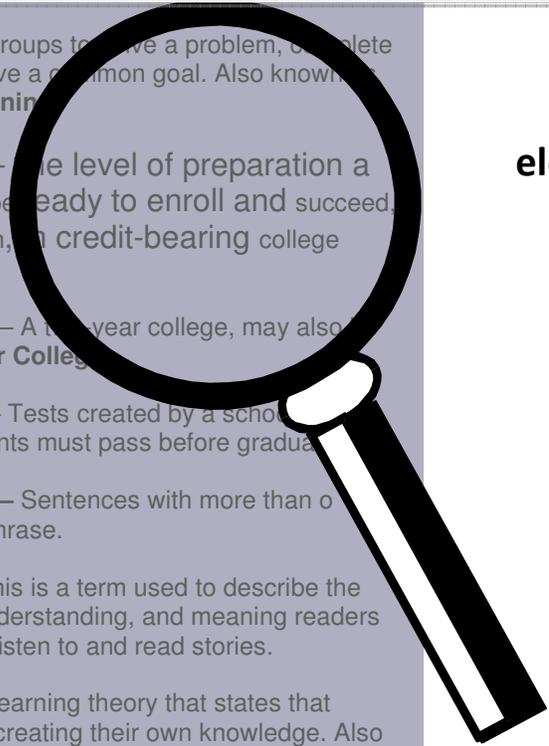


**Second Edition
2010 - 2011**

Family Dictionary of Education Terms

**Lists and defines
vocabulary and abbreviations used in
elementary and secondary public schools
in the state of Washington**



**Office of the Education Ombudsman
Governor's Office / State of Washington
1-866-297-2597
www.waparentslearn.org**

Class Size – The number of students enrolled in a school classroom.

Cognitive – A term which refers to reasoning or intellectual capacity.

Cognitive Development – The changes in the way we think, process information and learn. The process begins at birth and is affected by sensory perception, memory, and observation.

Cognitive Learning – The mental processes involved in learning, such as remembering and understanding facts and ideas.

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College Readiness – The level of preparation a student needs to be ready to enroll and succeed without remediation, in a credit-bearing college course.

Community College – A two-year college, may also known as a **Junior College**.

Competence Tests – Tests created by a school or state that students must pass before graduation.

Complex sentences – Sentences with more than one clause or verbal phrase.

Comprehension – This is a term used to describe the interpretations, understanding, and meaning readers construct as they listen to and read stories.

Constructivism – A learning theory that states that students learn by creating their own knowledge. Also known as **Discovery Learning**.

Content Standards – Standards that describe what students should know and be able to do in core academic subjects at each grade level.

Content-related Vocabulary – The words a student must know to communicate effectively about subject area material such as math, social studies, science, etc.

Context Clues – The words, phrases, and sentences surrounding an unfamiliar vocabulary word that help the student arrive at a possible definition.

Core Academic Subjects – The academic subjects schools and districts require all students to take in order to be eligible for grade promotion and graduation.

Core Curriculum – The main body of knowledge that all students are expected to learn.

Credit – A unit of coursework given for satisfactory completion of the course.

Introduction

The Office of the Education Ombudsman believes that good communication between families and educators is one of the keys of student academic success. The *Family Dictionary of Education Terms* is a tool developed to help families understand school-related terminology so that they can better communicate with school officials and advocate for their children’s education.

This first edition contains terminology most commonly used in Washington schools however it is not inclusive of all terms related to public education. As we identify missing terms and find new terms, we will include them in future editions.

Let’s also keep in mind that school districts sometimes develop local terminology pertaining to their education practices, geographical location, and the culture of their communities. To reduce the chance of miscommunication, whenever you hear education terms that are new to you, ask the person using the term to define it.

If you have questions or comments regarding the first edition of The Family Dictionary of Education Terms, please contact the Office of the Education Ombudsman at 1-866-297-2597 or at OEInfo@gov.wa.gov

Visit our Website: www.waparentslearn.org to learn more about OEO and download other publications for parents regarding the public education system.

How to Use This Document

This document is divided into three sections.

List of Commonly Used Acronyms	page 3
General Education Terms	page 10
Special Education Terms	page 29

All sections are organized in alphabetical order. If a term is sometimes referenced by its initials, the term is alphabetically listed, and the initials are shown in parentheses. If a term is generally referred to by its initials, then the initials reference is alphabetized, and the full term is shown in parentheses.

Acknowledgements

We appreciate the contributions made to this publication by our following partners in education:

- The OEO Parent Advisory Council.
- Staff from Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Center for the Improvement of Student Learning (CISL).
- Christie Perkins, Parent Educator and Coordinator of the Special Education Support and Washington State Special Education Training for All programs.

Frequently Used Education Acronyms

A

AA	Affirmative Action
ABE	Adult Basic Education
ACJ	Administrative Court Judge
ACT	American College Testing Program
ACTE	Association of Career and Technical Education
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ADP	Average Daily Participation
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
AFT	American Federation of Teachers
AG	Attorney General
ALE	Alternative Learning Experience
ALJ	Administrative Law Judge
AP	Advanced Placement
APE	Adaptive Physical Education
ARS	At Risk Students
ASB	Associated Student Body
ASBF	Associated Student Body Fund
ASL	American Sign Language
AT	Assistive Technology
AWSP	Association of Washington School Principals
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress

B

BA	Bachelor of Arts
BD	Behavioral Disability
BE	Business Education
BEA	Basic Education Act
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs
BIP	Behavioral Intervention Plan
BS	Bachelor of Science

C

CA	Children's Administration
CAA	Certificate of Academic Achievement

CAAN	Child and Adolescent Nutrition
CACFP	Child and Adult Care Food Program
CAMP	College Assisted Migrant Program
CAP	Corrective Action Plan
CAS	Cognitive Assessment System
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CBC	Circumstances Beyond Control
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CBSA	Core-Based Statistical Data
CCD	Common Core of Data
CD	Communication Disorders
CD ROM	Compact Disk Read only Memory
CDS	Communication Disorder Specialist
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
CE	Community Education
CEDARS	Comprehensive Education Data and Research System
CEP	Cultural Enrichment Program
CEU	Continuing Education Units ("Clock Hours")
CFS	Character and Fitness Supplement
CFS	Children and Family Services
CHAP	Comprehensive Homeless Assistance Plan
CHEF	Comprehensive Health Education Foundation
CIA	Certificate of Individual Achievement
CIS	Certificated Instructional Staff
CISL	Center for the Improvement of Student Learning
CNA	Comprehensive Needs Assessment
CNP	Child Nutrition Program
CNS	Child Nutrition Services
COLA	Cost of Living Adjustment
COM	Certificate of Mastery
CPF	Capital Projects Fund
CPR	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
CPS	Child Protective Services
CPU	Central Processing Unit
CRA	Civil Rights Act
CR	Civil Rights
CRT	Criterion-Referenced Tests
CSHCN	Children with Special Health Care Needs
CSR	Comprehensive School Reform
CSRS	Core Student Record System
CSTC	Child Study and Treatment Center
CTBS	Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills
CTE	Career and Technical Education
CTONI	Comprehensive Test of Non-Verbal Intelligence

CWS Child Welfare Services
CY Calendar Year (January-December)

D

DAID District Assigned ID
DARE Drug Abuse Resistance Education
DD Developmentally Delayed
DDC Developmental Disabilities Council
DDD Division of Developmental Disabilities
DE Distributive Education
DECA Distributive Education Clubs of America
DAPE Developmentally Appropriate Proficiency Exam
DHHS Department of Health and Human Services
DIBELS Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills
DOC Department of Corrections
DOE United States Department of Education
DOH Department of Health
DORF DIBELS Oral Reading Fluency
DRA Developmental Reading Assessment
DRP Degrees of Reading Power
DSHS Department of Social and Health Services
DVR Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

E

E2T2 Enhancing Education Through Technology
EALR Essential Academic Learning Requirements (Essential Learnings)
EBD Emotionally/Behaviorally Disabled
EBP Evidence Based Practice
ECEAP Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program
ED Emotional Disturbance
ED United States Department of Education
EDGAR Education Department General Administrative Regulations
EEO Equal Educational Opportunities
EETT Enhancing Education Through Technology
EHA Education for Handicapped Act
EIEP Emergency Immigrant Education Program

ELD English Language Development
ELL English Language Learner
EPSDT Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment
ER Extended Response
ERIC Educational Resources Information Center
ERL Essential Requirements Level
ESA Educational Staff Associate
ESD Educational Service District
ESEA Elementary and Secondary Education Act
ESL English as a Second Language
ESOL English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESY Extended School Year

