

**Accommodations:** changes to how material is taught or a test is administered but does not substantially alter what the test measures; includes changes in presentation format, response format, test setting or test timing

**Achievement gap:** the difference in academic performance between student of any different groups, such as between children with and without disabilities, or different racial-ethnic groups and income levels

**Achievement test:** an assessment that measures competency in a particular area of knowledge or skill; measures mastery or acquisition of skills (generally applies to skills that have been taught)

**Activities of Daily Living (ADLs):** the things we normally do...such as feeding ourselves, bathing, dressing, grooming, work, homemaking, and leisure. Adaptive equipment or device may be used to enhance and increase independence in performing ADLs.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** Civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else.

**Adaptive behavior:** A sort of "practical intelligence." It is usually measured by scales that identify how well a person manages within his or her own environment. The term includes: communication, community participation, self-direction, health and safety, functional academics, leisure and work

**Adapted Physical Education (APE):** physical education that has been adapted or modified to address the individual needs of children with disabilities, by adapting the curriculum, task, equipment, and/or environment to enable all students to participate in, and benefit from, physical education

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):** A term used in the No Child Left Behind Act. It is the state's measure of progress toward the goal of 100% of students achieving the state academic standards in at least reading/language arts and math, and sets the minimum level of proficiency that the state, its school districts, and schools must achieve each year on annual tests and related academic indicators

**ADHD - Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder:** A condition identified as a medical diagnosis by the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual V (DSM-V). This condition is also often called Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) because of that usage in a previous edition of DSM. Although it is not a service category under IDEA, children with this condition may be eligible for service under other categories or under Section 504.

**Advocate:** An individual who is not an attorney, but who assists parents and children in their dealings with school districts regarding the children's special education programs.

**Affective:** A term which refers to emotions and attitudes.

**Alignment:** The process of making content standards, performance standards, assessment, and instruction consistent so they are most effective in helping students reach state standards

**Alternate achievement standards:** standards (or expectations) that differ from those that are set for other students of the same age/grade

**Alternative assessment:** ways other than standardized tests to get information about what students know and are able to do. Examples include, but are not limited to oral reports, projects, portfolios, or collections of work, demonstrations, performances, and experiments. Also refers to the different type of testing that is done when abilities of a student with a disability prevent him/her from taking part in the regular statewide or districtwide testing that is required by No Child Left Behind

**Alternative Dispute Resolution:** processes that may be used to resolve an issue or issues in dispute (i.e. Mediation)

**American Sign Language (ASL):** A complete, complex language that employs signs made by moving the hands combined with facial expressions and postures of the body. It is the primary language of many North Americans who are deaf and is one of several communication options used by people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing.

**Annual goals:** A required component of an IEP. Goals are written for the individual student to identify what the IEP team has determined the student can reasonably be expected to accomplish within 1 year

**Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA):** Behavior Analysis is the scientific study of behavior. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is the application of the principles of learning and motivation from Behavior Analysis, and the procedures and technology derived from those principles, to the solution of problems of social significance.

**Articulation:** The clarity or understandability of a student's speech. Disorders of articulation are seen in omissions (leaving sounds out), substitutions ("teef" for "teeth"), distortions (lisp), or additions ("runnering" for "running")

**Assistive Technology (AT):** Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities

**Attention:** The ability to focus with eyes and/or ears for a period of time without losing the meaning of what is being said

**Autism spectrum disorder (ASD):** general terms for a group of complex disorders of brain development. These disorders are characterized, in varying degrees, by difficulties in social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication and repetitive behaviors. With the May 2013 publication of the **DSM-5 diagnostic manual**, all autism disorders were merged into one umbrella diagnosis of ASD. Previously, they were recognized as distinct subtypes, including autistic disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) and Asperger syndrome.

**Baseline Measurement:** counting and recording how often a certain behavior occurs to allow for future comparison

**Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC):** A comprehensive set of rating scales and forms including the Teacher Rating Scales (TRS), Parent Rating Scales (PRS), Self-Report of Personality (SRP), Student Observation System (SOS), and Structured Developmental History (SDH). Together, they help you understand the behaviors and emotions of children and adolescents.

**Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP):** a plan of positive behavioral interventions in the IEP of a child whose behaviors interfere with his/her learning or that of others: based on data gathered through a functional behavioral assessment

**Board of Education v. Rowley ("Rowley"):** Case that helped to define how a special education program may be determined to be "appropriate."

**Bureau of Rehabilitative Services (BRS):** Administers the Title I Vocational Rehabilitation and Title VI Supported Employment (SE) programs of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. BRS receives federal funding from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSER) at the US Department of Education. The obligations for the use of this federal funding are defined in the BRS State Plan. The Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS) is the designated state unit that oversees BRS and the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs in Connecticut

**Central Auditory Processing Disorder (CAPD):** an umbrella term for a variety of disorders that affect the way the brain processes **auditory** information. Individuals with APD usually have normal structure and function of the outer, middle and inner ear (peripheral hearing). However, they cannot process the information they hear in the same way as others do, which leads to difficulties in recognizing and interpreting sounds, especially the sounds composing speech. It is thought that these difficulties arise from dysfunction in the central nervous system (i.e., brain).

**Child Find:** the procedures by which local school districts locate, count, evaluate, and, if found eligible, provide special education services to children with disabilities

**Child with a disability:** a child evaluated as having an intellectual disability, a hearing impairment (including deafness), a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment (including blindness), a serious emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, an other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-

blindness, or multiple disabilities, and who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

**Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals (CELF):** a comprehensive battery of tests that measure overall language assessment, including pragmatic language.

**Cloze:** A technique of assessing reading comprehension by asking the student to supply missing words

**Community-based Teaching:** Skills are taught at varied location in the community rather than in the classroom in order to facilitate generalization and application

**Connors Behavior Rating Scales:** The Connors rating system collects answers from parents, teachers, and adolescent patients themselves in order to create a comprehensive inventory of a child's behaviors. The multiple choice questions range from, "How often does your child have trouble going to sleep at night?" to, "How hard is it to focus on a homework assignment?"

**Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant (COTA):** An assistant who works with a child to achieve fine motor skills. The COTA is supervised by an occupational therapist and carries out the activities prescribed by the occupational therapist to improve a child's fine motor skills.

**Cognitive:** A term which refers to reasoning or intellectual capacity.

**Community-based:** A standard by which special education services may be judged. Skills are taught at varied locations in the community rather than in the classroom in order to facilitate generalization and application.

**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.

**Counselling Services:** A related service in special education that means services provided by qualified social workers, psychologists, school counsellors or other qualified personnel

**Criterion Referenced Assessment:** Tests that measure how well a student has learned a specific skill or subject. They are not tests that produce a number quotient, but show what a student can or cannot do. These tests compare a child to a set of standards or criteria and not to other children

**Cumulative File:** General file maintained by the school. Parent has the right to inspect the file and have 1 free copy of any information in it.

**Curriculum:** The subject matter that is to be learned. A curriculum is usually described in terms of its scope and sequence

**Curriculum-based assessment:** Direct assessment of a child's academic skills, by measuring and recording the child's progress in the general curriculum at frequent intervals as a basis to make instructional decisions

**Decoding:** the ability to apply the knowledge of letter-sound relationships, including knowledge of letter patterns, to correctly pronounce written words

**Developmental Delay:** Development which does not occur within expected time ranges

**Due Process Hearing:** A hearing conducted by a State Department of Education Hearing Officer to resolve a dispute between parents and a school district regarding special education

**Durable Medical Equipment:** Wheelchairs and other non-disposable equipment that may be covered as part of some health insurance programs

**Emotional Disturbance** (previously Serious Emotional Disturbance) **(ED):** An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems. Emotional disturbance includes schizophrenia. The term does not apply to children who are socially maladjusted, unless it is determined that they also have an emotional disturbance

**Encoding:** The ability to express ideas in symbols or words (spelling)

**Executive Functioning:** The ability to manage or regulate cognitive processes, including initiating, planning, organizing, and following through on a task

