

Glossary of Special Education Acronyms & Terms

A Acronyms

AAC | Alternative Augmentative Communication
ABA | Applied Behavioral Analysis
ABC | Antecedent, Behavior, Consequence
ADA | Americans with Disabilities Act
ADD/ADHD | Attention Deficit/Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ADLs | Activities of Daily Living
ADR | Alternative Dispute Resolution
AIM | Accessible Instructional Materials
APE | Adaptive Physical Education
APR | Annual Performance Report
ARD | Admission, Review, and Dismissal Committee
ARRA | American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009
ASD | Autism Spectrum Disorders
ASL | American Sign Language
AT | Assistive Technology
ATA | Assistive Technology Act
AYP | Adequate Yearly Progress

B Acronyms

BD | Behavioral Disorder
BIE | Bureau of Indian Education
BIP | Behavioral Intervention Plan
BOE | Board of Education

C Acronyms

CAP | Client Assistance Program
CAP | Corrective Action Plan
CAPD | Central Auditory Processing Disorder
CAPTA | Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
CBA | Curriculum Based Assessment
CC | Closed Captioning
CCSS | Common Core State Standards
CDA | Child Development Associate
CDC | Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CEC | Council for Exceptional Children
CF | Cystic Fibrosis
CFR | Code of Federal Regulations
CHIP | Children's Health Insurance Program
CIFMS | Continuous Improvement and Focused Monitoring System
COP | Community of Practice
CP | Cerebral Palsy

CPIR | Center for Parent Information and Resources (that's us!)

CPRC | Community Parent Resource Center

CSHCN | Children with Special Health Care Needs

CSPD | Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

CST | Child Study Team

D Acronyms

DB | Deaf-Blind

DD | Developmental Delay

DD Act | Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act

DIBELS | Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy

DoDDS | Department of Defense Dependent Schools

DS | Down Syndrome

DSM | Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders by the American Psychiatric Association

E Acronyms

EBP | Evidence-based Practice

ECE | Early Childhood Education

ECSE | Early Childhood Special Education

ED | Emotional Disturbance

ED | U.S. Department of Education

EDGAR | Education Department General Administrative Regulations

EHA | Education of the Handicapped Act (now IDEA)

EHDI | Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program

EI | Early Intervention

EIS | Early Intervening Services

ELL | English Language Learner

EMH | Educable Mentally Handicapped **

EPSDT | Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment

ERIC | Education Resources Information Center

ESD | Extended School Day

ESEA | Elementary and Secondary Education Act (now called ESSA)

ESL | English as a Second Language

ESSA | Every Student Succeeds Act

ESY or EYS | Extended School Year or Extended Year Services

F Acronyms

FAPE | Free Appropriate Public Education

FAS | Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

FBA | Functional Behavioral Assessment

FC | Facilitated Communication

FEOG | Full Educational Opportunity Goal

FERPA | Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

FOIA | Freedom of Information Act

G and H Acronyms

GE | General Education

GPRA | Government Performance and Results Act

GT | Gifted and Talented

HI | Hearing Impaired

HO | Hearing Officer

HoH | Hard of Hearing

HOUSSSE | High Objective Uniform State Standards of Evaluation - [Editor's Note, January 2016: The definitions and requirements associated with the term "highly qualified teachers" have been deleted from both general and special education legislation as of December 2015. You may still hear this term, if states themselves continue the standards they set under the No Child Left Behind Act.]

HQT | Highly Qualified Teacher - [Editor's Note, January 2016: The definitions and requirements associated with the term "highly qualified teachers" have been deleted from both general and special education legislation as of December 2015. You may still hear this term, but it will soon be a relic left over from past legislation.]