F

FACSE Family and Consumer Sciences Education
FAFSA Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FAPE Free Appropriate Public Education
FAQ Frequently Asked Questions
FAS Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
FBA Functional Behavioral Assessment
FBLA Future Business Leaders of America
FCCLA Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America
FDPIR Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations
FERPA Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
FFA Future Farmers of America
FIP Family Independence Program
FLSA Fair Labor Standards Act
FOIA Freedom of Information Act
FSP Food Stamp Program
FTE Full Time Equivalent
FY Fiscal Year (July-June)

G

GA General Administration
GATB General Aptitude Test Battery
GCERF Governor's Council on Education Reform and Funding

GEAR UP	Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
GED	General Education Development Certificate
GED/HEP	General Educational Development/High School Equivalency Program
GEPA	General Education Provisions Act
GESA	Generating Expectations and Student Achievement
GLE	Grade Level Expectations
GPA	Grade Point Average

H

HD	Health Department
HERO	Home Economics Related Activities
HFALT	Health and Fitness Assessment Leadership Team
HFL	Home and Family Life
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
HOTS	Higher-Order Thinking Skills
HQ	Highly Qualified
HRC	Human Rights Commission
HS	Head Start

I

IASA	Improving America's Schools Act
IB	International Baccalaureate
IBEST	Integrated Basic Education Skills Training
ICW	Indian Child Welfare
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IDEIA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act
IEE	Independent Educational Evaluation
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IFSP	Individualized Family Services Plan
IHE	Institution of Higher Education
IMEC	Interstate Migrant Education Council
IRT	Item Response Theory
ISF	Initial Sound Fluency
ISLLC	Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium

IT	Information Technology
ITBS	Iowa Test of Basic Skills
ITED	Iowa Tests of Educational Development
ITEIP	Infants and Toddlers Early Intervention Program
ITIP	Instructional Theory Into Practice

J

JAG	Jobs for America's Graduates
JATC	Joint Apprenticeship Training Council
JDRP	Juvenile Detention Rehabilitation Program
JRA	Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration
JTPA	Job Training Partnership Act

K

K-TEA II	Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement 2nd Edition
K-TEA/NU	Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement/Normative Update
K20	Videoconference Network
KABC II	Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children, 2nd Edition
KAIT	Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test
KM-R/NU	Key Math-Revised/Normative Update
KSA	Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

L

L & I	Department of Labor and Industries
LAP	Learning Assistance Program
LAS-O	Language Assessment Scales Oral
LCD	Liquid Crystal Display
LD	Learning Disability
LEP	Limited English Proficient
LEITER-R	Leiter-Revised
LID	Learning Improvement Day
LNF	Letter Naming Fluency
LON	Letter of Notification
LPN	Licensed Practical Nurse
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
LSES	Low Socio-economic Status

M

MAA	Medical Assistance Administration
M&O	Maintenance and Operation
MALT	Math Assessment Leadership Team
MAP	Minority Achievement Program
MAT	Master of Arts in Teaching
MAT6	Metropolitan Achievement Test (6 th Edition)
MC	Multiple Choice
MCE	Multicultural Education
MECCA	Making Equity Count for Classroom Achievement
MEN	Migrant Education News
MEP	Migrant Education Program
MERO	Migrant Education Regional Office
METT	Multi-Ethnic Think Tank
MHC	Math Helping Corps
MHCC	Math Helping Corps Cadre
MIT	Masters in Teaching
MOE	Maintenance of Effort
MOST	Measureable, Observable, Specific, Time-bound Goals
MPR	Median Percentile Rank
MR	Mental Retardation
MSDR	Migrant Student Data and Recruitment
MSIS	Migrant Student Information System
MSRS	Migrant Student Record System
MSRTS	Migrant Student Record Transfer System
M-V	McKinney-Vento Act

N

N/A	Not Applicable
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
NBPTS	National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
NCLB	No Child Left Behind (The 2001 Elementary and Secondary Education Act)
NEVAC	North East Vocational Area Cooperative
NRT	Norm-Referenced Tests
NWF	Nonsense Word Fluency

O

OCR	Office for Civil Rights
OEO	Office of the Education Ombudsman
OJT	On-The-Job Training
OME	Office of Migrant Education
OPP	Office of Professional Practices
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs
OSERS	Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services
OSPI	Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
OT	Occupational Therapist
OWLS	Oral and Written Language Scales

P

PA	Phonemic Awareness
PAC	Parent Advisory Council
PAIT-R/NU	Peabody Individual Achievement Test-Revised/Normative Update
PASS	Portable Assisted Study Sequence
PAVE	Parents Are Vital in Education
PC	Personal Computer
PDD	Pervasive Development Disorder
PGP	Professional Growth Plan
PGT	Professional Growth Team
PI	Prevention/Intervention
PIP	Primary Intervention Program
PL	Public Law
ProCert	Professional Certification
PSE	Public School Employee
PSESD	Puget Sound Educational Service District
PSF	Phoneme Segmentation Fluency
PT	Physical Therapist
PTA	Parent - Teacher Association
PTO	Parent - Teacher Organization
PTSA	Parent - Teacher Student Association

Q

R

R2R	Right to Read
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RALT	Reading Assessment Leadership Team
RAP	Remediation Assistance Program
RCW	Revised Code of Washington
RD	Registered Dietitian
REAP	Rural Education Achievement Program
RESA	Regional Education Services Agency
RFI	Request for Information
RFP	Request for Proposal
RTF	Retell Fluency
RIC	Resource Information Center
RLISP	Rural Low-Income Schools Program
RN	Registered Nurse
RRC	Regional Resource Center
RSN	Regional Support Network
RTL	Readiness To Learn
RTI	Response to Intervention

S

S-BIV	Stanford-Binet IV
S-B5	Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scales, Fifth Edition
SA	Short Answer
SAT	Scholastic Achievement Test
SBD	Severely Behaviorally Disabled
SBE	State Board of Education
SBP	School Breakfast Program
SC	Skills Center
SD	School District
SDI	Specifically Designed Instruction
SE	Special Education
SEAC	Special Education Advisory Council
SEALT	Special Education Assessment Leadership Team
SEC	Special Education Coalition
SEMY	Secondary Education for Migrant Youth
SES	Supplemental Education Services
SETC	Special Education Technology Center
SFSP	Summer Food Service Program
SI	School Improvement
SIF	School Improvement Facilitator
SIP	School Improvement Plan
SIT	School Improvement Team
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
SLD	Severe Learning Disabled
SLD	Specific Learning Disability
SLE	Supportive Learning Environments
SLO	Student Learning Objective
SLP	Speech-Language Pathologist
SLP	Student Leadership Program

SLP	Student Learning Plans
SPED	Special Education
SPI	Superintendent of Public Instruction
SRSAP	Small Rural School Achievement Program
SSALT	Social Studies Assessment Leadership Team
SSID	State Student Identification Number
STBIP	State Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program
STC	School-To-Career
STEPS	Sequenced Transition from Education to Post-School Settings
STW	School-To-Work

T

TA	Technical Assistance
TAP	Teacher Assistance Program
TESA	Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
TBIP	Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program
TDD	Telecommunication Device for the Deaf
TPR	Total Physical Response
TSE	Traffic Safety Education

U

UNIT	Universal Nonverbal Intelligence Test
URRD	Urban, Rural, Racial, Disadvantaged
USIC	Unique Student Identifier Code

V

VC	Video Conference
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W

WAAS	Washington Alternate Assessment System
WAC	Washington Administration Code
WAIS-III	Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale - Third edition

WAIS-R	Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale Revised
WASA	Washington Association of School Administrators
WASL	Washington Assessment of Student Learning
WEA	Washington Education Association
WIAA	Washington Interscholastic Activities Association
WIAT	Wechsler Individual Achievement Test
WIAT-II	Wechsler Individual Achievement Test - Second Edition
WIC	Women, Infants, and Children
WISC-III	Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - Third Edition
WISC-IV	Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children - Fourth Edition
WJ-III	Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Abilities or Achievement – Third Edition
WJ-R	Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery - Revised
WLPT II	Washington Language Proficiency Test – Second edition
WOIS	Washington Occupational Information Service
WPC	Washington Pre-College (test)
WRMT-R/NU	Woodcock Reading Mastery Test - Revised/Normative Update
WUF	Word Use Fluency
WWW	World Wide Web

X

Y

Z

Notes:

General Education Terms

A

Ability grouping – Assigning students with similar skills to learning groups.

Absence – Any part of a school day when a student is not in school.

Academic Achievement – What a student has learned from classroom instruction.

Academic Advisor – The member of the teaching staff assigned to provide school advice and guidance to students.

Accountability – The expectation that schools and/or educators should be held responsible for improving student achievement and should be rewarded or sanctioned for their success or lack of success in doing so.

Accreditation – Official recognition that a person or an organization meets specific requirements to be able to deliver instruction.

