

The Special Education Dictionary

Information listed in the Special Education Dictionary is provided from resources mentioned thorough out the dictionary definitions along and the following three key internet resources:

- Specialeducationguide.com
- birchtreecenter.org
- Kendall County Special Education Cooperative

504 Plan: Federal Law that protects the civil rights of individuals with disabilities. Students found not eligible for special education services may qualify for accommodations under section 504 (also known as a 504 Plan) if they have a diagnosed disability and requires accommodations in order to access school based services. The 504 Plan is a plan developed to ensure that a child who has a disability identified under the Rehabilitation Act and is attending an elementary or secondary educational institution receives accommodations that will ensure their academic success and access to the learning environment. These accommodations and modifications must ensure that there is no discrimination because of the child's disability. Source: AccessSTEM

Accommodations: Curricular adaptations that compensate for learners' weaknesses without modifying the curriculum. Students receiving accommodations read the same material and take the same tests as their peers without disabilities.

Acquisition Deficit: A type of social skills deficit that stems from a lack of knowledge: a child does not understand a skill, and thus cannot master it.

Adaptations: Changes in educational environments that allow students with disabilities to participate in inclusive environments by compensating for learners' weaknesses.

Adaptive Behavior: Adaptive Behavior includes the age-appropriate behaviors necessary for people to live independently and to function safely and appropriately in daily life. Adaptive behaviors include real life skills such as grooming, dressing, safety, safe food handling, school rules, ability to work, money management, cleaning, making friends, social skills, and personal responsibility. Adaptive behavior assessments are used in evaluation of students with learning disabilities to determine what behavior strengths and weaknesses should be addressed to improve the learner's possibility for success in school and life. <http://learningdisabilities.about.com/od/medicalinterventions/g/adptbehvrdeffin.htm>

Adapted Physical Education (APE): Related service for students who exhibit delays in motor development and perceptual motor skills. Adapted physical education is physical education which may be adapted or modified to address the individualized needs of children and youth who have gross motor developmental delays It involves differentiating instruction so the physical activity is as appropriate for the person with a disability as it is for a person without a disability. The emphasis of adapted physical education is to facilitate participation of students with disabilities with typically developing peers in ageappropriate activities. <http://www.pecentral.org/adapted/adaptedwhatis.html>

Adapted Seating: Any adaptation to or specialized seating that meets the individual needs of a student. Adapted seating may be required for physical or sensory needs.

Adaptive Daily Living Skills (ADLS): Skills for daily functioning including self-help, independent living and following routines.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): The measure by which schools, districts and states are held accountable for student performance under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Every state has the freedom to define AYP. All students, including those in special education programs, must demonstrate adequate yearly progress, until 2014 when the law assumes all students have met the standards. It is very likely that the 2014 date and perhaps the notion of Annual Yearly Progress will be significantly changed with the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

Source: Education Week <http://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/adequate-yearly-progress/>

Admission, Review and Dismissal (ARD): The name given to the committee used in some states (in other states not using the term ARD, they are called IEP teams or IEP committees) that is responsible for the development and review of a child's individualized education plan (IEP), evaluation and re-evaluation, functional behavioral analysis (FBA), and behavior intervention plan (BIP). The ARD committee meets at least once per year to review the IEP and construct a new plan for the coming year. In addition to the annual review meeting, other meetings can be called by teachers or parents whenever needed. This group is responsible for creating, implementing and maintaining the educational program from students with disabilities, as identified by IDEA.

Interim **Alternative Education Placement (AEP):** is a term for an educational setting and program other than the student's current placement that enables the student to continue to receive educational services according to his or her Individualized Education Program. There are certain behaviors for which a school system can change a student's placement to an "interim alternative educational setting" for up to 45 school days. This is so if the student carries a dangerous weapon to school or a school function, knowingly possesses uses, sells or attempts to sell illegal drugs at school or at a school function, or has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another while at school or at a school function.

American Sign Language (ASL): Most universally recognized method of communicating by using hand signs. Each sign represents a word or concept. Finger spelling is used for words/names that do not have a universal sign.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law in 1990. The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. <https://adata.org/learn-about-ada>

Annual Review (AR): The yearly meeting of the individualized education program (IEP) team (or called ARD committee in some states). The AR is designed to gather all the IEP team members in one location to update one another on a student's needs and performance by reviewing progress toward goals and looking at new data like work samples and recent testing.

Annual Yearly Progress (AYP): Student achievement as related to annual benchmarks for proficiency in academic areas established by the State Education Agency.

Antecedent Behavioral Consequences Chart (ABC): A tool used to create a record of disruptive behaviors that is utilized as part of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) to help to determine the

triggers of and motivations behind these behaviors. ABCs are used to record what happened just before a behavior, a description of the behavior itself and the consequence of the behavior.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA): A technique for correcting behavior and social skill deficits in children with special needs. It is based on the understanding that children are more likely to repeat desired behaviors when these behaviors are met with positive reinforcement, and that they are less likely to repeat undesirable behaviors that are not rewarded. One significant part of ABA is discrete trial training (DTT), in which a skill is broken down into its most basic components so that these components may be taught one at a time.

