

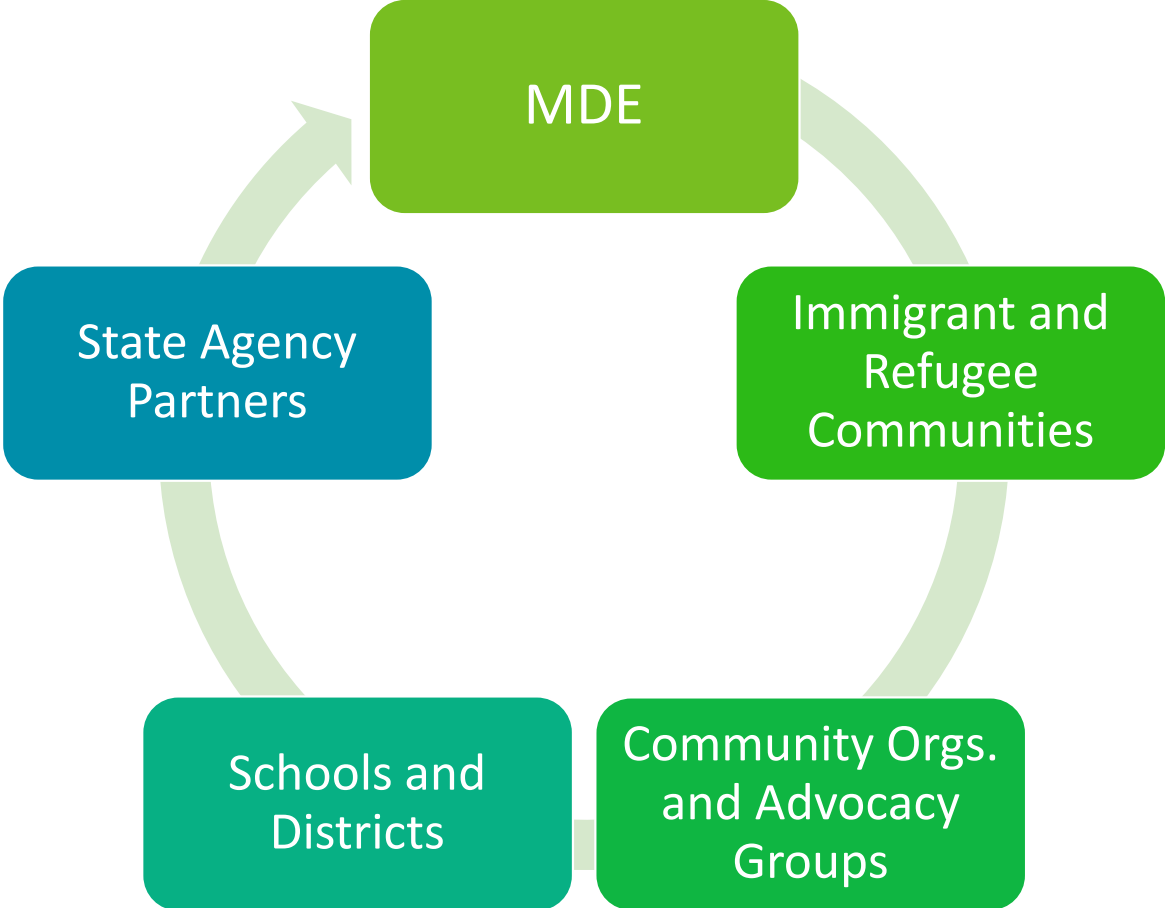


Language Access and Family Engagement

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January 8th, 2021

MDE Community Engagement Primary Stakeholder Groups



Targeted Communities

The Twin Cities is home to many of the country's largest immigrant and refugee-experienced communities outside of their native countries. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the three largest immigrant/refugee communities in Minnesota are:

- The Somali-American community. Primary language is Somali.
- The Latin-American community with immigrants from approximately 20 Latin American nations. Most frequently spoken language is Spanish.
- The Asian-American community with immigrants/refugees from over 40 Asian nations. Speaks over 40 different primary languages.

MN LEAPS Act and ESSA Title III

Minnesota LEAPS Act ensures that:

- Multilingualism and multiculturalism are positioned as educational and economic assets.
- Teachers and administrators receive appropriate preparation and continued professional development to support multilingual learners.
- Instruction is differentiated for the diversity of multilingual learners.
- Multicultural family voices are engaged and included in the educational process.
- The LEAPS Act can be found in 42 statutes. [View Key LEAPs Act Provisions.](#)

Title III & English Learner Services:

Critical Element 4 [Parent, Family, and Community Engagement](#)

- Informing parents about being involved in the education of their children
- Involving families in engagement activities and outreach events that are multilingual and multicultural
- Involving families and the community in program planning and implementation of programs for English learners including the World's Best Workforce Plan

Complexities in Language Access

Communities are complex. Diversity in lived experiences, spoken languages, immigration patterns to and around the country, size and urban concentration, culture and perceived relation to government and system, and varying degree of formal schooling present many challenges to school's language access plans and family engagement efforts.



Recommendations for School Leaders

- Convene regular meetings to modify and improve language access plan.
- Train staff on how to use The Language Line and school's preferred translation/interpretation vendors.
- Provide resources to help staff and parents identify language needed for interpretation.
- Train staff on how to operate simultaneous interpreting systems if available.
- Ensure translated materials on school website can be found easily.
- Use pre-recorded video, audio messages, and plain English language instead of wordy documents.

Recommendations for School Staff

- Pay attention to non-verbal cues like gestures and facial expressions to gauge parent's level of understanding.
- Listen for English words or phrases that interpreter may use and rephrase as necessary.
- Ask parent to repeat what they understood from the conversation and ask interpreter for their perspective and recommendations for improvement.

Thank you!

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