Accuracy – The ability to correctly read, write, and solve problems.

Achievement Gap – A consistent difference in academic test scores between groups of students. The gaps most frequently referred to are those between white students and minority groups such as African-American and Hispanic students.

Achievement Tests – Tests used to measure how much a student has learned in various school subjects.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – The minimum level of improvement established

by the federal government, that public schools must achieve each year.

Administrator – A school district employee, such as principal, director, or superintendent, who is responsible for directing and managing a school or program.

Advanced Placement (AP) Program – A series of high-level courses that high school students can take to earn college credits.

Advisory Group – A small group of students who meet regularly with a school staff member to discuss school work and requirements.

Advocate – (noun) Someone who acts on behalf of another person.

Advocate (To) – (verb) To support or speak in favor of an idea, issue, or person(s).

Affective – A term which refers to emotions and attitudes.

After-school Program – Programs run by schools and/or organizations that provide recreational and learning activities for students after the end of the regular school day or on the weekends.

Alignment – How well the skills and knowledge taught in schools match the requirements of state and/or federal learning standards.

Alternative Assessment – Any form of measuring what students know and are able to do other than traditional tests. Examples are: oral reports, projects, performances, experiments, portfolios (collections of student's work), and class participation.

Alternative School – A public school designed by a school district to serve students whose needs are not being met in the traditional public school environment.

American College Test (ACT) – The ACT is one of the two commonly used tests designed to assess high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work.

Appeal – A request for a person or entity with greater authority to review and change an earlier decision.

Apprenticeship – A combination of on-the-job training (OJT) and related classroom instruction under the supervision of a trade professional.

Aptitude Tests – Tests that attempt to predict a person's ability to do something.

Articulation Agreement – An agreement between a high school or skill center and a community or technical college that allows the high school or skill center to offer college credit for a secondary career and technical education (CTE) course.

Assessment – Teacher-made tests, standardized tests, or tests from textbook companies that are used to measure a student's skills or knowledge.

Associate Degree – An award showing that a student has completed a two-year course of study in a community college.

Average – Usual, expected, or ordinary performance.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA) – The total number of days of student attendance divided by the total number of days in the regular school year.

AVID – AVID stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination and is a fourth-through twelfth-grade system to prepare students for four-year college eligibility. Schools that participate in AVID are required to meet staff training and membership requirements.

B

Bachelor's Degree – An award that normally requires at least four years of full-time equivalent college courses.

Basic Skills – The fundamental skills needed to succeed in school and eventually in life. Historically, these skills have included the ability to read, write, and calculate (math).

Becca Bill – A Washington state law that requires school districts to take specific actions when students are absent. The law is RCW 28A.225.030.

Below Average – Under the usual, expected, or ordinary quality or performance.

Benchmark – The level of performance students should show by a particular point in their schooling.

Best Practices – Classroom instructional strategies that have been demonstrated and accepted by the professional community to improve student learning.

Bilingual Education – School program where two languages are used to teach the curriculum so that students gain knowledge of both languages.

Block Scheduling – Usually used in middle or high school, this scheduling allow student to have fewer classes per day and longer time in each class.

Bond Measure – An agreement by the citizens of a school district to repay the money borrowed by the school district for major construction or purchases, such as new school buildings, computers, or school improvements.

Boosters – A volunteer organization, usually parents and alumni, whose sole objective is to provide ongoing financial assistance in support of a schools' extracurricular programs, for example athletic program boosters or music boosters.

Breakfast Program – A program using state and federal dollars to provide low-cost or free breakfasts to low income students.

Budget – The plan for how to spend the school's or school district's funds.

Bulletin – A printed news publication.

Bullying – Repeated negative behavior that a person uses to take advantage of someone with less power. A bully is someone who uses bullying behavior.

C

Cadre – A group.

Calendar Day – Refers to all days of the week, including weekends and holidays.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) – Classes that allow students to get credit for training in a skill or trade while still in high school. CTE classes may be held on-site or at a skill center.

Categorical Funds – Funds from the state or federal government granted to qualifying school districts for specific programs and/or for particular groups of students.

Certificate of Individual Achievement – An official document available for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) who are unable to take the High School HSPE (with or without accommodations).

Certificated Staff – School employees who are required by the state to hold teaching certificates. Also referred to as **Certified Staff**.

Character Education – A method that teaches students about basic human values.

Charter School – A school that is run by a group of organizers other than the school board and free from most state and local regulations.

Classroom Management – The way a classroom is organized to make instructional time as productive possible for all students.

Class Size – The number of students enrolled in a school classroom.

Closed Campus – A school where students are not allowed to leave the school grounds during the school day without permission.

Cognitive – A term which refers to reasoning or intellectual capacity.

Cognitive Development – The changes in the way children think, process information, and learn as they grow up.

Cognitive Learning – The mental processes involved in learning, such as remembering and understanding facts and ideas.

Collaboration – Individuals working together to accomplish goals.

Collaborative Learning – An instructional strategy where students of different abilities

and interests work together in small groups to solve a problem, complete a project, or achieve a common goal. Also known as **Cooperative Learning**.

College Readiness – The level of preparation a student needs to be ready to enroll and succeed, without remediation, in credit-bearing college course.

Community Schools – Schools that provide essential services, such as medical and dental services, nutrition classes, parent programs, and social services, for both students and families.

Community College – A two-year college, may also be known as a **Junior College**.

Competence Tests – Tests created by a school district or state that students must pass before graduating.

Complex sentences – Sentences with more than one clause or verbal phrase.

Comprehension – This is a term used to describe the interpretations, understanding, and meaning readers construct as they listen to and read stories.

Computer-assisted Instruction (CAI) – Educational programs delivered through the use of computers and educational software.

Conflict Management – A strategy that schools use to prevent and address conflict among students. It usually includes a set of expectations for behavior.

Conflict Resolution – A defined practice based on an understanding that there are various perspectives to address and solve a problem.

Constructivism – A learning theory that states that students learn by creating their own knowledge. Also known as **Discovery Learning**.

Contempt of Court – Someone who has willfully violated a court order can be judged to be in contempt of court.

Contempt Hearing – The court hearing where a judge determines whether or not someone is in contempt of court.

Content Standards – Standards that describe what students should know and be able to do in core academic subjects at each grade level.

Content-related Vocabulary – The words a student must know to communicate effectively about subject area material such as math, social studies, science, etc.

Context Clues – The words, phrases, and sentences surrounding an unfamiliar vocabulary word that help the student arrive at a possible definition.

Continuous Progress – A system of education in which individuals or small groups of students go through a sequence of lessons at their own pace, rather than at the pace of the entire classroom group.

Conditional Certificate – A temporary teaching certificate given to a person who has expertise in a particular subject and that has been hired by a school district because they cannot find a certificated teacher with an endorsement in that subject.

Core Academic Subjects – The academic subjects schools and districts require all students to take in order to be eligible for grade promotion and graduation.

Core Curriculum – The main body of knowledge that all students are expected to learn.

Credit – A unit of coursework given for satisfactory completion of the course.

Criterion-referenced Tests – Tests designed to measure how thoroughly a student has learned a particular subject compared to an established benchmark.

Critical Thinking – Logical thinking based on sound evidence.

Cultural Competence – A set of attitudes, awareness, knowledge, and skills that enables effective teaching in racially, culturally and socio-economically diverse classrooms.

Curriculum – The subject matter that is to be learned.

Curriculum Materials – Text, audio, video, and/or electronic media used to teach the curriculum of a school or subject area.

Cut Score – The minimum score needed to pass a test.

Cyber Schools – Educational institutions that offer most or all of their instruction by computer through the internet.

D

Decoding – The process of translating individual letters or groups of letters into sounds so that the reader can pronounce a word.

Descriptive Sentences – Sentences that contain modifying words or phrases

(adjectives and adverbs) and are more elaborate than simple sentences.

Detention – A disciplinary action that removes a student from the classroom to another designated space within the school.

Developmentally Appropriate – Curriculum and instruction that is based on the mental and physical development of the student.

Developmental Screening Tests – Tests used to identify students who may have physical, behavioral, and/or developmental disabilities or delays, or sensory impairments.

DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) – A testing tool that helps teachers determine at what level students in grades Kindergarten through 6th are able to read and write.

Differentiated Instruction – An instructional technique that includes various ways to teach content and assess learning. It is used to meet student needs and differences in readiness, interests, and learning styles.

Diploma – A certificate conferred by a high school, college, university or other educational institution as official recognition for the completion of a program of studies.

Direct Instruction – A teaching technique in which the teacher presents the content and students are expected to respond in a specific manner.

Discipline – All forms of corrective action or punishment used with students.

