

# A Parent's Guide To Commonly Used Special Education Terminology

Compiled by:  
Jim Rodrigues, Resource Specialist  
M.S. Special Education

Contributions From:  
Kathy Decker, PPS School Psychologist  
M.A. Special Education

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## A

**A.B. 3632:** This legislation requires California public mental health agencies, other public agencies and local education agencies to coordinate the provision of mental health services to students with disabilities. Chapter 26.5 of Division 7 of Title I of the State Government Code codifies State Law AB 3632 (Chapter 1747/Statutes of 1984) as amended by AB 882 (Chapter 1274/Statutes of 1985) which shifts the responsibility for provision of mental health services to children eligible through Special Education from the Local School District to Community Mental Health. The provisions of AB 3632/882 are implemented as of July 1, 1986. Source: [POLICY/PROCEDURE REGARDING: AB3632 Services: Children referred through Special Education](#).

**Accommodations:** Changes made in the general education classroom environment and curriculum that allow resource students to actively participate at their own level while meeting the individual goals as established by their Individualized Education Program (IEP). California Education Code 60850 (1) "Accommodations" means any variation in the assessment environment or process that does not fundamentally alter what the test measures or affect the comparability of scores. "Accommodations" may include variations in scheduling, setting, aids, equipment, and presentation format. Source: [California Education Code](#). Matrix for test variations, accommodations and modifications for statewide testing: [California Department of Education](#). Also see [Modifications](#). Also see [California Department of Education](#) for additional information.

**Adaptive Physical Education (APE):** Physical education instruction and support specifically geared for students with disabilities for whom regular physical education is not possible. The need for APE is determined through the IEP process. According to the [Physical Education Framework](#), California Department of Education: Direct physical education services provided by an adapted physical education specialist to students who have needs indicated by an assessment and evaluation of motor skills performance and other areas of need... a special education child who is identified with a disabling condition may receive adapted physical education if the need is documented in the assessment report(s) developed through EC §56320-56329 and the IEP team process. Temporary disabilities do not meet eligibility criteria.

**ADHD - Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder:** Per the DSM-IV :Persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity that is more frequently displayed and is more severe than is typically observed in individuals at comparable level of development. Source: [DSM-IV \(Text Revision\) Definition Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder](#). Not a disabling condition that is covered by the IDEA; however, individuals with this condition may meet the criteria for receiving services under other qualifying IDEA categories (i.e. Other Health Impaired or Specific Learning Disability) or under [Section 504](#).

**Advocate:** A person who provides information and support to parents of children with disabilities. Source for more information on advocates: [Advocating for Your Child - Getting Started](#) by Pamela Wright, MS, MSW (Other sources of information: [Wrightslaw](#); [Special Ed Advocacy: Nine Rules of Thumb](#)).

**Age Appropriate:** Activities and materials that are appropriate for a student's chronological (actual) age rather than ones directed towards a younger audience. See [Chronologically Age Appropriate](#).

**Age Equivalent:** The chronological age in a defined population for which a given score is the median (middle) score. An examinee assigned an age equivalent of 7-5 indicates that he or she received the same score (raw score, scale score, standard score, etc.) as the average child who is seven years, five months old. Source: [Riverside Publishing](#).

**Alternate Assessment:** State assessment for students with significant cognitive disabilities. See [California Alternate Performance Assessment \(CAPA\)](#).

**American Sign Language (ASL):** A formal method of communication used by people with hearing impairments. It is a system of articulated hand gestures and their placement relative to the upper body as well as facial expression, movements, postures and other non-manual signs that enhance and emphasize the meaning of signs. Source: [Developmental Disabilities Resource Center](#).

**Anecdotal Information/Evidence:** An informal account; typically a narrative description, provided by teachers, staff and/or other individuals about the progress of a student in any number of areas.

**Annual Goals:** A required component of an IEP and are written specifically for each student. Source: [\[Code of Federal Regulations\]\[Title 34, Volume 2\]\[Revised as of July 1, 2002\]](#) Sec. 300.347(a)(2), which requires that the IEP include: a statement of measurable annual goals, including benchmarks or short-term objectives, related to--(i) meeting the child's needs that result from the child's disability to enable the child to be involved in and progress in the general curriculum; and (ii) meeting each of the child's other educational needs that result from the child's disability.

**Annual Review:** An annually scheduled meeting of the IEP team at which the student's goal are reviewed for progress and revised accordingly. Source: [34CFR300.343 \(c\)\(1\)\(2\)\(i\)\(ii\)\(iii\)\(iv\)\(v\)](#).

**Asperger Syndrome:** Asperger's syndrome (or disorder) is a developmental disorder in which people have difficulties understanding how to interact socially. People with Asperger's syndrome may not recognize verbal and nonverbal cues or understand normal social rules, such as taking turns talking or recognizing personal space. Source: [Asperger's Syndrome from Healthwise](#).

**Assessment:** Assessment is defined as the systematic basis for making inferences about learning and student development. More specifically, assessment is the process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and using information to increase students' learning and development. Source: [California Services for Technical Assistance and Training \(CalSTAT\)](#). Data may be collected from a variety of sources (i.e. teachers, school staff, parents/guardians, counselors) and may include information such as social interaction, health information, psychological assessments, academic assessments, etc. This information is then used to determine eligibility or continued eligibility for special education services and to develop goals and objectives based on student strengths and weaknesses. Parental/guardian consent is needed before beginning any assessment.

**Assistive Technology:** According to the United States Assistive Technology Act of 1998, assistive technology (also called *adaptive technology*) refers to any product, device, or equipment, whether acquired commercially, modified or customized, that is used to maintain, increase, or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Source: [Auburn University](#).

**Assistive Technology Device:** The term "assistive technology device" means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. Source: [US Code](#) Title 29, Section 31, § 3002.

**At Risk Students:** Identified as students who are at risk of not achieving educational goals, ones who tend to have negative behaviors that interfere with their learning and/or the learning of others, and/or ones who have family problems that may cause the aforementioned issues (including such factors as being economically disadvantaged, single parent family, parent incarcerated, etc.). Source: [At-Risk Students and Technology Education: A Qualitative Study](#).

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):** A condition resulting in symptoms of inability to maintain attention, impulsive behaviors and/or motor restlessness. Source: [Attention Deficit Disorder Association](#).

**Attention Span:** The length of time during which a person can concentrate on a subject or idea. Source: [Answers.com](#).

**Auditory Discrimination:** The ability to distinguish the slight differences between sounds. This skill is vital for reading. Source and additional information: [National Center for Learning Disabilities](#).

**Auditory Memory:** The ability to store and recall what is heard. Two types: long-term auditory memory is the ability to remember something heard a long time ago; short-term auditory memory is the ability to recall something heard very recently. Source and additional information: [National Center for Learning Disabilities](#).

**Auditory Processing Disorder (APD):** Auditory processing is a term used to describe what happens when your brain recognizes and interprets the sounds around you... Children with APD often do not recognize subtle differences between sounds in words, even though the sounds themselves are loud and clear.... Other common names are central auditory processing disorder, auditory perception problem, auditory comprehension deficit, central auditory dysfunction, central deafness, and so-called "word deafness." Source: [National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, National Institutes of Health](#).

**Augmentative Communication:** Augmentative and alternative communication include any method that assists a person with communication when the person is having difficulty with oral communication. It includes sign language, including gesture systems, and communication devices. Source: [Speechville](#).

**Autism Spectrum Disorder:** Also known as Pervasive Developmental Disorder. According to [The National Institute of Mental Health \(NIMH\)](#): *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* DSM-IV-TR (fourth edition, text revision)<sup>1</sup> as two of the five pervasive developmental disorders (PDD), more often referred to today as autism spectrum disorders (ASD). All these disorders are characterized by varying degrees of impairment in communication skills, social interactions, and restricted, repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior. The pervasive developmental disorders, or autism spectrum disorders, range from a severe form, called autistic disorder (autism), to a milder form, Asperger syndrome.

## B

**Baseline Data:** Data that reflect the level and frequency of behavior prior to beginning an intervention. Source: [A FAMILY GUIDE TO COMMON TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION](#).

**Basal:** For individually administered tests, the point on a test, associated with a given level of functioning or skill, for which an examiner is confident, that all items prior to that item would be answered correctly (considered too easy). The items below this point, although not administered to the individual student, are afforded full credit. Contrast to Ceiling. Basal and ceiling rules act to enhance the efficiency of the test administration process by administering only the range of items required to obtain an accurate estimate of the individual's ability. Source: [Riverside Publishing](#).

**Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS):** BICS is defined as language proficiency in everyday communication. This language is acquired naturally, without formal schooling. Conversing with family members and friends using skills in pronunciation, basic vocabulary, and grammar is an example of BICS. Source: [Riverside Publishing](#).

**Basic skills:** Skills in subjects like reading, writing, spelling, and mathematics. Source: [Wrightslaw](#).

**Behavior Disorder:** According to the U.S. National Library of Medicine: behavior disorders go beyond mischief and rebellion. With behavior disorders, your child or teen has a pattern of hostile, aggressive or disruptive behaviors for more than 6 months. Source: [Child Behavior Disorders](#). Also known as [Conduct Disorder](#).

**Behavioral Intervention/Support Plan (BIP/BSP):** A Behavioral Intervention Plan is a written, specific, purposeful, and organized plan, which describes positive behavioral interventions and strategies that address a student's social, emotional, and behavioral development.

The purpose of a BIP is to rearrange the social and/or physical environment to prevent a behavior from occurring by making it less effective, efficient, and relevant, while teaching alternative behaviors that are acceptable and more effective, efficient, and relevant. If an intervention plan attempts to teach an acceptable alternative behavior, but the new behavior is not more effective, efficient, and relevant than the problem behavior for the student, the plan is less likely to be successful. An effective behavioral intervention plan should show a clear link between the functional behavioral assessment and the intervention selected. Source: [Oregon Department of Education Office of Special Education](#).

