



Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner

September 9, 2019

Dear Members of the General Court:

Pursuant to Chapter 154 of the Acts of 2018, Section 81, I convened a task force to study and develop recommendations on the training and certification of language interpreters in educational settings to improve language access for limited English proficient parents/guardians. Task force members thoughtfully examined the specific needs of families and students in our public schools, sharing the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's priority of equitable access for all students.

Task force members included:

Mary Bourque; Massachusetts Association for School Superintendents
Oanh Bui; Parent, The Federation for Children with Special Needs
Regina Galasso; University of Massachusetts Amherst
Phyllis Hardy; Multistate Association for Bilingual Education – Northeast, Inc.
Susan Ou; Parent, The Federation for Children with Special Needs
Diana Santiago; Massachusetts Advocates for Children, Inc.
Jean Spera; Massachusetts Administrators for Special Education
Lauren Woo (Commissioner's designee); Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The task force held its first meeting on November 6, 2018 and met on seven occasions. On July 18, 2019, the task force submitted their final set of recommendations. As statutory Chair of the task force, I enclose the recommendations for your consideration.

If you have any questions about this report, please feel free to contact Lauren Woo, Director of the Office of Strategic Transformation, at lwoo@doe.mass.edu or 781-338-3563.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Cc: Jessica Leitz, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Russell Johnston, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Lauren Woo, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

School Interpreters Task Force – Recommendations

Our Charge

Section 81

The task force shall: (i) research the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to serve as an interpreter in school settings including, but not limited to, language proficiency, knowledge of education-specific terminology and concepts, confidentiality and ethics of interpreting and an understanding of the role and function of an interpreter; (ii) investigate existing interpreter training programs and report on any changes to such programs that are necessary to appropriately train interpreters working in school settings; and (iii) research existing interpreter assessments, certifications and credentials and report on changes needed to assess, certify or credential interpreters working in school settings.

The task force shall apply its findings to develop recommendations on the following: (i) the knowledge, skill and competency requirements necessary to serve as an interpreter in school settings; (ii) the training, assessment and certification of interpreters in school settings; and (iii) endorsements, certifications, credentials or assessments, if any, that should be established by the board of elementary and secondary education to ensure a reasonable supply of qualified interpreters for use in school settings.

The Importance of Creating a Welcoming Environment for all Parents and Guardians

A welcoming environment with a strong grounding in cultural responsiveness is at the foundation of improving the two-way communication and connection to families. The recommendations of this task force represent an important means to develop this important welcoming environment. When parents and guardians have an opportunity to communicate with educators through effective interpretation services, trust and understanding often follow.

Task Force Process

The School Interpreters Task Force appointed by the Commissioner has eight members: Mary Bourque (Massachusetts Association for School Superintendents), Oanh Bui (Parent, The Federation for Children with Special Needs), Regina Galasso (University of Massachusetts Amherst), Phyllis Hardy (Multistate Association for Bilingual Education – Northeast, Inc.), Susan Ou (Parent, The Federation for Children with Special Needs), Diana Santiago (Massachusetts Advocates for Children, Inc.), Jean Spera (Massachusetts Administrators for Special Education), Lauren Woo (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)). Member backgrounds can be found in [Appendix A](#). Each Task Force participant has deep expertise with the challenges and dynamics of interpretation in schools. As a group of educators, parents, guardians, and advocates, they met on seven occasions. At those meetings the Task Force members brought nuanced and invaluable insights to the limitations of the current interpretation services in schools as well as creative and pragmatic ideas for how to achieve needed improvements. Supplementing the experience and knowledge of the Task Force were invited experts. The individuals who met and conferred with the Task Force were:

- Iraida Alvarez (Attorney, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)
- Martha Boisselle (Teacher, Brighton High School)
- Gaye Gentes (Program Director, Found in Translation)

- Russell Johnston, (Senior Associate Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)
- Bernardo Llorente (Manger of Translation and Interpretation Services, Framingham Public Schools)
- Cristiano Mazzei (Director of Online Interpreter and Translator Training, UMASS Amherst)
- Julia Mejia (Founder & Director, Collaborative Parent Leadership Action Network)
- Michael O’Laughlin (Program Director, Center for Professional Education, Interpreter Certificate Program)
- Lauren Viviani (Special Education Manager, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)
- Steve Zrike (Superintendent, Holyoke Public Schools)

Additionally, the Task Force examined resources and documents from other states that have forged promising practices in interpretation services. The Task Force studied resources from Washington, Minnesota, Georgia as well as new approaches that UMASS Amherst has developed with the Holyoke Public Schools.

