

Reaching Every Family: Multilingual Google Forms Made Easy

Chris Spackman

The Graham Family of Schools

2025 November 20

Opening Survey

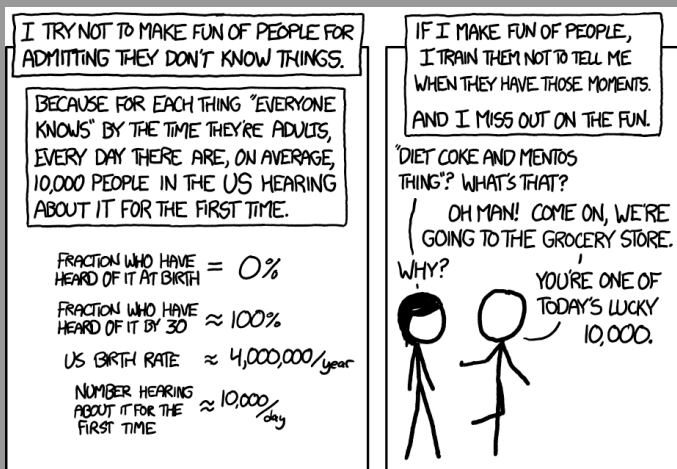
Welcome! Please complete the survey at
<https://www.ChrisSpackman.com/2025-11-20-intro-survey.html>.

Or, use this QR code:



Today's *Nagare*

- Introductions and brief tech familiarity conversation
- Legal requirements and generally “Why are we here?”
- Three ways of creating multilingual forms
- Q & A and wrap up



I hope we have some of “today’s lucky 10,000” here today.

Another QR Code

Please go to <https://www.ChrisSpackman.com/2025-11-20.html> for these slides, as well as links we will use today.

Or, use this QR code:



Why We Are Here

Our goals for today are:

- Review legal requirements for language access
- Mention a few options that we will not discuss much today
- Understand the advantages and disadvantages of multilingual Google Forms
- Practice using Apps Script to “easily” create multilingual Google Forms

Legal Requirements

This is probably not news to anyone here, but the DOJ and DOE are pretty specific about language access requirements:

*“Schools must communicate information to limited English proficient parents in a language they can understand about **any program, service, or activity that is called to the attention of parents who are proficient in English**” (emphasis added)*

Legal Requirements

“This includes, but is not limited to, information related to:”

- registration and enrollment in school and school programs
- requests for parent permission
- gifted and talented programs
- parent handbooks
- report cards
- parent-teacher conferences
- student discipline policies and procedures
- special education and related services
- meetings to discuss special education
- language assistance programs

from: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ellresources.html>

Preferred Language Identification Process

Again, probably not news to anyone here, but just for completeness:

- Families complete **Language Usage Survey** (LUS) at registration:
 - languages used at home
 - student's first language
 - preferred school communications languages (get oral and written)
 - (and a few other things)
- Registrar or ESOL Coordinator (or ??) goes through LUS forms looking for families with other languages at home
- Someone communicates family language preferences to school staff

The Problem

When sending Forms / Surveys to families, we need to ...

- collect information from **all** our families
- make it easy for families; not fair to depend on them to translate
- work with the data for all responses, together

BTW, “Forms / Surveys” can also include things like signing up for events or conferences, etc. Third-party sites for this, and outside organizations in general, are often not aware of need to support multiple languages.

(Non-Google) Choices

Canva — not sure of its capabilities; might be a great choice if already in the Canva ecosystem

Lime Survey — super powerful; free and open source; massive learning curve

MagicSchool — will help create multilingual questions; cannot create / host surveys

Survey Monkey — paid; can add multiple languages & respondent chooses

Survey Planet — multilingual; one language per form

I don't use Canva, and I haven't found a good, free, K-12 appropriate, usable service. So, I default to Google Forms.

Google Forms

Google Forms — three choices for multilingual forms; arguably none are great:

- One form with [several languages per question](#) (like our opening Form)
- One form with [sections for each language](#)
- Script to create separate forms (with [AppScript for Forms](#))

All have their drawbacks. Biggest is often the extra time needed for collating the data later. There are add-ons / extensions, but the AppScript is free, unlimited, and private and safe (no data worries).