I Acronyms

IA | Instructional Assistant

IAES | Interim Alternative Educational Setting

ID | Intellectual Disabilities

IDEA | Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

IEE | Independent Educational Evaluation

IEP | Individualized Education Program

IES | Institute of Education Sciences

IFSP | Individualized Family Service Plan

IHE | Institution of Higher Education

ITCA | Infants and Toddlers Coordinators Association

ITP | Individualized Transition Plan

L, M, and N Acronyms

LD | Learning Disability

LEA | Local Education Agency

LEP | Limited English Proficiency

LRE | Least Restrictive Environment

MD | Muscular Dystrophy

MD or MH | Multiple Disabilities or Multiply Handicapped

MDR | Manifestation Determination Review

MOU | Memorandum of Understanding

MTSS | Multi-Tiered System of Supports

NASDSE | National Association of State Directors of Special Education

NCLB | No Child Left Behind Act (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, reauthorized in 2015 as ESSA, Every Student Succeeds Act)

NIH | National Institutes of Health

NIMAS | National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard

NIMH | National Institute of Mental Health

NPRM | Notice of Proposed Rule Making

O Acronyms

OCD | Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
OCR | Office for Civil Rights
ODD | Oppositional Defiant Disorder
OHI | Other Health Impairment
OI | Orthopedic Impairment
O & M | Orientation and Mobility Services
OSEP | Office of Special Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Education
OT | Occupational Therapy

P and R Acronyms

P&A | Protection & Advocacy
PALS | Peer-Assisted Learning System
PARCC | Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers
PASS | Plan for Achieving Self-Support
PBS | Positive Behavioral Supports
PCA | Personal Care Attendant
PD | Physical Disability
PDD | Pervasive Developmental Disorder (the term is no longer used; as of 2013, it's included under the umbrella category of autism spectrum disorder)
PEI | Spanish acronym for the Individualized Education Program (Plan Educativo Individualizado)
Perkins Act | Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act
PII | Personally Identifiable Information
PLEP or PLP | Present Level(s) of Educational Performance or Present Level(s) of Performance
PP | Paraprofessional
PS | Preschool
PT | Physical Therapy
PTAC | Parent Technical Assistance Center
PTI | Parent Training and Information Center
RDA | Results-Driven Accountability
RFP | Request for Proposals
RS | Related Services
RTI | Response to Intervention
RTTT | Race to the Top Fund

S Acronyms

§ | This symbol means "Section" as in "§ 300.7 Child with a disability" in the IDEA regulations
SAS | Supplementary Aids and Services
SB | Spina Bifida
SCHIP | State Children's Health Insurance Program
SE | Special Education
SEA | State Education Agency
SEAC | Special Education Advisory Committee
Section 504 | Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
SED | Serious Emotional Disturbance
SEPAC | Special Education Parent Advisory Council
SI | Sensory Integration

IMR | State-Identified Measurable Results for Children with Disabilities
SIP | State Implementation Plan
SLD | Specific Learning Disability
SLI | Speech/Language Impairment
SLP | Speech/Language Pathologist
SPOA | Specific Power of Attorney
SPP | State Performance Plan
SSDI | Social Security Disability Income
SSI | Supplemental Security Income
SSIP | State Systemic Improvement Plan
SST | Student Study Team

T to Z Acronyms

TA&D | Technical Assistance and Dissemination Network funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)
TANF | Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
TBI | Traumatic Brain Injury
TDD | Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf
TMH | Trainable Mentally Handicapped **
TS | Tourette Syndrome
T-TA | Training and Technical Assistance
TTY | Teletypewriter (phone system for the deaf)
TWWIIA | Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act
VI | Visual Impairment
Voc Ed | Vocational Education
VR | Vocational Rehabilitation
WIC | Women, Infants and Children (Special Supplemental Food Program)
WWC | What Works Clearinghouse

Additional Terms

504 | Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – a civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability
21stCCLC | 21st Century Community Learning Centers
2e | Twice Exceptional or Twice-Exceptional

** Until October 2010, IDEA used the term “mental retardation.” In October 2010, Rosa’s Law was signed into law by President Obama. Rosa’s Law changed the term to be used in future to “intellectual disability.” The definition of the term itself did not change, only the use of “intellectual disability” instead of “mental retardation.”