The legislature created the Task Force to “study and develop recommendations on the training and certification of language interpreters in educational settings to improve language access for limited English proficient parents.” As part of this process, the Task Force considered the requirements of federal and state law, regulations, and guidance regarding language access in school settings for limited English proficient (LEP) parents and guardians. In particular, the Task Force focused on the need for school districts to be able to meaningfully communicate with LEP parents and guardians in the context of providing special education services for students.¹ The U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights underscored the obligation to provide language assistance to LEP parents and guardians effectively with appropriate and competent staff or appropriate and competent outside resources in its January 2015 “Dear Colleague” letter.²

Draft Recommendations of Task Force³

Recommendation #1: Develop a tiered system

The Task Force recommends that each district use a tiered system of competencies and skills when contracting for or using the services of interpreters, including interpreters who are employees of the district. Each tier has a different range of recommended competencies and knowledge. Tier 3 incorporates the highest level of skills and competencies. The competencies and knowledge linked to each Tier depend on the context within which interpreters are needed.

¹ The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education monitors these requirements through its Public School Coordinated Program Review System. See, e.g. Special Education Program Review Criteria # 29 and Civil Rights Program Review Criteria #7.

² “Dear Colleague” Letter from U.S. Dep’t of Justice and U.S. Dep’t of Educ. on English Learner Students and Limited English Proficient Parents to Sch. Educ. Agencies, Sch. Dist., and All Pub. Sch. (Jan. 7, 2015).

³ For the purposes of these recommendations, we are distinguishing interpretation from translation. Translation refers to written work done with a document, while interpretation refers to oral communication.

- Tier 3 interpreters would be required at IEP and other **specialized⁴ meetings**. The list below, which may expand over time, details the specialized meetings that require the highest level of interpretation skills::
 - Discuss a student’s education plan (IEP)
 - Address a safety plan or a behavior intervention plan
 - Consider English Learner Education (ELE) program placement
 - Conduct due process or student discipline hearings
 - Develop Individual 504 plans
 - Address bullying complaints
 - Address the use of physical restraint and seclusion of students
- Tier 2 interpreters serve at parent conferences, community meetings that do not require simultaneous translation, and other school gatherings that do not have a legal context.
- Tier 1 interpreters are used during spontaneous, unannounced meetings or communication scenarios that occur in schools when a Tier 3 or Tier 2 interpreter is not available. In certain cases, if the interpreter discovers that such an unannounced meeting is about a more specialized topic and it is within an urgent timeframe, the conversation will be brought to the attention of a Tier 2 or Tier 3 interpreter by phone or other mode of communication.

Tier Skills and Competencies:

All Tiers: It is recommended that any individual serving in the role of an interpreter in any school context, whether Tier 1, Tier 2, or Tier 3 possess the following competencies:

1. Formally demonstrated language proficiency in English and at least one other language as described below in [Recommendation #2](#). For Tier 1 interpreters, language proficiency does not have to be formally assessed;
2. Knowledge of pertinent subject matter;
3. The role of the interpreter in school settings;
4. Understanding of and appropriate response to dual role issues specific to school contexts (e.g., when interpreters have another job within the school context outside of their role as an interpreter);
5. Knowledge of ethics and confidentiality with respect to interpretation; and
6. Sufficient cultural competency to negotiate cross cultural differences.

Tiers 2 & 3: In addition to the minimum skills and competencies required above, it is recommended that Tier 2 and Tier 3 interpreters possess the additional following competencies:

1. Knowledge of basic educational (e.g., special education, general education, individualized education plan, in-school suspension) terminology used in school settings; and
2. Participation in ongoing professional development after completing the required endorsement course, described in [Recommendation #4](#).

Tier 3: Finally, in addition to the minimum skills and competencies required in the above two sections, it is recommended that Tier 3 interpreters possess the additional following competency:

⁴ This list details the specialized meetings that require the highest level of interpretation skills and future reference to “specialized meetings” within this document refers to this list of meetings.