Expressing Language: The ability to put thoughts into words and sentences, in a way that makes sense and is grammatically accurate

**Extended school day:** A provision for a special education student to receive instruction for a period longer than the standard school day

**Extended school year (ESY):** A provision for a special education student to receive instruction during ordinary school "vacation" periods

**FERPA - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act:** A federal law that regulates the management of student records and disclosure of information from those records

**Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):** an educational right of children with disabilities in the United States that is guaranteed by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504) and the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Under Section 504, FAPE is defined as "the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services that are designed to

meet individual needs of handicapped persons as well as the needs of non-handicapped persons are met and based on adherence to procedural safeguards outlined in the law.” Under the IDEA, FAPE is defined as an educational program that is individualized to a specific child, designed to meet that child's unique needs and from which the child receives educational benefit. The United States Department of Education issues regulations that define and govern the provision of FAPE.

**Fine motor:** Functions which require tiny muscle movements. For example, writing or typing would require fine motor movement.

**Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA):** a systematic set of strategies that is used to determine the underlying function or purpose of a behavior, so that an effective intervention plan can be developed. FBA consists of describing the interfering or problem behavior, identifying antecedent or consequent events that control the behavior, developing a hypothesis of the behavior, and testing the hypothesis. Data collection is an important part of the FBA process. Often, teachers/practitioners use functional communication training (FCT), differential reinforcement, response interruption/redirection, extinction, and stimulus control/environmental modification to address these behaviors in learners.

**Functional curriculum:** A curriculum focused on practical life skills and usually taught in community based settings with concrete materials that are a regular part of everyday life. The purpose of this type of instruction is to maximize the student's generalization to real life use of his/her skills.

**Gross motor:** Functions which require large muscle movements. For example, walking or jumping would require gross motor movement.

**Heterogeneous grouping:** An educational practice in which students of diverse abilities are placed within the same instructional groups.

**Homogeneous grouping:** An educational practice in which students of similar abilities are placed within the same instructional groups.

Home Schooling:

Homebound Instruction:

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP):** The document, developed at an IEP (PPT) meeting which describes the child's special education program. It sets the standard by which special education services are determined appropriate for a child with a disability

**IEP meeting (aka PPT meeting):** A gathering required at least annually under IDEA in which an IEP is developed for a student receiving special education.

**IFSP - Individual Family Service Plan:** Document which outlines the services to be delivered to families of infants and toddlers receiving special services.

**Inclusion:** Inclusion is the educational practice of educating children with disabilities in classrooms with children without disabilities.

**Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE):**

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):**

**Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES):**

**Joint agreement:** Also called a "cooperative." A joint agreement is a voluntary association of school districts who join together to provide special education services.

**LEA - local educational agency.** i.e., a local public school district.

**Learning disability:** An eligibility category under IDEA and described in detail within the statute.

**LRE - least restrictive environment:** A requirement of IDEA.

**Mediation:** A voluntary dispute resolution process for which the CT State Department of Education will provide mediators upon mutual consent of both the parent and the school district

**Occupational therapy:** A special education related service which is usually focused upon the development of a student's fine motor skills and/or the identification of adapted ways of accomplishing activities of daily living when a student's disabilities preclude doing those tasks in typical ways (e.g. modifying clothing so a person without arms can dress himself/herself).

**OCR - US Office for Civil Rights:** An agency of the federal government's executive branch within the Department of Education. It is charged with enforcing a number of civil rights statutes including Section 504.

**OSEP - US Office of Special Education Programs:** An office within OSERS charged with assuring that the various states comply with IDEA.

**OSERS - US Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services:** An agency of the federal government's executive branch within the Department of Education.

**Placement:** The setting in which the special education service is delivered to the student. It must be derived from the student's IEP.

**Present levels of educational performance.** A required IEP component.

**Referral:** Notice to a school district that a child may be in need of special education. Although good practice suggests making referrals in writing, an oral referral may be valid. A referral sets certain timelines in place.