Distance Learning – Taking classes in locations other than the classroom or places where teachers present the lessons including online, DVD, or telecommuting.

Diversity – Diversity involves recognizing a variety of student characteristics including those of ethnicity, language, socioeconomic class, disabilities, and gender.

Dismissed – When a court case is dismissed, it ends.

DRA (Developmental Reading Assessment)
A tool teachers use to assess and record Kindergarten to 3rd grade students' reading development.

Dropouts – Students who leave high school before graduating.

Dual Credit – A course or program where high school students can earn both high school and college credits for the same course.

Dual-language Program – A school program designed to serve both language minority and language majority students at the same time. Students from two language groups receive instruction in both languages. Also known as **Dual Immersion Program**.

Due Process of Law – Ensures that a person will be notified and have an opportunity to be heard before any public entity can change her/his rights.

Dyslexia – Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulties with accurate and/or fluent word recognition and by poor spelling and decoding abilities.

E

EALR (Essential Academic Learning Requirement) – Washington State's definition of what all students should know and be able to do as a graduate of public schools.

Early Childhood Education – The education of pre-school age children.

Electronic Media – The different electronic sources such as television, web pages, e-mail, CDs, etc. that may provide information or be used to share information.

ELL (English Language Learner) – A person learning English whose primary language is other than English.

Emergency Expulsion – Immediate removal of a student from school or class for an indefinite period of time.

Emergent Literacy – The view that reading and writing learning begins at birth and is supported by adult interactions.

Emotional Development -The ways in which individuals learn to interact in socially acceptable ways, establish and maintain relationships, and view themselves in positive ways.

Enrichment – Topics and activities that are not considered part of basic education.

Environmental Education – An educational practice that builds students' awareness of the natural world and how to protect it.

Equal Access –Case law based on religious non-discrimination. It requires schools that allow extra-curricular, voluntary-participation student clubs to meet on school property to also allow extra-curricular school use to religious groups.

ESL (English as a Second Language) – English language instruction for students whose primary language is not English.

Evaluate – To conduct a careful appraisal or study of something and determine its worth or value.

Expenditure – All amounts of money paid out by a school system.

Experiential Education – Education that emphasizes learning from experiences rather than from lectures, books, and other secondhand sources and which may take the form of internships, service learning, school-to-work programs, field studies, or similar experiences.

Expulsion – Removal of a student from school, class, or sometimes district property for an indefinite period of time.

Extra-curricular Activities – Activities that are not part of the required curriculum and that take place outside of the regular course of study.

F

Fact Finding Hearing – A court procedure where a judge determines whether a legal case can be made against an individual.

Familiar Sounds – Sounds that students hear or speak in their primary language.

Family involvement in education – Another term for parent participation in the education of their children .

FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) – A federal law that protects the privacy of student education records.

Financial Aid – Grants, loans, and funds provided by the government for college expenses, such as college tuition, textbooks, and sometimes the living costs of students.

Fine Motor – Functions which require tiny muscle movements, for example, writing or typing.

Fluency – The ability to read a text accurately, quickly, and with proper expression and comprehension.

Formative Assessment – A test that determines what students have learned at a particular time in order to plan further instruction. Also known as **Formative Test**.

Free or Reduced-Price Meal – A federal program that provides breakfast, lunch, and/or after school snacks for students from low-income families.

Functional Illiteracy – The inability to read or write well enough to perform many basic, necessary tasks in daily life.

G

Guardian – Person legally placed in charge of the welfare of a minor or of someone incapable of managing her or his own affairs.

GEAR-UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) A federal grant program created to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in college.

Gender Bias – The idea that one gender or the other is short-changed by school practices and expectations.

General Educational Development (GED) Test – A high school equivalency test certifies that a person has the skills and knowledge equal to those of a high school graduate.

General Vocabulary – Words that are critical to understanding the main idea, events, characters, themes of a lesson.

Generalize – To arrive at a broad conclusion based upon a small piece of evidence. May also be referred to as **Generalization**.

Genres – A term used to classify literary and informational works into categories, such as biography, mystery, historical fiction, etc.

Gifted and Talented Program- A program that offers advanced coursework to students identified as being academically gifted or talented.

GLE (Grade Level Expectation) – The essential content or subject matter to be learned by students at a specific grade level.

Grade Point Average (GPA) – A system of scoring student achievement. Student's GPA is computed by multiplying the grade received in each course by the number of credits offered for each course, then dividing by the total number of credit hours studied.

Graduate – A student who has received a diploma for successfully completing a program or school's course requirements.

Graduate School – University level school that provides instruction and degrees beyond the bachelor degree.

Graduation Requirements – The courses and number of credits required by a school district or the state to receive a high school diploma. The state provides a minimum set of requirements, and school boards can set additional graduation requirements for their school district.

Grant – Funds provided for students to attend college that do not have to be repaid.

Graphic Features – Maps, diagrams, graphs, charts, or pictures that help make the text meaningful and interesting to readers.

Graphing Calculator – A calculator with a larger display that draws and displays math functions and data.

Gross motor – Functions which require large muscle movements, for example, walking or jumping.

Guidance Counselor – School staff member who provides academic advice to students and their families, helps them address learning problems, and assists students in career and personal development.

Guided Practice – A teacher-led activity that the class completes together.

H

Head Start Program – A federally sponsored preschool program for children from low-income families.

Health Education – Curriculum that addresses physical, mental, emotional, and social health.

Hearing Examiner/Officer – The decision-maker in school discipline hearings.

Heterogeneous Grouping – The practice of grouping together students of varying abilities, interests, or ages for instruction.

Higher Education – Study beyond high school at a college or university that results in an associate, bachelor, or higher degree. Also known as **Post-secondary Education**.

Higher-Order Questions – Questions that require thinking and reflection rather than single-solution responses.

Higher-Order Thinking Skills – The ability to understand complex concepts and apply sometimes conflicting information to solve a problem that may have more than one correct answer.

High Frequency Words – High utility words which make up 50% of printed text, for example: *A, the, this, that*, etc.

Highly Qualified Teacher – Teachers are required by federal law (NCLB) to meet following three criteria to be considered highly qualified:

- 1) Holds at least a bachelor’s degree.
- 2) Holds full state certification.
- 3) Demonstrates subject matter knowledge and teaching skill in each core academic subject assigned to teach.

High School – Generally grades 9th through 12th.

Homework – Regular assignments to be completed outside the classroom.

Honors Program – Courses a school or district designs and offers to students to challenge their learning beyond the regular curriculum.

I

Idiom – An expression that does not mean what it literally says, for example, “you drive me crazy”, “hit the deck”.

Illiteracy – Lack of reading and/or writing skills.

Immersion – A program that teaches children to speak, read, and write in another language by instructing them in that language.

Inclusion – The practice of educating all children of various needs and capabilities in the same classroom.

Incomplete – A temporary grade stating that a student has not finished all class assignments at the end of a grading period.

Independent Study – An opportunity for students to conduct self-directed learning and receive credit.

Individualized Instruction – A practice provides each student with the lessons and assignments according to her/his strengths and needs. Students work at their own pace to learn the material. Also called **Individualized Education, Differentiated Curriculum, Individualized Education, or Differentiated Instruction.**

Inference – A conclusion reached after reading text and using past knowledge and experience to understand it.

Informal Knowledge – Knowledge about a topic that students learn through experience outside of the classroom.

Inquiry – A process in which students explore a problem, and create and work through a plan to solve the problem.

Inquiry-based Learning – An instructional method where students create questions about a phenomenon, fact, or piece of literature, and work to answer their questions through an exploration of the topic.

In Loco Parentis – Refers to an individual who takes on the parent role and responsibilities for a child without formally adopting him/her.

Integrated Curriculum – The practice of using a single theme to teach a variety of subjects.

Internship – Workplace learning that gives students an opportunity to apply their knowledge and learn new skills.

In-service – Continuing professional education for educators. Also known as **Staff Development** or **Professional Development**.

Instructional Aide – A school employee assigned to help teachers with the education of students. Also known as an **Instructional Assistant, Paraeducator, or Paraprofessional**.

Interactive Learning – Occurs when the teacher or computer software adjusts the instruction in response to the learner's needs.

Interdisciplinary Curriculum – A way to organize curriculum in which content is drawn from two or more subject areas to focus on a particular topic or theme. Also referred to as **Multidisciplinary Curriculum, Integration, or Integrated Curriculum**.

International Baccalaureate (IB) – IB courses are offered as part of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme, a rigorous two-year curriculum (geared primarily to students aged 16 to 19) that leads to a degree that is widely recognized internationally. It prepares students for a university education, with a specific focus on the ability to communicate with and understand people from other countries and cultures.