- >50 hours of successful school interpretation experience in Tier 3 contexts (e.g., special education meetings) with feedback from a qualified interpreter. In order to provide adequate feedback, a Tier 3 or qualified interpreter (of the same language) must observe the interpreter working in a specialized meeting at least once for a period of 30 minutes. Feedback can come from observing a live meeting or from the recording of a meeting.

The skills and competencies required for Tier 3 status, the highest level, are illustrated in the graphic below.

Figure 1.0: Tier 3 Competencies



Please note, based on appropriate experience in interpreting, school staff member/individual may receive a “[Grandfathered](#)” status (see Recommendation #5).

Please note that all qualifications apply to high incidence (as determined by DESE) and low incidence languages.

For low incidence languages, if the school district is unable to identify an in-person interpreter with required competencies despite reasonable efforts, a school district may use the services of a phone-based interpreter with required competencies.

As an alternative to the above-outlined tiered system, DESE may develop a process for approving alternative models that school districts propose. The Task Force recommends that DESE develop a standardized template districts can utilize to demonstrate that interpreters obtained through its proposed alternative model will have the required skill levels and competencies. For example, a district could choose to incorporate the information required in the DESE standardized template as part of its District Improvement Plan (within the Language Access Plan subsection).

Recommendation #2: Implement standards for language proficiency

The Task Force recommends that Tier 2 and Tier 3 prospective school interpreters be formally assessed for language proficiency in all languages for which they will be serving as an interpreter. Since an interpreter cannot be effective without proficiency in the parent's/guardian's primary language, the Task Force recommends that prospective interpreters be assessed for language proficiency before being eligible to take the school interpreter endorsement course described below in Task Force [Recommendation #4](#). Pathways for determining language proficiency include:

1. Certification from an interpreter training program that may be outside of the educational context (e.g., medical or court interpreting).
2. For individuals that have not been serving as professional interpreters, a minimum score (see scores below) on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) earned within the prior 5 years. The OPI may be administered remotely or on location.
 - a. For Tier 3 interpreters: a minimum score of "Advanced-Mid" must be earned.
 - b. For Tier 2 interpreters: a minimum score of "Advanced-Low" must be earned.
3. For Tier 2 interpreters, attainment of the Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction. (Although not required, Tier 1 interpreters may attain the Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy.)
4. Assessed for language proficiency by DESE approved vendor (to be determined, see Recommendation #4) who has the expertise to assess language competency.
5. Another pathway that DESE determines to be effective for formally assessing language proficiency as a prerequisite to serving as a school interpreter.

Recommendation #3: Create a state-wide database of Tier 3 interpreters

The Task Force recommends that DESE establish a database of approved vendors that contains the names of all individuals and interpretation service providers who have demonstrated Tier 3 competencies. This will allow school districts to hire interpreters who have the appropriate skill levels.

1. In order to establish the database, DESE will be responsible for assessing [Tier 3 competencies](#) (or hiring qualified service providers to do so) as described above in Recommendations 1 and 2.
2. Individuals and interpretation service providers will have a range of pathways for demonstrating Tier 3 competencies. See [Figure 2.0](#) below.
3. DESE will also track school employees who have attained Tier 3 status. Those personnel will not be listed on the public service provider list.
4. Any individual who has satisfied all requirements for Tier 3 status except for the 50 hour field practice requirement will be assigned *interim* status which will allow them to serve in Tier 3 school contexts. This interim status will be valid for one (1) calendar year or until the individual demonstrates that he or she has obtained the 50 hours of successful interpretation within a school context. If the individual has not obtained sufficient hours after one (1) calendar year, DESE approval will be required to extend his or her interim status for an additional year. At the end of the second year, individuals who have not obtained sufficient experiential hours will lose their interim status.
5. If a complaint is raised about the quality of interpretation services provided and such complaint is not resolved at the district level, the district may notify DESE. DESE may choose to conduct its own review and, if warranted, reserves the right to remove individuals or service providers from the approved database of qualified interpreters.

