

# E Education•ary

## A compilation of education-related acronyms and definitions

### Educational Acronyms

<b>AAA</b>	Alabama's Alternative Assessment	<b>AFT</b>	American Federation of Teachers <a href="http://www.aft.org">www.aft.org</a>
<b>AACTE</b>	American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education <a href="http://www.aacte.org">www.aacte.org</a>	<b>AHSGE</b>	Alabama High School Graduation Exam
<b>AALECE</b>	Alabama Association of Licensed Early Care and Education (formerly AALCCC)	<b>ALEX</b>	Alabama Learning Exchange <a href="http://www.alex.state.al.us">www.alex.state.al.us</a>
<b>AASA</b>	American Association of School Administrators <a href="http://www.aasa.org">www.aasa.org</a>	<b>ALSDE</b>	Alabama State Department of Education <a href="http://www.alsde.edu">www.alsde.edu</a>
<b>AASB</b>	Alabama Association of School Boards <a href="http://www.theaasb.org">www.theaasb.org</a>	<b>AMSTI</b>	Alabama Math, Science and Technology Initiative
<b>AAYC</b>	Alabama Association for Young Children	<b>AOPA</b>	Alabama Occupational Portfolio Assessment
<b>ABPC</b>	Alabama Best Practices Center <a href="http://www.bestpracticescenter.org">www.bestpracticescenter.org</a>	<b>AP</b>	Advanced Placement
<b>ACCESS</b>	Advocacy Center for Children's Educational Success with Standards	<b>API</b>	Alabama Policy Institute
<b>ACE</b>	Alabama Conference of Educators <a href="http://www.goacoe.org">www.goacoe.org</a>	<b>AREN</b>	Alabama Research Education Network
<b>ACHE</b>	Alabama Commission on Higher Education	<b>ARFI</b>	Alabama Reading First Initiative
<b>ACT</b>	American College Testing	<b>ARI</b>	Alabama Reading Initiative
<b>ACTM</b>	Alabama Council of Teachers of Mathematics <a href="http://www.dpo.uab.edu/~tsmith/ACTM.htm">www.dpo.uab.edu/~tsmith/ACTM.htm</a>	<b>ARMT</b>	Alabama Reading and Math Test
<b>ACYF</b>	Administration on Children, Youth and Families	<b>ASCD</b>	Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development <a href="http://www.ascd.org">www.ascd.org</a>
<b>ADA</b>	Average Daily Attendance	<b>ASU</b>	Alabama State University
<b>ADD</b>	Attention Deficit Disorder	<b>AUM</b>	Auburn University at Montgomery
<b>ADECA</b>	Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs	<b>AYP</b>	Adequate Yearly Progress
<b>ADHD</b>	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	<b>BCER</b>	Business Coalition for Education Reform <a href="http://www.bcer.org">www.bcer.org</a>
<b>ADM</b>	Average Daily Membership	<b>BEOG</b>	Basic Education Opportunity Grant
<b>AEA</b>	Alabama Education Association <a href="http://www.myaea.org">www.myaea.org</a>	<b>BOE</b>	Board of Education
<b>AEFA</b>	American Education Finance Association	<b>CCSSO</b>	Council of Chief State School Officers <a href="http://www.ccsso.org">www.ccsso.org</a>
<b>AEIF</b>	Alabama Excellence Initiative Fund	<b>CEU</b>	Continuing Education Unit
<b>AEIS</b>	Alabama Early Intervention System	<b>CLAS</b>	Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools <a href="http://www.clasleaders.org">www.clasleaders.org</a>
<b>ADF</b>	Alabama Department of Finance	<b>CRT</b>	Criterion-Referenced Test
		<b>CSP</b>	Council for School Performance

