

Glossary of Special Education Terms and Acronyms

Adaptive Physical Education (APE) - a related service for students with disabilities unable to participate in a regular physical education program.

Activities of Daily Living (ADL) - activities that help make a student independent in areas such as self care, dressing, eating and toileting.

Assessments -the collecting and bringing together of information about a student's needs which may include social, psychological and educational evaluations used to determine services; a process using observation, testing and test analysis to determine an individual's strengths and weaknesses in order to plan his or her educational services.

Assessment Plan - the description of the tests (psychological, achievement, language, etc) that may be used in a particular student's assessment.

Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder (ADD or ADHD)

A disorder characterized by the inability to maintain attention for a period of time.

Audiological Services

A related service that supports children with hearing loss.

Autism

A condition characterized by severe language and communication delays as well as social delays.

Community Based Instruction (CBI)

A model of instruction in which IEP goals are met in a "natural", age appropriate setting.

Resource Parent Council (RPC) – specially trained parents from many school districts in San Mateo County willing to support, encourage and assist other parents with concerns about the educational needs of their child.

A group of parents and professionals that works to support families within their school districts.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HOH)

A condition characterized by a hearing loss so severe that it inhibits language processing and potentially educational performance.

Deaf-Blind

A condition characterized by loss of both hearing and vision.

Designated Instruction Services (DIS)

Otherwise known as related services; it means specialized instruction and or support services (eg—Speech, OT, Vision services)

Developmentally Delayed (DD)

A term used to describe a student who may demonstrate delays in several areas of development.

Due Process

The legal procedures set up to resolve disagreements between parents and school districts over some part of a child's special education program.

Extended School Year (ESY)

Extends the school year for some children with special needs.

Free, Appropriate, Public Education (FAPE)

Free—"without cost" to parents or children;

Appropriate—"in keeping with an individualized education program"

Public—"at public expense, under public supervision and direction"

Education—"preschool, elementary.. .or secondary school..."

Full Inclusion

A supported placement where a child with severe disabilities is placed in a school and classroom that he would attend if he did not have a disability.

Individualized Education Plan(IEP)

A written document, mandated by law, that defines a child's disability, states current levels of educational performance, describes educational needs and services and specifies annual goals.

Informed Parental Consent

Students cannot receive special education services unless the parent has been informed in writing of the reasons for it, including the IEP contents and parent consents, in writing, by signing the IEP.

Intellectual Disability (ID) –a disability marked by significantly below average intellectual functioning and often accompanied by deficits in adaptive behavior and adversely affects the child's educational performance.

Local Education Agency (LEA)

Your local school district.

Least Restrictive Environment(LRE)

The environment in which a child can be educated most like a non-disabled child and still meet the requirements of his IEP.

Mediation

An informal process for solving disagreements between parents and school districts prior to Due Process.

Early Start – services and supports for children with identified special needs from birth to age 3.

Occupational Therapy (OT) - a related service to assist a child with motor delays.

Other Health Impaired(OHI)

A disability which affects learning in due to chronic health problems.

Orthopedically Handicapped (OI)

A condition involving the neuromuscular skeletal system that affects the ability to move, as in paralysis or cerebral palsy.

Perceptual Motor Skills

The ability to perceive a situation, evaluate it and make a judgment on what action to take.

Physical Therapy (PT)

A therapeutic related service to support a child with their gait and mobility.

Placement

The assigned educational classroom or site for delivery of special education services. Placement occurs after the IEP is written and signed by the parent.

Emotional Disturbance (ED)

A behavior problem which prevents learning and/or getting along with others; the behavior must have continued for a minimum of six months and be characterized as severe.

Special Day Class(SDC)

A self-contained classroom in which only students who require special education instruction for more than 50% of the school day are enrolled.

Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA)

The county office through which some special education services are funded.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) – a disability characterized by an injury to the brain, such that the injury affects the child's educational performance.

Timeline

The time limits mandated by law -- such as the 60 day time limit to hold an IEP meeting from the a signed consent for assessment is received in the district special education office.

Transportation – a related service which may be appropriate and part of a school district's offer of FAPE for some students with special needs if they do not attend the school located closest to their home.

Visual Impairment (VI)– a disability characterized by blindness or limited/partial sight which may impair the child's educational performance.