

# OPEN DOORS

*for* MULTICULTURAL FAMILIES

*FINAL REPORT FOR WISE LANGUAGE ACCESS FORUMS*

JULY 12<sup>TH</sup> 2022

# Purpose

The purpose of this report is to highlight the goals, processes and key takeaways of the recent partnership between [Open Doors for Multicultural Families](#) and WISE to deliver a 6-part Language Access Forum series.

Views shared within this report represent those of the ODMF Advocacy and Civic Engagement (ACE) Team, who served as project consultants. For more information, please contact our staff, listed at the end of this document.



# Here's what we'll cover:



Project Overview



Our approach to co-creating forum content



Summary of Language Access Forums 1-6



Key Takeaways



Closing Observations



# Project Overview

In January 2022, WISE approached **Open Doors for Multicultural Families (ODMF)** to co-create and facilitate a series of six (6) 90-minute Language Access forums.

Attendees represented a **variety of service providers across Washington State**, including disability employment providers and other community stakeholders.

Multicultural family advocates served as **subject matter experts (SMEs)** during each forum.

Spanish, Cantonese, and ASL **interpretation services were contracted for multilingual participation**, and to model best practices for language access in virtual settings.

Forums were held virtually, using Zoom. Multiple meeting links were used in lieu of breakout rooms to provide **more comprehensive interpretation services** to participants in smaller group settings.

The final forum of the series was held on **June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022**.



# Forum #1:

# Community Planning

- January 2022
- ODMF and WISE support staff made introductions and engagement agreements for future forums were created
- Moses Perez, ODMF ACE manager shared updates on language access efforts/legislation in Washington Public Schools ([HBI 153](#))
- Attendees participated in small group discussions to determine what is currently working, what is not, and ideas for
- Multicultural parent advocates weighed in as subject matter experts in small group discussions.
- Attendees identified the top five language access priorities that informed agenda-planning for five latter forums (i.e. co-creation).



# Forum #2:

## Working with Interpreters

- February 2022
- ODMF shared various tools such as : the “Working with Interpreters Checklist”, additional interpreter engagement strategies, organizational self-assessments, and ODMF’s “Life After High School” document, which was written specifically for BIPOC/multilingual communities.
- Discussion questions included: *What do you think about the tools that were just introduced in the larger group? How could you apply them in your daily work? What are some challenges can you envision? What other tools might be helpful?*
- Interpreter and industry expert Fanny Cordero presented on “Best Practices for Remote Interpretation & Digital Considerations”. Post presentation, Fanny facilitated an engaging Q&A to cover specific individual and organizational challenges of forum attendees.
- A survey was administered to gather insight for future co-created forum topics.



# Forum #3:

## Making Services Easier to Understand

- March 2022
- This forum focused on how service providers are preparing and explaining forms to their BIPOC clients and families.
- Best practices and example forms we shared by attendees.
- Forum facilitators reviewed example state service and employment plan with attendees. Fanny Cordero also shared her expert opinion on the accessibility of forms from a client and interpreter's point of view.
- The importance of creating forms in plain English, **before** translating into another language was highlighted for attendees. Facilitators explained that this helps everyone including the interpreter when explaining these forms to BIPOC clients and their families.



# Forum #4:

## Funding Language Access Supports

- April 2022
- Attendees brainstormed ideas, resources, and funding for language access supports for our BIPOC communities.
- A panel was formed consisting of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Developmental Disability Administration (DDA), and a community service provider from Clark County sharing best practices.
- Various topics were discussed: funding, digital divide within BIPOC communities (digital literacy & access), and prioritizing equity for those furthest from services





# Forum #5:

# Technology Access

- May 2022
- Groups brainstormed and shared what types of technology attendees (service providers) are using for language access supports.
- Presenters highlighted the need to be culturally responsive when using technology with BIPOC/ASL communities. Considering that those who created these technologies can be very different from the end-users/clients
- Pros and cons of using apps such as Google Translate
- Breaking down large concepts into more basic chunks
- Presentation concluded with the importance of modeling humility and that we are **all** still on this learning journey of language access



