

### Overall Emphasis and Purpose:

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has specific provisions governing the evaluation of and services for students with limited English proficiency. The Individualized Education Program (IEP) team must be aware of the native language of a student to accurately assess what the student knows and can do. The IEP team must consider the language needs of the student as those needs relate to development, review, and revision of the student's IEP. The IEP team must also be aware of the native language of the parents to obtain informed consent because the parents may not fully understand the decisions being made and their impact on the student. The 2017 General Assembly passed a Bill requiring that if the native language spoken by the parents is spoken by more than 1% of the student population in the local school system, the system must provide the parents with the translated document within thirty (30) calendar days after the date of the request. In AACPS, Spanish is the only language for which translations are required.

### What this means for you as a Special Educator/Service Provider:

- AACPS has developed a Parent/Guardian Questionnaire that must be completed and uploaded into Tienet prior to referral for Language Dominance screenings.
- The timeline is not extended if Language Dominance screening is needed so the referral for Language Dominance screening must be made prior to the screening IEP date.
- There are times that Language Dominance screenings may not be necessary. Without a correctly completed referral form, the Bilingual Student Assessment Team (BSAT) is unable to make the determination as to whether Language Dominance screening is necessary.
- Bilingual assessments may not report standardized scores but may report qualitative scores. These scores can still be used to determine patterns, deficit areas, and areas of strength to determine eligibility and appropriate services.
- MSDE has IEP related documents- consent, invitations, Prior Written Notice forms available in many languages at the following website:  
[marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Special-Education/info.aspx](http://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/Special-Education/info.aspx)
- Parents may not fully understand the special education processes or have a frame of reference for what it means- Language Link will help connect with the parents.
- If the determination is that bilingual assessments are needed, the BSAT will complete the assessments, however, they may be unable to attend the eligibility IEP team meeting. There must be a Regular School Team (RST) meeting prior to meeting with the parent. Scores on bilingual assessments often look unusual and teams may need assistance in interpreting the results in making an appropriate eligibility decision.

### What the Special Educator/Service Provider needs to do if not already doing:

- For initial evaluations, if, and only if, the team is referring a student for special education, fully complete the Parent/Guardian Questionnaire and the Referral and Summary of Performance forms in Tienet, to ensure that a Language Dominance screening is appropriate.
- For re-evaluations, complete the Checklist for Language Dominance form and upload it into Tienet when the referral is made.
- Contact the parents using Language Link to inform them of the process and to obtain complete information for the Parent/Guardian Questionnaire.
- Use the **Language Dominance** email ([spedbilingual@aacps](mailto:spedbilingual@aacps)) to refer the case to the BSAT once the appropriate forms are completed. This must take place prior to the screening meeting.
- Obtain parental consent to complete Language Dominance Screening if you are notified that it is appropriate.
- If the BSAT determines that assessments in English are appropriate, complete the recommended assessments.
- Ensure the student has passed hearing and vision screenings prior to referral for Language Dominance Screening.
- Inform parents whose native language is Spanish of the opportunity to have their child's IEP or IFSP translated.