Interpretation – The process of verbally communicating information from one language into another language keeping the intent and meaning of the original information.

J

K

K-12 – Refers to Kindergarten through 12th grade education.

Kindergarten Entry Age – The age when children are eligible to enroll in Kindergarten, usually at least 5 years old.

L

Language Arts – Another term for English curriculum. The focus is on reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills.

Learner-centered Classroom – Classroom in which students are encouraged to choose their own learning goals and projects. Also known as a **Student-Centered Classroom**.

Learning Contract – An agreement between a student, teacher, parent (or other adult as a family member) detailing how the student will work toward specified learning objectives.

Learning Disability – A condition that interferes with a student's ability to learn. Also known as a **Learning Disorder**.

Learning Styles – Differences in the way students learn best including through hearing, seeing, or doing the learning task.

Letter of Recommendation – A letter written by a teacher or other adult that supports a student’s application for a program, college, or a job.

Levy – (noun) An additional sum to property taxes within a school district for education-related expenditures. Residents of the school district vote on whether to pay these levy taxes.

Levy – (verb) To impose taxes.

LEP (Limited English Proficient) Students – Students who are reasonably fluent in another language but who have not yet achieved comparable skills in reading, writing, listening, or speaking English. Also known as **English Language Learner (ELL)**.

Literacy – Ability to read and write. Also refers to other types of knowledge and skills such as scientific literacy, computer literacy, etc.

Literal – The common or ordinary meaning of words.

Local Revenues – The money a school district receives from local taxes, investments, and student activities.

Long-Term Suspension – Exclusion from school for more than 10 days.

Looping – A school practice where the teacher moves with his or her students to the next grade level, rather than sending them to another teacher the next school year.

M

Mainstream – To place students with disabilities into regular classrooms with the

supports defined in their Individualized Education Plan.

Magnet Schools – An alternative public school that often focuses on a particular area of study, such as performing arts or science and technology, in addition to the core curriculum.

Manipulatives – Any object, for example, blocks, toothpicks, or coins, that can be used to represent or model a problem situation or develop a mathematical concept.

McKinney-Vento Act – Federal legislation that provides educational services to homeless students which are equal to all other enrolled students, and ensures that homeless children and youth have equal opportunities to enroll in, attend, and be successful in school.

Measurement of Student Progress (MSP) – Beginning in the 2009-10 school year, the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) for grades 3rd through 8th will be replaced by the Measurements of Student Progress (MSP) to identify students’ abilities in math (grades 3rd through 8th), reading (grades 3rd through 8th), science (grades 5th and 8th), and writing (grades 4th and 7th). The testing window for the MSP will be in May beginning spring 2010.

Mediation – A strategy for conflict resolution which relies upon a neutral third party work to help parties arrive at an agreed upon compromise.

Mentor – To serve as a role model for another person.

MESA (Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement) – The MESA program assists academically disadvantaged students, especially students of color, girls,

and students in poverty, by helping them to prepare for and successfully complete a 4-year college program.

Middle School – Schools for students in the early adolescent years, generally grade 6th through grade 8th.

Modeling – The practice of demonstrating to the learner how to do a task, so that the learner can copy the model. It often includes thinking aloud or talking about how to work through a task.

Multi-age Classroom – A classroom that includes children from different grades.

Multi-disciplinary Curriculum – Generally refers to learning a particular topic area through the viewpoint of more than one subject.

Multiple Intelligences – A theory of intelligence developed in the 1980s by Howard Gardner that broadly defines intelligence beyond mathematical and linguistic, to include musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and intrapersonal.

N

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) – Also called “the Nation’s Report Card,” this federal test uses groups of students in grades 4th, 8th and 12th from around the country to measure progress in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and the arts. Scores are reported nationally and by state, but not for individual students or schools.

Navigation 101 – A program for students in grades 6th through 12th with the goal to help

students make plans, set class schedules, and prepare for life beyond high school.

Neighborhood Schools – Public schools nearest to students’ homes as determined by school district attendance boundaries.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) – A federal law that requires yearly student testing, consequences for schools or districts that do not meet standards, and requires all teachers and assistants to be highly qualified.

Non-verbal Communication – Messages sent by way of gestures and other body language, and drawings.

Notice – Notification of an action that usually contains information about legal rights to appeal a decision.

O

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) – The primary state agency charged with overseeing K-12 education in Washington State.

Office of the Education Ombudsman (OEO) – A state agency that helps resolve problems and disputes between families and schools. (www.waparentslearn.org)

Ombudsman – A person that helps resolve conflict or disputes.

On-Time Graduation rate – The number of students who started grade 9th in the fall of a particular year and are expected to graduate four years later.

Open-Ended Question – A question that can be answered in more than one way and may have more than one correct answer.

Outcomes – What students are supposed to know and be able to do.

P

Parent Involvement – The participation of parents in the education of their children.

Parent Teacher Association (PTA) – A national, nonprofit organization, independent of the public school system that supports family involvement in schools and advocates for children. When student members are included, the name often becomes PTSA or Parent Teacher Student Association.

Parent Teacher Conference – A meeting where the parents and the teacher of a particular student discuss present and future academic progress.

Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) – A local, school-based, organization of parents, and others to support family and public involvement in the school and advocate for students.

Pedagogy – The art or profession of teaching.

Peer Mediation – Programs in which students are trained in conflict resolution and assist other students to work through problems without using violence.

Performance Assessment – A test that determines what students know through their ability to perform certain tasks.

Performance Criteria – The skills or knowledge that will be evaluated as a student completes a task.

Performance Tasks – Activities, exercises, or problems that require students to show what they can do.

Per-pupil Expenditures – Expenditures made by schools, a school district, or the state divided by the total number of students in the school, school district, or state.

Petition for Readmission – A request to have a student return to school before the end of an expulsion or suspension.

Phonemic Awareness – The ability to identify and combine individual sounds (phonemes) into spoken words.

Phonics – An instructional strategy used to teach reading. It helps beginning readers by teaching them letter-sound relationships and having them sound out words.

Picture Dictionary – A dictionary that defines words using pictures and graphics.

Placement Exam – A skills test given to new students to determine what class or courses are best for their abilities and interests.

Policy – A piece of legislation, norm, or regulation.

Portable – A building, often with one or two rooms, that is used as a classroom and can be moved when it is no longer needed.

Portfolio – A collection of work that demonstrates and documents the student's learning progress over time. It might include writing samples, examples of math problems, and results of science experiments.

Prerequisite – A course that must be completed before a student is allowed to register for a more advanced course.

Primary Language – A student's first language. The language spoken at home.

Principal – The certificated hired by the Superintendent to manage the day-to-day business of the school, supervise and evaluate school staff.

Professional Development – Programs that allow teachers or administrators to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to perform their jobs successfully. Also known as **Inservice**.

Proficiency – The ability to do something at grade level.

Prompt – Pictures or words to which a student responds orally or in writing.

Pull-out Programs – The practice of providing instruction in small groups outside of the regular classroom in order to give particular students additional learning opportunities.

Pupil – A student.

Purge – An action to be done by an individual found to be in violation of a court order.

Q

Quick Write – An exercise where students quickly write down everything they know about a topic.

Quota – The number or amount constituting a proportional share.

Quotation – The repeated statement from a person or from text. When written, it is enclosed in quotation marks.

Quorum – The minimum number of members of a group required to be present at a meeting in order to make decisions for an organization.

R

Readability – The level of difficulty in a written passage.

Reference Tools – Materials for students to refer to in order to check spelling, word meaning, grammar, etc., such as picture dictionaries and/or bilingual dictionaries.

Remedial Class – Instruction, usually in addition to regular classroom learning, that provide additional time or attention for a student to learn what's expected at their grade level.

Report Card – The record of student attendance and grades for each grading period and the entire school year. Student report cards are sent home for parent review each grading period.

Response to Intervention (RTI) – A tool that helps educators identify students at risk for poor learning outcomes, provide evidence-based instructional strategies, monitor student progress, and adjust the interventions in response to students' reaction to the intervention.

Rubric – A grading or scoring system that lists what work students must show to be proficient. Also called a **Scoring Guide**.

Running Start – A college preparation option that permits students in grades 11th and 12th to take courses on local community and technical college campuses and earn credit toward both high school graduation and a college degree.

S

Sanctions – Another word for punishment.

Scaffolding – An instructional technique in which the teacher breaks a complex task into smaller tasks and supports students as they learn, and then gradually shifts responsibility for learning to the students.

School-Based Management – A system of school governance by which many school level decisions are made by the individual school rather than at district or other agency level. Also known as **Site-Based Management** or **Site-Based Decision Making**.

School Board - The school board is formed by School Board Directors or members. They set goals and policy, hire and supervise the Superintendent, and manage the finances of the school district.

