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# EL Students Or Bilingual Family Members Should Not Interpret For Their Family. **Why?**

## Myth Vs Fact

**Myth:** The student is bilingual. They can just interpret for their parents.

**Fact:** Using students or untrained loved ones is a violation of civil rights

## Why It's Not Allowed

- **Confidentiality:** Students should not hear or transmit private information (disciplinary actions, health, IEPs).
- **Accuracy:** Children lack the training to handle jargon, nuance, or sensitive terms.
- **Emotional Harm:** Asking children to interpret puts them in adult roles, often in high-stress situations.
- **Bias & Pressure:** Family members may filter information to “protect” each other, leading to miscommunication.
- **Legal Risk:** OCR has repeatedly clarified that schools must use qualified interpreters, not family or peers.

## What To Do Instead

- ✓ Always request a trained interpreter.
- ✓ Plan ahead: schedule at least 48 hours in advance when possible.
- ✓ Share materials with interpreters early for prep.