**Benchmark:** Short-term instructional objectives (also called IEP objectives) are measurable, intermediate steps between the present levels of educational performance of a student with a disability and the annual goals that are established for the student. The objectives are developed based on a logical breakdown of the major components of the annual goals, and can serve as milestones for measuring progress toward meeting the goals.

—[from Appendix C to 34 CFR § 300, question 39](#). **NOTE:** Changes from IDEA, as amended in 2004, eliminate the requirement for objectives/benchmarks for all students with disabilities except those students with disabilities who take the alternate assessment. [20 USC § 1414 (d)(1)(A)(i)(I)] Source: [California Services for Technical Assistance and Training \(CalSTAT\)](#).

**Bipolar Disorder:** According to the [Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research \(MFMER\)](#): Bipolar disorder is characterized by an alternating pattern of emotional highs (mania) and lows (depression). The intensity

of the associated signs and symptoms varies. Bipolar disorder can range from a mild condition to a severe condition, and there may be periods of normal behavior.

## C

**California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA):** The CAPA is designed to assess those students with significant cognitive disabilities who cannot participate in the CSTs even with accommodations and modifications. The CAPA links directly to the California academic content standards. Source: [Standards and Assessment Update \(March 2006\)](#).

**California Children's Services (CCS):** [Children's Medical Services Branch](#) (California Department of Health Services) states that CCS is a statewide program that treats children with certain physical limitations and chronic health conditions or diseases. CCS can authorize and pay for specific medical services and equipment provided by CCS-approved specialists. The California Department of Health Services manages the CCS program. The referenced web site provides additional information on services provided and qualification criteria.

**California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE):** California Department of Education June 2006: State law, enacted in 1999, authorized the development of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), which students in California public schools would have to pass to earn a high school diploma. All California public (high) school students must satisfy the CAHSEE requirement, as well as all other state and local requirements, in order to receive a high school diploma. The CAHSEE requirement can be satisfied by passing the exam or, for students with disabilities, receiving a local waiver pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60851(c), or receiving an exemption pursuant to *Education Code* Section 60852.3.

The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school and to help ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate grade-level competency in reading, writing, and mathematics. The CAHSEE is divided into two parts: English-language arts and mathematics. Test questions address California content standards that a High School Exit Examination Standards Panel, appointed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, determined students should know to graduate from high school. Source and additional information: [California Department of Education](#).

**Center for Independent Living (CIL):** A non-profit organization that advocates for and provides free support services for the disabled community in order to enhance their quest to lead independent lives and become productive members of society. [CIL Website](#) (located in Berkeley, CA). An agency located in Hayward, CA., providing similar services is [Community Resources for Independent Living](#) (CRIL).

**Cerebral Palsy (CP):** According to [National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke](#): The term cerebral palsy refers to any one of a number of neurological disorders that appear in infancy or early childhood and permanently affect body movement and muscle coordination but don't worsen over time. Even though cerebral palsy affects muscle movement, it isn't caused by problems in the muscles or nerves. It is caused by abnormalities in parts of the brain that control muscle movements. The majority of children with cerebral palsy are born with it, although it may not be detected until months or years later.

**Childhood Depression:** Persistent feelings of sadness in children that adversely affect the child's ability to function in everyday life situations. A mental health problem with potentially serious consequences if left untreated (i.e. drug and alcohol abuse, suicide). Click here to review [common signs and symptoms](#) of childhood depression. Source: [National Mental Health Association](#).

**Chronologically Age Appropriate:** Activities and materials that are appropriate for a student's chronological (actual) age rather than ones directed towards a younger audience. See [Age Appropriate](#).

**Cognitive:** Pertaining to cognition, the process of knowing and, more precisely, the process of being aware, knowing, thinking, learning and judging. Source: [MedicineNet, Inc.](#)

**Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency:** Academic language skills. According to [The Crosslinguistic Role of Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency on Reading Growth in Spanish and English](#): CALP is described as the second threshold that involves having language necessary for cognitively demanding tasks and is required for accelerated cognitive as well as academic growth. CALP has been shown to develop in approximately 5 to 7 years (Cummins, 1978; Thomas & Collier, 1997). Cummins proposes that if children do not develop CALP in their



L1, this will lead to cognitive and academic delays and possibly develop a state of “semilingualism,” where the student is limited in both L1 and L2 (Hudson & Smith, 2001).

**Collaboration, Collaborative Learning/Teaching:** Consists of: Special educators are part of the instructional or planning team; Teaming approaches are used for problem-solving and program implementation; Regular teachers, special education teachers, and other specialists collaborate. Source: [SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS](#)

**Communication Board/Book:** A book or board consisting of assorted pictures, objects, drawings, photos, wand/or words. The disabled person is then able to point to an object in order to communicate.

**Community Based Instruction:** Any instruction that takes place in the community (outside of the classroom); generally geared towards those individuals with severe disabilities, is usually a component of the IEP, is typically individualized and teaches functional skills; allows students to acquire job skills and become familiar with their community and its available resources; may be a supported (paid) activity, but does not need to be (see [Supported Employment](#)). Source and additional information: [Phoenix Day School for the Deaf](#).

**Compulsion:** An insistent, repetitive, intrusive and unwanted urge to perform an act that is contrary to the person's ordinary wishes or standards. Since it serves as a defensive substitute for still more unacceptable unconscious ideas and wishes, failure to perform the compulsive act leads to overt anxiety. Compulsions are obsessions that are still felt as impulses. Source: [Woodford County Special Education Association](#).

**Conduct Disorder:** According to the DSM-IV: A repetitive and persistent pattern of behavior in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate societal norms or rules are violated, as manifested by the presence of three (or more) of the following criteria in the past 12 months, with at least one criterion present in the past 6 months: aggression to people and animals, destruction of property, deceitfulness or theft, serious violations of rules. Source (and additional information): [PsychologyNet.org](#).

**Congenital:** A condition that is present at birth. May or may not be genetic.

**Consent:** A written agreement signed by the parent/guardian allowing the student to be evaluated for initial or continuing special education services.

**Content Standards:** A statement of a broad goal describing expectations for students in a subject area at a particular grade or at the completion of a level of schooling. Content standards are the goals of the curriculum. The standards are typically the basis or specification on which the test items are written. Source: [Riverside Publishing](#). California Content Standards: Content standards were designed to encourage the highest achievement of every student, by defining the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students should acquire at each grade level. Source and information on the content standards by subject: [California State Board of Education](#). See also Standards.

**Continuum of Services/Programs:** A full range of educational services/programs available to meet the needs of special education students so that they may be served in the least restrictive environment. Mandatory requirement for local education agency (typically school districts). Reference: [Cal. Ed. Code Sec 56360](#).

**Core Academic Subjects:** The term “core academic subjects” means English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography. [[Section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965](#) [20 U.S.C. 7801]].

**Co-teaching:** An educational model where general education and special education teachers work together to plan and deliver course work to both the general education and the special education student in the same classroom. See [Collaboration, Collaborative Learning/Teaching](#).

**Criterion-Referenced Tests:** Assesses how well a student has learned a specific set of criteria they have been taught. Student performance is not compared to other students in this type of test. The California Standards Tests (CSTs) are considered criterion-referenced tests. The California academic standards are the basis for these tests. Results are reported according to performance levels that show a student's achievement of the standards. (See Norm Referenced Tests.) Source: [California Department of Education](#).

**Curriculum:** A program of study taught to students.

- “**Grundy** (1987) defines curriculum as a programme of activities (by teachers and pupils) designed so that pupils will attain so far as possible certain educational and other schooling ends or objectives.” Source: [Curriculum Development Foundation and Principles](#).

## D

**Data Driven/Based Decision Making:** The gathering of data and using this information to make informed decisions.

**Decoding:** Decoding is the ability to figure out how to read unknown words by using knowledge of letters, sounds, and word patterns. Decoding is the ability to pronounce unfamiliar words in a way consistent with the conventions of the English language. Source: [Reading Success Lab](#).

**Developmental Delay:** *Developmental Delay* is when your child does not reach their [developmental milestones](#) at the expected times. It is an *ongoing, major delay in the process of development*. If your child is slightly or only temporarily lagging behind, that is not called developmental delay. Delay can occur in one or many areas—for example, motor, [language](#), social, or thinking skills. Source: [University of Michigan Health System](#)

**Depression:** A mood disorder in which feelings of sadness, loss, anger, or frustration interfere with everyday life for an extended time. Source: [U.S. National Library of Medicine](#).

**Designated Instruction and Services (DIS):** Services needed by a disabled child in order to benefit from special education services. They include services such as: speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and rehabilitation counseling. See Related Services. Source: [WrightsLaw.com](#). NOTE: The law does not state that students are entitled to receive all services that they may need, but only those which will allow the child to benefit from special education services. See [California Education Code 56363](#) for specific information.

**Developmental Disability:** [U.S. Code at 42 USC 15002](#): The term "developmental disability" means a severe, chronic disability of an individual that: (i) is attributable to a mental or physical impairment or combination of mental and physical impairments; (ii) is manifested before the individual attains age 22; (iii) is likely to continue indefinitely; (iv) results in substantial functional limitations in three or more ... major life activity(ies)

**Developmental History:** An account of how and when a person met developmental milestones, such as walking and talking. For adults, information on social-emotional development may be included. Used primarily in the diagnosis of developmental disorders. Source: [MedicineNet, Inc.](#) May be used to determine if there are any lags in development that might help explain academic or processing delays.

**Developmental Speech and Language Disorders:** People with developmental speech and language disorders have difficulty producing speech sounds, using spoken language to communicate, or understanding what other people say. Source: [MedicineNet](#).

**Diagnostic Tests:** A variety of tests used to diagnose or identify areas of strengths and weaknesses in academic and/or cognitive areas. The most commonly used academic test in our District is the Woodcock Johnson III.

