



AAC	Augmentative and alternative communication.
ABA	Applied behavioral analysis - the science of human behavior based upon the principles of learning theory to improve socially significant behaviors to a meaningful degree.
ADA	Average daily attendance - refers to the number of students present at a school when attendance is taken --the higher the number the greater the allocation of money to the school.
ADA	The Americans with Disabilities Act.
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (not disability categories under IDEA, but medical diagnoses).
AEM (AIM)	Accessible Educational Materials (also known as Accessible Instructional Materials).
APE	Adapted physical education - an instructional support service provided to students needing adaptations or modifications to grade-level essential elements of PE.
AI	Auditory impairment (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules).
ARD	Admission, Review and Dismissal - refers to a process of entering, annually reviewing, or exiting the special education system. In Texas, this term is also used to refer to the annual meeting at which a student's evaluation or progress is reviewed and the individualized education program (IEP) is determined. In other states, this meeting is called the IEP meeting.
ARD Committee	A group of persons, specified by state rule, who must be present to determine the entrance, exit, or annual IEP for a student served under IDEA. In Texas, persons required for the ARD Committee include: the parent(s) of the child; a regular education teacher; the child's special education teacher; a representative of the school district (often a school administrator); others who have a special knowledge or expertise concerning the child (including related services personnel) at the discretion of the school district; someone who can interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results (can be one of the persons already listed); and, when possible, the child with a disability.
AT	Assistive technology - AT must be considered by the ARD committee when determining the needs of a child who receives special education. By state law, "assistive technology device" means any device, including equipment or a product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a student with a disability.
AU	Autism (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules). The most recent term for the medical diagnosis, as accepted under DSM-V, is autism spectrum disorder.

BIP (also BMP)	Behavior intervention plan or behavior management plan - Developed by the IEP team for any student needing positive behavioral supports.
CBI	Community-based instruction - carryover of curriculum into community settings.
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations.
CHIP	Children's Health Insurance Program.
COE	Commissioner of Education - Appointed by the governor and part of the executive branch. This individual works with the legislature and the publicly elected State Board of Education to develop policy and rules that govern public education in Texas.
DARS	Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services. The state agency known as DARS was dissolved as of September 1, 2016; its programs and services were divided and transferred to either the Texas Workforce Commission or to Texas Health and Human Services Commission.
DB	Deaf-Blind (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules).
DS	Developmental Services – services provided by an Early Intervention Specialist (a state specialty certification).
ED	Emotional disturbance (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules).
EI	Early intervention - programs and services for children ages 0 – 3 years, and their families.
ECI	Texas' Early Childhood Intervention – a system of programs that administer early intervention to children 0 – 3yrs in Texas in compliance with IDEA Part C
ECSE	Early Childhood Special Education – a federal and state mandated program for young children with disabilities. It refers to the range of special education services that apply specifically to children between the ages of 3 – 5 prior to kindergarten. (Formerly known as the Pre-School Program for Children with Disabilities PPCD).
EIS	Early Intervening Services - Services for students in prekindergarten through grade 12 who are not currently identified as needing special education or related services, but who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment. The purpose of these services is to prevent unnecessary referrals to special education.
ELL	English language learners – formerly known as LEP (limited English proficiency). ELL students who have been mainstreamed into only general education classes.
ESEA	In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson passed the Elementary and Secondary Education Act as a part of the "War on Poverty." ESEA

emphasizes equal access to education and establishes high standards and accountability. The law authorizes federally funded education programs that are administered by the states. The ESEA has been amended twice. In 2002, Congress amended ESEA and reauthorized it as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The most recent reauthorization was the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law on December 10, 2015.