Articulation Disorder: An articulation disorder involves problems making sounds. Sounds can be substituted, left off, added or changed. These errors may make it hard for people to understand you. Young children often make speech errors. For instance, many young children sound like they are making a “w” sound for an “r” sound (e.g. “wabbit” for “rabbit” or may leave sounds out of words, such as “nana” for “banana.” The child may have an articulation disorder if these errors continue past the expected age.
<http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/SpeechSoundDisorders/>

Assessment: Evaluations used to identify a student’s strengths, weaknesses and progress. These tests are designed to provide an overview of a child’s academic performance, basic cognitive functioning and/or his or her current strengths or weaknesses; they can also test hearing and vision. Assessments can consist of anything from the observations of a teacher or aide to standardized and criterion-referenced tests to complex, multi-stage procedures such as a group of teachers assembling a large portfolio of student work.

Assessment Plan: A written description of the assessments that will be used to evaluate a student’s strengths, weaknesses and progress and to determine his or her eligibility for special education services and the types of services that would help that student succeed. In some states the school district is given 15 days to decide which testing services will be used and put that into a plan, while in other states the time frame is not defined. However, IDEA gives only 60 days to complete an evaluation from the time a parent gives permission.

Assistive Technology (AT): Assistive technology is technology used by individuals with disabilities in order to perform functions that might otherwise be difficult or impossible. Assistive technology can include mobility devices such as walkers and wheelchairs, as well as hardware, software and peripherals that assist people with disabilities in accessing computers or other information technologies. Source: AccessIT
<http://www.washington.edu/accessit/articles?109>

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD): An out-of-date term that was previously used to describe children who have difficulty paying attention, but are not significantly impulsive or hyperactive. Today the term ADD is usually used to describe the inattentive subtype of AD/HD or as a synonym for AD/HD. Source: The Child Mind Institute <http://www.childmind.org/en/posts/ask-an-expert/2014-6-30-whatdifference-between-add-and-adhd>

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD): A condition that can make it hard for a person to sit still, control behavior and pay attention. Children with AD/HD are sometimes eligible for special education services under IDEA’s “other health impairment” disability category.

Auditory Processing: This is the ability to analyze, blend and segment sounds. It’s also known as phonemic awareness. Surprisingly, auditory processing is crucial not just for speaking, but also for

reading and spelling. This is because when you read, you need to be able to identify the individual and blended sounds that make each word unique and recognizable.

<http://www.learningrx.com/cognitivedefinition-faq.htm>

Auditory Processing Disorder: An auditory processing disorder interferes with an individual's ability to analyze or make sense of information taken in through the ears. This is different from problems involving hearing per se, such as deafness or being hard of hearing. Difficulties with auditory processing do not affect what is heard by the ear, but do affect how this information is interpreted, or processed by the brain. An auditory processing deficit can interfere directly with speech and language, but can affect all areas of learning, especially reading and spelling. When instruction in school relies primarily on spoken language, the individual with an auditory processing disorder may have serious difficulty understanding the lesson or the directions. Common areas of difficulty with Auditory Deficits/disorders and some educational implications: **Phonological awareness** is the understanding that language is made up of individual sounds (phonemes) which are put together to form the words we write and speak. **Auditory discrimination** is the ability to recognize differences in phonemes (sounds). This includes the ability to identify words and sounds that are similar and those which are different. **Auditory memory** is the ability to store and recall information which was given verbally. **Auditory sequencing** is the ability to remember or reconstruct the order of items in a list or the order of sounds in a word or syllable. **Auditory blending** is the process of putting together phonemes to form words. <http://www.ldonline.org/article/6390/>

Augmentative and Alternative Communication Device (AAC): AAC includes all forms of communication (other than oral speech) that are used to express thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas. An AAC device is a **tool** that uses a non-speech mode of communication to augment spoken language. AAC devices include electronic devices that digitize or synthesize speech and non-electronic communication aids such as manual communication boards.

Sources: ASHA.org <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/AAC/> and NYC Department of Education http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/SpecialEducation/D75/for_employees/AssistiveTechnology

Autism (AUT): Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life and affects a person's ability to communicate and interact with others. Autism is defined by a certain set of behaviors and is a "spectrum disorder" that affects individuals differently and to varying degrees. Source: Autism Society <http://www.autism-society.org/about-autism/>

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): A disorder characterized, in varying degrees, by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication and repetitive behaviors. Autism spectrum disorders include autistic disorder, Rett syndrome, childhood disintegrative disorder, pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) and Asperger syndrome.

Source: Autism Speaks <http://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism>

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP): A plan that targets one to three of a student's undesirable behaviors with interventions that are linked to the functions of the behavior; each intervention specifically addresses a measurable, clearly-stated targeted behavior. A BIP can include prevention strategies, which stop the behavior before it begins, as well as replacement behaviors, which achieve the same function as the disruptive behavior without causing disruption.

Behavior Management: Responding to, preventing and de-escalating disruptive behavior.

Behavior Support Plan (BSP): A proactive action plan to address behavior(s) that are impeding learning of a student or of others in his or her classroom. Source: Positive Environments, Network of Trainers

<http://www.pent.ca.gov/beh/bsp/bsp.htm>

Blended Early Childhood Classroom: This classroom is considered a regular education classroom with a combination of typically developing peers and special education students.

Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA): A Behavior Analyst who has met professional credentialing criteria as set forth by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board®, Inc. Behavior Analysts conduct behavioral assessments and provide behavior analytic interpretations of the results. They design and supervise behavior analytic interventions for a range of cases.