**Differentiated Instruction:** Differentiated instruction is an approach to teaching essential content in ways that address the varied learning needs of students with the goal of maximizing the possibilities of each learner. Source: [Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development](#).

**Disability:** An impairment that affects the student's educational performance. Under the IDEA, 13 specific disability categories are listed. Source: [NICHCY](#) (Note: Section 504 defines disabilities differently than does the IDEA. More information: [About, Inc.](#))

**Discrepancy Formula:** Used to determine if a significant disability exists. It is based on a significant difference between ability and achievement. The IDEA no longer allows states to require that this method be the only method to determine eligibility for special education services. The law now allows the Response to Intervention (RTI) model as part of the evaluation process. Source: [Montana Office of Public Instruction](#).

**Due Process Procedures/Hearing:** Procedures that safeguard parental/guardian, student and school district rights by giving them a process to challenge decisions they disagree with that are made in the IEP process. Due process proceedings may be implemented by the parent/guardian, the student or the school district. Meant to be a non-confrontational method of resolving disputes, and is binding on all parties. Additional information: [TITLE 20 > CHAPTER 33 > SUBCHAPTER II > § 1415; A GUIDE FOR CALIFORNIA PARENTS: SPECIAL EDUCATION DUE PROCESS AND THE RESOLUTION SESSION](#)

**Dysfluency:** Stuttering.

**Dysgraphia:** A neurological disorder characterized by writing disabilities. Source: [National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke](#).

**Dyslexia:** A brain-based type of learning disability that specifically impairs a person's ability to read. These individuals typically read at levels significantly lower than expected despite having normal intelligence. Although the disorder varies from person to person, common characteristics among people with dyslexia are: difficulty with phonological processing (the manipulation of sounds) and/or rapid visual-verbal responding. Source: [National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke](#).

**Dyspraxia:** Developmental dyspraxia is a disorder characterized by impairment in the ability to plan and carry out sensory and motor tasks. Generally, individuals with the disorder appear "out of sync" with their environment. Symptoms vary and may include poor balance and coordination, clumsiness, vision problems, perception difficulties, emotional and behavioral problems, difficulty with reading, writing, and speaking, poor social skills, poor posture, and poor short-term memory. Although individuals with the disorder may be of average or above average intelligence, they may behave immaturely. Source: [National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke](#).

## E

**Early Intervention:** Services for children birth through age two that are designed to meet the developmental needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities under section 632 in Part C of the Act. Section 632(5)(A) of the Act defines *infant or toddler with a disability* as a child under the age of three years who (a) is experiencing developmental delays in one or more of the areas of cognitive development, physical development, communication development, social or emotional development, and adaptive development, or (b) has a diagnosed physical or mental condition that has a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. Source: [Federal Register](#) / Vol. 71, No. 156 / Monday, August 14, 2006 / Rules and Regulations.

**Educational Psychology:** The application of psychology and psychological methods to the study of development, learning, motivation, instruction, assessment, and related issues that influence the interaction of teaching and learning. Source: [Educational Psychology: Effective Teaching, Effective Learning](#).

**Educational Psychologist:** A trained professional who administers and interprets psychological tests and is a participant of the IEP team.

**Eligibility:** As related to special education, it means that the student must meet specific criteria to qualify for special education services.

**Emotionally Disturbed:** Defined under the [IDEA](#) as: (I.) A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affects educational performance: (A) an inability to learn which 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 general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or (E) a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

**Evaluation:** An evaluation includes information from parents, any special medical concerns, interviews with parents and school staff, and may include specific tests. The results of an evaluation will be used to determine if your child needs special education and related services help in school. You must give your consent **in writing** before the first evaluation can take place. The evaluation:

- must be done by trained and knowledgeable persons
- must be in all areas related to the suspected disability
- is more than just one test or assessment procedure



- must be in your child's native language unless clearly not possible to do so
- must not discriminate against your child

Source: [FAPE](#)

**Exceptional Child:** An exceptional child is one that is different in some way from the "normal" or "average" child. The term "exceptional child" includes those with special problems related to physical disabilities, sensory impairments, emotional disturbances, learning disabilities, and mental retardation. Most exceptional children require a lot of understanding and patience as well as special education and related services if they are to reach their full potential of development. Source: [Ohio State University Fact Sheet Family and Consumer Sciences](#)

**Expressive Language Disorder:** Individuals with this Communication Disorder of childhood test substantially below their expected level in the development of ability to express themselves in language. Source: [DSM-IV: Expressive Language Disorder](#).

**Expulsion:** [California Education Code 48925](#): (b) "Expulsion" means removal of a pupil from (1) the immediate supervision and control, or (2) the general supervision, of school personnel, as those terms are used in Section 46300.

**Extended School Day:** Education provided for students with disabilities in excess of the required minutes for a required school day.

**Extended School Year (ESY):** Education provided for students with disabilities in excess of the minimum school days required (i.e. summer school)

## F

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):** A Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. Source: [U.S. Department of Education](#).

**Fine Motor Skills:** Generally refer to the small movements of the hands, wrists, fingers, feet, toes, lips, and tongue. Source: "Fine Motor Skills." [Encyclopedia of Children's Health](#). Ed. Kristine Krapp and Jeffrey Wilson. Thomson Gale, 2005. [eNotes.com](#). 2006. 10 May, 2007. Source: [eNotes.com](#)

**Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):** According to the IDEA, [§ 300.17](#) [Free appropriate public education](#): *Free appropriate public education* or *FAPE* means special education and related services that— (a) Are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge; (b) Meet the standards of the SEA, including the requirements of this part; (c) Include an appropriate preschool, elementary school, or secondary school education in the State involved; and (d) Are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP) that meets the requirements of §§300.320 through 300.324. (Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(9)).

**Full Inclusion:** Full inclusion means that all students, regardless of handicapping condition or severity, will be in a regular classroom/program full time. All services must be taken to the child in that setting. Source: [Special Education Inclusion](#). Also see [Inclusion](#) and [Mainstreaming](#).

**Functional Behavioral Assessment:** Functional behavioral assessment is generally considered to be a problem-solving process for addressing student problem behavior. It relies on a variety of techniques and strategies to identify the purposes of specific behavior and to help IEP teams select interventions to directly address the problem behavior. Functional behavioral assessment should be integrated, as appropriate, throughout the process of developing, reviewing, and, if necessary, revising a student's IEP. A functional behavioral assessment looks beyond the behavior itself. The focus when conducting a functional behavioral assessment is on identifying significant, pupil-specific social, affective, cognitive, and/or environmental factors associated with the occurrence (and non-occurrence) of specific behaviors. Source: [CECP](#).

**Functional Skills:** Skills needed for independent living, such as cooking, comparison shopping, working with or managing money, using public transportation, and knowing how to be safe in the community. Source: [National Center for Learning Disabilities](#).

## G

**General Education:** Education not in the special education classroom. Also known as regular education or mainstream classroom.

**Grade Equivalent:** A score derived by computing the mean raw score obtained by children in each grade. It is usually expressed in tenths of a grade. A grade equivalent score of 3.5 on a reading test means that the child is reading at a level consistent with the average child who is in the middle of the third grade. Source: [Special Services, Psychology, and Section 504 Information Van Dyke Public Schools](#).

**Gross Motor Skills:** Gross motor skills encompass the abilities required to control the large muscles of the body for walking, running, sitting, crawling, and other activities. The muscles required to perform gross motor skills are generally found in the arms, legs, back, abdomen, and torso. Source: [Healthline Networks](#).

## H

**Hand-Eye Coordination:** the ability of the vision system to coordinate the information received through the eyes to control, guide, and direct the hands in the accomplishment of a given task, such as handwriting or catching a ball. Hand-eye coordination uses the eyes to direct attention and the hands to execute a task. Source: "Hand-Eye Coordination." [Encyclopedia of Children's Health](#). Ed. Kristine Krapp and Jeffrey Wilson. Thomson Gale, 2005. [eNotes.com](#). 2006. 10 May, 2007.

**Heterogeneous Grouping:** An educational practice where students of varying abilities, interests, or ages are mixed in mainstream classes. This practice is usually helpful with integrating children with disabilities into the mainstream curriculum. Source: [Learn NC](#).

**Homogeneous Grouping:** An educational practice of grouping students according to perceived ability, achievement, interests, or other characteristic. This practice tends to prevent the integration of disabled students into the mainstream curriculum. Source: [Learn NC](#).

## I

**Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)/Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA):** The purpose of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is to ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that includes special education and related services to meet their unique needs. The IDEA provides money to states to assist them to meet their obligations under the law. If a state submits an annual plan (to the Office of Special Education Programs in the U. S. Department of Education) which conforms to the procedures outlined in the law, it can receive federal funds to supplement the cost of educating children with disabilities. The IDEA thus requires that states educate children with disabilities, and it gives them financial assistance to help them accomplish this task. Source: [Sevier County Special Education](#).

**IEP (Individualized Education Plan):** A legal document written specifically for each student with a disability that, among other information, and after considering the student's strengths and weaknesses, develops specific annual goals and objectives that the student is expected to make progress towards during the duration of the IEP. The document is developed, reviewed, and revised at least yearly (or at other times as specified in the IDEA), and denotes all special education and related services that will be provided to the student. Source: [National Center for Learning Disabilities](#). Additional information: [Public Law 94-142: The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#).

**IEP meeting:** As required by the IDEA, meeting held at least annually at which an IEP is developed, reviewed and/or modified for a student receiving special education. Section [34CFR300.344](#) of the IDEA requires participation by a variety of IEP team members specifically including:

- One or both parents/guardians;
- The child (if appropriate);
- At least one regular education teacher of the child;
- At least one special education teacher of the child or who is a representative of the public agency who is qualified to provide/supervise specially designed instruction;
- Others who are involved in the education of the child as identified by the agency or the parent/guardian.