Recommendation #4: Develop a course that focuses on key competencies of interpreters in schools

The Task Force recommends in consultation with interpretation experts, DESE develop a rigorous, interactive curriculum that offers opportunities for supervised practice. The course should be provided over an extended period of time, with sufficient hours that will support the skills and competencies required for interpreters. Such a curriculum will be delivered in a blended (a combination of online and face-to-face) course that will support the skills and competencies required for Tier 3 and Tier 2 interpreters. These include the core knowledge and competencies required for interpreters working in any setting, as well as additional competencies necessary to effectively serve as interpreters in a school setting (See [Table 1](#) and [Recommendation #1](#) for the requirements for each Tier) including the rights of parents/guardians and students within US schools. Participants who successfully complete this course will have gained the additional competencies needed for Tier 3 & Tier 2⁵. Individuals licensed through DESE might be able to apply course hours towards Professional Development Points required for licensure renewal.

Additionally, the Task Force recommends DESE establish a *train-the-trainer* version of the course that will allow school districts (and other interpretation agencies) to offer this course and ongoing training to their own personnel with DESE oversight. At a minimum, trainers should have met all of the requirements to be a Tier 3 interpreter in addition to having the additional skills needed to effectively train and assess staff being trained.

Recommendation #5: Develop a phased roll out of the tiered system with grandfathering allowed

The Task Force recommends that DESE establish a phased in roll out of these requirements starting with a small number of diverse school districts, obtaining feedback from educators as well as parents and guardians prior to moving into Phase II which would include a larger sample of school districts. Phase III will involve all schools. Phase II and Phase III will begin in Years 3 and 5 of the roll out. Each district involved in the roll out will have 6 years to achieve all aspects of these recommendations. The Task Force acknowledges the importance of rolling out as quickly as possible, given the importance of language access for children, families, and educators. Obtaining and applying feedback and sharing best practices should occur throughout all phases.

Grandfathering: School employees whose primary job responsibility has been to serve as an interpreter for one or more years at the time that legislation incorporating these recommendations goes into effect may meet the language proficiency requirement outlined in [Recommendation #2](#). The school district must provide a letter of endorsement from the superintendent or his or her designee to DESE describing how the individual(s) has also obtained the knowledge and competencies required for Tier 3 and 2 interpreters as outlined in [Table 1](#) and [Recommendation #1](#).

Recommendation #6: Establish a state wide contract for phone interpretation

The Task Force recommends that DESE develop a state-wide contract for phone interpretation services that will allow schools to utilize this service for interpretation work at reduced pricing. Phone interpretation services are acceptable for Tier 1 and may be used in Tier 2 contexts. Tier 3 interpreters may provide interpretation by phone only if the school district is unable to identify a Tier 3 interpreter who can be physically present.

⁵ Interpreters that have successfully completed a DESE-approved interpreter training program that includes the core competencies and knowledge required for effective interpretation need only complete the portions of the course addressing knowledge and competencies required to serve as an interpreter in school settings.

Recommendation #7: Develop a short video explaining the basics of interpretation and the role of interpreters for parents and guardians with limited English proficiency

The Task Force recommends that DESE develop a short video (or other medium) for parents and guardians that provides an overview of the basics of interpretations, the role of interpreters at school-based meetings, and the importance of establishing effective two-way communication with parents and guardians. In addition, the video should include an explanation of the reasons for which the use of students as interpreters is inappropriate and harmful. The video will be available in multiple languages and with supports that would allow non-literate caretakers to access the main ideas of the presentation.

Recommendation #8: Develop a training module for all school staff that addresses how to communicate effectively with parents and guardians using an interpreter

The Task Force as well as the experts who presented at our meetings emphasized the importance of building awareness in all staff members of the role that interpreters play in school, ethical obligations of interpreters, and how to support effective two-way communication using an interpreter. Effective interpretation requires, for example, adaptations at meetings (e.g., additional time, an introduction by the interpreter) so that parents and guardians whose first language is not English have the same opportunity to participate in discussions and decisions related to their children's education as English-speaking parents. When all staff implement these adaptations, understanding among parents/guardians, school staff, and interpreters will be optimized.

Recommendation #9: Develop a mechanism for collecting parent/guardian feedback

Each district should develop a means for collecting feedback from parents/guardians who experience interpretation services. The purpose of this feedback is to understand the parent/guardian experience and apply feedback to improvement efforts in this area. Districts are expected to develop feedback mechanisms in parent/guardians' native languages.

