

Acronyms and Definitions

The following is a list of common acronyms in special education and in the disability community.



Wake Special Education PTA
Bridging The Gap to Success

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act	CCK	Cross-Categorical Kindergarten
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder	CCR	Cross-Categorical Resource
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	CEC	Council on Exceptional Children
AIG	Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted	CECAS	Comprehensive Exceptional Children Accountability System
APE	Adapted Physical Education	CD	Cognitive Delay
APR	Annual Performance Report	CHADD	Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder	COTA	Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant
ASHA	American Speech-Language-Hearing Association	CP	Cerebral Palsy
ASL	American Sign Language	DB	Deaf-Blindness
AT	Assistive Technology	DD	Developmental Delay
AU	Autism	DPH	Due Process Hearing
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress	DPHO	Due Process Hearing Officer
BED	Behaviorally/Emotionally Disturbed (changed to SED in 2008)	DPI	NC Department of Public Instruction
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plan	DSM-IV	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual IV
BOE	Board of Education	ECAC	Exceptional Children's Assistance Center
CA	Curriculum Assistance	ED	Emotional Disturbance
CAP	Community Alternatives Program	EI	Early Intervention
CC	Cross-Categorical	ELL	English Language Learner

EMD	Educationally Mentally Disabled (changed to ID-Mild in 2008)	IPT	IDEA Proficiency Test (used for LEP students)
EOC/EOG	End of Course/Grade	IQ	Intelligence Quotient
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act (aka NCLB)	ITC	Invitation to Conference
ESY	Extended School Year	LA	Lead Agency
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education	LD	Learning Disability
FBA	Functional Behavior Assessment	LEA	Local Education Agency
FERPA	Family Education Rights and Privacy Act	LEP	Limited English Proficiency
FM	Focused Monitoring	LICC	Local Interagency Coordinating Council
FRL	Free/Reduced Lunch	LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
GT	Gifted and Talented	LTO	Long Term Objective
HI	Hearing Impaired	MR	Mental Retardation
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act	MU	Multi-Handicapped
ICC	Interagency Coordination Council	NASDSE	National Association of State Directors of Special Education
ICR	In Class Resource	NCLB	No Child Left Behind
ID	Intellectual Disability; also refers to eligibility category "Intellectually Disabled" which is 3-tiered: mild, moderate, severe.	NECTAC	National Early Childhood and Technical Assistance Center
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	OCR	Office of Civil Rights
IEE	Individual Education Evaluation	OCS	Occupational Course of Study
IEP	Individual Education Program	ODD	Oppositional Defiant Disorder
IFSP	Individual Family Service Plan	OHI	Other Health Impaired
IHCP	Individualized Health Care Plan	OI	Orthopedic Impairment
		O&M	Orientation and Mobility
		OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
		OSERS	Office of Special Educational and Rehabilitation Services
		OT	Occupational Therapy
		P&A	Protection and Advocacy

Part B	Special Education – School-aged Children	SIG	State Improvement Grant
Part C	Special Education – Birth through Two Years Old (Early Intervention)	SIP	School Improvement Plan
PDD	Pervasive Developmental Disorder	SL	Speech Language
PDD-NOS	PDD - Not Otherwise Specified	SLD	Specific Learning Disability
PEP	Personalized Education Plan	SLP	Speech Language Pathologist, aka Speech Therapist
PLP/PLEP/PLOP	Present Levels of Educational Performance	SPD	Sensory Processing Disorder (aka Sensory Integration Dysfunction/Disorder)
PT	Physical therapy/therapist	SPMD	Severely/Profoundly Mentally Disabled (changed to as ID-Severe in 2008)
PTIC	Parent Training and Information Center (NC's PTIC is ECAC)	SST	Student Support Team
PWN	Prior Written Notice	STO	Short-Term Objectives
RICC	Regional Interagency Coordinating Council	TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
RTI	Response to Intervention	TDD/TTY	Telecommunications Device for the Deaf
SCS/SCoS	Standard Course of Study	TMD	Trainable Mentally Disabled (changed to ID-Moderate in 2008)
SBE	State Board of Education	USDE	US Dept of Education
SEA	State Education Agency	VI	Visual Impairment
Section 619	Special Education – Ages 3 through 5	VR	Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab)
SED	Severely Emotionally Disabled (formerly BED)	WPCSS	Wake County Public School System
SI	Sensory Integration		
SID	Sensory Integration Disorder/Dysfunction		

Adapted Physical Education (APE): A component of the educational curriculum in which physical, recreational, and other therapists work with children who exhibit delays in motor developmental and perceptual motor skills. It is a related service some children might need in addition to or in place of physical education.

Adequate Yearly Progress: The degree of progress for children in academic areas established by the state education agency (SEA).