(Authority: 20 U.S.C. 1401(30), 1414(d)(1)(A)(7), (B)).

If it is determined necessary, an IEP meeting can be reconvened by the IEP team members (i.e. parent, counselor, teacher) whenever a review of the IEP document content is necessary.

**Inclusion/Inclusive Education:** According to the [National Center on Educational Restructuring and Inclusion](#), inclusive education leads to: Providing to all students, including those with significant disabilities, equitable opportunities to receive effective educational services, with the needed supplementary aids and support services, in age appropriate classrooms in their neighborhood schools, in order to prepare students for productive lives as full members of society. Also see [Full Inclusion](#), [Mainstreaming](#) and [Self-Contained classroom](#).

**Independent Living Centers:** According to the [California Department of Rehabilitation](#): An independent living center is a consumer controlled, community based, cross disability, nonresidential private nonprofit agency that is designed and operated within a local community by individuals with disabilities. Independent living services are services that maximize a person's ability to live independently in the environment of their own choosing.

**Independent Living Skills:** All the tasks and functions persons perform, in accordance with their abilities, in order to lead lives as independently as possible. These curricular needs are varied, as they include skills in personal hygiene, food preparation, money management, time monitoring, organization, etc. (Hatlen, 1996). Source: [Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired \(TSBVI\)](#).

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** Federal Law [20 U.S.C. § 1400](#) et seq., most recently amended in 2004, meant to ensure "a [free appropriate public education](#)" for students with disabilities, within their [Individualized Education Program](#) (IEP) that distinguishes needs in the [Least Restrictive Environment](#). The act requires that [public schools](#) provide necessary learning aids, testing modifications and other educational accommodations to children with disabilities. The act also establishes due process in providing these accommodations. Children whose learning is hampered by disabilities not interfering with their ability to function in a general classroom, may qualify for similar accommodations under Section 504 of the [Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#) or the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA). Source: [Wikipedia](#).

**IQ (Intelligence Quotient):** Relative intelligence of an individual expressed as a score on a standardized test of intelligence. Source: [Unified Medical Language System](#). Typical tests used in a special education setting include the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC-III-R), Stanford-Binet (SB:IV), and Woodcock Johnson III Tests of Cognitive Abilities.

## J

**Job Coaching:** Supported employment; job training is provided by a coach to a disabled student(s) at the job site.

## L

**LEA: Local Educational Agency:** See [Local Educational Agency](#).

**Learning Disabilities (LD):** See [Specific Learning Disability](#).

**Learning Styles:** The different ways people learn best. Also known as learning modalities and multiple intelligences.

"Some theorists and practitioners reduce learning modalities to three categories including visual, motor, and auditory. Visual children tend to learn by watching and looking at pictures and may be easily distracted by movement and action in the classroom. Those who respond to motor/kinesthetic stimuli tend to be involved and active, would rather do than watch, and prefer 'hands on' projects. Auditory children tend to learn by being told, respond to verbal instructions, and may be easily distracted by noise.

Learning modalities refer to the style learners use to concentrate on, process, and retain information, while multiple intelligences are the learners' biological potential and independent, diverse cognitive abilities their talents, which can be influenced by educational and cultural influences. Howard Gardner refers to multiple intelligences as tools to use in teaching and learning. He suggests at least eight elements of multiple intelligences that provide finer distinctions among behaviors." Source: [Public Broadcasting Service \(PBS\)](#).

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** According to [TITLE 20 > CHAPTER 33 > SUBCHAPTER II > § 1412 \(5\)](#): 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 not disabled, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

**Legal Guardian:** In California, when the court gives custody of a child under the age of 18, or the child's property, or both, to an adult relative or other caregiver, this is called a legal guardianship. The guardian then has the authority to make decisions for the young child that a parent would normally make, and also assumes certain duties and obligations regarding the child's care and control. Source: [Superior Court of California, County of Contra Costa](#).

**LEP (Limited English Proficient):** An individual who (1) was not born in the United States or whose native language is a language other than English and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; or (2) is a Native American or Alaska Native or who is a native resident of the outlying areas and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on such individual's level of English language proficiency; or (3) is migratory and whose native language is other than English and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; and has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language and whose difficulties may deny such individual the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language of instruction is English or to participate fully in our society. Source: Title VII of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (IASA); [PART E--GENERAL PROVISIONS "SEC. 7501. DEFINITIONS; REGULATIONS \(8\) \(A\)](#).

**Local Education Agency (LEA):** is a school district, board of education, or other public authority under the supervision of a state educational agency having administrative control and direction of public elementary or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or political subdivision in a state. Source: [The Access Center](#).

**Long-Term Suspension:** Any suspension exceeding ten school days in a row. Students with disabilities are subject to the same suspension rules as nondisabled students, except with regard to the length of suspension. Under certain circumstances, a nondisabled student can be suspended for a period in excess of 30 days cumulatively per school year. However, a special education student may not be suspended for more than ten consecutive school days without parental consent or a court order. [Cal. Ed. Code Sec. 48915.5(b); 34 C.F.R. Sec. 300.519(a).] A student can suffer multiple suspensions for separate offenses that accumulate to more than ten school days in a school year so long as no single suspension exceeds ten school days. However, for all days of suspension in excess of ten in a school year; the student must receive FAPE, although in an alternative setting, which must provide services to the extent necessary to allow the child to progress appropriately in the general curriculum and in achieving his IEP goals. [34 C.F.R. Secs. 300.520(a)(ii); and 300.121(d).] Source: [SPECIAL EDUCATION RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES, Chapter 8 Information on Discipline of Students with Disabilities](#).

**Low Incidence Disability:** Per [CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE 56026.5](#): "Low incidence disability" means a severe disabling condition with an expected incidence rate of less than one percent of the total statewide enrollment in kindergarten through grade 12. For purposes of this definition, severe disabling conditions are hearing impairments, vision impairments, and severe orthopedic impairments, or any combination thereof. For purposes of this definition, vision impairments do not include disabilities within the function of vision specified in Section 56338. *Additional information:* California Code of Regulations under [Title 5, Section 3051.16](#) further defines these services: Specialized services for low-incidence disabilities may include: a. Specially designed instruction related to the unique needs of pupils with low- incidence disabilities provided by teachers credentialed pursuant to Education Code 44265. b. Specialized services related to the unique needs of pupils with low-incidence disabilities provided by qualified individuals such as interpreters, note takers, readers, transcribers, and other individuals who provide specialized materials and equipment.

## M

**Mainstream/Mainstreaming:** Used to refer to the selective placement of special education students in one or more "regular" education classes. Proponents of mainstreaming generally assume that a student must "earn" his or her opportunity to be placed in regular classes by demonstrating an ability to "keep up" with the work assigned by the regular classroom teacher. Source: [Special Education Inclusion](#). Also see [Inclusion](#), [Full Inclusion](#) and [Self-Contained Classroom](#).

**Manifestation Determination:** "Manifestation Determination" is a process to determine if a student's behavior problem was or was not a manifestation of the student's disability. A Manifestation Determination is completed as part of an IEP team meeting. The IEP team must convene no later than 10 school days when:

- A parent requests such a meeting following a disciplinary incident.
- A student is suspended for 5 or more consecutive days.
- A student is suspended for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year (and for every suspension thereafter).
- A change in placement for more than 10 consecutive days is being sought for disciplinary reasons.
- Exclusion or expulsion is being considered.

Source: [St. Paul Public Schools](#)

*Additional information:* [Source:](#) TITLE I / B / 615 / k / 1 / E (E) Manifestation determination.-- (i) <<NOTE: Deadline.>> In general.--Except as provided in subparagraph (B), within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the local educational agency, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the local educational agency) shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine-- (i) if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or (ii) if the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP. (ii) Manifestation.--If the local educational agency, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that either subclause (I) or (II) of clause (i) is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

**Mastery Level:** The cutoff score on a criterion-referenced or mastery test. People who score at or above the cutoff score are considered to have mastered the material; people who score below the cutoff score are considered to be non-masters. "Mastery" in this sense is an arbitrary judgment. A cutoff score can be determined by several different methods. Each method often results in a different cutoff score. Source: [Harcourt Assessment, Inc.](#)

**Mean:** The arithmetic average of a set of scores. It is found by adding all the scores in the distribution and dividing by the total number of scores. Source: [Harcourt Assessment, Inc.](#)

**Median:** The middle score in a distribution or set of ranked scores; the point (score) that divides a group into two equal parts; the 50th percentile. Half the scores are below the median, and half are above it. Source: [Harcourt Assessment, Inc.](#)

**Mediation:** According to the [U.S Department of Education](#) website: Statute: TITLE I / B / 615 / (e) Mediation.-- (1) In general. Any State educational agency or local educational agency that receives assistance under this part shall ensure that procedures are established and implemented to allow parties to disputes involving any matter, including matters arising prior to the filing of a complaint pursuant to subsection (b)(6), to resolve such disputes through a mediation process. (2) Requirements.--Such procedures shall meet the following requirements: (A) The procedures shall ensure that the mediation process-- (i) is voluntary on the part of the parties; (ii) is not used to deny or delay a parent's right to a due process hearing under subsection (f), or to deny any other rights afforded under this part; and (iii) is conducted by a qualified and impartial mediator who is trained in effective mediation techniques. (B) Opportunity to meet with a disinterested party.--A local educational agency or a State agency may establish procedures to offer to parents and schools that choose not to use the mediation process, an opportunity to meet, at a time and location convenient to the parents, with a disinterested party who is under contract with-- (i) a parent training and information center or community parent resource center in the State established under section 671 or 672; or (ii) an appropriate alternative dispute resolution entity, to encourage the use, and explain the benefits, of the mediation process to the parents. (C) List of qualified mediators.--The State shall maintain a list of individuals who are qualified mediators and knowledgeable in laws and regulations relating to the provision of special education and related services. (D) Costs.--The State shall bear the cost of the mediation process, including the costs of meetings described in subparagraph (B). (E) Scheduling and location.--Each session in the mediation process shall be scheduled in a timely manner and shall be held in a location that is convenient to the parties to the dispute. (F) Written agreement.--In the case that a resolution is reached to resolve the complaint through the mediation process, the parties shall execute a legally binding agreement that sets forth such resolution and that-- (i) states that all discussions that occurred during the mediation process shall be confidential and may not be used as evidence in any subsequent due process hearing or civil proceeding; (ii) is signed by both the parent and a representative of the agency who has the authority to bind such agency; and (iii) is enforceable in any State court of competent jurisdiction or in a district court of the United States. (G) <<NOTE: Confidential information.>> Mediation discussions.--Discussions that occur during the mediation process shall be confidential and may not be used as evidence in any subsequent due process hearing or civil proceeding.



