

ADVOCACY

Alphabet Soup: A Glossary of Commonly Used Terms and Abbreviations

ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act. A Federal law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in the areas of employment, public transportation, services provided by state and local government, services and accommodations offered by private businesses, and telecommunication access for people with communication impairments.

ASSESSMENT - Tests given to a child by qualified professionals to determine the child's current academic levels in such areas as math, reading, and spelling.

BIP - Behavioral Intervention Plan (sometimes referred to as a Behavior Management Plan or a Behavior Support Plan). A BIP includes practical and specific strategies and positive supports designed to increase or reduce certain behaviors.

CASE MANAGER / SERVICE COORDINATOR / TEAM LEADER - An individual who coordinates and facilitates services for a child and family.

COMAR - Code of Maryland Regulations interprets State laws governing State agencies.

DUE PROCESS - This is a formal, legal way to resolve a dispute between parents and the school system about a child's educational program.

EVALUATION - A review of assessments and other information, collected from a variety of sources, used to determine a child's eligibility for, and dismissal from, special education services. Evaluation also determines what kinds of supports and services a child will receive.

ESY - Extended School Year services. Services provided to children who do not make reasonable educational progress during the school year without services during the summer.

FAPE - Free Appropriate Public Education.

FBA - Functional Behavioral Assessment. FBA is a process for gathering information that can be used to determine why a person is exhibiting unacceptable behavior and what is needed to change the behavior.

IDEA - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. This is the name of the federal law that guarantees all children with disabilities the right to a free appropriate public education.

IEE - Independent Educational Evaluation. Assessment procedures conducted by a qualified individual who is not employed by the public agency responsible for the education of the student.

IEP - Individualized Education Program. The legally binding, annual document that describes what special education and related services your child is to receive.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM (IEP) TEAM - This multidisciplinary team is made up of regular and special education teachers, other professionals, and the parents of the child. The team is responsible for identifying and evaluating children with disabilities who are in need of special education; developing, reviewing their progress on, or revising an IEP; determining the student's placement; and determining that the child is no longer a child with a disability.

IFSP - Individualized Family Service Plan. This document describes what services an infant or toddler less than three years of age, and his or her family will receive. It is developed in collaboration with the family and professionals.

INFANTS & TODDLERS PROGRAM - This is the early intervention amendments to IDEA. It is the statewide program that requires services for children from birth to three years of age, including an individualized family service plan (IFSP) and case management services. Each county administers this program differently.

LCC - Local Coordinating Council. A group of people representing all of the city or county level agencies that provides services to children. The LCC makes recommendations for residential school placements.

LMB - Local Management Board. Established to implement the Systems Reform Initiative, and functions to develop jurisdictional plans for the provision of services and to allocate resources.

LRE - Least Restrictive Environment. All children with disabilities have a right to be educated in the least restrictive environment, with supports and services, in which their IEPs can be implemented. This means that a child can be in a class with his non-disabled peers.

LSS - Local School System (sometimes referred to as LEA - Local School System). Any of the 24 public, local school systems in Maryland responsible for educating your child.

MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION - Decision whether inappropriate and/or dangerous behavior is caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability; or is the direct result of the schools failure to implement the student's IEP. A manifestation determination may be required after a student has been removed from school as a disciplinary action.

MSDE - Maryland State Department of Education. The state agency that is responsible for monitoring local education agencies and for making sure that these agencies follow state and federal laws.

MEDIATION - This is the process of having a trained person try to help parents and the school system reach an agreement.

SECAC – Special Education Citizens’ Advisory Council. Each county has a council that works with the special education system to address student needs.

SESAC – State level Special Education Advisory Council provides input to the state department of education. SESAC’s are required by federal law.

SCC - State Coordinating Council. The SCC is made up of people from all of the state agencies that provide services to children.

SCREENING - Screening is the process of reviewing a child's situation to see if he or she may be disabled and in need of special education.

SEA - State Education Agency. The Maryland State Department of Education is the state education agency.

SECTION 504 - A federal law that prohibits any agency that gets federal money from discriminating against a person on the basis of disability.