ESL	English as a Second Language. Students are pulled out of their general education classes for specialized, intensive English language instruction.
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act, signed into law on December 19, 2017, is the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The ESSA provides for “rigorous and comprehensive state-developed plans designed to close achievement gaps, increase equity, improve the quality of instruction, and increase outcomes for all students.”
ESC	Educational Service Center - refers to the Texas Education Agency regional education service center(s). There are 20 regional education service centers in the state providing training and other resources to school districts. Region 4 ESC serves the Harris County area.
ESY	Extended School Year (also known as “summer school”). The need for ESY is determined by the student’s IEP team on an individual basis based on whether the child needs extended school year services in order to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). It is typically provided to students who have exhibited regression or have a reasonable expectation of regression over the summer, but may also be provided for a student under other special circumstances. This includes “emerging skills” or “breakthrough opportunities” when the child is in a critical stage of developing a skill and it is likely that the current level of acquisition will be lost due to the interruption of summer vacation.
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education - an entitlement of all children under IDEA.
FBA	Functional Behavioral Assessment - functional behavioral assessment is generally considered to be a problem-solving process for addressing student problem behavior. It relies on a variety of techniques and strategies to identify the purposes of specific behavior and to help IEP teams select interventions to directly address the problem behavior.
FERPA	Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act - FERPA protects students’ and families’ rights in school-related matters, including privacy/confidentiality of information.
FI IE	Full and individual initial evaluation - an evaluation done to determine eligibility for special education services under IDEA.
HIPAA	Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996.- HIPAA protects health insurance coverage and health information privacy for

workers and their families when they change or lose their jobs.

ICS	In-class support - A general education instructional arrangement where a special education teacher or paraprofessional comes for specific periods to assist with curriculum modifications for students whose IEPs require modifications.
ID	Intellectual Disability (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules). The former term was mental retardation (MR).
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - federal legislation that ensures that students with a disability are provided with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) that is tailored to their individual needs.
IEE	Independent educational evaluation - an evaluation, usually at parent request, completed by a professional outside the student's campus team.
IEP	Individualized Education Program - An individually-tailored, student-centered written education plan designed to meet the learning needs of a child, ages 3 through 21 years, who is receiving special education.
IFSP	Individualized Family Service Plan - A family-centered written treatment plan that specifies the early intervention services that will be provided to a qualifying child aged 0 to 3 years under IDEA Part C.
LD	Learning Disability (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules).
LEA	Local education agency (i.e., an independent school district).
LEP	Limited English proficiency – a prior term, now known as English language learner (ELL).
L.I.F.E. Skills	Learning in Functional Environments - a specific educational program to instruct students needing heightened emphasis on activities of daily living and community-based instruction. The term "LIFE Skills" has, over the years, become a common name for self-contained classrooms, even though the curriculum it is named for is no longer widely used.
LRE	Least restrictive environment - refers to a placement or instructional arrangement for a student with disabilities served under IDEA; mandates services in the least segregated setting possible.
MD	Multiple Disabilities (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules).
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports is an umbrella framework that includes Response to Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) frameworks. The framework is grouped into Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports.
NCEC	Non-categorical early childhood (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules) - A student between the ages of 3-5 who is evaluated as having an intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, a specific

learning disability, or autism may be described as non-categorical early childhood.

NCLB	The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 -- NCLB was a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965). It supported standards-based education reform based on the premise that setting high standards and establishing measurable goals can improve individual outcomes in education. In 2016, the Every Student Succeeds Act, the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, was passed. It includes measures to reform some aspects of the NCLB.
OCR	The Office of Civil Rights - The OCR enforces federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the Department of Education (ED).
OHI	Other health impairment (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules) - A student with other health impairment is one who has chronic or acute health problems such as asthma, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, diabetes, epilepsy, a heart condition, hemophilia, lead poisoning, leukemia, nephritis, rheumatic fever, sickle cell anemia, or Tourette's Disorder that adversely affects educational performance.
OI	Orthopedic impairment (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules) - OI 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).
O & M	Orientation and Mobility - A related service that is provided to blind or visually impaired children by qualified personnel to enable those students to attain systematic orientation to and safe movement within their environments in school, home, and community.
OSEP	Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education.
PBIS	Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports – School-wide systems of support that include proactive strategies for defining, teaching, and supporting student behaviors to create positive environments for learning.
PDD	Pervasive Developmental Disorder - not a disability category under IDEA, but, was a medical diagnosis under the DSM-IV. PDD is no longer included as a diagnosis under DSM-V, but falls under the umbrella term, "autism spectrum disorder."
PECS	Picture exchange communication system - functional communication for students with no communication or system of communication.
PEIMS	Public Education Information Management system – Texas' System for data collection and reporting on activities in special education.