**CSRD** Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration

**CSSO** Chief State School Officer

**CTFSE** Catastrophic Trust Fund for Special Education

**DIBELS** Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills

**DOE** U.S. Department of Education  
www.ed.gov

**DYS** Department of Youth Services

**ECE** Early Childhood Education

**ECS** Education Commission of the States  
www.ecs.org

**EIP** Early Intervention Program

**ELC** Education Leaders Council  
www.educationleaders.org

**ELL** English Language Learners

**ERIC** Education Resources Information Center  
www.eric.ed.gov

**ESEA** Elementary and Secondary Education Act

**ESL** English as a Second Language

**ETS** Education Testing Service  
www.ets.org

**FY** Fiscal Year

**GEPA** General Education Provisions Act

**HEA** Higher Education Act

**HOTS** Higher Order Thinking Skills

**HOUSSE** High, Objective, Uniform, State Standard of Evaluation

**IASA** Improving America's Schools Act

**IB** International baccalaureate

**IDEA** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

**IEP** Individualized Education Plan

**INTASC** Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium  
www.intasc.org

**IQ** Intelligence Quotient

**ISLLC** Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium

**K** Kindergarten

**K-12** Kindergarten through Grade 12

**LD** Learning Disability

**LEA** Local Education Agency

**LEP** Limited English Proficient

**MEP** Migrant Education Program

**MSSPAT** Mathematics and Science Scholarship/Loan Program for Alabama Teachers

**NAEP** National Assessment of Educational Progress (Nation's Report Card)  
www.nces.edu

**NAESP** National Association of Elementary School Principals  
www.naesp.org

**NASBE** National Association of State Boards of Education  
www.nasbe.org

**NASSP** National Association of Secondary School Principals  
www.nassp.org

**NBC** National Board Certification

**NBCC** National Board of Certified Counselors  
www.nbcc.org

**NBPTS** National Board of Professional Teaching Standards  
www.nbpts.org

**NATPR** National Average Teacher Pay Raise Bill

**NCES** National Center for Education Statistics

**NCLB** No Child Left Behind

**NEA** National Education Association  
www.nea.org

**NGA** National Governor's Association

**NRT** Norm-referenced Test

**NSF** National Science Foundation

**PARCA** Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama

**PEPE** Professional Education Personnel Evaluation

**Pre-K** Pre-kindergarten

**PSAT** Preliminary Scholastic Achievement Test

**PTA** Parent Teacher Association

**PTO** Parent Teacher Organization

**REACH** Realizing Every Alabama Child's Hopes

**SACS** Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

**SAT** Scholastic Aptitude Test and Stanford Achievement Test

**SAYRE** Southeastern Association for Year-Round Education

**SDE** State Department of Education

**SDFSC** Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program

**SDU** Staff Development Unit

**SECTQ** Southeast Center for Teacher Quality

**SEA** State Education Agency

**SEF** Southern Education Foundation

**SERVE** Southeastern Regional Vision for Education  
www.serve.org

**SRC** Southern Regional Council

**SREB** Southern Regional Education Board  
www.sreb.org

<b>SST</b>	Special Services Teacher
<b>TCT</b>	Teacher Certification Tests
<b>TESOL</b>	Teachers of English Speakers of Other Languages
<b>TIMSS</b>	Third International Math and Science Study
<b>TOEFL</b>	Test of English as a Foreign Language
<b>USDOE</b>	United States Department of Education www.ed.gov

## Education Dictionary

### A

**A+ Education Foundation:** Established in 1991, A+ is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that advances policies, programs and initiatives in Alabama’s K-12 education system that result in high achievement by every child.

**Ability Grouping:** Organizing students based on achievement rather than perception of ability. Unlike tracking, students remain together for a short period of time — part of the school day, a few days or a few weeks. See *tracking*.

**Acceleration:** The use of enrichment techniques and activities.

**Accountability:** Policies developed to hold schools, districts, educators, students and/or parents responsible or accountable for students’ academic performance. Students’ test scores are often used at a measure for accountability.

**Accreditation:** The process by which an organization authorizes teacher-education programs.

**Achievement Gap:** The difference in academic achievement of students of different cultural backgrounds, first languages or socioeconomic statuses and their peers.

**Achievement Test:** Standardized test that measures a student’s knowledge in specific academic areas such as reading, language, mathematics, social studies and science.

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):** The minimum level of improvement in achievement that states, school districts and schools must make each year.

**Advanced Placement (AP) Exams:** Tests administered by the College Board in various subjects such as European history, calculus and foreign language. High school students may take these exams in order to receive college credit.

**After School Programs:** After school programs are established by schools and community organizations to provide safe places and constructive activities to students. Research has linked after school programs to reductions in school discipline problems, teen pregnancy, drug use, violence and drop-out rates.

**Age Norms:** The average performance of an individual in various age groups.

**Alabama Alternative Assessment:** Alternative testing method for students with disabilities.

**Alabama Public School and College Authority:** Established by the Alabama Legislature for the construction, alteration, and improvement of public and other facilities for public education purposes in the State, including the procurement of sites and equipment.

**Alabama Reading and Math Test (ARMT):** The criterion-referenced portion of the SAT 10 test that includes questions more aligned with Alabama's standards. The ARMT is part of the statewide accountability system and will be used to determine which schools make Adequate Yearly Progress under *No Child Left Behind*.

**Alignment:** Process of making content standards, academic assessments and curricular instruction consistent so that they assist students in reaching state standards. See *standards*.