Central Auditory Processing Disorders (CAPD): also known as auditory processing disorder (APD).

Child Find Program: The Child Find Program is a program, mandated by IDEA, that continuously searches for and evaluates children who may have a disability. Child Find Programs can vary widely from school district to school district.

Chronological Age (CA): The actual age of a person, the number of years, months and days lived

Classroom Management: The way in which a class is arranged. This involves planning every aspect of a lesson, routines, procedures, interactions and the discipline in the classroom. [Behavior and Classroom Management-intro](#)

Co-Teaching/Collaborative Teaching: A **teaching strategy** in which two or more teachers work together, sharing responsibilities to help all students succeed in the classroom. It involves the distribution of responsibility among people for planning, instruction, and evaluation for a classroom of students. CoTeaching can look different in each classroom.

Collaborative Teaching: A teaching strategy in which two or more teachers work together, sharing responsibilities to help all students succeed in the classroom.

Council on Exceptional Children (CEC): Largest international professional organization dedicated to improving educational outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities, students with disabilities, and/or the gifted.

Curriculum-Based Measurements (CBM): Small, regular evaluations used to determine how well a student is learning in various subject areas. CBM can involve checklists or oral questions which the teacher uses to gauge student understanding and skill in a particular curriculum. These measurements are part of the monitoring component of the RTI process.

Cut Point, Cut Scores: Scores on screening tools, usually selected by a school district, that are used to determine whether or not a student needs additional testing or intervention.

Data-Based Decisions: A component of the RTI process that involves using information collected through the screening process to determine the intensity and duration of the needed intervention.

Deaf-Blindness (DB): Simultaneous hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

Deafness: Deafness is a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification.

Department of Human Services (DHS): DHS offers a comprehensive and coordinated array of social services to help improve the quality of life for thousands of individuals, families and communities across the state. DHS administers community health and prevention programs, oversees interactive provider networks that treat persons with developmental disabilities, mental health and substance abuse challenges and provides rehabilitation services. DHS also aids eligible, low-income individuals and families with essential financial support, locating training and employment opportunities and obtaining child care in addition to other family services. DHS's Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) is the state's lead agency serving individuals with disabilities. DRS works in partnership with people with disabilities and their families to assist them in community participation through employment, education and independent living opportunities.

Developmental Delay (DD): A delay in one or more of the following areas of childhood development: cognitive development, physical development (including vision and hearing), communication development, social and/or emotional development and adaptive development (including eating skills, dressing and toileting skills and other areas of personal responsibility). Developmental delay can be used as an eligibility for student ages 3-9 years.

Developmental Milestones: A set of functional skills or age-specific tasks that most children can do at a certain age range. Source: University of Michigan Health System
<http://www.med.umich.edu/yourchild/topics/devmile.htm>

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM): The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) is the standard classification of mental disorders used by mental health professionals in the United States. It is intended to be applicable in a wide array of contexts and used by clinicians and researchers of many different orientations (e.g., biological, psychodynamic, cognitive, behavioral, interpersonal, family/systems).

Direct Assessment: A component of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) that involves recording objective information about a student's disruptive behavior. This can entail using a scatter plot form to show the behavior's frequency and time of day, as well as using an antecedent-behavioral-consequences chart (ABC).

Discrete Trial Training (DTT): A part of applied behavioral analysis (ABA) in which a skill is broken down into its most basic components so that these components may be taught one at a time.

Domain Meeting: When a child continues to struggle after attempts have been made to remedy problems without special education services or when a request has been made for an evaluation by a parent, a team comprised of the school psychologist, parents and the school's **special education team** meets and addresses the following domain areas: Academic Achievement, Functional Performance, Cognitive Functioning, Communication Status, Health, Hearing/Vision, Motor Abilities, and Social/Emotional Status. For each domain the team must determine whether the domain area is relevant, what current information is available, and if any additional information is needed, if so who will gather the information. The team ultimately determines if the student should be evaluated, or if he or she will continue without special education services.

Early Intervention (EI): Services for at-risk children from birth to their third birthdays, as mandated by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). [[LINK to Early Intervention – IDEA Part C](#)]

Early Childhood Education (ECE): Education and care for young children – three-, four- and five-yearolds – goes by many names: child care, day care, nursery school, preschool, pre-kindergarten, and early education. It is delivered in many settings: center-based, home-based or at the local public school, in urban, suburban and rural communities. Some programs are part-time, part-year, while others offer fullday, full-year services. They can be privately run, either non-profit or for profit, or they can be operated by the local school system or by a federally funded program such as Head Start.

Early Childhood Outcomes (ECO): A 7 point scale used by preschool special education teachers to rate every preschool child with a disability. It documents the child's progress in each of three categories. The ECO captures information on children's progress in the acquisition and use of knowledge and skills, (including early language, communication and early literacy), positive emotional skills (including social relationships) and the use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE): special education programs and related services offered to students from age 3 through 6 or entering kindergarten.

Education for All Handicapped Children Act: Since 1990, known as the Individuals with Disabilities Act. (IDEA)

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA): Principal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school for students "at risk"; reauthorized as No Child Left Behind in 2001.

Emotional Disability (ED): A mental health issue including, but not limited to, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder (sometimes called manic-depression), conduct disorders, eating disorders, obsessivecompulsive disorder (OCD) and psychotic disorders.