Advocate: An individual who represents or speaks on behalf of another person's interests (as in a parent with his/her child).

American Sign Language (ASL): A method of communicating by using hand signs. Each sign represents either one word or a concept that is typically expressed with several spoken words. For words that do not have a sign, finger spelling is used.

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA): The national professional association for speech and language therapists and audiologists.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A law that took effect in 1992 that defines "disability" and prohibits discrimination by employers, by and facility open to the general public, and by State and local public agencies that provide such services as transportation (Public Law 101-336).

Aphasia: A communication disorder characterized by difficulty with producing language and/or with understanding language.

Assessment: The gathering of information by qualified personnel on a child's development.

Assistive Technology Device (AT): 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 functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Public schools are required to consider the assistive technology needs of students with disabilities.

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD): A neurobiological disorder. Typically, children with ADD have developmentally inappropriate behavior, including poor attention skills, impulsivity, and sometimes also hyperactivity. These characteristics arise in early childhood typically before age seven; are chronic; and last at least six months. Children with ADD/ADHD may also experience difficulty in the areas of social skills and self-esteem.

Autism (AU): A developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and non-verbal communication and social interaction.

Behavioral Assessment (BA): Gathering (through direct observation and by parent report) and analyzing information about a child's behavior. The information may be used to plan ways to help the child change unwanted behaviors. Observations include when a behavior occurs as well as the frequency and duration of the behavior.

Behavior Disorders (BD): A term used for children who exhibit difficulties with social interactions and inappropriate behavior that interferes with learning.

Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP): A plan that is put in place to teach a child proper behavior and social skills. It should be positive in nature, not punitive.

CAP (Community Alternatives Program): This is the Katie Beckett Medicaid waiver program for North Carolina. There are 4 types of CAP, two of which – CAP-C and CAP-MR/DD – that typically apply to the developmentally disabled. CAP-C is for medically fragile children. CAP-MR/DD is for those with developmental delays. To apply for these programs, contact Single Portal.

Cerebral Palsy (CP): A disorder of movement and posture control resulting from non-progressive damage to the brain during fetal life, the newborn period, or early childhood. Both genetic and acquired factors may be involved. It may be caused by a lack of normal fetal brain development or by injury to the brain. The extent and location of the brain damage determine the type of cerebral palsy and associated symptoms.

Child Find (CF): A required federal program that requires states to actively locate children, birth through 21, with developmental disabilities, or who are at risk for developmental disabilities. It particularly focuses on children not enrolled in school programs.

Children and Adults with Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD): A national organization that provides information, training and support for individuals interested and/or affected by ADD/ADHD.

Cognitive Delay (CD): A disability where a child's intellectual and adaptive behavior is below average and impacts the child's education.

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

Comprehensive Educational Evaluation: The tests and observations done by the school staff to find out if the child has a disability and requires special education and related services. The school's multidisciplinary team is required to do this evaluation and hold a meeting with the parent to discuss the results. A parent may choose to share any evaluation and assessment information done by the child and family agency or by other qualified persons.

Deaf-Blindness (DB): Concomitant hearing and visual impairments that cause severe communication, developmental, and educational needs.

DEC Forms:

Developmental Disability (DD): Any physical or mental condition that begins before the age of 18 years, causes the child to acquire skills at a slower rate than his/her peers, is expected to continue indefinitely, and impairs the child's ability to function in society.

Disability: A substantially limiting physical or mental impairment that affects basic life activities such as hearing, seeing, speaking, walking, caring for oneself, learning, or working.

Due Process: A process for resolving a dispute between the family and the public school related to the identification, evaluation, or placement of a child with disabilities.

Due Process Hearing: A legal proceeding, similar to a court proceeding, where a hearing officer is presented evidence by disagreeing parties. A verbatim record is taken of the proceedings, and a hearing officer writes a decision that may be appealed to the state education agency and if desired, to a civil court.

Due Process Hearing Officer: The trained and neutral individual who conducts the due process hearing.

Dyslexia: A learning disability in which the child has difficulty with reading due to difficulty distinguishing written symbols. For example, transposing letters and words such as reading "top" as "pot"

Dyspraxia: Difficulty with planning and performing coordinated movements although there is no apparent damage to muscles.

Emotional Disturbance (ED): A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects educational performance.

- A) An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors
- B) An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers
- C) Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
- D) A tendency to develop general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression
- E) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

Extended School Year (ESY): The delivery of special education and related services during the summer vacation or other extended periods when school is not in session. The purpose of ESY is to prevent a child with a disability from losing previously learned skills. The IEP team must consider the need for ESY at each meeting and must describe those services specifically with goals and objectives. Not all special education students require an extended school year. Extended school year services must be individually crafted.