School Board Directors – Citizens who live within a school district and are elected by other citizens to be part of the school board of directors.

School Choice – The opportunity for families to choose which schools their children will attend.

School Culture – The values, cultures, safety practices, and organizational structures that cause a school community to function and react in particular ways. Also known as **School Climate** or **School Environment**.

School Day – Any day, including a partial day, when students attend school for instruction.

School District – The organization responsible for providing free public education for school-age children residing within a specific area of a city, county, or state.

School-Family Partnership – Collaborative relationships between educators and family members based on mutual respect, trust, equality and shared goals that support and focus on student academic success.

School Improvement Plan (SIP) – The long-term plan schools create with staff and parents to ensure that all students are achieving at high levels.

School Improvement Status – The consequences faced by schools and districts that do not meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) required by No Child Left Behind federal legislation.

School Readiness – The basic background and knowledge that children are usually expected to have upon entering kindergarten.

School Records – Any information about a student kept by the school.

School-to-Work – A curriculum that integrates academic study with up-to-date career and technical education and work-readiness skills.

Scientific-based Research – Research about educational programs and activities that uses systemic and objective procedures that provide results considered reliable and valid.

Section 504 Plan – Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 extended civil rights to people with disabilities. It allows for reasonable accommodations as necessary for each student. Services, accommodations, and program modifications for students who qualify under Section 504 are outlined in a document called “504 Plan.”

Self-correction – Student recognizes and corrects error without input from others.

Self-efficacy – Learners' beliefs about their capacity of succeeding when learning specific topics or tasks.

Self-esteem – An affective or emotional reaction to the self.

Sign Language – A way of communicating that uses signs made with the hands, facial expressions, and body movements.

Sight Vocabulary – Words that a reader can immediately read without having to decode. Also known as **Sight Words**.

Snow Day – Refers to a day that schools are closed because of unsafe winter weather. It can also refer to the day added to the school calendar that replaces the missed school time.

Social Studies – Includes the subjects of civics, geography, economics, history, and the skills of research, reasoning, and analysis that students should be able to use in their studies of these subjects.

Social Promotion – The practice of promoting students to the next grade whether or not they have accomplished the goals of their current grade.

Special Education – Instruction provided for students with disabilities according to the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). (See also Special Education Glossary section of this publication)

Special Needs Students – Students who require special instructional programs to reach their learning potential.

Standardized Achievement Tests (SAT) – A test widely used as a college entrance examination. Also known as the SAT Reasoning Test (formerly called the Scholastic Aptitude Test).

Standardized Testing – A test provided in the same format for all who take it.

Standards – Statements of what students should know and be able to demonstrate.

Statute – A piece of legislation, law.

Story Elements – The critical parts of a story include character, setting, plot, problem, solution.

Student-centered Classroom – Classroom in which students are encouraged to choose their own learning goals and projects. Also known as **Learner-centered Classroom**.

Student Learning Plan (SLP) – A formal education document to provide regular communication to parents about the student's continued academic progress and to assure that students are on track for high school graduation.

Student-led Conference – A variation of the parent-teacher conference in which the student prepares for the conference and leads it by showing the parents or family members samples of her work and discussing areas of strengths and weaknesses.

Student Study Team – A team of educators and school staff that comes together at the request of a classroom teacher, parent, or counselor to develop a support system to meet the needs of a particular student. Also referred to as a **Multi-disciplinary Team** or **Student Intervention Team**.

Student Teacher – A teacher in training whose practice teaching is supervised by certificated staff or teacher.

Substitute Teacher – A certified teacher who teaches classes when the regular teacher is absent.

Summary – A condensed form of a particular piece of information.

Summons – An official call or notice to attend court at a specific date and time for a particular purpose.

Superintendent – The person hired by the School Board to manage the day-to-day business of the school district. The superintendent evaluates other district administrators and principals.

Superintendent of Public Instruction – The individual elected by the state’s voters to lead the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Supplemental Education – Additional instruction to basic education.

Suspension – A disciplinary action that removes a student from school for a definite period of time. Long-term suspensions last for more than 10 days; short term suspensions last fewer than 10 days.

Syllabus – An outline and description of a course.

T

Teacher Certification – Official state recognition that a person meets state standards and is qualified to be a teacher in Washington’s public schools.

Team Teaching – An arrangement by which two or more teachers teach the same group of students.

Tenure – The legal provision that people in certain positions may be fired only for specific cause.

Thematic Units – A unit of study that uses a specific theme. Sometimes thematic units include all core subject areas.

Think, Pair, Share – A cooperative learning strategy where students first **think** about a topic, **pair** with another student to discuss their ideas, and then **share** with the whole class.

Title I – A federal program that provides funds to improve the academic achievement for educationally disadvantaged students who score below the 50th percentile on standardized tests.

Total Physical Response (TPR) – A language-learning approach that emphasizes the use of physical activity to increase vocabulary retention.

Tracking – A teaching practice that groups students to receive instruction according to their abilities.

Transcript – A copy of a student's permanent school record that shows courses taken, grades, graduation status, and attendance and often includes assessments such as PSAT, SAT, ACT. Also known as **Student Records**.

Transfer of Learning – The ability to take previously learned knowledge or skills and apply them to new situations.

Translation – The process of transcribing written information from one language into

another language keeping the meaning and intent of the original information.

Truancy Petition – Paperwork submitted by a school district to juvenile court listing the number of school days missed by the student and the actions taken by the district to help the student return to school. This paperwork must be submitted before the student can be summoned to juvenile court for a hearing.

Truant Students – Youth ages 8 to 18 who do not attend school every day as required by Washington State law.

Tutor – Person who provides extra help for students with their schoolwork. A tutor may be another student or an adult.

U

Unit of Study – A segment of instruction focused on a particular topic.

University – An institution of higher education and research, which grants academic degrees in a variety of subjects in both undergraduate and postgraduate education.

V

W

Whole Language Approach – A teaching method that emphasizes reading for meaning in context.

Work-based Learning – Supervised learning activities for students that occur in paid or unpaid workplace assignments, and for

which course Credit is awarded. Also known as **Work-site Learning**.

Work-study Program – A Financial Aid program that provides jobs for students to earn part of their college related costs.

Writers' Workshop – A classroom practice that teaches students how to write through a short strategy lesson, an opportunity to write independently, and a discussion of how the writing lesson was used to change or improve their skills.

X

Y

Year-round Schooling – A school calendar that gives students shorter breaks throughout the year, instead of a traditional three-month summer break.

Z

Zero Tolerance – School district policy that defines specific punishment for students who break certain rules.

Notes:

Special Education Terms

Special education is a service that some children with disabilities receive. Not all children with disabilities qualify for special education services.

Some of the following terms are for students who receive accommodations either through a 504 plan or through the use of differentiated instruction that is part of a quality general education program. The federal and state laws for special education pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (a civil rights law) concerning students with disabilities can sometimes be complex and confusing.

The brief definitions provided here are not intended to be complete, but rather to provide a concise description of the topic as it is being used during a conversation among adults who work with and/or care for children with disabilities. Users are encouraged to seek further, more fully descriptive information about each of these terms from medical professionals and other knowledgeable sources such as school staff, parent groups, or disability-specific support groups. Users should also refer to the federal and state statutes and regulations for legal definitions.

See also: ***Protecting the Educational Rights of Students with Disabilities in Public Schools*** a free publication from the Office of the Education Ombudsman's available at: www.waparentslearn.org.

A

Accessibility – A barrier-free environment where students with disabilities can have maximum participation in all programs and activities offered in a school setting.

Accommodations – Changes in the way instruction, assessment, and instructional materials are designed and used to respond to the special needs of students with disabilities. Most often related to students who have a 504 plan or an IEP.

Adaptive Skills – A term which refers to age-appropriate self-help skills, including independent eating, toileting, personal hygiene and dressing skills. This may be an area for evaluation and may be a goal area for some students with an IEP.

Administrative Hearing – A formal process for parents and school districts to resolve disagreements about discipline and special education services. An administrative hearing concerning Special Education matters is known as a Due Process Hearing. There are other types of hearings that are used in education, including discipline, that are not a part of Special Education.

Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) – A judge who handles only administrative hearings (of all types, not just education). ALJs serve as the judges in special education due process hearing.

Advocate – An individual who is not an attorney, but who assists or represents parents to communicate their concerns and obtain necessary special education and related services for their child.

Affective – A term which refers to emotions and attitudes.

Alternate Assessment – A tool used for students with disabilities who cannot take standardized exams. The alternate assessment methods to be used are usually specified in IEPs.

Annual Goals – A required component of an IEP. Goals are written for the individual student to address the needs identified in their individual evaluation. The IEP goals must be reviewed and rewritten annually.

