

PARENT GUIDE

Common Education Terms

It is very important that you feel comfortable speaking at meetings about your child. This guide should help you understand many of the education words you may hear at school meetings about your child. This guide is made to help you feel more comfortable at these meetings. If you would like, bring it with you to use during the meeting to help you understand what is being said. You should always stop a speaker and ask what they mean if you do not understand something at a meeting about your child. What you say and want for your child is very important.

Term	Definition
504	504 refers to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This law lets a child receive services in school for a disability but it is not known as "special education." It is often used when the disability does not meet the strict requirements of traditional special education law.
ABA	ABA stands for Applied Behavior Analysis. This is a helpful system used to teach children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
Achievement	Achievement scores measure what a child learned in school (i.e., reading, math, writing).
Annual Review	Every year, a child's parents and teachers must meet to decide if the child has met their goals. It is called an Annual Review meeting.
Baseline	Information about how well a child performs a skill before any changes are made to their program is known as baseline data. Knowing the baseline helps you decide if changes to the program are useful because they let you see if the child's skill has improved.
BCBA	Board Certified Behavior Analysts are trained in taking data (see Data) and using ABA therapy (see ABA).
BIP	Behavior Intervention Plans explain what plan is in place to help a child with difficult behaviors.
Case Manager	Every child in special education (see IDEA) must have a person in the school who oversees their education. This person is known as a Case Manager.
Cognitive Ability	A child's cognitive ability is their ability to think and solve problems. It is typically measured by an intelligence test given by the school psychologist.
Data	Information about a behavior or skill, such as who, what, when, where, why, how long, and how well, is known as data.
Educational Evaluation	An Educational Evaluation is a set of tests given to a child to find out their current skills (i.e., achievement, cognitive ability, social ability, language, physical ability, etc.).
Extended School Year	Some children in special education will be educated during the summer months to help them keep the skills they already learned. This is known as an Extended School Year.
FBA	Looking at a child's behavior for several days in different places and using that information to figure out why a problem behavior happens is known as Functional Behavior Assessment.
Goals	The IEP team (see IEP) will write Goals for the year for a child. Every area of concern should have its own goal that is easy to measure.
IDEA	IDEA refers to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, which is the special education law covering children 6 to 21 years old.
IEP	An IEP is the Individualized Education Program for a child in special education. It is a legal document made by the PPT (see PPT) that tells the child's current skills, goals, what the school will do to help the child meet their goals, and how the goals will be measured.
Joint Attention	When two people share a look, thought, emotion, or idea, that is known as Joint Attention. Children with ASD may lack Joint Attention.
LRE	Children with disabilities have to spend as much of the school day with children without disabilities as possible. This is required by law and is known as the Least Restrictive Environment. The PPT (see PPT) will decide the Least Restrictive Environment for each child individually.
NCLB	Also known as "No Child Left Behind," NCLB is the law that allows federal spending on public K-12 schools.
OT	Occupational Therapy is provided by a certified occupational therapist and covers daily living skills.
PPT	PPT is a Planning and Placement Team. PPTs are made of parents, teachers, administrators, and specialists (e.g. school psychologists, physical therapists, etc.) to plan and review IEPs (see IEP).
PT	Physical Therapy is provided by a certified physical therapist. PT focuses on large muscle (running, skipping, etc.) and small muscle (writing, picking up small items, etc.) skills.
SPED	The term "sped" refers to Special Education. Qualifying for special education is decided by the planning and placement team (see PPT).
Triennial	A Triennial review happens every three years for a child in special education. The Planning and Placement Team decides if the child still qualifies for special education at a Triennial review.