**Allocation:** Funds are set aside and distributed for a particular purpose.

**Alternative Assessments:** Other means or assessments than standardized tests to obtain information regarding what students know and areas in need of improvement.

**Alternative School:** A school created for students who function better in a different environment than a regular classroom. These schools may be institutions geared towards students with behavioral problems, magnet schools created for a special group of talented or interested students to study a limited curriculum, etc.

**Alternative Teacher Certification:** A way for individuals to become classroom teachers without completing an undergraduate or graduate program in teacher education. Alternative certification takes into account an individual's background and experience and usually requires some professional training in the first years of teaching. Alternative certification is most common in urban school systems that have difficulty hiring enough regularly qualified teachers. For example, Teach for America recruits recent college graduates to teach for two years in needy urban schools. Advocates point out that such programs provide a way for bright, idealistic young people to make a needed and worthy contribution. Critics say teaching requires extensive preparation and that such shortcuts undermine efforts to make teaching a true profession (ASCD).

**American College Testing (ACT) Assessment:** National college admission examination that includes of tests in English, reading, mathematics and science.

**American Federation of Teachers [AFT]:** One of the two large teacher unions (the other is the National Education Association). The AFT represents about 1 million teachers, school support staff, higher education faculty and staff, health-care employees, and state and municipal employees. The AFT is affiliated with the AFL-CIO (ASCD).

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** Federal law passed in 1990 that prohibits the discrimination against any disabled individual. This law applies not only to education services, but also to employment.

**Apprenticeship:** A structured work placement that combines secondary school and work-based learning activities.

**Assessment/Evaluation:** A means of measuring the ongoing progress of students, teachers and schools. Teachers and schools may find out what students know and areas in need of improvement. See *standardized tests*.

**At-Risk Student:** Any child that is in danger of dropping out of school before graduation. Broad categories usually include inner-city, low-income, and homeless children; those not fluent in English; and special-needs students with emotional or behavioral difficulties. Substance abuse, juvenile crime, unemployment, poverty, and lack of adult support are thought to increase a youth's risk factor.

**Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD):** A medical term used to describe students with severe inattention and impulsiveness. The disorder can be treated through medication, psychotherapy, behavior modification and training. The most common medications used to treat ADD are Ritalin, Dexedrine and Aderall.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):** A medical term used to describe students with inappropriate degrees of hyperactivity, inattention and impulsiveness. See ADD definition above.

**Authentic Assessment:** A type of student evaluation that requires a student to perform a task rather than select an answer from a ready-made list.

**Autism:** A neurological disorder that typically appears during the first three years of life. Children and adults with autism may have difficulties in verbal and non-verbal communication, social interactions and leisure or play activities.

**Average Daily Attendance [ADA]:** A measure that may be used in state school aid formulas to calculate state aid.

**Average Daily Membership [ADM]:** The total number of students (membership) of a school during a reporting period divided by the number of days school is in session during the period. In Alabama, ADM used in the Foundation Program.

## **B**

**Basal Readers:** Elementary school books that incorporate simple stories and practice exercises to reinforce the materials the students are learning.

**Basic Skills:** Include reading, writing and mathematics skills.

**Behavior Disorder (BD):** A term used in special education to describe students whose behavior interferes with their classroom performance. Such students have problems relating to other children and adults, exhibit inappropriate behaviors such as extreme anger, or are severely depressed or have a tendency to develop physical symptoms, etc.

**Behavioral Correction Plan:** Plan developed to address any needs of a student with continuous disciplinary problems upon return from an expulsion or suspension.

**Below Grade Level:** Any student performing below the achievement level on a standardized test for his/her grade level.

**Benchmarks:** Examples of performances that serve as standards against which students' achievement is scored.

**Block Scheduling:** Reconfiguring the school day by increasing the length of the traditional class period and decreasing the number of class periods a day.

**Business/Education Partnerships:** School-reform coalitions formed by private businesses and schools or districts.

## C

**Carnegie Unit:** One unit of credit awarded in grades 9 through 12 for a minimum of 150 hours of instruction during the regular school year or 120 hours of instruction during summer school.

**Catastrophic Trust Fund for Special Education:** A fund administered by the State Department of Education for the purpose of assisting local education agencies providing special education and related services for children with disabilities in catastrophic cases (Code of Alabama, Article II, section 16-39-30: 1991).

**Categorical Aid:** This may refer to either state or federal aid for public education which is designated for a specific purpose and is restricted to that purpose only (or may not be reallocated to another program).

**Character Education:** Includes education in basic values or virtues.

**Charter School:** An independent public school which has greater flexibility in designing programs to improve student learning and in meeting local, state and national education goals. Charter schools are exempt from most state and local rules, policies and regulations; however, charter schools must be approved by local and state boards of education.