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

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): An individualized educational program that is designed to meet the child's unique needs and from which the child receives educational benefit.

Functional Behaviors: Behaviors (basic skills, such as meal-time skills) the child has mastered, or needs to master, in order to get along as independently as possible in society.

Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA): A process that examines why a child behaves the way he or she does given the nature of the child and what is happening in the environment. It is a process for collecting data to determine the possible causes of problem behaviors and to identify strategies to address the behaviors.

Gifted & Talented (GT): Those students with above average intellectual ability. Being classified as GT does not rule out learning disabilities.

Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA): Federal regulation that outlines the confidentiality and protection of medical records.

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.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): the federal law that provides the legal authority for early intervention and special education services for children birth through 21. Part B outlines services for children ages 3 through 21. Part C outlines services for children birth to age 3.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): A written statement of a child's current level of educational performance and an individualized plan of instruction, including goals, specific services to be received, the staff who will carry out the services to be received, the standards and timelines for evaluating progress, and the amount and degree to which the child will participate with typically developing peers (inclusion/least restrictive environment). The IEP is developed by the child's parents and the professionals who evaluated the child and/or are providing the services. It is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) for all children eligible for special education.

Interagency Agreement: A document signed by authorized representatives of at least two agencies outlining mutually agreed upon responsibilities to perform certain duties under specified conditions.

Interagency Coordinating Council: A council established for the purpose of advising and assisting in the development and implementation of quality services for infants and toddlers with disabilities, ages birth through 5. State council are required by IDEA.

Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP): A plan developed by the school nurse in collaboration with parents and teachers that outlines specific health care procedures to be provided to the student.

Intelligence Quotient (IQ): The score of an intelligence test that is a form of psychological testing of an individual's capacity to learn and deal effectively with his/her environment.

Invitation to Conference (ITC):

Learning Disability (LD): A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, or spell or to do mathematical calculations.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE): The placement that is as close as possible to the general education environment. This is the educational setting that permits a child to receive the most educational benefit while participating in a regular educational environment to the maximum extent appropriate. LRE is a requirement under IDEA.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP): Children whose primary language is other than English.

Local Education Agency (LEA): The public schools operating in accordance with statutes, regulations, and policies of the state department of education.

Music Therapy: A therapeutic service to meet recreational or educational goals. Music therapy includes playing instruments, moving to music, singing, and listening to music. It is utilized in a variety of applications in schools, hospitals, and private settings through both individual and group approaches, often in conjunction with other types of therapy. Both music education and music therapy contribute to special education by promoting learning and self-growth through enjoyable activities.

NCEXTEND1

NCEXTEND2

No Child Left Behind (NCLB): Reauthorized in 2001, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is the principal federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school for children "at risk." The NCLB provides opportunities for children to learn and progress.

Occupational Therapist (OT): A professional who provides therapy services based on engagement in meaningful activities of daily life such as self-care skills, education, recreation, work or social interaction.

Office of Civil Rights (OCR): The Office for Civil Rights enforces several federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the Department of Education.

Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP): Dedicated to improving results for infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities ages birth through 21 by providing oversight, leadership and financial support to assist states and local districts. OSEP administers the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD): Children who exhibit defiant and anti-social behaviors over a long period of time and environment.

Orientation & Mobility (O&M): Services provided to the blind or visually impaired by qualified personnel to enable a child to safely move in school and other environments.

Orthopedic Impairment (OI): Any orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Other Health Impaired (OHI): An educational classification that describes students who have chronic or acute health problems that cause limited strength, vitality, or alertness that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Part B: The section of the federal special education regulations that address school-age children, 3 through 21.

Part C: The section of the federal special education regulations that address children birth through two years.

Pervasive Developmental Disorder: Refers to the overall category that includes autism, Rett Syndrome, Asperger's syndrome, PDD-NOS, and Childhood Integrative Disorder. The disability that shares many of the same characteristics of Autism. Usually evident at age three, autism and PDD are neurological disorders that affect a child's ability to communicate, understand language, play and relate to others.

Physical Therapist (PT): A professional who is devoted to improving a person's physical abilities through activities that strengthen muscular control and motor coordination.

Placement: Placement refers to the amount of time the child will receive special education and related services. It does not refer to an assignment to a particular class or school.

Preschool Special Education: An educational program that is designed to meet the unique developmental needs of an individual child with a disability who is three, four, or five years of age. It is a child-focused educational effort. Sometimes referred to as Section 619 of the law.

Present Level of Educational Performance (PLP/PLEP): Statements written in the IEP that accurately describe the student's strengths, weaknesses, and learning styles.

Prior Written Notice (PWN): Must inform parents of their rights. It is a form that the school must use to tell parents why they're doing what they're doing or why they're not doing what they're not doing – they must tell parents in writing.

