

Definitions of Special Education Terms and Acronyms

ADA: The ADA prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in employment, State and local government, public accommodations, commercial facilities, transportation, and telecommunications. It also applies to the United States Congress.

Accessibility: When a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally integrated and equally effective manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. It guarantees SWDs are provided with curriculum materials in necessary formats and technologies with appropriate features in a timely manner and at the same time as students without disabilities.

Accommodations: Changes that allow a person with a disability to participate fully in an activity. Examples may include extended time, different test format, and alterations to a classroom. The Case Study Committee (CSC) determines what accommodations are required and once an accommodation is on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), they are not optional. Accommodations are reviewed annually and will need to be modified on an annual basis. An *accommodation* changes how a student learns the material. A *modification* changes what a student is taught or expected to learn.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): A disorder that causes children to struggle with paying attention, being extremely active, and acting impulsively.

Accessibility Services/Disability Services (DS): Provides coordination of support services and accommodations for all qualified SWDs. Through collaboration and support of the entire campus community, the Accessibility Services Office ensures that all individuals have access to

college life at its fullest. Services and accommodations are determined individually based on disability documentation.

Assistive technology: Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

Confidentiality: IDEA requires procedures to provide a FAPE for all children with disabilities and are safeguards prohibiting the disclosure of any personally identifiable information. Clear guidelines have been set forth for public schools when collecting, storing, releasing, or destroying personally identifiable information on students.

Culture: The shared assumptions of individuals participating in an organization, identified through stories, special language, norms, institutional ideology, and attitudes that emerge from the individual or organizational behavior, and organizational web bound by a structure.

FAPE: An educational right of children with disabilities guaranteed by the IDEA. FAPE is defined as an educational program that is individualized to a specific child, designed to meet that child's unique needs, provides access to the general curriculum, meets the grade-level standards established by the school system, and from which the child receives educational benefit.

Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA): HIPAA of 1996 is United States legislation that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding medical information.

IDEA: The original legislation was written in 1975, guaranteeing SWDs a FAPE and the right to be educated with their nondisabled peers. Congress has reauthorized this federal law. The most recent revision occurred in 2004.

IEP: Education plan provided to all students with a disability that have been found eligible for special education services and it is a written plan that specifies the individual educational needs of the student and what special education and related services are necessary to meet the student's unique instructional needs.

Individualized Transition Plan: This plan starts at age 16 and includes a statement about transition out of public education. This plan consists of goals that address areas of postschool activities, postsecondary education, employment, community experiences, and daily living skills. The plan includes services needed to achieve these goals.

Intellectual Disabilities: A disability characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills; deficit in cognitive functioning prior to the acquisition of skills through learning. The intensity of the deficit is such that it interferes in a significant way with individual normal functioning as expressed in limitations in activities and restriction in participation (disabilities).

Least Restrictive Environment: The placement of a special needs student in a manner promoting the maximum possible interaction with the general school population. Placement options are offered on a continuum, including regular classroom with no support services, regular classroom with support services, designated instruction services, special day classes, and private special education programs.

Modification: An adjustment to an assignment or a test that changes the standard or what the test or assignment is supposed to measure.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB): Passed in 2001 to improve student achievement, reform educational programs ensure that all children have the fair, equal opportunity to obtain a high-quality education, and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging state academic achievement standards

Specific Learning Disability: A condition giving rise to difficulties in acquiring knowledge and skills to the level expected of those of the same age, especially when not associated with a physical handicap.

Special Education Advocates or IEP Advocates: These help parents write appropriate IEPs and attain special education services for their child with a disability from their public-school system.

Specially Designed Instruction (SDI): As detailed in IDEA legislation, includes structured collaboration and delineated roles for each teacher, and emphasis on one-on-one instruction between students and special education teachers.

SOP: Documents a child's academic achievement and functional performance including recommendations on how to assist the child in meeting the child's postsecondary goals. It is provided to a child whose eligibility for special education services has terminated "due to graduation from secondary school with a regular diploma, or due to exceeding the age eligibility for a free appropriate public education under State law" (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 [IDEA]).

Transition Services: These identify each student's long-range goals relative to postsecondary education (including their strengths, preferences, and interests) vocational education, integrated employment continuing adult education, adult services an independent living.

Universal Design of Learning (UDL): A set of principles for designing curriculum that provides all individuals with equal opportunities to learn. UDL is designed to serve all learners, regardless of ability, disability, age, gender, or cultural and linguistic background. UDL provides a blueprint for designing goals, methods, materials, and assessments to reach all students, including those with diverse needs.

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