Recommendation #10: Secure sufficient resources to implement these recommendations

The Task Force recognizes that many of the above recommendations will require additional resources. These recommendations are an important measure to ensure that limited English proficient parents and guardians have an equal opportunity to communicate with their children's school in accordance with the legal requirements described above. The Task Force recommends that DESE determine the resources needed for implementation of recommendations 1-9 and recommends that the legislature allocate the resources accordingly. The number of school districts included initially and timeframe for the phased roll-out will depend in part on available resources.

Table 1.0: Competencies matched to Tiers

| Tier | Main Responsibility | 1. Language Proficiency | 2. >50 hours interpreting in a school context | 3. Knowledge of specialized educational terminology | 4. Ethics, confidentiality, appropriate role of interpreter, cultural competency | 5. Orientation to the role of the interpreter, the importance of effective two way communication with parents & guardians, basic educational terminology, and what to expect when interpreters are used in school settings | 6. Ongoing training |
|------|--|------------------------------|--|--|---|---|------------------------|
| 3 | Interpretation at IEP meetings, ELE placement, due process, and/or school discipline hearings, meetings held to address bullying concerns, other meetings or communications relevant to a student’s educational rights, safety, or access to equal educational opportunities, .or public meetings that require simultaneous interpretation | X (formally demonstrated) | X | X | X | X | X |
| 2 | Community meetings, parent/guardian conferences | X (formally demonstrated) | | X | X | X | X |
| 1 | Spontaneous, unplanned connections with parents/guardians | X | | | X | X | X |

Figure 2.0: Pathways to approval – How interpreters can demonstrate appropriate competencies

Requirement 1: Formally Demonstrated Language Proficiency

(at least one of the following)

- Assessed by DESE-approved vendor who has the expertise to assess language proficiency.
- Certification by an interpreter training program that may be outside of the educational context (e.g., medical or court interpreting).
- For individuals that have not been serving as professional interpreters, a minimum score (see scores below) on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) earned within the prior 5 years. The OPI may be administered remotely or on location.
 - For Tier 3 interpreters: a minimum score of “Advanced-Mid” must be earned.
 - For Tier 2 interpreters: a minimum score of “Advanced-Low” must be earned.
- For Tier 2 interpreters, attainment of the Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction. (Although not required, Tier 1 interpreters may attain the Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy.)
- Another pathway as approved by DESE.

Requirement 2: >50 Hours Interpreting in a School Context

(at least one of the following)

- Successful employment by a school district as an interpreter accounting for >50 hours of interpretation service;
- Documentation certified by the superintendent or designee that the individual has met the Tier 3 requirements of effective interpretation services in school contexts; or
- >50 hours of successful school interpretation experience in Tier 3 contexts (e.g., special education meetings) with feedback from a qualified interpreter. See [Tier 3 competencies](#) for more information.

Requirement 3: Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies for Effective Interpretation

(listed as 3-6 in Table 1 above)

- Successful completion of a DESE approved course;
- Submission of documents to DESE indicating that prior coursework in these competencies has been successfully completed fully or in part by a DESE approved provider; or
- Another pathway approved by DESE as effective in ensuring the same skill level and competencies as the recommended pathway.

Requirement 4: Ongoing Training

- Tier 3 and Tier 2 interpreters need to demonstrate that they are participating in ongoing training focused on interpretation skills and knowledge via approved DESE professional development opportunities, ongoing monitoring and evaluation, and appropriate academic college level course work.

Further Considerations

In order to improve and strengthen interpretation services in schools, the Task Force encourages school districts to provide professional development to all educators on what to expect when schools use interpreters and the special circumstances that effective interpretation requires. By providing this kind of professional development, schools will provide the background knowledge needed to help support the effective use of interpreters in school.

Appendix A: Task Force Bios:

Mary Bourque:

Mary Bourque is the Superintendent of the Chelsea Public Schools in Chelsea, Massachusetts. A life-long educator committed to improving urban education, Ms. Bourque is a proud graduate of Chelsea High School. Ms. Bourque graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from Salem State University. She received her Master's in Education from Boston University School of Education in Administration, Training, and Policy. She holds a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Administration from Boston University's School of Education.