Protection & Advocacy (P&A): The Protection and Advocacy System is a private, nonprofit organization that protects and promotes the rights of people with disabilities. In North Carolina, this organization is XXXXXXXX.

PTIC: Each state has a Parent Training and Information Center to assist parents of children with disabilities to become more knowledgeable about special education and their child's disability. In North Carolina, this organization is the Exceptional Children's Assistance Center (ECAC).

Regional Resource Center (RRC): Funded by the US Department of Education, there are six RRCs that provide technical assistance in special education for state education agencies.

Response to Intervention (RTI): RTI is a method of academic intervention designed to provide early, effective assistance to children who are having difficulty learning.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act: A federal law that protects the civil rights of individuals with disabilities. This law is closely intertwined with IDEA. Children with disabilities who are not eligible for special education may qualify for accommodations under Section 504.

Section 619: Authorizing section of Part B of IDEA that requires states to provide preschool services to children with disabilities, ages through to five.

Self-Stimulation: Often referred to as "stimming," these are abnormal behaviors, such as head banging, watching the fingers wiggle, or rocking side-to-side, that interfere with the child's ability to "sit still" and pay attention or to participate in meaningful activity.

Sensory Integration Disorder (SID or SI): Also known as Sensory Integration Dysfunction – the inability to process information received through the senses, causing problems with learning, development and behavior.

Sensory Integration Treatment (SIT): A technique of occupational therapy that provides playful, meaningful activities that enhance an individual's sensory intake and lead to more adaptive functioning in daily life.

Short-Term Objectives (STO): Part of a child's IEP that breaks down an annual goal into small measurable steps.

Single Portal: Single Portal is the intake office of Wake County Human Services. Contact them regarding services for those with developmental delays and mental health issues.

Special Education: Specialized instruction, tailor-made to fit the unique learning strengths and needs of students with disabilities. A major goal of special education is to teach the skills and knowledge the child needs to be as independent as possible. Special education programs focus on academics and also include therapy and other related services to help the child overcome difficulties in all areas of development. These services may be provided in a variety of educational settings but are required by IDEA to be delivered in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

Specific Learning Disability (SLD): A disorder that affects the ability to listen, think, speak, read, spell, or do mathematical calculations.

Speech and language Impairment/Disorders (SL or SI): Problems in communication and related areas such as oral motor function. These delays and disorders range from simple sound substitutions to the inability to understand or use language or use the oral-motor mechanism for functional speech and feeding. Some causes of speech and language disorders include hearing loss, neurological disorders, brain injury, mental retardation, drug abuse, physical impairments such as cleft lip or palate, and vocal abuse or misuse. Frequently, however, the cause is unknown.

Speech Language Pathologist (SLP): A trained therapist who provides treatment to help a person develop or improve articulation, communication skills, and oral-motor skills. Also helps children with speech errors and/or those with difficulties in language patterns.

State Board of Education (SBE): Determines public school and vocational education policy and manages and directs all public schools under provisions of applicable laws.

Department of Public Instruction: Oversees all aspects of education in the state.

State Education Agency (SEA): The state of board of education or other agency responsible for the state supervision of public elementary and secondary schools.

State Improvement Grant (SIG): A competitive grant offered by the US Department of Education to states. The purpose is to improve special education services in the state:

Student Support Team (SST): A team of educators who provide the teacher with ideas for interventions in the classroom.

Tactile Defensiveness: An abnormal sensitivity to touch indicated by avoidance or rejection of touching and handling. The child who has tactile defensiveness may resist touching or being touched by something that is wet, that is an unusual texture, or that is an unfamiliar temperature or pressure.

TDD/TTY: An assistive technology device attached to a telephone to enable individuals who are deaf to communicate with others.

Therapy: A treatment for certain physical or psychological conditions. The most common forms of therapy provided through early intervention and special education include occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech/language therapy.

Transition: The movement from one service, location, or program to another. Young children with disabilities transition at age three from early intervention to preschool special education services or to other community settings and services (early intervention and special education). Adolescents transition from school to adult services.

Transportation: A related service for students receiving special education services. If it is determined that the child needs this service to benefit from their education, the school district must provide the transportation, contract with another agency, or contract with the parents to bring their child to school. Transportation could mean round trip, home to school and school to home, services.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): Physical damage to the brain that could result in physical, behavioral, or mental changes depending on which area of the brain is injured. TBI could impact a student's education; special education services might be needed.

Visual Impairment: An impairment in visual acuity that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance.

Vocational Rehabilitation: A program of rehabilitation through job training focusing on the participant moving toward gainful employment.

This list of acronyms and definitions was developed from a publication of the [Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center](#) with additions made for North Carolina Policies and Procedures..