# Forum #6:

## Building Our Interpreter Network

- June 2022
- Attendees learned how to build out, sustain and refine your interpreter network.
- Presenters outlined the differences between interpretation (spoken) and translation (written text).
  - Simultaneous interpretation, consecutive interpretation and sight translation were defined.
  - Onsite vs remote interpretation
- Attendees learned the importance of having an organizational language access plan.
- ODMF provided an update on Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) Language Access Technical Assistance Program and Tool Kit
- Professional Educators Standards Board (PESB): credentialing for interpreters in school settings (emphasizing special education).



# ODMF Key Takeaways



This series had a good number and diverse range of attendees representing various portions of WA State.



WISE Staff were very open to learning how to improve their languages accessibility functions in virtual meetings.



Five of the six forums were created around the specifically expressed interests of attendees, which was successful.



BIPOC parents (subject matter experts) were prioritized and compensated generously for their time and expertise (lived experience) for each of the six sessions.



Multiple industry experts were invited to present, share knowledge and best practices



The majority of attendees were actively engaged throughout the six sessions. We believe this is because attendees were part of the co-creation process of determining the content to be shared at each session



# ODMF Key Takeaways Continued



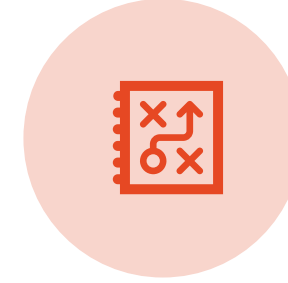
Creating and facilitating multiple Zoom sessions is NOT an easy task. WISE support staff and participants were willing to try new methods to enhance language access for limited English speaking & ASL participants.



Working with industry experts (interpreters) is also NOT an easy task. The humility of the WISE staff to receive feedback and implement feedback was impressive!



SMEs were honored through the six sessions. All the families reported this experience being a positive one; increasing their confidence in sharing/discussing emotional and sensitive topics.



Preparations prior to forums were key in minimizing technical difficulties. Instructions and expectations that were sent out (via email) also aided in improving the attendee's, support staffs, and industry experts' experience during the forums.



# Closing Observations

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Long-term solutions are needed for funding language access supports for providers. It would be optimal for this funding to be earmarked for these specific purposes.

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Reliable data for Washington State providers must be collected in the following areas: resources and time spent for language access efforts (year over year), resources needed to meet opportunity gaps for BIPOC & ASL populations within service areas, client language preferences.

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Service providers may benefit from networking and/or coalition building between industry peers and their clients to advocate for the necessary resources to implement, sustain and improve their language access efforts. “It’s more about language justice, not just language access”.

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# Closing Observations Continued

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Providers should identify potential “pilot-test” sites/providers to work with local BIPOC-led CBOs in order to reach further into impacted communities; they should work toward creating best practices for other providers who are in the same phase of their language access efforts.

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Providers, as well as local and state entities, should prioritize families and individuals who are furthest from services and who have the greatest needs for language access supports. “If you solve for **these** populations, **everyone** will be better off.”

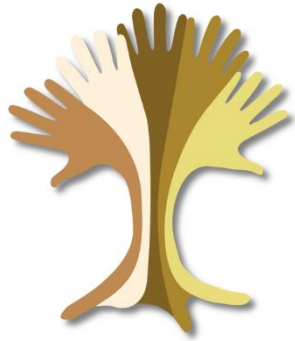
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Long-term planning and resource allocation are key to ensure these efforts are not temporary, but rather the new way of doing business for all their BIPOC clients, families, and communities.

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# Acknowledgment and Contact

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**OPEN DOORS**  
*for* MULTICULTURAL FAMILIES

Thank you very much for allowing us to be part of these WISE Language Access Forums. We are encouraged and stand by ready to work together in future endeavors until language justice is realized for all!

Kindly,

*-The Open Doors for Multicultural Families Advocacy & Civic Engagement (ACE) Team*

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