One Form, Two or Three Languages

Benefits:

- Easy to do
- All results data in one place
- Treats all languages (mostly) equally — but make all fonts same size

Drawbacks:

- Only good for 2 or at most 3 languages (items get too long after that)
- Some families may be confused about what language to reply in
- Mixed languages in text response data

Best choice for English plus 1 (or maybe 2) other languages

One Section Per Language

Benefits:

- Only need one form
- Response data is all in one form
- Treats all languages (mostly) equally

Drawbacks:

- Good for a few languages; very long if more than 4 or 5 languages
- Response data spread across many columns; need to collate
- Slightly more complex set up; need language selection and jump logic

Okay choice for English plus 2 or 3 other languages

One Form Per Language

Use Apps Script in a Google Spreadsheet to create individual Google Forms

Benefits:

- Only need one spreadsheet (and editing is much easier)
- Create Forms for as many languages as needed
- Treats all languages equally
- Can reuse spreadsheet to create new forms
- Can have spreadsheet translate for you (use `googletranslate` function)

One Form Per Language (cont.)

Drawbacks:

- Response data spread across many forms; need to collate across several spreadsheets
- First time set up can be time consuming
- Have to deal with Apps Script
- No English with other languages unless you specifically include it
 - makes using googletranslate function a bit more difficult

Best for English plus more than 2 or 3 other languages

Apps Script

The link to the “Google Sheets To Multilingual Google Forms” is on our PD page.

Information and directions are in the spreadsheet and the script.

Important tabs: Settings & English. The other tabs are for the languages you need. You need to fill those in.

- Rename tab names to the languages you want; should match what is in the settings sheet column A (Additional Languages)
- Use googletranslate function in language sheet cells if you do not want to translate yourself

Apps Script (cont.)

- See column D or [Wikipedia's list of language codes](#) for 2-letter codes to use
- After setting up languages and questions, execute the script with “Custom Scripts” ⇒ “Create Forms from Spreadsheet”.
 - It will take a few seconds, maybe as long as a minute
- Google will pop up some warnings and “are you really sure?” prompts. It is safe to use the script because it does everything through Google.
- They newly created Google Forms will appear in your Drive folder

If you want to see / edit the script, go to Extensions ⇒ Apps Script.

Lagniappe

YouTube video

I have a video on YouTube on how to create multilingual forms with Google Translate.

Multilingual Slides

I also have a Google Slide deck for translating Slides.

The directions are on the slide. I usually copy slides in, translate them in bulk, then paste the translated slides into a copy of the original slide deck.

Apps Script

Also, I'm happy to help if anyone needs some Apps Script to do something.

Q & A; Wrap Up

- Questions? Answers? Comments?
- The slides and other resources from today are at ChrisSpackman.com
- My “professional” email address is chris@ChrisSpackman.com.
- My work email is spackman.1@TheCharlesSchool.org.
- My Gmail (for the shared documents) is osugisakae@gmail.com.
- I’m on Mastodon at @chris_spackman@twit.social.
 - I believe you can also find me at that address on BlueSky

Links

These next slides include the text of most of the URLs in this presentation.

- <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/> (license for these slides)
- https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfCsKQHciWFxFPMUHd7T25w0jpsuhV7dj8_m-znq3lv6-_TAA/viewform?usp=sharing&ouid=106905352600030206233 (one form with sections for each language)
- <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1D8pmWrDALBddjUuwy6WnExVmkSoXKOUbADneUoBHXIw/edit?usp=sharing> (Google Slide deck for translating Slides)

Links (cont.)

- <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1F5pcXscIMDD2KdeYfLB8pEosWhGzYqmGY8QeRCU6NT0/edit?usp=sharing>
(Google Sheets To Multilingual Google Forms)
- <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/English-Learners/Identification-Reclassification-and-Monitoring/Language-Usage-Survey> (LUS info)
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_ISO_639_language_codes
- <https://forms.gle/VBnqSUjrkNEiNn4p6> (one form with several languages per question)

Links (cont.)

- <https://github.com/0sugiSakae/translate-google-forms> (Apps Script for the spreadsheet)
- https://twit.social/@chris_spackman (me on Mastodon)
- <https://www.ChrisSpackman.com/2025-11-20-intro-survey.html> (redirects to our intro Google Form)
- <https://www.ChrisSpackman.com/educator-resources/pd/2025-11-20-ohio-tesol/index.html>
- <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ellresources.html> (family communications requirements)

Links (cont.)

- <https://xkcd.com/1053/> (Today's Lucky 10,000 comic)
- <https://youtu.be/TXI9-IsRk7M> (my video on creating multilingual forms)
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- <mailto:osugisakae@gmail.com>
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Please see ChrisSpackman.com for editable versions of resources from today.

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Session Feedback

Language Culture Connection



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Thursday

Session: B

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