Assistive Technology Device – Any piece of equipment or product used to increase, improve, or maintain the abilities of a child with a disability.

Assistive Technology Service – Any service that directly assists a child with a disability in using or choosing an Assistive Technology Device.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) – Children diagnosed with attention deficit disorder tend to have problems staying on task and focusing on conversations or activities.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) – Children with ADD who are also hyperactive may be diagnosed with ADHD. Hyperactivity, a disorder of the central nervous system, makes it difficult for affected children to control their motor activities, and they may move rapidly from one task to another without completing any of them.

Audiology – A related service that addresses the impact of hearing loss for a student in the educational setting through evaluation, identification, modifications, maintenance of student and classroom equipment or devices, and other services.

Autism – A developmental disability affecting verbal and non-verbal communication and

social interactions that is often observed before age three. It is part of a group of disorders known as autism spectrum disorders (ASD). These disorders are often characterized by impaired communication skills and social abilities, and by repetitive behaviors. Symptoms can range from very mild to quite severe.

Aversive Intervention Plan - A plan developed by the IEP team that describes the systematic use of stimuli or other treatment which a student is known to find unpleasant for the purpose of discouraging undesirable behavior on the part of the student. The purpose of an aversive intervention plan is to assure that students eligible for special education are safeguarded against the use and misuse of various forms of aversive interventions. Aversive interventions should not be used with a student until a plan is developed to clearly define what specific aversive interventions will be used, how often and under what circumstances.

B

Baseline Data - The level at which a skill or behavior occurs BEFORE an intervention is implemented. Baseline data should be collected at the beginning of an assessment period and used to compare against post-intervention data to determine any changes as a result of intervention.

BCBA – Board Certified Behavior Analyst.

Behavior Intervention Plan – The plan of action designed and implemented to address behavior that may negatively impact the success of a student with disabilities. The plan includes positive strategies, program modifications, and aids and supports that address a student's disruptive

behaviors and allows the child to be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

C

Change of Placement – A change of placement occurs anytime a student is, for disciplinary reasons, removed from the placement identified on his/her IEP for more than 10 days. A change of placement may also occur if the IEP team meets and decides that services should be provided in a different location. It is not a change of placement if the school moves the student from one general education classroom to another or from one resource room to another.

Cognitive Development - Comprehending, remembering, and making sense out of one's experience. Cognition is the ability to think and is often thought of in terms of intelligence.

Communication Development - The ability to effectively use or understand age-appropriate language, including vocabulary, grammar, and speech sounds.

Consent - When a parent or guardian understands and agrees in writing to evaluation, the provision of special education services, or to release educational records for their student. Granting consent is voluntary and can be revoked at any time. The parent should be fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which consent is sought, in his or her native language, or other mode of communication

Continuum of Services – The range of services which must be available to the students of a school district so that they may be served in the least restrictive

environment. The IEP team must have the opportunity to consider placement in the general education classroom, special education classroom, home or hospital setting with whatever supports or services that are necessary.

D

Deafness – Deafness means a hearing impairment that is so severe that the student is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification, that adversely affects the student's educational performance.

Developmental Delay - When a student does not reach their developmental milestones when expected. These can be major or minor delays. For a student aged 3- 8 years old, this includes a child whose disability adversely affects educational performance in one or more of the following areas: Physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development or adaptive development AND shows delays of at least 2 standard deviations in one area, or at least 1.5 standard deviations in 2 or more areas on standardized testing. For children and adults applying for Developmental Disability services from Washington state, it includes a diagnosis of mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism or another neurological condition closely related to mental retardation or that requires treatment similar to that required for individuals with mental retardation which occurs before age 18, can be expected to continue indefinitely, and results in substantial limitations to an individual's intellectual or adaptive functioning.

Developmental Screening Tests – A tool used to identify disabilities, sensory

impairments (e.g., near-sightedness or reduced hearing), or behavioral and developmental disabilities. A screening is not the same as an assessment or evaluation.

Disability – A physical, sensory, cognitive, or affective impairment that causes the student to need special education and related services.

Due Process of Law – Ensures a person will be notified and have an opportunity to be heard before any public entity can change her/his rights. Due process procedures for special education situations are clearly outlined in the IDEA. Section 504 plan due process procedures are less clearly defined.

Due Process Hearing – An administrative hearing presided over by an administrative law judge, not only in special education. There are special education hearings but there are also DSHS hearings, for example.

Dyslexia – A language-based disability that affects both oral and written language.

E

Early Intervention Services – Services that meet the needs of infants and toddlers with disabilities. Typically refers to services from birth to three years of age.

Emergency Expulsion – the removal of a student when a superintendent or designee has good and sufficient reason to believe that the student's presence poses an immediate and continuing danger to the student, to other students, or to school personnel, or an immediate and continuing threat of substantial disruption of the educational process. The expulsion of

students with disabilities is limited to and subject to the requirements under IDEA.

Emotional/Behavioral Disability – When the student exhibits one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a student's educational performance: (A) An inability to learn that 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. (E) A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. An emotional/behavioral disability includes a diagnosis of schizophrenia.

Extended School Day – A provision for special education students to receive instruction for a period longer than the standard school day.

Extended School Year (ESY) – Special education and related services provided to students qualified for special education outside of the normal school year to ensure the student continues her/his educational progress.

Extracurricular Activities - activities that students engage in that are outside the required or elective coursework needed for graduation. These activities are voluntary, nonpaying, and usually involve students of the same age. Students often organize and direct these activities under paid faculty supervision. Schools and IEP teams must consider what supplementary aids and services may be necessary to ensure that every student has the ability to participate in the same nonacademic and extracurricular

activities as are available to non-disabled peers.

Exit from Special Education – When a school district stops providing special education services. This may be as a result of lack of continued eligibility or aging out of services at age 21. School districts are required to provide a “Prior Written Notice” to the parent (or student over age 18) **before** special education services cease.

F

FERPA – The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act. A federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. It identifies parents rights and school responsibilities about education records.

Fine Motor – Functions which require small muscle movement for some activities, for example: writing or typing.

Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) – The right of a student with a disability under IDEA or Section 504 to the education and support services necessary to meet each of his or her identified needs at no cost to the parent.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) – A problem-solving process for addressing student problem behavior that uses techniques to identify what triggers the behaviors, select appropriate interventions, and teach the student alternative behaviors.

G

Generalization – when a student demonstrates skills and behaviors in multiple environments and under a variety of conditions.

Goals – measurable annual benchmarks for growth in academic and functional areas of instruction

Graduation - students with disabilities have the right to participate in all high school graduation activities with their age peers without forfeiting their right to Transition Services from age 18-21 years of age.

Gross Motor – Functions which require large muscle movements. For example, walking or jumping.

Guardianship – When a court assigns someone else to handle various affairs for an incapacitated individual, such as their finances, health care decisions, or where to live.

H

I

IEP (Individualized Education Program) – A document that describes the education services that a student qualified for special education will receive. The IEP is specific to each student and tailored to his or her individual educational needs.

IEP Team – The group of people, including educators, parents, and others with knowledge of the student’s needs, which is responsible for creating and reviewing the student’s IEP and determining where, what and how services will be delivered.

Inclusion –The practice of educating children in the general education classroom, including children with physical, mental, and developmental disabilities. In order to meet the individual needs of the student, it is often

necessary to provide additional supports in the general education classroom.

Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) –

An evaluation conducted by a qualified examiner, who is not employed by the school district at the public's expense.

Individualized Education – The practice of giving lessons and assignments according to each student's needs and strengths. Also called **Individualized Instruction**.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) –

A federal law that guarantees a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for eligible children and youth with disabilities.

Instructional Aide – A school employee who is assigned to help teachers with the education of student. Also know as an **Instructional Assistant, Paraeducator, or Paraprofessional**.

Instructional Placement – Phrase used to describe the situation in which a child spends at least half of his/her school day receiving special education. See also **Resource Placement**.

Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) – A placement of up to 45 days for students with disabilities who a) bring weapons to school, b) bring drugs to school, c) inflict serious bodily injury at school, or d) are determined to be dangerous by an administration law judge. The IAES must be developed so that students can participate in the general education curriculum and progress towards achieving the goals set out in their IEP.

J

Job Coach – a person who provides specialized employment training and support on-site for a person with a disability.

K

L

Learning Disability – A child can be, but not always, identified as having a learning disability when she or he does not achieve adequately for the child's age or to meet state-approved grade-level standards when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child's age or state-approved grade-level standards. May also be known as a **Learning Disorder**.

Learning Disorder – A condition that interferes with a student's ability to learn. Another term for **Learning Disability**.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) – Commonly refers to removing a student from the general education environment as little as possible by providing specially designed instruction and supplementary aids and services in the general education classroom to the maximum extent appropriate for the student.