Source: NICHCY <http://nichcy.org/disability/specific/emotionaldisturbance>

Emotional or Behavioral Disturbance (EBD): A condition exhibiting one or more specific emotional and/or behavioral difficulties over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affects educational performance. Source: University of Minnesota <http://ici.umn.edu/index.php?topics/view/100/>

English Language Learner (ELL): Refers to speakers of other languages in the process of learning English. An English language learner (ELL) student is defined as a linguistically and culturally diverse (LCD) student who has an overall English Language Proficiency (ELP) level of 1-4 on the ACCESS for ELLs™ test administered each year.

English as a Second Language (ESL): Term for English-language programs that teach language skills to speakers from non-English language backgrounds.

English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL): Currently accepted term for English-language programs that teach language skills to speakers from non-English language backgrounds, replaces the term ESL.

Executive Functioning: Executive function and self-regulation skills are the mental processes that enable us to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and juggle multiple tasks successfully. Executive function and self-regulation skills depend on three types of brain function: working memory, mental flexibility, and self-control. These functions are highly interrelated. Each type of skill draws on elements of the others, and the successful application of executive function skills requires them to operate

in coordination with each other. Working memory governs our ability to retain and manipulate distinct pieces of information over short periods of time. Mental flexibility helps us to sustain or shift attention in response to different demands or to apply different rules in different settings. Self-control enables us to set priorities and resist impulsive actions or responses.

http://developingchild.harvard.edu/key_concepts/executive_function/

Expressive Language: Expressive language is the use of words, sentences, gestures and writing to convey meaning and messages to others. Expressive language skills include being able to label objects in the environment, describe actions and events, put words together in sentences, use grammar correctly (e.g. "I had a drink" not "Me drank"), retell a story, answer questions and write short story. Expressive language is important because it enables people to be able to express their wants and needs, thoughts and ideas, argue a point of view, develop their use of language in writing and engage in successful interactions with others. <https://childdevelopment.com.au/areas-of-concern/using-speech/expressive-language-using-words-and-language/>

Extended School Year (ESY): Delivery of special education and related services during extended periods when school is not in session. Must be determined necessary by the IEP team.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA): Federal law that protects the privacy and transfer of student education records.

Fluency Deficit: A type of instructional deficit in which a child needs to practice a skill or receive coaching in order to use a skill effectively. An example is a reading fluency deficit, where the child cannot read smoothly or does so at too slow a rate.

Fountas and Pinnell (F and P): is a system of reading levels which progresses in difficulty from A-Z. The reading text is classified according to various parameters, such as word count, number of different words, sentence length and complexity, word repetitions, illustration support, etc.

Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): The education to which every student is entitled under IDEA. Every student is entitled to an education that is appropriate for his or her unique needs and that is provided free of charge.

Functional Behavior Analysis (FBA): Functional Behavior Analysis is a process which describes a student's disruptive behaviors looks for the reasons behind the behaviors and offers interventions that teach new behaviors to replace the undesired ones.

Functional Communication Response (FCR): A more appropriate and functionally equivalent communicative response that is taught to replace undesired behavior.

Grade Level Expectations (GLE): List of skills that students are expected to demonstrate at each specific grade for each content area.

Group Intelligence Tests: Tests, often administered in the general education classroom, that measure academic ability as well as a child's cognitive level. It is through these types of tests that a teacher might first suspect that a student has a learning disability.

Hearing Impairment (HI): An impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Source: NICHCY <http://nichcy.org/disability/specific/hearingloss>

Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT): An initiative of the No Child Left Behind Act, the federal definition of a highly qualified teacher is one who meets all of the following criteria: Fully certified and/or licensed by the state; holds at least a bachelor degree from a four-year institution; demonstrates competence in each core academic subject area in which the teacher teaches. The term highly qualified is not always synonymous with state certification.

Inclusion, Inclusive Classroom: The term inclusion communicates an all-embracing societal ideology. Regarding individuals with disabilities and special education, inclusion secures opportunities for students with disabilities to learn inside mainstream classrooms. Mainstream classrooms in which students with disabilities learn are known as inclusive classrooms.

Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE): An evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner who is not employed by the school district responsible for the education of the child.

Indirect Assessment: A component of functional behavioral assessment (FBA) that involves interviewing teachers, parents and other adults who have contact with a student, asking questions about that student's disruptive behavior and when and where it occurs.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A legal document that defines special education services between the school district and the parents.

IEP Team/ Educational Team: The team of qualified professionals made up of the parent, special education teacher, interpreter of test data, district representative, and general education teacher at a minimum. This group makes all decisions related to the instructional program of a child with special needs, including placement and services provided. . If the student is in evaluation, qualified professionals are a part of this team. In some states this team is called the admission, review and dismissal (ARD) team.

Individual Intelligence Tests: Intelligence tests that are administered to a student one on one. These tests are often part of the assessment process. Two common individual intelligence tests are the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) and the Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale. These tests must be administered and interpreted by a trained psychologist.

Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP): A written treatment plan that maps out the early intervention services a child (age birth to his/her third birthday) will receive, as well as how and when these services will be administered. It details a child's current levels of functioning, specific needs and goals for treatment (referred to as outcomes).

