook explains that information provided to parents about behavior expectations at school must be provided to LEP parents in a language they can understand. This language was revised in October 2011. On page 8 it states:

Important school information such as behavior expectations and notices about parent-teacher conferences must be translated into Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Somali and Russian if the school has families who need information translated in those languages. Principals, teachers and building staff must all be responsible for assuring families receive translated materials. If you do not have the appropriate language support at your school, please contact interpretation & Translation Services. Lead time for translations should be considered when creating the communication (to request translation <http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/interpretation-translation/>). When interpreters will be needed for conferences, the contact number is 503-916-3427. To assist a parent on the telephone if you do not have appropriate language support at your school and the person speaks one of our supported languages, contact the PPS Language Line at 503-916-3589.

- c) The following notice was placed in the weekly “Administrators Connection” that is sent via email to all administrators:

Behavior Expectations in the 5 Major Languages

Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act requires that we provide all families with equal opportunity. That includes access to school-related information that is needed to make well-informed decisions about the participation of their children in the district’s programs and services. The Administrative Directive, Process for Communication with Parents/Guardians, Interpretation and Translation Services (6.10.046-AD), commits Portland Public Schools to providing information to families who have requested that information be sent home in one of the five major languages beyond English (i.e., Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Somali or Russian) spoken by students/families. Families indicate that request on the registration form.

At a minimum, your school should be providing families with the written translations of behavior expectations in the 5 major languages identified in the Administrative Directive (as relevant to your school language populations). The [Student Services website](#) has the Guide to Policies, Rules, and

Procedures on Student Responsibilities, Rights and Discipline, Suspension Procedures, Expulsion Procedures, and Alcohol/Drug Activity Procedures as well as the Student Responsibilities, Rights and Discipline Handbook and Brochure in the 5 major languages.

If your school provides families with additional behavior expectations (such as dress code or cell phone policies), please make sure that this information is translated for families who have requested that information be provided in one of the 5 major languages spoken in the district.

Requests for Translation Assistance: David Lee, ITS Coordinator, at x63427

Questions about Behavior Expectations: Tammy Jackson, Assistant Director of Student Services at x71004

Questions about compliance with Title VI: Carolyn Leonard, Compliance, at x63183

d) The following notice was also sent to all Special Education teachers via email (the memo is attached):

- **Interpretation for Special Education Meetings**

PPS has streamlined the process for assigning interpreters for special education meetings. Now IEP case managers may directly contact a pre-assigned interpreter. For more information, please read this [memo](#) that went out to building administrators last week.

Third, please find attached copies of the notice that was sent home to families regarding translation services for families in the five major languages. This notice is also available online at: <http://www.pps.k12.or.us/back-to-school/index.htm> with the translations along the right hand side.

Fourth, while the District has established phone systems at each school so that LEP parents are provided access to information in their home language, we have not finalized the recording for the District's main telephone number. While there is a script ready, we are developing the process for the language line to answer the calls from LEP parents and community members. We request permission to provide additional information on this issue by January 1, 2012.

Fifth, the agenda for the Board meeting on June 13, 2011 was translated (please see attached). While there were translators available and they were utilized by some participants for this meeting, there was a breakdown in communication. At the time, Portland Public Schools' email system was blocking email from Latino Network and so the Board of Education's manager did not get a copy of the email request for translation services. It is the practice of the Board of Education to have translators available any time there is a request and when there is an agenda item that we know may be of particular interest to LEP parents. The primary item on the agenda for the June 13th Board meeting was the vote on the District's Racial Equity Policy. Because that policy was still only in draft form, it was not translated in language other than English. Once the Board of Education completed its edits on the policy and voted to approve it, the Policy was translated into all five of the major languages (<http://www.pps.k12.or.us/departments/board/876.htm>).

If you have any further questions or need any additional information, please let me know.
Thank you,

Amanda Whalen

Cc: Carole Smith
Carla Randall
Jollee Patterson
Zeke Smith
Ewa Chomka-Campbell
Suzy Harris
Carolyn Leonard