

Glossary of Special Education Terms

Accommodations—An adaptation or modification that enables a student with a disability to participate in an educational program.

Adapted Physical Education (APE) – Developmental games, sports or similar activities designed for students whose disabilities prevent safe and successful participation in regular physical education.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)—A requirement of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) mandating each state to define the term for use in measuring the achievement of its districts and schools.

Aide/Paraprofessional/Paraeducator—A school employee who assists students with instruction and other related supports under the supervision of a qualified teacher or other qualified professional.

Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD)— A reclassification first appearing in the DSM-IV which combines previously separate diagnostic classifications for attention deficit disorder (ADD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); new classification characterizes the disorder in terms of criteria for inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity and established subtypes that specify which characteristics predominate.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) – Federal legislation enacted in 1990 to prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in employment (Title I), public services (Title II) and public accommodations (Title III) that makes access to public facilities, employment and transportation services by persons with disabilities an entitlement; applies to elementary and secondary schools; codified at 42 USC 12101-12213.

Annual Review-- A strategically scheduled meeting to assess the child's progress and to make updates to the child's IEP for the next academic year.

Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) – A method of analyzing behavior into component parts to determine where a child (or an adult) fails to perform, and therefore permitting extra training to be applied to those specific parts; a method of using simple rewards and reinforcers to help train components of behavior.

Apraxia—Inability to speak purposefully that is not the result of a motor impairment.

Assistive Technology Device – Any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with disabilities.

Auditory Processing – Sensory processing skills involving rate of process, association of sounds and symbols, auditory sequencing and auditory discrimination.

Autism—A pervasive developmental disorder characterized by significant deficiencies in communication skills, social interaction and motor control; not the same as but may be associated with mental retardation.

Balanced Literacy--A framework to help all students learn to read and write effectively.

Behavior Intervention – Actions taken to extinguish, change or redirect undesirable behavior.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) – A component of the child's IEP that describes positive behavioral interventions and other strategies that the district must implement to prevent and control unacceptable behaviors.

Behavior Modification—Programming intended to modify or eliminate problem behavior(s) and to increase performance of desired behaviors.

Case Manager— The professional who organizes and coordinates services and supports for the student being serviced. Provides a single point of contact in helping parents to obtain the services and assistance they need.

Child Advocate (lay advocate) — In connection with special education, a non-lawyer with special knowledge or training concerning the problems of children with disabilities, also called parent advocate. Non-lawyers can act as advisors to parents of children with disabilities at the administrative hearing level.

Child Study Tea (CST) -- An educational team comprised of parents, teachers and administrators.

Communication Disorder—When used in the broadest sense, a wide variety of disabilities affecting ability to use or benefit from meaningful symbolic communication in speech, language or hearing, including articulation disorder, language disorder, and voice disorder.

Core Curriculum—Standards defined by the state as to what the public school curriculum should teach by subject and grade.

Deaf/Blindness--hearing and visual impairments.

Director of Student Services/Special Education- The administrator of the Special Education/Student Services Department for Moorestown Township Public Schools.

Division of Developmental Disabilities--DDD— State of New Jersey Health and Human Services Department that provides financial and respite services for children with developmental disabilities.

Due Process--a procedure guaranteed by federal law for resolving disputes regarding special education services.

Early Intervention--a process used to recognize warning signs for and to take early actions against factors that put individuals at risk.

Emotionally Disturbed--a condition exhibiting emotional characteristics that may inhibit educational performance.

English as Second Language--ESL--

Evaluation—procedures used to determine whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services that the child needs.

Extended School Year--ESY— Special education programming that extends beyond the 180 days of the traditional school year.

Free and Appropriate Education--FAPE—The entitlement of every child with a disability under both the IDEA and Section 504, available to all children between the ages 3 to 21, that special education and related services that are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge; that include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education in the state involved; and that are provided in conformity with an individualized education program or Section 504.

Functional Behavior Assessment— A process which searches for an explanation of the purpose behind a problem behavior before developing an intervention.

Gifted and Learning Disabled—Students identified as exhibiting remarkable talents or strengths in some areas and disabling deficits in others.

HSPA--High School Proficiency Assessment

In-class Support--ICS-- A classroom with a trained special education teacher and a general education teacher with students with and without disabilities.

Inclusion Classroom — Generally understood as the placement of a child with a disability with his or her chronological age peers in a regular education class.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act--IDEA-- Federal law that grants entitlement for special education services to children with disabilities.

Independent Education Evaluation--IEE-- An evaluation of a child by a non-school district employee that parents may obtain as a right under the IDEA.

Individualized Education Plan--IEP— The cornerstone of the IDEA, a written document, ideally developed in a collaborative and cooperative effort between parents and school personnel, that describes the disabled child's abilities and needs and prescribes the placement and services designed to meet the child's unique needs.

Interpreter— In connection with deaf individuals, an individual who facilitates communication between a deaf person and a speaking individual by translating spoken language to a manual language (American Sign Language (ASL) or otherwise) and vice-versa; ability to interpret effectively, accurately and impartially is essential.