Individual Service Plan (ISP): Is similar to and IEP for students who are NOT enrolled in a public school. An ISP is developed for these students who are NOT enrolled in a public school but have been evaluated and are eligible for services. These students are homeschooled students or attending nonpublic or parochial school. Students with an ISP can receive services that are defined through the annual Timely Meaningful Consultation meeting.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): A law that guarantees educational rights to all students with disabilities and makes it illegal for school districts to refuse to educate a student based on his or her disability.

Informed Consent: The signed consent of a parent that describes what the parent is consenting to; informed consent must be obtained before a district assesses, makes a major revision to a child's program, continues, or stops service for a child's disability.

Intellectual Disability (ID): Significantly sub average general intellectual functioning, existing simultaneously with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child's educational performance. ID has been referred to as "Mental Retardation" (MR) in the past, and the term and its acronym may be used colloquially or on older documentation. (The federal government has passed legislation changing this term, but the legislation gave the states no deadline for changing the term in state laws/documents. Most states have already changed the term.) It is not, however, a currently accepted practice to refer to individuals with intellectual disabilities as mentally retarded.

Interventions: Sets of teaching procedures used by educators to help students who are struggling with a skill or lesson succeed in the classroom.

Intelligence Quotient (IQ): One of the measures used to determine eligibility for special education services. Source: Medline Plus <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/001912.htm>

Kendall County Special Education Cooperative (KCSEC): A special education cooperative that services 6 member districts in Kendall County. The 6 member districts are Oswego District #308, Yorkville District #115, Plano District #88, Newark Grade District #66, Newark High District #18 and Lisbon Grade District #90. KCSEC provides direct special education programs and related services to all of its member districts.

LBSI Teacher: A licensed special education teacher trained to work with individuals with varying disabilities including: learning disabilities, social or emotional disorders, cognitive disabilities, physical disabilities and other health impairments, autism and traumatic brain injury. Teachers are prepared to work with students from kindergarten through age 21 in a range of settings.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): The environment in which students with disabilities must be educated, as mandated by The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Students with disabilities must be educated in a classroom setting that is as close to the general education setting as possible.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP): Speakers of other languages in the process of learning English. This means persons who are unable to communicate effectively in English because their primary language is not English and they have not developed fluency in the English language. A person with Limited English Proficiency may have difficulty speaking or reading English. An LEP person will benefit from an interpreter who will translate to and from the person's primary language. An LEP person may also need documents written in English translated into his or her primary language so that person can understand important documents related to health and human services.

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/civilrights/resources/specialtopics/lep/>

Local Education Agency (LEA): Public schools operating in accordance with statutes, regulations, and policies of the State Department of education

Manifestation Determination Review (MDR): A manifestation determination review is a meeting in which the IEP team meets to discuss a behavioral/disciplinary action imposed on the student. The team

will determine at the meeting whether or not the conduct was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability.

Measures of Academic Progress (MAP): K – 12 interim assessments that measure growth and assist teachers in differentiating instruction, evaluating programs, and structuring curriculum. These assessments also reveal which academic skills and concepts the student has acquired and what they are ready to learn next.

Mental Age (MA): A measure of mental development as determined by intelligence tests, generally restricted to children and persons with intellectual impairment and expressed as the age at which that level of development is typically attained.

Modifications: Curricular adaptations that compensate for learners' weaknesses by changing or lowering expectations or standards. Modifications Resource: [Modifications](#)

Monitoring: A component of the RTI process that involves assessing, keeping accurate records of and monitoring student progress, responsiveness to instruction and intervention. The term is also used for a state's evaluation of each district's compliance with mandates of IDEA and state special education code.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS): A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a systemic, continuous- improvement framework in which data-based problem-solving and decision making is practiced across all levels of the educational system for supporting students.

Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET or MDT): The name used for the group of trained professionals that conduct eligibility and review assessments. These members are often the same as the IEP Team, but the law does not define a MET or MDT, simply calls them a group of qualified professionals.

Multidisciplinary Team; manifest determination Team (MDT): added to IEP Team/Educational Team

Multiple Disabilities (MD): Simultaneous impairments (such as intellectual disability-blindness, intellectual disability-orthopedic impairment, etc.), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in a special education program solely for one of the impairments. The term does not include deaf-blindness. [[LINK to Multiple Disabilities](#)]

Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT): A theory which outlines [students' varied approaches](#) for processing information (known as "intelligences") and how teachers can access these pathways.

Native Language: The first language of an individual. A school district is **required to evaluate a student in his or her native language, or document proficiency in English, before they can identify that student as having a disability and provide special education services.** In addition, parents must be offered evaluation plans and individualized education plans (IEPs) in their native language before giving informed consent.

Natural Environment: An educational setting that is comparable to the setting provided to children without disabilities.

Observational Records: Information about a child's academic performance provided by anyone who works with a child. Observational records are a common element of **an assessment plan.**

Occupational Therapist (OT): A professional who treats patients with injuries, illnesses or disabilities through the therapeutic use of everyday activities. They help these patients develop, recover and improve the skills needed for daily living and working.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/occupational-therapists.htm>

Orientation and Mobility (O&M): Services provided to blind or visually impaired students that will allow them to safely move in school and other environments.

Orthopedic Impairment (OI): Physical disabilities which could affect the academic process.

