

GLOSSARY OF SPECIAL EDUCATION TERMS

- **Student with a Disability:** A child who has been evaluated and determined to have a qualifying disability and need special education.
- **Compensatory Education (“Comp Ed”):** Make up services owed to a child with a disability who did not receive services listed in her Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or did not receive a free, appropriate public education (“FAPE”).
- **Evaluation Report (ER):** The report of the special education evaluation, which must be provided to a parent.
- **Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA):** An FBA is an assessment to identify the reasons for a specific student behavior and to help the IEP team select appropriate interventions to address the behavior. An FBA must be conducted if a child’s behavior was a manifestation of her disability unless an FBA has already been completed.
- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** A federal law that requires Pennsylvania and other states to ensure that eligible children with disabilities receive a “free appropriate public education” in the “least restrictive environment” and procedural safeguards.
- **Individualized Education Program (IEP):** A written education plan, developed by the parent and the school district, that, among other things, sets out the child’s educational goals, how progress will be measured, what special education and related services the district agrees to provide, and the extent to which the child will be educated in a regular classroom and with what supports.
- **Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Team:** The IEP Team is a group of specific school staff, parents, and any persons the school or the parent invite, which develops the IEP for an eligible child.
- **Initial Evaluation:** The first evaluation for a student with a suspected IDEA disability. Parental consent is required to conduct an initial education evaluation unless a court issues an order authorizing another person to consent to the initial evaluation.
- **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** The IDEA mandates that an eligible child must be educated together with students who do not have disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate to the child’s needs with the “supplemental aids and services” needed to support the child in the regular school environment.
- **Manifestation Determination:** When a school district proposes to suspend a child who is receiving special education for more than 15 days in a school year or 10 or more days in a row,

a team must determine if: the child's conduct was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or the conduct was the direct result of the school entity's failure to implement the IEP. The IEP Team decides whether these criteria are met in which case the child is entitled to special protections in the discipline process.

- **Notice of Recommended Educational Placement/Prior Written Notice (NOREP/PWN):** The purpose of this notice is to summarize for the parents the recommendations of the local education agency (LEA) for the child's educational program and other actions taken by the LEA.

- **Parent (under the IDEA):** A biological or adoptive parent, foster parent, guardian (but not the State), an individual acting as a parent in the place of a parent, with whom the child lives, or a surrogate parent appointed by a school district or court. The biological parent continues to be the IDEA parent unless she is not available or active.

- **Permission to Evaluate-Consent Form:** A written document that gives the school district/LEA to evaluate the child/youth for special education services.

- **Permission to Evaluate-Evaluation Request Form (PTE-Evaluation Request Form):** A written document requesting an evaluation for special education services. This does not provide consent for the school district/LEA to evaluate the child/youth.

- **Transition Plan:** A student aged 14 or older must have a transition plan in the IEP that sets out the goals for the student when he or she graduates and the transition services to be provided.

- **Special Education Decision Maker/Surrogate Parent:** Distinguished from the Education Decision Maker, this individual must be appointed by a local educational agency when the child does not have an active parent who can be located and there is no foster parent who can perform this role. The individual has the same rights as the child's parent in the special education system. When the child in a facility has no parent available, the court can appoint a special education decision maker/surrogate parent. A court can also appoint an education guardian whenever that is in the child's best interest.

Source: Education Law Center, 2010.