M

Mainstream – The practice of placing students with disabilities into regular classrooms with the supports defined in their IEP. The students usually also receive some assistance and instruction in separate classrooms, or resource rooms

Manifestation Determination – A process conducted by a student's IEP team to

identify and address the relationship between a student's disability and behaviors that would normally be subject to expulsion or suspension. The IEP team must determine that the behavior is a manifestation of the child's disability if:

- The behavior in question was caused by the child's disability, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability or
- the behavior was the direct result of the school's failure to implement the child's IEP.

Mediation – A free, voluntary process where a trained, neutral mediator helps parents and/or advocates and school districts reach a mutually acceptable solution to disagreements over special education services and/or supports.

Multidisciplinary Team - a team of teachers, parents, specialists, and administrators who assess the individual needs of a student and make educational recommendations.

N

Native Language – the language normally used by someone, or, in the case of a student, the language normally used by the parents of the student in their home or learning environment. For an individual with deafness or blindness, or for an individual with no written language, the mode of communication is that normally used by the individual, such as sign language, Braille, or oral communication.

Natural Supports – a system of supports that are available to all individuals as a natural result of typical family and community living.

Nonacademic Services – may include counseling services, athletics, transportation, health services, recreational

activities, special interest groups or clubs sponsored by schools, and referrals to agencies that provide assistance to individuals with disabilities and employment of students. Schools and IEP teams must consider what supplementary aids and services may be necessary to ensure that every student has the ability to participate in the same nonacademic and extracurricular activities as are available to non-disabled peers.

O

Objectives - Measurable steps toward the achievement of a goal.

Occupational Therapy – A special education related service which is usually focused on the development of a student's fine motor skills and strategies for daily life.

Office of Civil Rights (OCR) – An office within the U.S. Department of Education responsible for enforcing Section 504 protections and investigating civil rights complaints.

Other Health Impairment - 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 adversely affect educational performance.

OSPI – Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. In Washington, it is the state educational agency.

Orientation and Mobility Services – related services that teach a blind or visually impaired child navigation skills to know where he is in space and how to plan to get

where he wants to go within the school setting and community.

Orthopedic Impairment - Physical 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) that adversely affect a student's educational performance.

P

Paraeducator – A school employee who is assigned to help a teacher with the education of student(s). Also known as an **Instructional Aide, Instructional Assistant, or Paraprofessional**.

Parent Participation - A school district must ensure that one or both of the parents of a student eligible for special education are present at each IEP team meeting or are afforded the opportunity to participate, including: (1) Notifying parents of the meeting early enough to ensure that they will have an opportunity to attend; and (2) Scheduling the meeting at a mutually agreed on time and place indicating the purpose, time, and location of the meeting and who will be in attendance. Parents must be informed about the participation of other individuals on the IEP team who have knowledge or special expertise about the student. Parents must also be included in the development of a transition plan. If neither parent can attend an IEP team meeting, the school district must use other methods to ensure parent participation, including video or telephone conference calls. A meeting may be conducted without a parent in attendance if the school district is unable to convince the parents that they

should attend. In this case, the public agency must keep a record of its attempts to arrange a mutually agreed on time and place. The school district must take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the parent understands the proceedings of the IEP team meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for parents with deafness or whose native language is other than English. The school district must give the parent a copy of the student's IEP at no cost to the parent.

PECS – Picture Exchange Communication System.

Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD) – A term used to describe a certain type of disability on the autism spectrum.

Physical development: Fine and/or gross motor skills requiring precise, coordinated, use of small muscles and/or motor skills used for body control such as standing, walking, balance, and climbing that adversely affect a student's educational performance.

Physical Therapy – A treatment of physical disabilities, under a doctor's prescription, that helps a student improve the use of bones, muscles, joints, and nerves in order to better access education programs and services.

Placement – The how and where students who have an IEP or Section 504 Plan receive the special education services or accommodations outlined in their plans.

Positive Behavior Support - An approach to changing student behavior that interferes with learning that is focused on scientifically-based, best evidence-based practices, data, and positive outcomes for students. Generally, the goal of positive behavioral

support is to increase a student's integration and access to their peers and the educational environment, and to prevent isolation, restraint or disciplinary actions for a student.

Post-secondary Education – Instruction and training that occurs after graduation from high school.

Prior Written Notice – A written document that describes any changes to a student's eligibility, evaluation, placement, or services that is provided to the parent BEFORE the changes occur. This written notice must be provided in the parent's native language. The district must also provide this notice when it refuses to make a change that is requested by the parent.

Q

R

Reasonable Accommodation – Educational program adaptation or modifications that allow students with disabilities to more fully participate in school.

Reevaluation - Evaluation which occurs for a student who is already eligible for special education services to determine their continued eligibility for services or if any changes to the educational program need to occur.

Referral – The written request made to a school district to evaluate a student for special education and/or Section 504 eligibility.

Related Services – Various support services, for special education students. For example: transportation, social work, counseling.

Resolution Session – A meeting between the parents, school district, and IEP team that occurs after a due process hearing request has been made in order to discuss the complaint and try to solve the problem before the hearing occurs.

Response To Intervention (RTI) – Refers to scientifically-based interventions a school district may use to determine if a child has a learning disability.

Resource Room – A special education classroom where students can go for additional help mastering academic skills. A student's IEP designates the number of minutes a day and/or week a student will receive resource room support.

S

Section 504 Plan – Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 extended civil rights to people with disabilities. It allows for reasonable accommodations as necessary for each student. Services, accommodations, and program modifications for students who qualify under Section 504 are outlined in a document called "504 Plan."

Social or emotional development - The ability to develop and maintain functional interpersonal relationships and to exhibit age appropriate social and emotional behaviors.

Special Education – Specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability who qualifies for special education. The services are provided

at no cost to the parent. The services can be provided in many different settings.

Special Education Student – Any student who has a disability that adversely affects his or her academic performance.

Specially Designed Instruction – Instruction designed to address the specific needs of a student who qualifies for special education services. It is based on the results of the student's individual evaluation. In order for instruction to be considered specially designed, it must differ from the instruction provided in the general education program, and cannot merely be accommodations or modifications.

Specific Learning Disabilities – A disorder of one or more psychological processes that interfere with the ability to process language, written or spoken that may be noticed with difficulty in listening, speaking, writing, reading, spelling, or doing mathematical calculations.

Speech/language impairment -A communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a student's educational performance.

Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) – A professional who can help students who have language and speech disorders. This might include expressive and/or reception language as well as speech disorders.

Stay Put – The right of a student with a disability to remain in his or her current placement until disputes have been resolved. When a parent or the school district files for a hearing, there may be a stay put requirement until the dispute is settled.

Supplementary Aids and Services - Aids, services, and other supports that are provided in general education classes or other education-related settings that enable students with disabilities to participate to the maximum extent appropriate with nondisabled students in the least restrictive environment and in all programs and activities offered to students.

Supported Employment – A progressive approach to maximizing competitive employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

Surrogate Parent – A person designated by the school district to assume all parent educational rights when a parent or immediate relative caring for the child cannot be identified, or when a child is a ward of the state.

T

Therapeutic Day Program – An instructional placement for students with significant emotional disturbances in which treatment for the emotional difficulty is incorporated into the school program.

Transition Services – A plan of activities designed to assist and prepare a student in special education to move from secondary education to the workplace or to higher education.

Transition Planning – Planning for adolescents' post-school lives. It must begin by age 16 and it requires transition goals to be incorporated into the IEP process.

Transfer of Rights – Parent rights transfer to the student at the age of 18. Parents must be notified of the transfer of student rights in writing and in their native language. Parents

may remain involved in their student's IEP team, and must be notified of IEP meetings once a transfer of rights occurs.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) - 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 student's educational performance. Traumatic brain injury 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. Traumatic brain injury does not apply to brain injuries that are congenital or degenerative, or to brain injuries induced by birth trauma.

U

Unilateral Private School Placement – when a parent places their child with a disability in a private school without the agreement of the school district and requests payment or reimbursement for the costs of the private school.

Universal Design - a concept or philosophy for designing and delivering products, services and systems that are usable by everyone, including people with disabilities.

V

Vocational Rehabilitation Services – Employment training and services designed to assist a person with a disability who wants to work but has a substantial barrier to finding or keeping a job.

W

Washington Alternate Assessment System (WAAS) – The system designed for and administered to students with disabilities who, even with accommodation, would not be able to take the state assessment of student learning.

X

Y

Z

Zero Reject – A core principle of the IDEA which establishes that no student with a disability, regardless of the nature or severity of their disability, can be denied a free, appropriate, public education.



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