Other Health Impairment (OHI): A disability category under IDEA that lists examples of health-related conditions that may qualify a child for special education: attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, heart conditions, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia and Tourette syndrome. Source: NICHCY <http://nichcy.org/disability/specific/emotionaldisturbance>

Outcomes: Short-term goals that are a critical component of an individualized family service plan (IFSP). They must be relevant, specific and measurable.

Performance Deficit: A social or academic skills deficit in which a student understands a particular skill, but fails to implement it consistently.

Performance-Based Tests: Evaluations, such as the Woodcock Johnson, Third Edition (WJIII) or the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT), that are used to help determine a child's [eligibility for special education services](#).

Pervasive Development Disorder (PDD): The diagnostic category of pervasive developmental disorders (PDD) refers to a group of disorders characterized by delays in the development of socialization and communication skills. Parents may note symptoms as early as infancy, although the typical age of onset is before 3 years of age. Symptoms may include problems with using and understanding language; difficulty relating to people, objects, and events; unusual play with toys and other objects; difficulty with changes in routine or familiar surroundings, and repetitive body movements or behavior patterns. Autism (a developmental brain disorder characterized by impaired social interaction and communication skills, and a limited range of activities and interests) is the most characteristic and best studied PDD. Other types of PDD include Asperger's Syndrome, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder, and Rett's Syndrome. Children with PDD vary widely in abilities, intelligence, and behaviors. Some children do not speak at all, others speak in limited phrases or conversations, and some have relatively normal language development. Repetitive play skills and limited social skills are generally evident. Unusual responses to sensory information, such as loud noises and lights, are also common.

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/disorders/all-disorders/pervasive-developmental-disorders-information-page>

Phonological Disorder: A phonological process disorder involves patterns of sound errors. For example, substituting all sounds made in the back of the mouth like "k" and "g" for those in the front of the mouth like "t" and "d" (e.g., saying "tup" for "cup" or "das" for "gas") Another rule of speech is that some words start with two consonants, such as broken or spoon. When children don't follow this rule and say only one of the sounds ("boken" for broken or "poon" for spoon), it is more difficult for the listener to understand the child. While it is common for young children learning speech to leave one of the sounds out of the word, it is not expected as a child gets older. If a child continues to demonstrate such cluster reduction, he or she may have a phonological process disorder.

<http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/SpeechSoundDisorders/>

Physical Therapist (PT): Professionals who help people who have injuries or illnesses improve their movement and manage their pain. They are often an important part of rehabilitation and treatment of patients with chronic conditions or injuries.

Source: [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS): A type of augmentative alternative communication (AAC) originally developed for children with autism. The primary purpose of PECS is to teach individuals with autism to initiate communication. Individuals are taught to initiate by handing a picture to a communication partner in exchange for a desired item. Source: [Autism Spectrum Institute at Illinois State University](#)

Positive Behavior Support (PBS): An approach to [eliminate challenging behaviors](#) and replace them with pro-social skills. Source: [NASP Resources](#)

Pragmatic Language: Pragmatic language is use of language in a social setting. An individual may say words clearly and use long, complex sentences with correct grammar, but still have a communication problem – if he or she has not mastered the rules for social language. Pragmatics involves three major communication skills: using language for different purposes, changing language according to the needs of a listener or situation and following rules for conversations and storytelling.

Pragmatic Organization Dynamic Display (PODD): A type of augmentative alternative communication (AAC) system that is organized using whole word and symbol vocabulary for individuals with complex communication needs.

Present Levels: A component of an [individualized education program \(IEP\)](#) that defines a student's strengths and weaknesses, current levels of academic achievement, and current levels of functional performance. Before 2004 this part of the IEP was called present levels of performance; the current term is present levels of academic achievement and functional performance (PLAAFP).

Present Level of Performance (PLP): Statements written in the IEP that accurately describe the student's current levels of educational and functional performance in all areas that have been identified in need of intervention. Also referred to as PLEP, Present Levels of Educational Performance and PLOP, Present Levels Of Performance.

Prior Written Notice (PWN): Written notification to parents from the school informing them in advance of any action that will be taken or that was considered but rejected.

Procedural Safeguards: Parent's Rights under IDEA. They represent guarantees for parents and their child with disabilities, as well as offer both school and parents a variety of options for resolving any disagreements.

Processing Speed: This is the speed at which your brain processes information. Faster processing speed means more efficient thinking and learning. <http://www.learningrx.com/cognitive-definition-faq.htm>

Professional Learning Community (PLC): A group of professionals that review data, create needed interventions and make decisions, with the goal of helping students learn and achieve. While the exact definition of a PLC can vary from school to school, in general, the PLC serves the entire school and members collaborate to analyze data and support student learning.

(PUNS) Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Service: PUNS is a statewide database of people with developmental disabilities who need services. The data base helps make sure services are available to you and your family when you need them. The state uses the data to select individuals for services as funding becomes available. Services include in home supports to help with independent living, respite care to provide temporary relief for caregivers, training programs to teach life and work skills, job coaches to help with success in the workplace, residential living arrangements and adaptive equipment. Families need to update their information on the PUNS list on a yearly basis.

