



UNDERSTANDING ALPHABET SOUP

A Primer on Special Education Acronyms & Abbreviations

Greetings, and welcome to the world of Exceptional Student Education (ESE).

As you participate in the ESE process, you will encounter unfamiliar languages and acronyms. The language is often referred to as Alphabet Soup. It may seem like a foreign language, but it is really just a language of initials.

These initials and acronyms are used in meetings, and it is assumed that everyone is familiar with the meaning. As a parent or self-advocate, if you are in a meeting and this occurs, feel free to ask, "What does that term mean?"

This brochure was designed to assist you in understanding the most common language used inside the alphabet soup. You can find definitions of these special education terms at www.fndusa.org

It might be helpful for you to read and study the contents of this brochure and the resources on our website before you attend a meeting for your child or yourself.

A Primer on Special Education Acronyms & Abbreviations

AAC Alternative Augmentative Communication	IA Instructional Assistant
ABA Applied Behavioral Analysis	ID Intellectual Disabilities*
ABC Antecedent, Behavior, Consequence	IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
ADA American with Disabilities Act	IEE Independent Educational Evaluation
ADD Attention Deficit Disorder	IEP Individualized Education Program
ADHD Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	IFSP Individualized Family Support Plan
ADLs Activities of Daily Living	IHE Institute of Higher Education
ADR Alternative Dispute Resolution	LD Learning Disability
AIM Accessible Instructional Material	LEA Local Education Agency
APE Adaptive Physical Education	LEP Limited English Proficiency
APR Annual Performance Progress	LRE Least Restrictive Environment
ASD Autism Spectrum Disorder	MD Muscular Dystrophy
ASL American Sign Language	MD Multiple Disabilities
AT Assistive Technology	MH Multiply Handicapped
AYP Adequate Yearly Progress	MDR Manifestation Determination
BEES Bureau of Exceptional Education and Student Services	MTSS Multi-Tiered System of Support
BD Behavioral Intervention Plan	NIMAS National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard
CAPD Central Auditory Processing Disorder	 OCD Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
CBI Community Based Instruction	ODD Oppositional Defiant Disorder
CC Closed Captioning	OHI Other Health Impairment
CERT Considerations for Educationally Relevant Services	OI Orthopedic Impairment
CF Cystic Fibrosis	OT Occupational Therapy
CP Cerebral Palsy	PBIS Positive Behavior Intervention Supports
DB Deaf-Blind	PD Physical Disability
DD Developmental Delay	PDD Pervasive Developmental Disorder
DS Down Syndrome	PLEP Present Level of Educational Performance
EBD Emotional Behavioral Disorder	PLP Present Level of Performance
ESE Exceptional Student Education	PP Para-Professional
ESOL English for Speakers of Other Languages	PS Preschool
ESY Extended School Year	PT Physical Therapy
FAPE Free Appropriate Public Education	RDA Results-Driven Accountability
FBA Functional Behavioral Assessment	RS Related Services
FC Facilitated Communication	RTI Response to Intervention
FERPA Family Educational Rights Privacy Act	§ This symbol means "Section" as in § 300.7 Child with a disability" in the IDEA regulations
GE General Education	SAS Supplementary Aids and Services
GT Gifted and Talented	SB Spinal Bifida
HI Hearing Impaired	SE Special Education
HoH Hard of Hearing	

A Primer on Special Education Acronyms & Abbreviations

- SEA** State Education Agency
- SEAC** Special Education Advisory Committee
- Section 504** of the Rehabilitation Act
- SED** Serious Emotional Disturbance
- SI** Sensory Integration
- SLD** Specific Learning Disability
- SLI** Speech/Language Impairment
- SLP** Speech/Language Pathologist
- TBI** Traumatic Brain Injury
- TDD** Tele-communication Devices for the Deaf
- TIEP** Transition Individualized Education Program
- TS** Tourette Syndrome
- TTY** Tele-typewriter (phone system for the deaf)
- TWWIIA** Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act
- VI** Visual Impairment
- Voc. Ed.** Vocational Education
- VPK** Volunteer Prekindergarten Education Program
- VR** Vocational Rehabilitation
- WIC** Woman Infant and Children Special Supplemental Nutrition Program

****Editorial Note****

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