

Special Education Terms

Information for Parents

Navigating the special education services provided by your school can be confusing and full of unfamiliar terms. The following are some of the terms you may hear as you work to support your child's success.

- ▶ **504 Plan:** A plan developed to ensure that students with disabilities receive the accommodations they need to succeed in the regular classroom
- ▶ **Accommodations:** Alterations that enable a student to work around a disability, without a change in the curriculum (for example, giving answers orally instead of in writing)
- ▶ **Annual Review (AR):** Yearly meeting of an IEP team to assess a student's needs and progress
- ▶ **Assessment:** An evaluation used to identify a student's strengths, weaknesses, and progress
- ▶ **Assistive Technology (AT):** Technology devices used to help students perform tasks that would otherwise be difficult or impossible for them
- ▶ **Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP):** A plan specifically targeting one to three of a student's undesirable or disruptive classroom behaviors
- ▶ **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):** The right to equal educational opportunities
- ▶ **Individualized Education Program (IEP):** A document that defines the special education services to be delivered to students who qualify, as defined by IDEA (There are 13 categories of disabilities that make students eligible for an IEP.)
- ▶ **IEP Team:** The group of individuals who meets to discuss and make decisions on a student's IEP. An IEP team typically includes parents, teachers, counselors, and other special education staff.

- ▶ **Inclusion:** The opportunity for students with disabilities to learn alongside their non-disabled peers in general education classrooms
- ▶ **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** The law that guarantees educational rights for students with disabilities
- ▶ **Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA):** In 2004, Congress reauthorized IDEA and renamed it IDEIA.
- ▶ **Intelligence Quotient (IQ):** The score derived from cognitive (intelligence) testing
- ▶ **Interventions:** Instructional methods designed to target a student's educational needs
- ▶ **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** A requirement stating that, as much as possible, students with disabilities must be taught in the same setting as students without disabilities
- ▶ **Modifications:** Changes (or adaptations) to what is being taught or expected of a disabled student, making it possible for them to participate in a classroom with students who have no disabilities (for example, giving an easier assignment)
- ▶ **Outcomes:** The specific, short-term, measurable goals included in an IEP
- ▶ **Performance-Based Tests:** Assessments that measure a student's academic performance and eligibility for special education services
- ▶ **Resource Teacher:** A special education teacher who helps students with learning difficulties
- ▶ **Response to Intervention (RTI):** The process by which the success of an intervention is examined and modified
- ▶ **Special Education:** Instruction that is specifically designed to bolster the success of qualified students

For a comprehensive list of terms, visit specialeducationguide.com/special-education-dictionary.