Receptive Language: Receptive language is the ability to understand words and language. It involves gaining information and meaning from routine, visual information within the environment, sounds and words, concepts such as size, shape, colors and time, grammar and written information. Some children who have difficulty understanding oral language (words and talking) may appear to be understanding because they may be able to pick up key words and get visual information from the environment or from gestures. Receptive language is important in order to communicate successfully. Children who have understanding difficulties may find it challenging to follow instructions at home or within the educational setting and may not respond appropriately to questions and requests. Within the school setting, difficulties in understanding may lead to attention and listening difficulties and/or behavioral issues. As most activities require a good understanding of language, it may also make it difficult for a child to access the curriculum or engage in the activities and academic tasks required for their year level of school.
<http://www.childdevelopment.com.au/understanding-language>

Response to Intervention (RTI): A process used by educators to help students who are struggling with a skill or lesson. If a child does not respond to the initial interventions, more focused interventions are used to help the child master the skill. RTI strategies address both learning and behavior.

Scatter Plot: A form used in direct assessment to record disruptive behavior and show the behavior's frequency and the time of day at which it occurs.

Screening: "Under Part C, screening is at a state's discretion and is part of Post-Referral Procedures. Screening is conducted using appropriate instruments, administered by trained personnel, by the lead agency or an early intervention program. The purpose of screening is to determine whether an infant or toddler is suspected of having a disability and is, therefore, in need of early intervention services. Screening requires parental notice and consent, must be performed within the 45 day timeline, and, at a parent's request and with consent, the EI program must conduct an initial evaluation of the infant or toddler even if the results of the screening do not identify the child as suspected of having a disability. Under Part B, screening may be conducted as part of child find activities in order to ascertain whether the child should be referred for an evaluation to determine if the child has a disability and is in need of special education and related services."

Sensory Processing: (sometimes called "sensory integration" or SI) is a term that refers to the way the nervous system receives messages from the senses and turns them into appropriate motor and behavioral responses. Whether you are biting into a hamburger, riding a bicycle, or reading a book, your successful completion of the activity requires processing sensation or "sensory integration."

Sensory Processing Disorder: (SPD, formerly known as "sensory integration dysfunction") is a condition that exists when sensory signals don't get organized into appropriate responses. Pioneering occupational therapist and neuroscientist A. Jean Ayres, PhD, likened SPD to a neurological "traffic jam" that prevents certain parts of the brain from receiving the information needed to interpret sensory information correctly. A person with SPD finds it difficult to process and act upon information received

through the senses, which creates challenges in performing countless everyday tasks. Motor clumsiness, behavioral problems, anxiety, depression, school failure, and other impacts may result if the disorder is not treated effectively.

Skill Evaluation: Diagnostic measures for determining a child's gross motor skills, fine manipulative skills and hearing, sight, speech and language abilities, administered by specialists such as a school speech pathologist or general practitioner. A skills evaluation is a common element of an [assessment plan](#).

Social Developmental Study (SDS): A narrative assessment formulated by a child's classroom teacher, parents, pediatrician and school specialists, focusing on issues such as the child's health history, developmental milestones, genetic factors, friendships, family relationships, hobbies, behavioral issues and academic performance. A developmental and social history is a common element of an assessment plan.

Special Education (SPED): Term used in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that is defined as specially designed instruction to increase the student's chances for success.

Specialized Equipment: Any equipment high or low tech used to support the individual needs of a child. Equipment can be utilized, but are not limited to the physical, gross motor, fine motor, and sensory needs of a student.

Specific Learning Disability (SLD): A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations. Specific learning disabilities include conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage.

Source: [Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education](#)

Speech or Language Impairment (SLI): A communication disorder such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment or a voice impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP): Refers to the therapist providing Speech and Language services. Also known as a speech therapist, a professional who diagnoses and treats communication and swallowing disorders. Source: [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)

Special Education (SPED): Used in conjunction with other words to indicate Special Education (SPED Department, SPED Teacher, etc.)

Stanford Binet Intelligence Scale (derived from the Binet-Simon Test): A norm-referenced individual intelligence test, administered by the school psychologist or special education team. The questions are designed to help educators differentiate between students performing below grade level because of cognitive disabilities and those who do so for other reasons.

"Stay Put" Law: A law which states that a parent can request that a child remain in his or her current educational placement while an IEP or offer of FAPE is in dispute.

Student Baseline: A student's starting point, determined by data collected through universal screening tools. A student's baseline is used to measure his or her progress throughout the year.

Student Study Team (SST): A more common term is Multidisciplinary Evaluation Team (MET or MDT). It is a team comprised of the school psychologist, parents and the school's special education team that meets when a child continues to struggle after attempts have been made to remedy problems without special education services. The SST or MET decides if the student should be evaluated, or if he or she will continue without special education services.