**Child-Centered Schooling:** Education that focuses on the child, not the subject. Instead of using lectures, drills and rote learning, child-centered teaching utilizes individualized instruction and hands-on learning.

**Class Rank:** The relative position of a student in his or her graduating class, which is determined by Grade Point Average (GPA).

**Classroom Management:** The way a teacher organizes and administers routines to make classroom life as productive and satisfying as possible. What some people might describe narrowly as "discipline." For example, teachers with good classroom management clarify how various things (such as distribution of supplies and equipment) are to be done and may even begin the school year by having students practice the expected procedures.

**Coaching:** Educators use this term, commonly used in athletics, to refer to any situation in which someone helps someone else learn a skill. The late Mortimer Adler, who devised the Paideia program, maintained that coaching is one of three basic modes of teaching (the other two are presenting and leading discussions). Coaching is also considered an important part of training programs in which teachers learn new teaching methods. A process in which teachers visit each other's classes to observe instruction and offer feedback is known as peer coaching.

**Cognitive Sciences:** Area of study that focuses on how people think and learn.

**Cohort:** A group of students sharing the same experience at the same time. A particular group of people with something in common. For instance, a cohort might be a group of students who had been taught an interdisciplinary curriculum by a team of junior high school teachers. Researchers might want to track their progress into high school to identify differences in success of students in the cohort compared with students who had attended conventional classes in the same school (ASCD).

**Collaboration:** A relationship between individuals or organizations that enables the participants to accomplish goals more successfully than they could have separately. Educators are finding that they must collaborate with others to deal with increasingly complex issues. For example, schools and school systems often form partnerships with local businesses or social service agencies. Many schools teach students how to work with others on group projects. Some educators call this collaborative learning, although it is more commonly known as cooperative learning (ASCD).

**Collaborative Learning:** Working with other students in pairs or groups. See *cooperative learning*.

**College Board:** Non-profit organization that administers the SAT and AP programs.

**Community College:** Public two-year institution supported by the local community. Community colleges generally offer two types of curricula: transfer — the first two years of work for a bachelor's degree — and terminal — vocational training for employment.

**Community Partnerships:** Connections between local organizations and schools to help address students' needs and improve achievement.

**Comprehensive School Health Program:** An organized set of policies, procedures and activities designed to protect and promote the health and well-being of students and staff which has traditionally included health services, health education and an emphasis on a healthy school environment.

**Comprehensive School Reform:** An approach to school improvement that involves adopting a design for organizing an entire school rather than using numerous unrelated instructional programs. New American Schools, an organization that promotes comprehensive school reform, sponsors several different designs, each featuring challenging academic standards, strong professional development programs, meaningful parental and community involvement, and a supportive school environment (ASCD).

**Confidence Interval:** Confidence intervals provide more accurate estimates of student performance than raw test scores. The confidence interval is a range within which a student's true score is likely to fall.

**Constructivism:** Theory of learning that holds that children modify their understanding in light of new information.

**Constructed Response:** Test questions that require students to write their own responses.

**Content Clusters:** Groups of items measuring a similar skill on each Stanford 10 subtest. The Content Clusters are useful in identifying students' strengths and weaknesses in meeting specific learning objectives.

**Content Standards:** Standards regarding what students in K-12th grade should know and be able to do in the core content area.

**Contextual Learning:** Learning that enables students to test academic concepts via real-world applications. Students acquire knowledge through actual experience.

**Continuous Progress:** Term used to depict a curriculum model that allows each student to progress at his or her own pace.

**Cooperative Learning:** An instructional method in which students of all performance levels work together in small groups toward a group goal. Students share responsibility for each other's learning.

**Core Knowledge:** A school reform movement that emphasizes a solid core curriculum to help children establish strong foundations of knowledge at each grade level.

**Courses of Study:** Alabama's statewide curriculum is organized into courses of study. These courses of study are linked by subject area through all grade levels and provide an established, sound sequence of learning for students in each academic area.

**Creationism:** The view that human beings were specifically created by God and did not evolve from other forms of animal life through the process of natural selection. Advocates of scientific creationism believe that the creationist view should be taught alongside evolution in science classes. Opponents argue that creationism is a religious, not a scientific, position. They insist that the only ideas that should be taught in science classes are those that are based on scientific evidence and that are subject to rigorous scientific scrutiny (ASCD).

**Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRT):** Tests that compare a student's performance to a specific standard of acceptable performance instead of the performance of other students. The tests are designed to measure how thoroughly a student has learned a particular body of knowledge without regard to how well other students have learned it. Most nationally standardized achievement tests are norm-referenced, meaning that a student's performance is compared to how well students in the norming group did when the test was normed. Criterion-referenced tests are directly related to the curriculum of a particular school district or state and are scored according to fixed criteria (ASCD).

