

## Glossary and Acronyms

As with most systems, special education has peculiar acronyms and verbiage which will be an impediment to understanding what is being discussed. The following list is a good start at understanding this language.

**504 or 504 Plan.** A section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 under which students who do not qualify for special education are able to obtain some services.

**Accommodations** - Techniques and materials that allow individuals with disabilities to complete school or work tasks with greater ease and effectiveness. Examples include spellcheckers, tape recorders, and expanded time for completing assignments.

**ADA** - The Americans with Disabilities Act. A comprehensive federal act passed in 1990 that provides a wide range of protection for qualified handicapped individuals. It is considered to be a civil rights act. A special education student by definition is protected under this act.

**Adaptive and Assistive Technology** - Equipment that enhances the ability of students and employees to be more efficient and successful. For individuals with LD, computer grammar checkers, an overhead projector used by a teacher, or the audiovisual information delivered through a CD-ROM would be typical examples. Special Education Students are entitled to Adaptive and Assistive Technology as part of their Individual Education Plan.

**ADD/ ADHD** - Attention Deficit Disorder/Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. A common attentional disorder that may qualify a student for special education services as Other Health Impaired (see OHI below)

**Assessment** - Comprehensive Evaluation Report A report issued by a school district or other administrative unit, based on a thorough psycho-educational evaluation of a pupil, and indicating that pupil's educational strengths and weaknesses.

**Child Find** – The obligation imposed by both IDEA and Section 504 that requires schools to seek out and find all children who are eligible for services.

**CDE** - California Department of Education

**DD** - Developmental Disability. Developmental Disabilities in infants and toddlers are displayed as significant differences between expected level of development for age and current level of functioning.. Children with developmental disabilities are those who have delay in one or more of the following areas: cognitive development; physical and motor development, including vision and hearing; communication development; social or emotional development; or adaptive development.

**DIS** – Designated Instruction and Services. California's unique acronym for Related Services. The Education Code calls many of the "Related Services" under the federal law Designated Instruction and Services or DIS services.

**DSM-5** - Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders , Fourth Edition, published by the American Psychiatric Association. This is the diagnosticians bible, and it contains the diagnostic criteria for all accepted mental disorders, including those that may qualify for special education .

**DS** - Down Syndrome

**DSS** - Department of Social Services

**DR** - Department of Rehabilitation

**Due Process** - A system of formal proceedings regularly implemented in accordance with established rules and principles.

**ESY** - Extended School Year. Special programs for children whose learning regression is extreme after long breaks in the school year.

**FAPE** - Free and Appropriate Public Education A planned individualized program of education and special services, provided without cost to the family and based on a child's own needs and allows the child to make individual progress.

**Hearing Officer** - An impartial professional not employed by one's own school district or intermediate unit charged with the responsibility of conducting a due process hearing. The hearing officer may or may not be an attorney, but must be knowledgeable about special education laws..

**HQT** – A new aspect of IDEIA 2004, there is now a requirement for Highly Qualified Teachers to teach special education children.

**IDEIA** - Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. A set of federal laws under which all state special education programs operate.

**IEE** - Independent Educational Evaluation. If the parents disagree with the evaluation performed by the school, they can, under some circumstances obtain an Independent Educational Evaluation at public expense.

**IEP** - Individualized Education Program. A legally required program requiring parent participation to meet the unique needs of students who have been identified through a multifactorial evaluation to be eligible for special education services.

**Intellectual Disability** – The term that replaced Mental Retardation.

**K-12** An abbreviation often used by school officials that refers to pupils and/or programs concerned with education in kindergarten through grade twelve.

**LD** - Learning Disabled. A disorder affecting one or more of the basic psychological processes. May affect listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling or mathematical calculations.

**LEA** -Local Education Agency. Typically the school district you are dealing with.

**LRE** - Least Restrictive Environment. The setting in which federal law requires that the needs of each special education student be met. Students are to be removed from the regular classroom only when they are not successful at their level with supplemental aids and services. Depending on the child's individual needs, his LRE can be as restrictive as a self-contained classroom or resource center or as nonrestrictive as a general education classroom for the entire school day. A continuum of alternate placements must be available.