PLAAFP	Present level of academic achievement and functional performance - determined by IEP/ARD team.
PPCD	Texas' Preschool Programs for Children with Disabilities (programs in schools for ages 3 - 5yrs). Previous terminology that was renamed Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) in Texas in the 2019-20 school year.
REED	Review of existing evaluation data - must take place as part of an initial evaluation, if appropriate, and as part of any reevaluation of a child under the IDEA. ARD committee members must review the existing evaluation data about the student to determine the scope of the evaluation. If the REED is part of a reevaluation, members must decide what additional assessment, if any, is needed to decide whether additions or modifications will be made to the student's special education and related services.
Rtl	Response to Intervention - An evidence-based, problem-solving approach to public education that is applicable to <i>all</i> children (regular and special education students). Rtl includes frequent data collection regarding progress in both academic and behavior arenas, and provides for immediate intervention when data shows student progress that is behind expected progress. Rtl first assumes the problem is with instruction, and problem-solving efforts are initially targeted at improving the quality or increasing the intensity of instruction. Although special education and related service professionals may be part of problem-solving teams at all levels of Rtl, a formal referral for special education is the last option in this approach.
SBOE	State Board of Education--along with the Commissioner of Education, oversees the state public education system. Members of this regulatory body are elected by the public. The board's authority comes from the state legislature.
SEA	State education agency - In Texas, this is the Texas Education Agency, or TEA.
Section 504 -	A federal law that guarantees certain rights to individuals with disabilities and prohibits discrimination against them. It ensures that a child with a disability has equal access to an education. Unlike the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 does not require the school to provide an individualized educational program (IEP).
SHARS	School Health and Related Services program – the Medicaid program Texas districts can access to bill for special education and related services for their Medicaid-eligible students. The services must be specified in the student's IEP. Only services provided directly to the student or in the presence of the student can be reimbursed.
SI	Speech or Language Impairment (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules).

SLD	Specific Learning Disability – 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.
SSI	Supplemental Security Income - A United States government program that provides stipends to low-income people who are either aged (65 or older), blind, or disabled.
SSS	Scotopic sensitivity syndrome - A visual perceptual disorder.
STAAR	State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness.
STAAR A	Accommodated version of STAAR with embedded supports designed to help students with disabilities access assessed content. Supports include visual aids, graphic organizers, clarifications of construct-irrelevant terms and text-to speech functionality.
STAAR Alternate 2	Assessment that meets federal requirements mandated under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Designed by TEA to assess students in grades 3-8 and high school with significant cognitive disabilities who receive special education services.
STAAR-EOC	End of Course State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness - Students not receiving section 504 or special education services are required by Texas Education Code (TEC) §28.025(c) to meet all curriculum requirements and pass all five STAAR end-of-course (EOC) assessments in order to receive a Texas high school diploma.
TAC	Texas Administrative Code – Texas’ laws.
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules)
TEA	Texas Education Agency. TEA is responsible for providing resources and quality control to ensure local education agencies implement the state education code passed by the legislature and the rules developed by the Commissioner and/or the SBOE.
TEACCH	Treatment and Education of Autistic and Related Communication Handicapped Children (comprehensive program of structured learning).
TEKS	Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (state mandated education curriculum K-12).
TELPAS	Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System – designed by TEA along with TELPAS Alternate to assess the progress that limited English proficient (LEP) or English language learners (ELL) make in learning the English language.

UDL Universal Design for Learning – a framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn. It looks at the “Why”, “What”, and “How” of learning.

USDE United States Department of Education.

VI Visual impairment (including blind) - (a disability category under IDEA and SBOE rules).

VR Vocational rehabilitation.

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