**Medi-Cal:** The purpose of Medi-Cal is to provide comprehensive medical services to children and adults in low-income families. Single adults and families who are eligible but have income levels above prescribed levels must pay or obligate their excess income toward the costs of their medical care. Source: [County of Madera Social Services](#).

**Medicaid:** A federally funded program that provides medical care for qualified low-income individuals. Medicaid is available only to certain low-income individuals and families who fit into an eligibility group that is recognized by federal and state law. Medicaid does not pay money to you; instead, it sends payments directly to your health care providers. Depending on your state's rules, you may also be asked to pay a small part of the cost (co-payment) for some medical services. Source: [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services](#).

**Medically Fragile:** Medically Fragile Persons – The term medically fragile is used to define persons who require some sort of ongoing/daily medical care or supervision and who are dependent upon medical professionals, family members, or other caregivers for that support. Generally, if the person requires ongoing nursing care, they are medically fragile. Source: [Alameda County Disaster Shelter Plan For Medically Fragile Persons](#).

**Mental Illness:** Mental illness is the term that refers collectively to all diagnosable mental disorders. Mental disorders are health conditions that are characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior (or some combination thereof) associated with distress and/or impaired functioning. Source: [Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General](#).

**Mental Retardation (MR):** [IDEA Regulations](#): Part 300 / A / 300.8 / c / (6) Mental retardation means significantly subaverage general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Additional information: [NICHY](#).

**Mobility Training/Orientation and Mobility Training:** Orientation and Mobility (O&M) is the teaching of concepts, skills and techniques necessary for a person who is blind to travel safely, efficiently and confidently through any environment and under all environmental conditions and situations. Orientation and mobility services may include: basic orientation concepts of body awareness and geometric shapes; use of reference systems to increase safety, independence and confidence; a primary travel system using residual vision, sighted guide, long cane, prescribed low vision aids or a combination of the above. Where appropriate, the system may integrate the use of a guide dog and electronic vision enhancement systems; effective indoor travel techniques, including self-protective techniques, trailing and room or building familiarization; safe and effective negotiation of outdoor areas including street crossings at various traffic controlled intersections and the use of public transportation. Source: [New York State Office of Children and Family Services](#)

**Modality:** Different ways of learning. See [Learning Styles](#).

**Mode:** The score or value that occurs most often in a distribution. Source: [Harcourt Assessment, Inc.](#)

**Modifications:** [California Education Code Section 60850](#) (f) (5) "Modification" means any variation in the assessment environment or process that fundamentally alters what the test measures or affects the comparability of scores. California Department of Education Document Explaining: [Testing Variations, Accommodations, and Modifications](#). Also see [California Department of Education](#) for additional information.

**Multiple Intelligences:** Howard Gardner identifies at least seven different human intelligences that allow us to engage in learning and help us make sense of the world: (1) language; (2) logical-mathematical analysis; (3) spatial representation; (4) musical thinking; (5) the use of the body to solve problems or to make things; (6) an understanding of other individuals; and, (7) an understanding of ourselves. Within the framework of learning with technology, each has a specific role and capacity. Source: [UNESCO.ORG](#) definitions. Additional information: [Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development](#).

## N

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB):** President Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act on January 8, 2002. The law helps schools improve by focusing on accountability for results, freedom for states and communities, proven education methods, and choices for parents. Source: [U.S. Department of Education](#).

**Nonverbal Learning Disorders:** known as NLD; is a neurophysiological disorder originating in the right hemisphere of the brain. Reception of nonverbal or performance-based information governed by this hemisphere is impaired in varying degrees, including problems with visual-spatial, intuitive, organizational, evaluative, and holistic processing functions. Source: [NLDA – Nonverbal Learning Disorders Association](#).

**Norm-Referenced Tests:** A standardized, national norm-referenced test compares a student's score to scores from a sample of students selected to be representative of the nation as a whole. When a student scores at the 62nd percentile, it means the student's score was equal to or better than 62 percent of the students in the norming sample who took the same test under the same standardized conditions. Norm-referenced tests are not designed to measure student knowledge of a specific curriculum or instructional program. Source: [California Department of Education](#).

## O

**Objectives:** Objectives specify what learners will be able to do, or perform, to be considered competent. Source: [SDSU](#).

**Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD):** An anxiety disorder characterized by recurrent, unwanted thoughts (obsessions) and/or repetitive behaviors (compulsions). Repetitive behaviors such as handwashing, counting, checking, or cleaning are often performed with the hope of preventing obsessive thoughts or making them go away. Performing these so-called "rituals," however, provides only temporary relief, and not performing them markedly increases anxiety. Source (and more information): [The National Institute of Mental Health \(NIMH\)](#)

**Occupational Therapy (OT):** Occupational therapy (OT) is a health and rehabilitation profession that helps people regain, develop, and build skills that are important for independent functioning, health, well-being, security, and happiness. OT practitioners work with people of all ages who, because of illness, injury, or developmental or psychological impairment, need specialized assistance in learning skills to enable them to lead independent, productive, and satisfying lives. Source: [Department of Occupational Therapy, College of Applied Human Sciences, Colorado State University](#). According to [About: Parenting Special Needs](#), occupational therapy deals with strengthening [fine-motor skills](#) like writing, cutting, shoe-tying and using utensils.

**Office for Civil Rights (OCR):** The mission of the Office for Civil Rights is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights. Source: [U.S. Department of Education](#).

**Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD):** Oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) is diagnosed when a child displays a persistent or consistent pattern of defiance, disobedience, and hostility toward various authority figures including parents, teachers, and other adults. ODD is characterized by such problem behaviors as persistent fighting and arguing, being touchy or easily annoyed, and deliberately annoying or being spiteful or vindictive to other people. Children with ODD may repeatedly lose their temper, argue with adults, deliberately refuse to comply with requests or rules of adults, blame others for their own mistakes, and be repeatedly angry and resentful. Stubbornness and testing of limits are common. These behaviors cause significant difficulties with family and friends and at school or work (DSM-IV; Weiner, 1997). Source: [About: Oppositional Defiant Disorder](#).

**Orientation and Mobility Training:** See [Mobility Training](#).

**Orthopedic Disabilities:** [IDEA Regulations](#): Part 300 / A / 300.8 / c / (8) state: Orthopedic impairment means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes impairments caused by a congenital anomaly, impairments caused by disease (e.g., poliomyelitis, bone tuberculosis), and impairments from other causes (e.g., cerebral palsy, amputations, and fractures or burns that cause contractures). A qualifying category for special education services.

**Other Health Impaired:** [IDEA Regulations](#): Part 300 / A / 300.8 / c / (9) Other health impairment means having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that-- (i) Is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome; and (ii) Adversely affects a child's educational performance.

## P

**Paraeducator/Paraprofessional:** According to the [National Education Association](#): The paraeducator is a school employee who works alongside and under the supervision of a licensed or certificated educator to support and assist in providing instructional and other services to children, youth, and their families. The licensed educator remains responsible for the overall conduct and management of the class-room or program; the design, implementation, and evaluation of instructional program; and student progress. Definition adapted from A. L. Pickett, National Resource Center for Paraprofessionals, City University of New York, 1993.

**Paraplegia:** Complete paralysis of the lower half of the body including both legs, usually caused by damage to the spinal cord. Source: [The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition](#).

**Paraplegic:** Someone affected by paraplegia.

**Percentiles/Percentile Ranks (PR):** A point on the norms distribution below which a certain percentage of the scores fall. For example, if 70% of the scores fall below a raw score of 56, then the score of 56 is at the 70th percentile. Source: [Harcourt Assessment, Inc.](#)

**Performance-Based Assessment:** Performance-based assessments represent a set of strategies for the . . . application of knowledge, skills, and work habits through the performance of tasks that are meaningful and engaging to students (Hibbard and others, 1996, p. 5). This type of assessment provides teachers with information about how a child understands and applies knowledge. Also, teachers can integrate performance-based assessments into the instructional process to provide additional learning experiences for students. Source: [Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development \(ASCD\)](#).

**Physical Therapy (PT):** The use of exercises and physical activities to help condition muscles and restore strength and movement. For example, physical therapy can be used to restore arm and shoulder movement and build back strength after breast cancer surgery. Source: [St. Jude Children's Research Hospital](#).

**Physically Disabled:** Having a physical condition that adversely affects the day-to-day motor functioning, such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, multiple sclerosis, orthopedic impairments, and other physical disabilities. Source: [Department of Health and Human Services](#).

**Placement:** The setting in which the special education service is delivered to the student. It must be derived from the student's IEP. Source: [Council for Disability Rights](#).

**Positive Behavior Supports (PBS):** Positive behavior support (PBS) is the application of behavior analysis to achieve socially important behavior change... it is an application of a behaviorally-based systems approach to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve the fit or link between research-validated practices and the environments in which teaching and learning occurs. Attention is focused on creating and sustaining school environments that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation, etc.) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional. In addition, the use of culturally appropriate interventions is emphasized. Source: [OSEP Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports](#).