**Regression/recoupment:** The amount of loss of skills a child experiences over an instructional break (primarily summer vacation) and the amount of time it takes him/her to recover the lost skills. Standards for when regression and recoupment concerns require summer school are developed in case law and in state and federal policy letters.

**Related services:** Related services means transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a child with a disability to benefit from special education, and includes speech- language pathology and audiology services, interpreting services, psychological services, physical and occupational therapy, recreation, including therapeutic recreation, early identification and assessment of disabilities in children, counseling services, including rehabilitation counseling, orientation and mobility services, and medical services for diagnostic or evaluation purposes. Related services also include school health services and school nurse services, social work services in schools, and parent counseling and training.

**SEA - state education agency.** i.e., Connecticut State Department of Education

**Section 504:** Provision of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which prohibits recipients of federal funds from discrimination against persons with disabilities.

**Short-term objectives:** A required component of an IEP. Each annual goal must have at least one short-term objective.

**Standardized tests:** Tests which have norms reflecting a larger population (usually these are age or grade based norms reflecting the performance of children throughout the country on the same tests).

**Supplementary aids and services:** Accommodations which could permit a student to profit from instruction in the least restrictive environment.

**Surrogate parent.** An individual trained and appointed by CT-SDOE to exercise special education rights on behalf of children with disabilities who are wards of the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) or are otherwise without access to parents.

**Therapeutic day program:** An instructional placement for students with serious emotional disturbance in which aspects of treatment for the emotional difficulty are incorporated into the school program. Depending on the theoretical orientation of the school, these services may include psychotherapy, behavior management, positive peer culture, or other types of intervention.

**Transition planning:** A coordinated set of activities for a child with a disability that is designed to be a results-oriented process, that is focused on improving the academic and

functional achievement of the child with a disability to facilitate the child's movement from school to post-school activities, including post-secondary education, vocational education, integrated employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living, or community participation and is based on the individual child's needs, taking into account the child's strengths, preferences, and interests and includes instruction, related services, community experiences, the development of employment and other post-school adult living objectives, and, when appropriate, acquisition of daily living skills and functional vocational evaluation.

**Visual-motor:** Co-ordination of what is seen with an action. For example, one uses visual-motor coordination when catching a ball. **Special Education** - Special education is a broad term used to by the law to describe specially designed instruction that meets the unique needs of a child who has a disability. These services are provided by the public school system and are free of charge. Services can include instruction in the classroom, at home, in hospitals and institutions.

**Intellectual Disability** - significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

**Hearing Impairment (including Deafness)**- Hearing impairment means an impairment in hearing, whether permanent or fluctuating, that adversely affects a child's educational performance but that is not included under the definition of deafness in this section. Deafness is a hearing impairment that is so severe that the child is impaired in processing linguistic information through hearing, with or without amplification that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

**Speech or Language Impairment** - Speech or language impairment means a communication disorder, such as stuttering, impaired articulation, a language impairment, or a voice impairment, that adversely affects a child's educational performance.

**Visual Impairment** - Visual impairment including blindness means impairment in vision that, even with correction, adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes both partial sight and blindness.

**Orthopedic Impairment** - Orthopedic impairment means a severe orthopedic impairment that adversely affects a child's educational performance. The term includes 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).

**Traumatic Brain Injury** - Traumatic brain injury means 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 child'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.

**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 (1) Is due to chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit disorder or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, and Tourette syndrome; and (2) Adversely affects a child's educational performance.

**Specific Learning Disability** - Specific learning disability means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

Disorders not included. Specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

**Deaf-blindness** - Deaf-blindness means concomitant hearing and visual impairments, the combination of which causes such severe communication and other developmental and educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for children with deafness or children with blindness.

**Multiple Disabilities** - Multiple disabilities means concomitant impairments (such as mental retardation-blindness or mental retardation-orthopedic impairment), the combination of which causes such severe educational needs that they cannot be accommodated in special education programs solely for one of the impairments. Multiple disabilities do not include deaf-blindness.