

## Glossary of Terms

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**Academic**—Having to do with school subjects such as reading, writing, math, social studies and science.

**Access points**—Academic expectations written specifically for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. As part of the Florida Standards, access points reflect the essence or core intent of the standards that apply to all students in the same grade, but at reduced levels of complexity  
(<https://accesstofls.weebly.com/uploads/2/3/7/3/23739164/accesspointsbrochure.pdf>).

**Accommodations**—Changes that are made to the **way** students with disabilities learn and **how** they demonstrate performance. Accommodations include a wide range of techniques and support systems that help students with disabilities work around any limitations that result from their disability.

**Adaptive equipment**—Adaptive equipment refers to equipment that assists people with disabilities to engage in daily living activities and improve their ability to engage in the school environment.

**Age appropriate**—Describes materials, activities and experiences that are useful and suitable for persons of a particular age. For example, age-appropriate books for a teenager are different than age-appropriate books for a seven-year-old, even if the teenager reads on a second-grade level.

**Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC)** —All forms of communication, other than oral speech, that are used to express thoughts, needs, wants and ideas (<http://www.asha.org/public/speech/disorders/AAC/>). AAC includes special augmentative aids (e.g., picture and symbol communication boards and electronic devices) that help people express themselves to increase social interaction, school performance and feelings of self-worth.

**Assessment**—A process of collecting information about what a student knows and can do and what a student still needs to learn. Assessments may include giving tests, observing the student and evaluating the student's portfolio or work samples.

**Assistive technology (AT)**—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 the functional capabilities of a student with a disability (SWD). The term does not include a medical device that is surgically implanted or the replacement of that device. For more information on the use of technology for students with disabilities, visit please the following website:  
(<https://www.tlc-mtss.com/>).

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**Autism Spectrum Disorder**—A person who has an autism spectrum disorder has trouble communicating and interacting with others. The person may also repeat patterns of behaviors and activities. In order to qualify for programs and services for students with autism spectrum disorder, a student must meet all the requirements listed in the Florida State Board of Education Rule 6A-6.03023, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.; <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?id=6A-6.03023>).

**Career and technical education (CTE)**—Education related to the skills needed for a trade or technical career (<http://www.fldoe.org/workforce/>). It includes the knowledge, skills and dispositions that are important for students to become career ready, such as occupational-specific standards and technical content standards.

**Collaboration**— A style for direct interaction between at least two coequal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision making as they work toward a common goal.

**Collaborative models of support**—

- **Consultation**—A general education teacher (grades K–12) is providing instruction and a special education (ESE) teacher is providing consultation services for SWDs in the general education classroom, in accordance with a student’s IEP.
- **Inclusion Teaching/Support Facilitation**—Two teachers, one general and one special education (ESE) teacher (grades K-12), are providing instruction in the general education classroom. The ESE teacher provides services to individual or small groups of students on an individualized basis within the general education classroom, but not as a co-teacher.
- **Co-teaching/Team Teaching**—Two teachers, one general education and one special education (ESE) teacher, share responsibility for planning, delivering and evaluating instruction for all students in a class/subject for the entire class period.

**Cooperative learning**—The instructional use of small groups of students who work together to maximize their own and others’ learning. The essential components of cooperative learning include positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, social skills, structured group processes, individual accountability and personal responsibility.

**Critical friend**—A trusted person who provides added perspectives and feedback to an individual or group. A critical friend asks provocative questions, provides information and data to be examined through another lens, offers critical feedback related to a specific context of work and serves as an advocate for the success of the individual or group.

**Differentiated instruction**—A broad term that refers to a variety of classroom practices that allow for differences in students’ learning preferences, interests, prior knowledge and need to learn in social contexts. Teachers who differentiate instruction are responsive to the many and varied needs of students rather than taking a “one-size-fits-all” approach to learning. They recognize that they must plan and implement a variety of strategies to help each learner reach their highest potential.

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**Disability**—A condition that makes it hard for a person to learn or do things in the same ways as people without disabilities. A disability may be temporary or permanent.

**Exceptional Student Education (ESE)**—The name given in Florida to educational programs and services for students with special learning needs (including those who have disabilities and those who are gifted). It is sometimes called “special education.”

**Flexible Grouping**— Flexible grouping is a short-term grouping and regrouping practice that responds to student needs in alignment with the instructional objectives. It differs from the morecommon grouping practice in which students are placed in the same group or given whole-group instruction for all or most of the school year. Flexible groups are fluid.

**Functional behavioral assessment (FBA)**—FBA is a process to identify the function or purpose of an individual’s inappropriate behavior by examining the environment in which the behavior is occurring and identifying the variables that maintain the behavior (<http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7590/urlt/0107234-tap99-3.pdf>).