**Pre-referral Process:** The purpose of the pre-referral process is to ensure your child tries reasonable accommodations and modifications before she's referred for special education assessment. Source: [Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation](#).

**Present Level of Performance:** The IEP must provide information on the child's present level of performance, addressing each area of need. The present level of performance is a clear, descriptive statement of how the child is performing in specific areas of need as found during the evaluation. The statement should include the child's strengths, interests, and needs. Source: [Cooperative Educational Service Agency No. 7](#).

**Primary Language:** The language the person first learned, or the language which is spoken in the home.

**Procedural Safeguards:** Specific procedures taken that advise the parents of their educational rights under the IDEA. Source: [Statute: TITLE I / B / 615](#).

**Psychological Evaluation:** Psychological evaluations conducted by school-based or community professionals can be invaluable tools in understanding and addressing the learning needs of individual students. When conducted, interpreted, and reported in a manner that accurately and fairly describes student needs, such evaluations can positively affect a student's educational career... The process of obtaining and interpreting psychological evaluations is usually the responsibility of the school psychologist and special education team, but principals are often involved in discussions regarding these evaluations and what the results may mean for a student's educational services. Source: [National Association of Secondary School Principals](#).

**Psychological Services:** [Regulations:](#) Part [300](#) / [A](#) / [300.34](#) / [c](#) / [\(10\)](#) Psychological services includes-- [\(i\)](#) Administering psychological and educational tests, and other assessment procedures; [\(ii\)](#) Interpreting assessment results; [\(iii\)](#) Obtaining, integrating, and interpreting information about child behavior and conditions relating to learning; [\(iv\)](#) Consulting with other staff members in planning school programs to meet the special educational needs of children as indicated by psychological tests, interviews, direct observation, and behavioral evaluations; [\(v\)](#) Planning and managing a program of psychological services, including psychological counseling for children and parents; and [\(vi\)](#) Assisting in developing positive behavioral intervention strategies.

**Psychomotor Skills/Domain:** deals with behaviors that require the development and coordination of motor skills and neuromuscular control. Source: [Professional Teaching Strategies](#).

## R

**Range Of Motion:** The distance and direction of movement of a joint. Source: [Medline Plus](#).

**Raw score:** The number of questions answered correctly on a test. They should not be used to make comparisons between different tests. Raw scores are typically converted to percentile ranks, standard scores, grade equivalent and/or age equivalent scores. Source: [Harcourt Assessment](#).

**Receptive Language:** A child's understanding of the information he receives through spoken or written communication. Source: [Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation](#)

**Receptive Language Disorders:** Refer to difficulties in the ability to attend to, process, comprehend, retain, or integrate spoken language. Receptive Language Disorders include: Central Auditory Processing Disorders (CAPD), Aphasia, Comprehension Deficit, "delayed language," "delayed speech." Source: [Kaufman Children's Center](#).

**Referral for Assessment:** [California Education Code Section 56029](#) states that "Referral for assessment" means any written request for assessment to identify an individual with exceptional needs made by any of the following:

- (a) A parent or guardian of the individual.
- (b) A teacher or other service provider of the individual.
- (c) A foster parent of the individual, consistent with the limitations contained in federal law.

**Regional Center:** (California) Regional centers are nonprofit private corporations that contract with the Department of Developmental Services to provide or coordinate services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities. They have offices throughout California to provide a local resource to help find and access the many services available to individuals and their families. Source: [Department of Developmental Services, State of California](#).

**Regular Education:** Education not in the special education classroom. Also known as general education or mainstream education.

**Response to Intervention (RTI):** According to SchwabLearning.org: There is currently no formal definition of RTI, nor is there an RTI model that is well established and widely endorsed by researchers and educators. However, the following could serve as a description of the essential elements: RTI is an individualized, comprehensive assessment and intervention process, utilizing a problem-solving framework to identify and address student academic difficulties using effective, efficient, research-based instruction. Source and additional information: [SchwabLearning.org](#).

**Rehabilitation:** The purpose of rehabilitation is to help the patient reach the highest level of function by preventing complications, reducing disability, and improving independence. Source: [Ohio State University Medical Center](#).

**Related Services:** [34 CFR § 300.21](#): As used in this part, the term *related services* means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech-language pathology and audiology services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. The term also includes school health services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training. As used in this part, the term *related services* means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech-language pathology and audiology services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. The term also includes school health services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training.

Per Statute: TITLE I / [A / 602 / \(26\)](#) Related services.-- (A) In general.--The term 'related services' means transportation, and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services (including speech-language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, social work services, school nurse services designed to enable a child with a disability to receive a free appropriate public education as described in the individualized education program of the child, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services, except that such medical services shall be for diagnostic and evaluation purposes only) as may be required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes the early identification and assessment of disabling conditions in children.

(B) Exception.--The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted, or the replacement of such device.

**Reliability:** The degree to which test scores are dependable, repeatable, and unaffected by measurement error; reliability refers to the consistency of measurement. Usually expressed in the form of a reliability coefficient; the higher the reliability coefficient the better the test as there are smaller random errors in the score. Source: [California State Personnel Board Merit Selection Manual: Policy and Practices](#) and [Harcourt Assessment](#).

**Remediation:** Process by which an individual receives instruction and practice in skills that are weak or nonexistent in an effort to develop/strengthen the skills. Source: [LD Resources](#).

**Residential Facility:** A facility or residential program that provides housing and appropriate supervision for individuals requiring developmental or behavioral assistance on a 24-hour basis outside the individual's home. Source: [Special School District of St. Louis County \(SSD\)](#).

**Resource Classroom:** The resource room is the least restrictive of the special education models in which children are removed from the classroom for a portion of the school day for special services. The amount of time a child might be in the resource room for special services would logically be determined by the actual needs of the student as expressed in the IEP. The nature and variety of services that a student receives in the resource room must be stipulated in the IEP. Source: [SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS](#)

**Resource Specialist Program (RSP):** Under the Resource Specialist Program, students with specific learning problems are assigned to regular classrooms for the majority of the school day but receive supportive instruction and consultation services by the Resource Specialist Teacher, either in a learning center or the general education classroom. Source: [Poway Unified School District](#).

## S

**School Psychologist:** A member of the IEP team who is responsible for administering and interpreting educational tests; a general practice and health service provider specialty of professional psychology that is concerned with the science and practice of psychology with children, youth, families; learners of all ages; and the schooling process. Source: [American Psychological Association](#).



**Section 504:** Part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; a civil rights law to protect people with disabilities by eliminating barriers and allowing full participation in areas such as education and the workplace... "Handicapped person" is defined by Section 504 as a person with a mental or physical impairment that limits one or more major life activities, such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working, to a substantial degree. Source: [Charles and Helen Schwab Foundation](#). Comparing the [IDEA to Section 504](#).

**Self-Advocacy:** An individual's ability to effectively communicate, convey, negotiate or assert his or her own interests, desires, needs, and rights. It involves making informed decisions and taking responsibility for those decisions. (VanReusen et al, 1994). Self-Advocacy skills are essential so that disabled individuals can obtain the accommodations and modifications necessary for them to be successful in school or the work place. Acquisition of these skills helps them understand their legal rights and how to convey this information to others. In addition, to become a successful self-advocate, disabled individual need to understand their learning styles, strengths and weakness, interests, and preferences. Source and additional information: [LD OnLine](#)

**Self-Contained Classroom:** Placement in a self-contained classroom means that your child will be removed from the general school population for all academic subjects to work in a small controlled setting with a special-education teacher. Students in a self-contained class may be working at all different academic levels, with different textbooks and different curricula. Self-contained classes offer structure, routine, and appropriate expectations, but some students may require a higher level of specialization. Source: [Choose the Right Special Education Placement for Your Child](#). Also see Inclusion, Full Inclusion and Mainstreaming.

**Self-Determination:** Self-determination is a person's ability to control his or her own destiny. A crucial part of the concept of self-determination involves the combination of attitudes and abilities that will lead children or individuals to set goals for themselves, and to take the initiative to reach these goals. To do this one must be in charge, which is not necessarily the same thing as self-sufficiency or independence, make his or her own choices, learn to solve problems effectively, take control and responsibility for his or her life, learn to experience and cope with the consequences of making decisions on his or her own. Source: [National Association of Special Education Teachers](#).

**Self-Injurious Behavior:** Any behavior that results in injury to the body. Some examples are: head-banging or hitting or hand-biting. Additional information as it pertains to individuals with autism or mental retardation: [Kennedy Krieger Institute](#).

**Self-Stimulation Behavior:** Repetitive behaviors such as hand flapping, twirling objects in front of the eyes, and body rocking that extends for a prolonged period of time and seems to provide sensory or kinesthetic feedback. These behaviors can be expressed in a variety of ways such as: gazing at lights or making inappropriate facial expressions or grimacing, body rocking or loud and repetitive vocalizations. Most self-stimulatory behaviors appear to have little or no obvious social meaning to others and appear to interfere with relationships, learning, and neurological development. Source: [University of South Florida, R. Lee Smith, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Special Education](#).

**Sensory Input:** Sensory input plays a critical role in brain function. Sensations from hearing, vision, taste, smell, touch, pressure, and movement provide the input to the brain which is organized for movement, cognition and learning. The richness of the sensory environment and the interactive experience of the individual with the environment contribute to the growth of intelligence. Source: [Monroe Institute](#), [Bridges4Kids](#).

**Sensory Integration:** The ability to take in information through senses (touch, movement, smell, taste, vision, and hearing), to put it together with prior information, memories, and knowledge stored in the brain, and to make a meaningful response. Sensory integration occurs in the central nervous system and is generally thought to take place in the mid-brain and brainstem levels in complex interactions of the portions of the brain responsible for such things as coordination, attention, arousal levels, autonomic functioning, emotions, memory, and higher level cognitive functions. Because of the complexity of the various areas which are dependent upon and interact with each other as well as the child's own personality and environment, it is not possible to have a single list of symptoms which identify sensory integrative dysfunction. Source: Sensory Integration Dysfunction: Definitions, Evaluations & Solutions: [Bridges4Kids](#).