T scores: T-scores are standardized scores on each dimension for each type. A score of 50 represents the mean. A difference of 10 from the mean indicates a difference of one standard deviation. Thus, a score of 60 is one standard deviation above the mean, while a score of 30 is two standard deviations below the mean. <http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/collections/maps/t-score.html>

Total Communication: a holistic view of communication, often using a range of modalities or even thinking "outside the box" to create a system of communication that works for an individual. Other definitions of Total Communication include: Using any means and every means to communicate and/or receive a message; Creating a best fit system of communication to facilitate an individual to communicate, optimizing his skills and reducing his impairments; A "catch-all" that ensures that an individual has access to some means of communication; Facilitating and assisting each person by providing supports and opportunities to become involved and to actualize their potential. Some examples of modalities that may be used in a Total Communication approach: Touch cues, Texture cues / Objects of reference, Braille, Environmental cues, Facial expression, gesture and body language, Signing Systems, Pictures / Visual Strategies, Print and Symbol Systems, Assistive Technology / Communication / AAC, Speech, Voice and Language, and Eye-gaze and Partner Assisted Scanning. Total communication encompasses a host of different ways to communicate, many of which we use every day without even thinking. The important thing to note, is that by using a combination of different communication modalities you can greatly increase the effectiveness of the message, and the listener will have more cues to help them understand the message. <http://www.icommunicatetherapy.com/>

Transition/Transition Plan: Transition is a general term used to describe a change in a student's school or program. A transition plan is **specific to an IEP:** a student who will turn 14.5 within the life of his or her individualized education program must have a transition goal and plan that outlines how he or she will transition to life beyond high school.

Transition Meeting: A meeting of the individualized education program (IEP) team prior to a student moving into a new program or school.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): An acquired injury to the brain caused by an external physical force, resulting in total or partial functional disability and/or psychosocial impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Triennial Review; Tri (Reevaluation or Three-Year Reevaluation): An IEP review meeting that takes place every three years. During this meeting, the IEP team meets to discuss a student's continuing eligibility for special education services. It is often combined with the IEP annual review (AR).

Universal Design: An approach that makes a curriculum accessible to all students, regardless of their backgrounds, learning styles and abilities.

Universal Screening Tool: A test that can correctly identify students who are struggling with grade-level concepts or skills. A universal screening tool is used as part of the RTI process.

Visual Impairment (VI): impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

Visual Motor integration (VMI): consists of coordinating visual perceptual skills together with grossmotor movement and fine-motor movement. It is the ability to integrate visual input with motor output. This is how individuals plan, execute and monitor motor tasks, such as threading a needle, tying shoe laces, catching or hitting a ball. It is also essential in academic performance. This is commonly referred to as Eye-Hand Coordination. <http://www.visionandlearning.org/visualintegration08.html>

Visual Processing: This is the ability to perceive, analyze and think in visual images. Visual processing is imperative for reading, remembering, walking, driving, playing sports and literally thousands of other tasks you do every day. <http://www.learningrx.com/cognitive-definition-faq.htm>

Visual Processing Disorder: A visual processing, or perceptual, disorder refers to a hindered ability to make sense of information taken in through the eyes. This is different from problems involving sight or sharpness of vision. Difficulties with visual processing affect how visual information is interpreted, or processed by the brain. Common areas of difficulty and some educational implications: Spatial relation, which refers to the position of objects in space. Visual discrimination, which is the ability to differentiate objects based on their individual characteristics. Visual closure, which is the ability to identify or recognize a symbol or object when the entire object is not visible. Object recognition (Visual Agnosia), when unable to visually recognize objects which are familiar to them, or even objects which they can recognize through their other senses, such as touch or smell. Whole/part relationships, when have a difficulty perceiving or integrating the relationship between an object or symbol in its entirety and the component parts which make it up. <http://www.idonline.org/article/6390/>

Visual supports: Visual supports are any tool presented visually that supports an individual as he or she moves through the day. Visual supports might include, but are not limited to, pictures, written words, objects within the environment, arrangement of the environment or visual boundaries, schedules, maps, labels, organization systems, timelines, and scripts.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR): Training focusing on the student moving toward gainful employment

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised (WISC-R): An individual intelligence test, usually administered by the school psychologist, which measures a student's intelligence in a variety of areas, including linguistic and spatial intelligence. This is a norm-referenced test, meaning that it has statistical validity and reliability for what it states it measures.

Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Third Edition (WISC-V): is an individually administered intelligence test for children between the ages of 6 and 16 inclusive that can be completed without reading or writing. The Fifth Edition (WISC-V) is the most current version and generates a Full Scale IQ which represents a child's general intellectual ability. It also provides five primary index scores (i.e., Verbal Comprehension Index, Visual Spatial Index, Fluid Reasoning Index, Working Memory Index, and Processing Speed Index) that represent a child's abilities in more discrete cognitive domains.

Widening Gap: The gap between what a child with a disability knows and what his or her peers know, which widens as he or she advances to higher grades.

Workforce Investment Act (WIA): The Workforce Investment Act is a federal act that “provides workforce investment activities, through statewide and local workforce investment systems, that increase the employment, retention, and earnings of participants, and increase occupational skill attainment by participants, and, as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation.” The Kendall County Special Education Cooperative WIA program provides a comprehensive program of educational support, training and employment services to students with disabilities. The KCSEC WIA Vocational Coordinator works individually with students to overcome barriers that may impede their successful transition from high school to employment or post-secondary education or training opportunities.

Woodcock Johnson, Third Edition (WJIII): A performance-based test commonly used to help to determine a student’s eligibility for special education services.

Wraparound Services Program (WRAP): is a community-based solution focus to meet the needs of behaviorally challenged students who are at risk. The goal is to wrap the available community resources around the student’s needs. Resources are created and organized around the student, family and teacher. This collaborative process focuses on identifying the strengths of the student and his or her family and extended family. These strengths are used as the basis of the wraparound plan. Wraparound services is Funded through the Department of Health and Human Services through the Federal Block Grant.