**General education and natural contexts**—All physical settings frequented by students without disabilities and the people and naturally occurring activities taking place in those settings, to include the following:

- Natural school settings (e.g., classrooms, cafeteria, football stadium, common areas);
- Community-based settings;
- Roles and contributions of the participants in natural settings, such as involvement in student presentations, volunteer activities, etc.; and
- Interpersonal relationships among the participants in natural settings, such as reciprocal learning and social interactions or norms among students and/or adults.

**Heterogeneous**—A heterogeneous classroom is one that reflects the rich diversity of students. Rather than grouping children based on their ability or achievement, a heterogeneous classroom is composed of students with varying interests, attitudes, talents, and backgrounds (Rubin, 2006). Research strongly supports the positive effects of heterogeneous groupings of students because of its noticeable effects on attitude toward school, increase of self-concepts as learners, relationships with peers, reduction of anxiety, and future aspirations.

**High-incidence disabilities**—Students with the most commonly occurring disabilities, such as a communication disorder (speech and language impairment), specific learning disability, mild/moderate cognitive disability or an emotional or behavioral disorder.

**In-Class Supports**—Specially Designed Instruction provided in the general education classroom, as designated by the student’s IEP. Includes co-teaching, support facilitation, and dual-certified models.

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**Inclusion (as defined in s. 1003.57, Florida Statutes [F.S.]—**A student with a disability receiving education in a general education regular class setting, reflecting natural proportions and age-appropriate heterogeneous groups in core academic and elective or special areas within the school community; a student with a disability is a valued member of the classroom and school community; the teachers and administrators support universal education and have knowledge and support available to enable them to effectively teach all children; and a student is provided access to technical assistance in best practices, instructional methods, and supports tailored to the student's needs based on current research.

([http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?mode=ViewStatutes&SubMenu=1&App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=1003.57&URL=1000-1099/1003/Sections/1003.57.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?mode=ViewStatutes&SubMenu=1&App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=1003.57&URL=1000-1099/1003/Sections/1003.57.html))

**Inclusive scheduling—**A team-planning process to schedule supports for students with disabilities in inclusive, general education classrooms. Students are scheduled for services and supports in general education classrooms based on their individual needs rather than their disability label. The inclusive scheduling process results in teacher master schedules that allow services to be provided where and when supports are needed

(<https://www.floridainclusionnetwork.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/FINAL-CueCard-Inclusive-Scheduling-11.19.18.pdf>).

**Individual educational plan (IEP)—**A written plan that describes the individual learning needs of a student with disabilities and the ESE services, supports, aids and accommodations and modifications that will be provided to that student.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)—**An important United States law regarding the education of students with disabilities (<http://idea.ed.gov/>). The IDEA requires that all students with disabilities be provided a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

**Interventions—**Interventions are the supports provided to student(s) that help them learn (it could include a specific curriculum, a teaching strategy, one-on-one, or small group assistance from a teacher). Interventions are often provided to individual students or small groups of students in order to give them extra help so that they can be successful in meeting their educational goals. The important thing to remember is that the intervention should match each student's learning needs

(<http://www.florida-rti.org/reveal/glossary/glossary.htm>).

**Least restrictive environment (LRE) —**The IDEA entitles all students with disabilities to a free, appropriate education in the least restrictive environment (<http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/root/statute,l,B,612,a,5>). This means that, to the maximum extent possible, children with disabilities are to be educated with children who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling or other ways of removing children with disabilities from the regular educational environment should only occur when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes cannot be achieved satisfactorily with the use of supplementary aids and services.

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**Low-incidence disabilities**—Students with a particular disability or combination of disabilities, such as blindness, low vision, deafness, hard-of-hearing, dual sensory impairment, the most significant cognitive disability, complex health issues, serious physical impairment, multiple disability, traumatic brain injury, and autism spectrum disorder, that generally do not exceed 1 percent of the school population.

**Modifications**—Changes made to **what** students with disabilities are expected to learn, and may include changes to content, requirements and expected level of mastery. Generally, these students will be those with a most significant cognitive disability and working toward completion of standards based on the state academic standards and access points.

**Multi-tiered system of support (MTSS)**—MTSS uses a data-based, problem-solving process that matches the intensity of support with student needs to most efficiently allocate resources to improve learning and behavior for all students (<http://www.floridarti.usf.edu/>). Effective core instruction and interventions are provided for all students, including students with disabilities, who need various levels of supports to master all academic standards. Three tiers describe the level and intensity of the instruction/interventions provided across a continuum of support: Tier One – core, universal instruction; Tier Two – supplemental intervention; and Tier Three – intensive intervention. The MTSS may also be referred to as Problem-Solving/Response to Intervention or Instruction (PS/RtI).

**Natural proportions**—SWDs are distributed throughout general education classes based on the natural proportion, or ratio, of students **with** disabilities to students **without** disabilities. **For example**, if the whole school student population is comprised of 12 percent SWDs, then classes should also reflect no more than 12 percent SWDs. Also, students with the most significant cognitive disability typically comprise no more than 1 percent of the total school population. Therefore, those students should be placed into general education classes at a ratio of no more than 1 percent of the total number of students in that class.