**Severe Disabilities:** People with severe disabilities are those who traditionally have been labeled as having severe to profound mental retardation. These people require ongoing, extensive support in more than one major life activity

in order to participate in integrated community settings and enjoy the quality of life available to people with fewer or no disabilities. They frequently have additional disabilities, including movement difficulties, sensory losses, and behavior problems. Source: [NICHCY](#).

**Sheltered Workshop:** A work setting that provides transitional and/or long-term employment in a controlled and protected working environment for those who are perceived to be unable either to compete or to function in the open job market due to their physical or developmental disabilities. Source: [Special School District of St. Louis County](#).

**Short-term objectives:** Measurable, short-term instructional objectives and evaluation criteria, evaluation procedures and schedules used to measure progress toward the annual goal. Source: [National Association of Special Education Teachers](#).

**Short-Term Suspension:** Suspensions involving 10 or fewer days at one time. [34 C.F.R. § 300.520 Authority of school personnel](#): (a) School personnel may order— (1)(i) To the extent removal would be applied to children without disabilities, the removal of a child with a disability from the child's current placement for not more than 10 consecutive school days for any violation of school rules, and additional removals of not more than 10 consecutive school days in that same school year for separate incidents of misconduct (as long as those removals do not constitute a change of placement under § 300.519(b)).

**Social Skills:** Social skills are those communication, problem-solving, decision making, self-management, and peer relations abilities that allow one to initiate and maintain positive social relationships with others. Deficits or excesses in social behavior interfere with learning, teaching, and the classroom's orchestration and climate. Social competence is linked to peer acceptance, teacher acceptance, inclusion success, and post school success. Source: [LD OnLine](#).

**Social Stories:** Used to present appropriate social behaviors in the form of a story. It was developed by Carol Gray and seeks to include answers to questions that autistic persons may need to know to interact appropriately with others (for example, answers to who, what, when, where, and why in social situations). Source and additional information on how social stories are constructed and used: [Meredyth Goldberg Edelson, Ph.D., Dept. of Psychology, Willamette University, Salem, Oregon](#).

**Social Worker:** Social workers help people function the best way they can in their environment, deal with their relationships, and solve personal and family problems. Source: [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#).

**Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA):** The SELPA is an administrative body that coordinates the administration and delivery of special education services within a group of school districts.

**Special Education:** [California Ed Code 56031](#) states: "Special education" means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parent, to meet the unique needs of individuals with exceptional needs, whose educational needs cannot be met with modification of the regular instruction program, and related services, at no cost to the parent, that may be needed to assist these individuals to benefit from specially designed instruction. Special education is an integral part of the total public education system and provides education in a manner that promotes maximum interaction between children or youth with disabilities and children or youth who are not disabled, in a manner that is appropriate to the needs of both. Special education provides a full continuum of program options, including instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and instruction in physical education, to meet the educational and service needs of individuals with exceptional needs in the least restrictive environment. Individuals with exceptional needs shall be grouped for instructional purposes according to their instructional needs. Also see: 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1401(16); 34 C.F.R. Sec. 300.14.

**Special Needs Children:** As used in special education, a term that references children who have some form of disability or other extenuating circumstances that require special services or treatment to insure that they adequately progress in attaining life skills.

**Specific Learning Disability:** As defined by TITLE I / [A / 602 / 30; \(30\)](#) Specific learning disability.-- [\(A\)](#) In general.--The term 'specific learning disability' means a disorder in 1 or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. [\(B\)](#) Disorders included.--

Such term includes such conditions as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. (C) Disorders not included.--Such term does not include a learning problem that is primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

**Speech and Language Disorder:** Speech and language disorders refer to 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. Source and additional information: [NICHCY- Info About Speech & Language Disorders Fact Sheet Number 11 \(FS11\), 2000](#). **Also:** A speech disorder refers to a problem with the actual production of sounds, whereas a language disorder refers to a difficulty understanding or putting words together to communicate ideas. Source: [KidsHealth](#).

**Speech/Language Therapy:** Speech-language therapy involves having a speech-language specialist work with a child on a one-to-one basis, in a small group or directly in a classroom, to overcome difficulties involved with a specific disorder. Speech-language therapy uses a variety of therapeutic strategies... Source and additional information: [KidsHealth](#).

**Speech-Language Pathologist:** Speech therapists, officially called Speech-language pathologists, work with people who have a variety of speech-related disorders. These disorders can include the inability to produce certain sounds, speech rhythm and fluency problems, and voice disorders. They also help people who want to modify accents or who have swallowing difficulties. Speech therapists' work involves assessment, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of speech-related disorders. Source and additional information: [Speech Therapist: Career Profile](#).

**Standard deviation (SD):** A measure of the variability, or dispersion, of a distribution of scores. The more the scores cluster around the mean, the smaller the standard deviation. In a normal distribution of scores, 68.3% of the scores are within the range of one S.D. below the mean to one S.D. above the mean. Computation of the S.D. is based upon the square of the deviation of each score from the mean. Source: [Harcourt Assessment, Inc.](#)

**Standard Scores:** Standard scores are raw scores that have been transformed to have a given mean and standard deviation. They express how far an examinee's score lies from the mean of the distribution in terms of the standard deviation. For example, the WISC IV has a mean standard score of 100, with each standard deviation being 15 points. A standard score of 85 would be one standard deviation below the mean. Source: [Special Services, Psychology, and Section 504 Information Van Dyke Public Schools](#). See [Z-Score](#).

**Standardized Test:** A test designed to be administered, scored, and interpreted according to a prescribed set of rules or instructions. The instructions for administration require that the testing conditions are the same for all examinees so that the results can be interpreted through comparisons to a specific reference group (norm group) who were administered the test under the same conditions. Source: [Riverside Publishing](#).

**Standards:** Statements that describe what students are expected to know and be able to do at each grade level and within each subject area. See also: Content Standards. View: [California Content Standards by Subject](#).

**Standards-Based Assessment:** Assessments intended to represent systematically described content and performance standards. Source: [Riverside Publishing](#).

**Stanines:** Stanines provide a single-digit scoring system with a mean of 5 and a standard deviation of 2. The scores are expressed as whole numbers from 1 to 9. . Source: [Special Services, Psychology, and Section 504 Information Van Dyke Public Schools](#).

**Stay Put:** IDEA 2004 maintains the "stay put" provisions of IDEA 1997. (Section 1415(j)) Under the "stay put" provision, the child can remain in the then-current educational placement and continue to receive the same services during proceedings to challenge the IEP, unless the parents and school agree otherwise. Source and more information: [Wrightslaw.com](#).

**Student Success/Study Team (SST):** A positive school-wide early identification and early intervention process. Working as a team, the student, parent, teachers and school administrator identify the student's strengths and

assets upon which an improvement plan can be designed. Concerns are seen as obstacles to student success and not descriptors of the student or his character. As a regular school process, the SST intervenes with school and community support and a practical improvement plan that all team members agree to follow. Follow-up meetings are planned to provide a continuous casework management strategy to maximize the student's achievement and school experience. Source and additional information: [California Department of Education](#).

ALSO: The Student Study Team (SST) goes by many names. Some school districts may refer to it as the Child Guidance Team, the Student Assistance Team (SAT), the Site Consultation Team, or the Instructional Study Team (IST).

The Student Study Team is a regular education process to provide classroom teachers with assistance for students in their classrooms who are experiencing learning or behavioral problems that the teacher has been unsuccessful in solving. The process may differ in various school districts and even among different schools in the same district. The Student Study Team is often considered to meet the requirements of the California Education Code 56303, which specifies that the resources of regular education be considered before referring a student for special education instruction and services. Source: [CASRC](#).

**Supplemental Aids and Services:** Aids, services, and other supports that are provided in regular education classes or other education-related settings to enable children with disabilities to be educated with nondisabled children to the maximum extent appropriate. Examples of supplemental aids and services might be assistive technologies such as a computer or adapted physical education. Source: [National Center for Learning Disabilities, Inc.](#)

**Supported Employment:** [TITLE 42—THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE, TITLE 42 > CHAPTER 144 > SUBCHAPTER I > Part A > § 15002](#) The term “supported employment services” means services that enable individuals with developmental disabilities to perform competitive work in integrated work settings, in the case of individuals with developmental disabilities — (A) (i) for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred; or (ii) for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of significant disabilities; and (B) who, because of the nature and severity of their disabilities, need intensive supported employment services or extended services in order to perform such work.

**Supported Living:** [TITLE 42—THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE, TITLE 42 > CHAPTER 7 > SUBCHAPTER XIX > § 1396u](#) (a) Community supported living arrangements services: In this subchapter, the term “community supported living arrangements services” means one or more of the following services meeting the requirements of subsection (h) of this section provided in a State eligible to provide services under this section (as defined in subsection (d) of this section) to assist a developmentally disabled individual (as defined in subsection (b) of this section) in activities of daily living necessary to permit such individual to live in the individual’s own home, apartment, family home, or rental unit furnished in a community supported living arrangement setting:

- (1) Personal assistance.
- (2) Training and habilitation services (necessary to assist the individual in achieving increased integration, independence and productivity).
- (3) 24-hour emergency assistance (as defined by the Secretary).
- (4) Assistive technology.
- (5) Adaptive equipment.
- (6) Other services (as approved by the Secretary, except those services described in subsection (g) of this section).
- (7) Support services necessary to aid an individual to participate in community activities.