Her doctoral research centered upon the impact of student mobility in urban districts within Massachusetts and the consequences mobility has upon schools' and districts' performance accountability. Her doctoral research has been the basis for reform to State policy including informing the 2010 Massachusetts Reauthorization of Education Reform and the resulting inclusion by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of a "churn rate" of students in school and district profiles. Most recently, student mobility and transiency has been taken into consideration in the 2018 revision to the MA Accountability Framework. She is a founding member of the Five District Partnership which was based on her doctoral research.

Ms. Bourque began her teaching career as a middle school teacher in St. Peter's Elementary School, South Boston, MA. She returned to Chelsea teaching at the high school and later Chelsea's elementary schools. In 1998 Ms. Bourque was offered the opportunity to help open a start-up school, the Clark Avenue Middle School, for approximately 750 students. She served as assistant principal and principal of the Clark Avenue Middle School. While serving in both positions she also led the district-wide curriculum alignment and formative assessment design work; all of this work was completed during the final five years of the Boston University/Chelsea Public Schools Partnership. Ms. Bourque accepted the position of Assistant Superintendent of the Chelsea Public Schools in 2004 and was moved to Deputy Superintendent in 2008. On July 1, 2011 she became Superintendent of the Chelsea Public Schools and continues to serve in that position today.

Ms. Bourque served as the 2016-2017 MASS President; was awarded the 2017 AASA Massachusetts Superintendent of the Year, and the MASS 2017 Bobbie D'Alessandro Women in Leadership Award. She continues to serve as a MASS Executive Officer and one of the four Chairs for the Urban Superintendents' Network.

Oanh Bui:

Oanh Bui is a Vietnamese parent of a child with multi-disability and a professional who holds two Master Degrees in Health Administration/Public policy and Sustainable International Development. She was a LEND fellow (Leadership and Education in Neuro-developmental Disability) through Shriver Center. She is working now at the Federation for Children with Special needs as a Health Educator and Outreach Specialist. Being a cultural broker herself, she understands greatly the obstacles which not only Vietnamese speaking families but also many non-English speaking families are facing with. She has worked and collaborated with different stakeholders to address the accessibility issues including language access for the culturally linguistically diverse communities'. She is establishing a network of cultural brokers to support families from diverse background.

Oanh is an advisory member of the DDS Statewide Family Support, Consumer Advisory Committee of Shriver Center and the Institute for Community Inclusion at UMASS Boston, the Steering Committee of Autism Act Early in Massachusetts. She is also an active member of TASH and AUCD Multi-Culturally Council.

Regina Galasso:

Regina Galasso is Associate Professor in the Spanish and Portuguese Program in the Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures and Director of the Translation Center at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Before joining the faculty at UMASS, she was Assistant Professor of Spanish at the Borough of Manhattan Community College of the City University of New York. She earned her B.A. from Rutgers University, her M.A. from Middlebury College, and her Ph.D. from the Johns Hopkins University. She participated in academic programs in Cuba and Spain. Before entering graduate school, she worked at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC as an interpreter for the AmericArtes Festival. Her research and teaching interests include twentieth-century Iberian literatures, literary and cultural relationships between U.S. and Iberian and Latin American Writers and Artists, literature of the city, and literary translation. She teaches courses on Spanish-English translation, literary translation, and literature. She has translated literary works by writers from Argentina, Cuba, and Spain. Her book-length translations include the testimonial novel *A True Story: A Cuban in New York* (Jorge Pinto Books, by Miguel Barnet (Cuba) and the poetry collection *Lost Cities Go to Paradise* (Swan Isle Press, 2015) by Alicia Borinsky (Argentina/US). She is the author of the book *Translating New York: The City's Languages in Iberian Literatures* (Liverpool University Press, 2018) which won the Northeast Modern Language Association 2017 Book Award. She has edited volumes on literary translation activity and city space, including the forthcoming *Avenues of Translation: The City in Iberian and Latin American Writing* (Bucknell University Press, 2019). Included in her duties as Director of the UMASS Translation Center, Professor Galasso works closely with the Center's team to provide a range of translation and interpreting services to clients both near and far. Most recently, she has worked with Holyoke Public Schools to design an in-person Interpreter and Translator in Education Training Workshop Series which will take place this fall.