**Person-centered planning (PCP)**—Person-centered planning is a term used to describe an approach to assist individuals in planning for their futures (<http://project10.info/DPage.php?ID=103>). The goal of PCP is to aid an individual in developing meaningful life goals based on his or her strengths and talents, utilizing individual, natural and creative supports and services. PCP focuses on the person and their needs by putting them in charge of defining the direction for their lives, not on the systems that may or may not be available to serve them.

**Person first language**—A respectful, accurate way of communicating about and describing people. This approach puts the person first and the descriptors afterward. Instead of describing a person as a “Down Syndrome boy,” this approach describes him as “a boy with Down Syndrome.” People with disabilities are not their diagnoses or disabilities; they are people, first. When we adopt new ways of thinking and talking about people with disabilities, we’ll not only exert a positive influence on their lives, but also on our society as a whole.

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**Positive behavior intervention and support (PBIS)**—The application of evidence-based strategies and systems to increase academic performance, increase safety, decrease problem behavior and establish positive school cultures (<http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu/>).

**Problem-Solving/Response to Intervention or Instruction (PS/RtI)**—RtI is a problem-solving process that matches resources to individual student's needs (<http://www.florida-rti.org/floridamtss/index.htm>). It involves understanding where the student is struggling; designing a way to help the student (an intervention); monitoring how the student responds to the intervention; and changing, decreasing, or increasing the intensity of the intervention depending on how the student responds.

**Professional development (PD)**—Job-embedded learning opportunities that include formal and informal means of helping educators learn and apply new skills, develop new insights into pedagogy and their own practice and explore new or advanced understandings of evidence-based content and resources.

**Related services**—Those services provided by professionals as noted in the student's IEP, such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, speech-language pathology and audiology services and interpreting services

**School leadership team**—A team of individuals at the school level who have individual and unique strengths that, together, comprise a collective group of broad strengths. These broad categories of strengths include: executing, influencing, relationship building and strategic thinking (Rath & Conchie, 2008). School leadership teams generally include members representing school-based administrators, department or grade-level chairpersons, general education and special education lead teachers, instructional coaches, school services personnel, etc.

**School leaders**—Personnel who provide leadership for all aspects of the school, including curriculum, instruction, assessment, budgets, operations, etc. School leaders typically refer to school-based administrators who include principals and assistant principal(s).

**Self-determination**—Taking control and making decisions that affect one's own life. Self-determination skills help students with disabilities make choices, set goals and manage their own lives.

**Specially Designed Instruction**— Specially designed instruction as defined by IDEA regulations refers to adaptations to the content, methodology or delivery of instruction that:

- Address the unique needs of a child that result from the child's disability
- Ensure access to the general education curriculum so that the child can meet the educational standards that apply to all children
- Are guaranteed by IDEA and implemented in accordance with the individual educational plan (IEP) process

**Stakeholder groups**—Administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, related services personnel (speech/language therapist, occupational therapist, physical therapist), other certified personnel (e.g., guidance, academic and non-academic coaches), non-instructional personnel (e.g., paraprofessionals, front office

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staff, cafeteria staff), families of students with disabilities, families of students without disabilities.

**Student profile**—A comprehensive description of the abilities of a child with a disability, including academic, non-academic, social, communication, and behavior strengths and types or intensity of support (e.g., communication or peer supports) needed to participate fully and become independent. A student profile includes information about the student's abilities and support needs at school, home, in the community and when interacting with same-age peers without disabilities.

**Students with the most significant cognitive disability**—A most significant cognitive disability is more than a significant delay in intellectual and adaptive skills. A most significant cognitive disability is one in which the impact of the cognitive disability is permanent, prominent and pervasive. Furthermore, the disability affects all aspects of the student's academic, domestic, community living, leisure and vocational activities.

**Supplementary aids and services**—Aids, services and other supports that are provided in general education classes or other education-related settings that enable children with disabilities to be educated alongside children without disabilities, to the maximum extent possible. AT, adapted physical education and training in the use of braille or large print books are examples of supplementary aids and services (<http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/.root.statute.I.A.602.33>).

**Technical assistance (TA)**—The provision of targeted and customized supports by a professional or teacher, with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application or implementation of services by recipients.

**Transition services/postsecondary**—Activities that help a student move from school to post-school activities. For more information on transition planning for students with disabilities, visit the Project 10 (Transition Education Network) website: <http://project10.info/>

**Universal design for learning (UDL)**—UDL is a flexible approach to curriculum design that offers all learners full and equal opportunities to learn (<http://www.cast.org/>). Based on research on the diverse ways people learn, UDL offers practical steps for giving everyone the chance to succeed. For example, whereas some students might be motivated by working in large groups, others may prefer small groups with structured activities. UDL is based on three principles: 1) Provide multiple means of representation; 2) Provide multiple means of expression; and 3) Provide multiple means of engagement.

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