Important DCPS Phone Numbers:

Office of Bilingual Education
Office of Bilingual Education, Garrison Administrative Unit – East Wing
1200 S Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
Main Office: 202-671-0750
Fax: 202-671-2667
Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Family & Community Engagement
Foreign transcript evaluation, translation, and interpretation services
Phone: 202-671-0755

Language Access Line
202-671-0754

Tips & Important Things to Keep in Mind about ELL families...

- Good manners, a smile, and an attitude of respect go a long way to make up for not speaking your students’ home language. All families want their children to succeed so start there and build success!
- DCPS has a system for getting letters and other written materials translated or for using the language access line. Familiarize yourself with these services, including how far in advance you need to give them material, how often you can request services, and how far in advance you need to make requests.
- Even though they claim to be fantastic, stay away from free online translation services. Those computerized programs can only translate verbatim. They cannot translate context or intention. Many unfortunate misunderstandings can occur when you don’t take context or intention into account. Examples of how this may go awry include...
  - “I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.”
  - “There is no time like the present; it is time to present the present.”
  - “The buck does funny things when the does are present.”
- Translations are written and interpretation is oral. Learn to use the correct word for the correct service. It matters to those who are in the habit of serving ELL students and families.
- Find ADULTS in your school community (parents, other teachers, coaches, after care providers, community organizations, etc.) who can help you translate important documents when necessary. Offer something in exchange for their help and be kind to them by limiting the amount of pages you ask to be translated at any one time! **For every page of text it takes about two hours to translate, so be kind!**
- You should try to avoid using students as interpreters since it is important that everything you have to share is done accurately. Also, when scheduling important school meetings such as IEP meetings, discipline meetings, etc. it is important to obtain a trained professional to serve as an interpreter. These meetings are full of school acronyms and “education-ese” and only a skilled education interpreter can ensure that the information is accurately relayed.
- It is important to identify who your students are, including countries of origin. Not every Spanish speaker comes from Mexico. Once you learn this important information, make an effort to attend cultural events in the community highlighting this group. Often community organizations serving this group will be present and it is a good way to make connections and learn more about your students. Not to mention, they are FUN!
- Be resourceful, for instance, you can help volunteer at a community-based organization in exchange for someone there translating a letter!
Where to Get Help and Learn More...

**Latin American Youth Center**  
1419 Columbia Road, NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
Phone: 202-319-2225  
Fax: 202-462-5696  
Hours of Operation:  
Monday - Friday 8:00am - 8:00pm  
Saturday - 10:00am - 5:00pm  
Sunday – Closed

**CARECEN (Central American Resource Center)**  
1460 Columbia Road NW, Suite C-1  
Washington, DC 20009  
Phone: 202-328-9799  
Fax: 202-328-7894  
Email: info@carecendc.org

**African Immigrant and Refugee Foundation**  
1525 Newton Street NW  
Washington, DC 20010  
Phone: 202-234-2473

**DC Ethiopian Community Center**  
7603 Georgia Avenue NW, Suite 100  
Washington, DC 20012  
Phone: 202-726-0800  
Email: eth@prodigy.net

**Islamic Center of Washington, D.C.**  
2551 Massachusetts Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20008  
Phone: 202-332-8343

**Chinese Culture and Community Service Center, Inc. (CCACC)**  
16039 Comprint Circle, Gaithersburg, MD 20877  
Phone: 240-631-1200  
Fax: 240-631-2468  
Email: ccacc@ccacc-dc.org  
Website: http://www.ccacc-dc.org

**Vietnamese-American Community Service Center, Inc.**  
2437 15th Street NW  
Washington, DC 20009  
Phone: 202-667-0437  
Fax: 202-667-0438