Phyllis Hardy:

Phyllis Hardy is currently Executive Director of the Multistate Association for Bilingual Education - Northeast, Inc. (MABE). She represents MABE as a steering committee member of the Language Opportunity Coalition that successfully advocated for the LOOK Act and the Seal of Biliteracy. She has co-lead the Dual Language Special Education Network, whose activities frequently focus on awareness of linguistic and cultural differences, especially when interacting with diverse families. She received her B.A. at Franklin & Marshall College followed by a M. Ed. (Special Education) at Boston College. She started her educational career as a Bilingual Special Educator in Framingham, MA and has also worked in the fields of Transitional Bilingual Education, Early Childhood Education and Dual Language Education. As a Special Education Coordinator, she often led IEP meetings in Spanish, needing to interpret and/or translate for team members who did not speak Spanish. Following her public school experience, Phyllis worked as a Program Specialist for The Education Alliance at Brown University, supporting school districts and teachers in different English Language Education programs in the areas of instruction, culturally responsive teaching, and the assessment of English Learners regarding eligibility for special education services. Phyllis was born and raised in Puerto Rico and is a bilingual speaker of Spanish and English. She loves to read, swim and contribute to her religious community. She is happily married with three grown children and two grandsons.

Susan Ou:

Susan Ou has been the Chinese Outreach Coordinator for 6 years at the Federation for Children with Special Needs. Before she took this position, she was a Chinese teacher in the one of Chinese schools- Chung Wah Academy. Being a parent of ELL student with disability and a family member of LEP adult with Intellectual Disability, she understands the importance of supporting the student's vision. Susan runs two parent support groups (Greater Boston and Metro West), which provide Chinese parents of students with disabilities educational, emotional support.

Diana Santiago:

Diana Santiago is a Senior Attorney and Project Director at Massachusetts Advocates for Children (MAC). She directs MAC's *Proyecto Acceso a la Educación Especial*, a project focused on addressing the educational needs of Latino students with disabilities. As part of *Proyecto Acceso*, Diana provides direct case advocacy to Latino parents facing linguistic and other barriers to accessing special education services for their children as well as information and advice to Spanish-speaking parents through MAC's Helpline. In addition, she conducts workshops on parent involvement in the special education process and transition in special education for Latino parents and professionals that support them. Diana also leads the *Latinos and Special Education Coalition of the Education Law Task Force*, a statewide coalition of special education attorneys and advocates that work primarily with Latino families that MAC launched in early 2017. Coalition focus areas include language access in special education, immigrant rights in education, and issues impacting Latino students with disabilities that are also English learners. Through her direct representation of limited English proficient parents at team meetings and work with the Coalition, Diana sees first hand and hears from coalition colleagues the struggles that parents commonly face participating in decisions about their children's education because the interpreter is not qualified to convey necessary information. Prior to joining MAC, Diana worked at the Boston Public Health Commission managing the Boston Child Health Study and projects focusing on children with special health care needs. Immediately after graduating from law school she was a staff attorney at South Coastal Counties Legal Services in their family law and public benefits practices. Diana attended Northeastern University School of Law and has a master's degree in public health from Tufts University School of Medicine. She completed her undergraduate degree in legal studies and Latin American Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Jean Spera:

Jean Spera is the Director of Student Services for the Cambridge Public Schools. Holding a Masters in Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology, a Certificate in Advanced Educational Specialization in School Psychology, and a Certificate in Advanced Graduate Studies in Educational Leadership, she has substantial experience in interpreting psychological evaluations, designing programs to support students' varied needs, and managing the special education process and procedures. Ms. Spera is also a board member with the Massachusetts Administrators for Special Education, Massachusetts State Special Education Advisory Council, and Massachusetts Urban Special Education Collaborative.

Lauren Woo:

Lauren Woo is the Director of the Office of Strategic Transformation at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Ms. Woo graduated with a bachelor's of arts degree from Bates College. She received a master's degree in teaching from Pace University and a master's degree in Education Policy and Management from Harvard University Graduate School of Education. Ms. Woo began her teaching career as a special education teacher as a Teach for America corps member in

Brooklyn, New York. Following her two-year commitment, she served as a special education Learning Specialist with Achievement First East New York. After graduating from Harvard, Ms. Woo worked on the leadership team at Brooke Charter Schools in Boston where she led the network's efforts in talent recruitment and development. In her current role, Ms. Woo leads the support, assistance and oversight of the Massachusetts schools and districts in state receivership.