**Surrogate Parent:** A person assigned to substitute for the natural parents when a student’s parents are not known, are not available, or when the student is a ward of the state. Source: [California Education Code Section 56050](#) 56050. (a) For the purposes of this article, “surrogate parent” shall be defined as it is defined in Section 300.515 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations. (b) A surrogate parent may represent an individual with exceptional needs in matters relating to identification, assessment, instructional planning and development, educational placement, reviewing and revising the individualized education program, and in other matters relating to the provision of a free appropriate education to the individual. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, this representation shall include the provision of written consent to the individualized education program including nonemergency medical services, mental health treatment services, and occupational or physical therapy services pursuant to Chapter 26.5 (commencing with Section 7570) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code. The surrogate parent may sign any consent relating to individualized education program purposes. (c) A surrogate parent shall be held harmless by the State of California when acting in his or her official capacity except for acts or omissions which are found to have been wanton, reckless, or malicious. (d) A surrogate parent shall also be governed by Section 7579.5 of the Government Code.



**Suspensions:** [California Education Code 48925](#):(d) "Suspension" means removal of a pupil from ongoing instruction for adjustment purposes. However, "suspension" does not mean any of the following: (1) Reassignment to another education program or class at the same school where the pupil will receive continuing instruction for the length of day prescribed by the governing board for pupils of the same grade level. (2) Referral to a certificated employee designated by the principal to advise pupils. (3) Removal from the class, but without reassignment to another class or program, for the remainder of the class period without sending the pupil to the principal or the principal's designee as provided in Section 48910. Removal from a particular class shall not occur more than once every five schooldays.

**Syntax:** Organization of words in sentences: the ordering of and relationship between the words and other structural elements in phrases and sentences. The syntax may be of a whole language, a single phrase or sentence, or of an individual speaker. Source: [Encarta® World English Dictionary \[North American Edition\]](#)

## T

**Team Teaching:** Team teaching is when two or more teachers collaborate to teach a group of students together. This can be done on every level of education from Kindergarten all the way through University level courses. Team teaching has become a key element in supporting the education mandates for inclusion classrooms. Beginning with Public Law 94-142, the Education of the Handicapped Act of 1975, which is known today as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), all students have the right to a full and free public education in the least restrictive environment. Due to the fact that it is impossible for students to gain all of the skills necessary to succeed in today's demanding world through an isolated and segregated teaching model, collaborative teaching or team teaching has become a successful alternative. Team teaching is also called co-teaching. Source and additional information on team teaching: [Julie Aubrey, Michigan State University](#).

**Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDD):** Device which allows conversation to take place over the telephone by sending typed messages through phone lines to the TDD screen. Source: [U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office for Civil Rights](#).

**Test Bias:** A test which shows provable and systematic differences in the results of people based on group membership. Source: [About.com](#).

**Test Accommodations:** Techniques and materials that allow individuals with disabilities to complete school or work tasks with greater ease and effectiveness. Examples: tape recorders, spell checkers, expanded time.

An accommodation is any variation in the assessment environment or process that does not fundamentally alter what the exam measures or affect the comparability of exam scores. Source: [Questions and Answers about the California High School Exit Examination \(CAHSEE\) Test Variations](#).

Examples of accommodations as per the California Department of Education: [Accommodations Matrix - Standards and Assessment Division \(California ...http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sa/documents/matrix5.pdf\)](#)

**Test Modifications:** A modification is any variation in the assessment environment or process that fundamentally alters what the exam measures or affects the comparability of exam scores. Source: [Questions and Answers about the California High School Exit Examination \(CAHSEE\) Test Variations](#).

**Test Variations:** A test variation is defined as a change in the manner in which a test is presented or administered, or in how a test taker is allowed to respond. Test variations include, but are not limited to, accommodations and modifications. Source: [Questions and Answers about the California High School Exit Examination \(CAHSEE\) Test Variations](#).

**Therapeutic Day Program:** An instructional placement for students with serious emotional disturbance in which aspects of treatment for the emotional difficulty are incorporated into the school program. Depending on the theoretical orientation of the school, these services may include psychotherapy, behavior management, positive peer culture, or other types of intervention. Source: [Council for Disability Rights](#).

**Title 5 Regulations:** Title 5 (Sections 56000-56076) of the California Code of Regulations define the eligibility criteria for students with disabilities.



**Title I:** A Federally funded program. Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.) is amended to read as follows: [TITLE I—IMPROVING THE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF THE DISADVANTAGED; SEC. 1001](#). STATEMENT OF PURPOSE. The purpose of this title is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments.

**Tourette Syndrome:** Tourette syndrome (TS) is a neurological disorder characterized by repetitive, stereotyped, involuntary movements and vocalizations called tics. Source and additional information: [National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke](#).

**Transition Services:** [California Education Code 56460](#) states that: (e) The goal of transition services is planned movement from secondary education to adult life that provides opportunities which maximize economic and social independence in the least restrictive environment for individuals with exceptional needs. Planning for transition from school to postsecondary environments should begin in the school system well before the student leaves the system.

According to Federal Regulations, [transition services](#) are defined in: [TITLE 20](#) > [CHAPTER 33](#) > [SUBCHAPTER I](#) > § 1401 “(34) TRANSITION SERVICES.—The term ‘transition services’ means a coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that— “(A) is designed to be within a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child’s movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation; “(B) is based on the individual child’s needs, taking into account the child’s strengths, preferences, and interests; and “(C) includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

**Transportation:** Considered a related service for students with a disability who require special transportation to, from and between schools ([TITLE 20](#) > [CHAPTER 33](#) > [SUBCHAPTER I](#) > [§ 1401 Definitions \(26\)](#)). Additional information on transportation services: [Parental Guidelines for Receiving Special Needs Transportation](#).

**Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI):** Disability category as defined by the IDEA: 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. The term applies to open or closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention; reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, and motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; information processing; and speech. The term does not include brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or brain injuries induced by birth trauma. Source: [National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities](#).

**Triennial Re-evaluation:** Special education students must be re-evaluated at least every three years (more frequently if determined necessary or requested by the parent). The purpose of this re-evaluation is to determine if the student continues to qualify for special education services as defined by IDEA. Program placement is also to be considered for appropriateness. Source and additional information: [U.S. Department of Education, A Guide to the Individualized Education Program](#).

**T-Score:** A derived score on a scale having a mean score of 50 units and a standard deviation of 10 units. Consequently, a T-score of 60 represents a score that is 1 standard deviation above the mean. Source: [Pearson Assessments](#).

## V

**Validity:** In terms of assessment, validity refers to the extent to which a test's content is representative of the actual skills learned and whether the test can allow accurate conclusions concerning achievement. Source: [About.com](#).

**Variations:** A test variation is defined as a change in the manner in which a test is presented or administered, or in how a test taker is allowed to respond. Test variations include, but are not limited to, accommodations and modifications. Source: [California Department of Education](#).

**Visually Impaired:** Disability category as defined by the IDEA: impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness. Source: [National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities](#).

**Visual Processing/Perceptual Disability:** 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. Source: [LD OnLine](#).

**Visual Perception/ Visual Motor Deficit:** Co-ordination of what is seen with an action. Common characteristics: Reverses letters; cannot copy accurately; eyes hurt and itch; loses place; struggles with cutting. Source and additional information: [Learning Disabilities Association of America](#).

**Vocational Education:** Vocational education is an organized educational program that is directly related to the preparation of individuals for paid or unpaid employment. Source: [Dorene J. Philpot Law](#).

**Vocational Rehabilitation:** Services designed to get people with disabilities prepared for employment and can include training, education, transportation and job placement. Source and additional information: [California Department of Rehabilitation](#).

## Z

**z-Score:** A standard score with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 1. See [Standard Score](#). Source: [Harcourt Assessment, Inc.](#)

## ACRONYMS Frequently Used in Special Education

A.B. 3632: [Mental Health Services](#)

ADA: [Americans with Disabilities Act](#)

ADD: [Attention Deficit Disorder](#)

ADHD: [Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder](#)

APE: [Adaptive Physical Education](#)

ASL: [American Sign Language](#)

AT: [Assistive Technology](#)

BD: [Behavior Disorders](#)

BIP: [Behavioral Intervention Plan](#)

BSP: [Behavior Support Plan](#)

CAHSEE: [California High School Exit Examination](#)

CAPD: [Central Auditory Processing Disorder](#)

CDE: [California Department of Education](#)

CELD: [California English Language Development Test](#)

CST: [California Standards Tests](#)

DIS: [Designated Instruction and Services](#)

ED: [Emotionally Disturbed](#)

ELA: [English-Language Arts](#)

ELD: [English-Language Development](#)

ESL: [English as a Second Language](#)

ESY: Extended School Year

FAPE: [Free Appropriate Public Education](#)

FBA: [Functional Behavioral Assessment](#)

FEP: [Fluent English Proficient](#)

HI: Hearing Impaired

IDEA: [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act](#)

IEP: [Individualized Education Program](#)

ITP: [Individualized Transition Plan](#)

IQ: Intelligence Quotient

LD: [Learning Disabilities](#)

LEA: [Local Educational Agency](#)

LEP: [Limited English Proficient](#)

LRE: [Least Restrictive Environment](#)

OCR: [Office for Civil Rights](#)

OHI: [Other Health Impaired](#)

OSEP: [Office of Special Education Programs](#)

OT: Occupational Therapy/Therapist

PDD: [Pervasive Developmental Disorders](#)

PT: Physical Therapy/Therapist

SED: [Special Education Division](#) (California)

SELPA: [Special Education Local Plan Area](#)

SLD: [Specific Learning Disability](#)

SLI: Speech Language Impairment

SPED/LEP: [English Learner or LEP Student in Special Education](#)

SST: [Student Success Teams](#) (also known as Student Study Teams)

STAR: [Standardized Testing and Reporting Program](#) (California)

VI: [Visually Impaired](#)

504: [Section 504](#)

*Unless otherwise noted, all material is quoted from the referenced sources.*

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