**MDT-** Multi-Disciplinary Team A team of school officials, representing a variety of areas of professional expertise, and the parent(s) or guardian(s) of an exceptional, school-age learner that reviews the results of all formal and informal testing pertaining to the learner.

**MR -** Mental Retardation. Children who function intellectually, academically, and behaviorally below a standard score or IQ score of 70, in addition to other requirements. The term has been changed to “Intellectual Disability”

**OCR** Office of Civil Rights An office in the Department of Education in Washington, D.C., responsible for investigating and issuing findings regarding claims of violation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and, therefore often investigates matters relating to special education.

**OHI -** Other Health Impaired. One of the qualifying conditions for special education. A health condition which may cause severe communication, developmental and/or educational problems.

**OSEP -** Office of Special Education Programs One of the federal agencies that often rules with regard to matters of special education.

**OSERS** Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services

**OT -** Occupational Therapy. A service provided by a trained therapist, or a trained motor aide as either a direct service or as a consult to assist children with moderate to severe fine motor dysfunctions.

**PDD:** Pervasive Developmental Disorder. A category of diagnostic terms in the DSM-IV that include severe developmental disorders such as autism.

**PT -** Physical Therapy. A service provided by a trained therapist as either a direct service or as consult to assist children with moderate to severe physical disabilities of gross motor dysfunctions.

**Pull out -** Services for special education children provided outside the regular classroom. In California it is nearly the same as a Resource Program.

**Regular Education Initiative** A position taken by some advocates of special education that contends that students with disabilities can and should be educated in regular classrooms under the primary responsibility of the general education program.

**Rehabilitation** A social service program designed to teach a newly disabled person basic skills needed for independence.

**Related Services** Developmental, corrective, and other supportive services required by a school-age learner with disabilities to benefit from special education. Related services may include, but are not limited to, such services as audiology; social services; parent information, counseling, and training; special transportation services; speech and language therapy; psychological services; physical therapy; occupational therapy; and medical services regarding evaluation and diagnosis.

**Resource Program -** A program model in which a student with a disability is in a regular classroom for most of each day, but also receives regularly scheduled individual services in a specialized resource classroom, under the supervision of a resource specialist.

**Remediation** An educational program designed to teach a learner to overcome and/or cope with a disability through training and education.

**RTI** Response to Intervention, In an RTI process, students who show signs of learning difficulties are provided with a series of increasingly intensive, individualized instructional or behavioral interventions. These kinds of interventions are designed and delivered by general education staff in collaboration with other experts such as special educators and school psychologists and are based on reliable research. This type of intervention process includes systematic monitoring of the student's progress. Students who do not show improvement, or "responsiveness," to this series of interventions are considered to be "at risk" for learning disabilities and possibly in need of special education services in order to receive educational benefit from instruction.

**SDC** - Special Day Class.

**SED** - Seriously Emotionally Disturbed. An emotional disturbance that prevents him/her from functioning educationally. Under the new law in 1997 this is now known as Emotionally Disturbed.

**SELPA:** Special Education Local Plan Area

**SI** - Sensory Integration. Sensory Integration is commonly referred to as a therapeutic technique initially developed by A. Jean Ayres, Ph.D., OTR to treat Sensory Integration Dysfunction, (SID). Sensory Integration is a neurological process involving analysis, synthesis, and organization of sensory stimulatory input. SID results as a breakdown in the nervous system's ability to unify and organize the sensory input. Some symptoms of SID are: balance and equilibrium problems, delays in language development, hyper or hyposensitivity to touch, movement, sight, or sound, and poor organizational or motor planning ability.

**"Stay Put"** Rule/ A Stay Put Order - The state of pendency that affects an exceptional child whose parent(s) or guardian(s) start "due process" procedures by requesting a pre-hearing conference or a hearing. During that time, until matters get settled, the pupil's placement is considered to be pending; that is, as far as his or school placement goes, the pupil temporarily "stays put."

**Transition Services** A coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process, which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational training, integrated employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation.

**VI** - Vision Impaired. A child whose vision impairment adversely affects his/her educational performance.

**Vocational Training or Vocational Rehabilitation** Preparation, provided by a school or social service agency, to develop work habits and work attitudes, as well as specific training in a particular skill, such as auto mechanics, carpentry, or assembly-line work.