Intervention Team--IT— A group of educators who meet to discuss possible strategies to help students with academic struggles.

Learning Disability--LD-- Generally speaking, a disability that results in a student being unable to achieve in a specific learning area on the same level as other students with the same of comparable mental abilities and educational opportunities. As defined by the Joint Committee

on Learning Disabilities, a generic term of a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities.

Learning Resource Center--LRC—A community-based service provides schools and parents with information services, materials circulation, technical assistance, consultation services and production services.

Least Restrictive Environment mandate--LRE—The directive under IDEA that states “each agency must ensure that; to the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are non-disabled; and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature of severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aides and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Limited English Proficiency--LEP- For those students where English is not the dominant language used in the household and/or whose difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement of State assessments and the ability to successfully achieve in classrooms where the language of instruction is English; or the opportunity to participate fully in society.

Mainstreaming—Under IDEA, the requirement for the placement of special education students under least restrictive environment.

MAP--Measures of Academic Progress.

Mediation—An informal process in which parents and school districts voluntarily resolve differences about issues such as identification, programming or placement for a student with a disability without conducting a due process hearing.

Modification-- Changes in curriculum or instruction that change the requirements or alter the content standards or benchmarks or a change in the academic work required of a student.

Multiply Disabled-- The presence of two or more disabling conditions.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 --NCLB—Legislation reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 that overhauled existing federal efforts to support elementary and secondary education. NCLB was designed around four essential components: accountability for results; an emphasis on scientific research; expanded parental options; and expanded local control and flexibility.

NJASK-- New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge.

Non-verbal Learning Disability--NLD-- A neurological syndrome with motoric, visual/spatial, social and /or sensory deficits.

Occupational Therapy—OT -- In connection with services for children with disabilities generally, improvement of sensory integration, handling of objects, posturing of one's body and increasing daily living functioning.

Orthopedic ally Impairment – Generally, a disability that limits mobility and ambulation. A severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Other Health Impaired--OHI—A health impairment causing limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that is due to chronic or acute health problems.

Out of District Placement-- The placement of a student with a disability in a more appropriate setting that is outside the home district.

Parental Consent—Meaningful involvement of parents in and consent to the implementation of their child's IEP under IDEA.

PDD, PDD/NOS-- Pervasive Developmental Delays/Not Otherwise Specified-- A diagnosis of developmental delays that could be on the Autism spectrum associated with severe deficits and pervasive impairments in multiple areas often including reciprocal social interaction, and impairments in communication.

Physical Therapy--PT—A related special education service usually focusing on an individual's gross motor skills and to ambulate safely.

PRISE--Parental Rights in Special Education-- The handbook detailing parent's rights and the rights of the disabled student.

Pull-out Support—A program of special education instruction in a small group setting as appropriated in an individual's IEP.

Relationship Development Intervention--RDI-- A treatment program for Autism spectrum disorders.

Reevaluation— Periodic evaluation of a student already identified as eligible of services under either Section 504 or IDEA. The reevaluation may not occur more than once a year, unless the parent and the public agency agree otherwise, but it must occur at least once every three years, unless the parent and the public agency agree it is unnecessary.

Referral— Identification for individual evaluation or treatment, made either individually or through systematic screening.

Related Services— Services required to assist a child with disabilities to benefit from special education and may include transportation, speech language pathology services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, recreation, counseling, social work services, and parent counseling/training services.

Right to Notice—The term indicating the parent's legal right to be notified of a change in the child's education plan.

Right to "Stay Put"-- If the parent and school disagree on a child's program, the child "stays put" in the last program while the parties litigate.

School Psychologist -- Educational professional whose function includes assessment, intervention and counseling services, with particular expertise in the learning process.

Self-Contained Class or Program – Located within a regular education school, a full-day or mostly full-day class or program for children with disabilities, usually composed of children in the same categorical grouping who cannot be educated appropriately in a regular classroom; characterized by highly individualized, closely supervised specialized instruction.

Social Maladjustment-- Consistent inability to conform to the standards for behavior established by the school.

SPAN--Statewide Parent Advocacy Network-- A group committed to educating and supporting parents.

SpEAC--Special Education Advocacy Council-- A parent-based committee representing students and parents of students needing or receiving special education services (formerly known as SEAT).

Special Education—Public education for a student with a disability consisting of other than the regular curriculum, although regular education placement or materials also may qualify as special education if it meets the individual needs of the child.

Specific Learning Disability—A neurologic disability resulting in an inability or compromised ability to achieve academically that is not related to, or the cause or result of low intellectual ability or sensory impairment.

Speech/Language Therapy-- Provides analysis of speech and language comprehension and production, intervention strategies and services related to speech and language development.

IDEA Title 6A Chapter 14-- The federal law mandating the free and appropriate education of students with special needs.

Transition to Adulthood-- Refers to the child's adaptation from school life to adult life.

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