**Critical Thinking:** Mental process of acquiring information and evaluating it to reach a logical conclusion.

**Cultural Diversity:** Recognizing that students come from a variety of ethnic, geographic, economic and religious backgrounds.

**Curriculum:** The content of an instructional program.

## **D**

**Data:** Facts or figures from which inferences can be made.

**Data-Driven School Improvement:** The use of achievement test scores and data to develop strategies for school improvement.

**Decentralization:** Transfer of school policymaking and decision-making authority from federal to state level or from state level to districts or local schools.

**Decision-making Skills:** Thinking skills that enable students to solve problems. Skills include identifying problems, seeking alternative solutions, applying knowledge, evaluating alternatives and selecting courses of action.

**De-tracking:** doing away with tracking because of evidence that all children are capable of achieving valuable educational goals. See *ability grouping* and *tracking*.

**Developmental Stage:** The physical, social, biological, emotional, psychological and academic level of an individual child, rather than the actual chronological age.

**Developmentally Appropriate Practice:** Any activity involving young children that is based on knowledge of the stages of child development, while understanding that each child is unique and each child's experiences should match his or her developing abilities.

**Diagnostic Test:** Intensive, in-depth evaluation of a student's skills in a specific area. Diagnostic tests are used to determine the specific learning needs of individual students.

**Differentiated Instruction:** Teaching to each individual student's learning level.

**Direct Instruction:** Detailed instruction in specific skills. Instruction proceeds through demonstration of skills, guided practice, feedback and independent practice. The contents and skills are presented in a strict order.

**Disaggregated Data:** Data broken down by subgroups of students (e.g., by gender, race and age).

**Distance Learning:** Delivery of instruction via multimedia computers, satellite or teleconferencing when the teacher and the students are in different locations.

**Diversity:** In education, discussions about diversity involve recognizing a variety of student needs including those of ethnicity, language, socioeconomic class, disabilities, and gender. School reforms attempt to address these issues to help all students succeed. Schools also respond to societal diversity by attempting to promote understanding and acceptance of cultural and other differences (ASCD).

**Drills:** Targeted, repetitive exercises.

**Drop-out Rate:** The number of students who do not complete high school.

**Drug-Free School Zones:** Drug-free areas around schools created by the U.S. Congress and state legislatures in the 1980s. People convicted of possession or of use of illegal drugs in these areas are subject to increased legal penalties.

**Dyslexia:** Reading impairment, thought to be a genetic condition, in which children transpose letters.

## E

**E-Learning:** Use of the Internet in instruction.

**E-Rate:** Reduced rate for Internet access in public schools and libraries under the Telecommunications Act of 1996

**Early Childhood Education:** The education of young children. Many educators think of early childhood education as including children ages 3 through 7. Recent research information about the brain development of infants is causing many specialists to think of this period of rapid learning as beginning at birth (ASCD).

**Early Intervention Programs (EIP):** Programs provided from kindergarten through the fifth grade. The programs provide specialized instruction in smaller classes to students who are not performing at grade level.

**Earmarking:** The practice of reserving budgetary funds for a specific purpose.

**Echo Reading:** A program in which children read aloud along with an adult.

**Education Commission of the States (ECS):** A nonprofit organization whose purpose is to help governors, state legislators, state education officials, and others develop policies to improve the quality of education at all levels. The commission was formed in 1965 to help states approach education policy decisions in an organized fashion. Members include 49 states (all but Montana), three territories, and the District of Columbia (ASCD).

**Education for Handicapped Children Act (EHA):** Law passed in 1975 that states that special needs children have the right to a free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Revised in 1990 to become the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

**Educational Overburden:** Relates to school systems (usually urban school systems) claiming that the higher percentage of lower-income and educational disadvantaged students in their school systems is not only a financial burden, but one which requires special services and additional effort.

**Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA):** Federal law passed in 1965 that focuses on children from high-poverty communities and students at risk of education failure. The Act authorizes Title I, Safe and Drug Free Schools and Title VII programs.

**Emotional and Behavioral Disorders (EBD):** Disorders characterized by consistently aggressive, impulsive or withdrawn behavior (i.e. schizophrenia). EBDs impair personal, social, academic and vocational skills.

**English Immersion:** Instruction for bilingual students that is conducted entirely in English. Teachers deliver lessons in simplified English, so students can learn English and other academic subjects.

**English Language Learners (ELL):** Students who speak a language other than English and have not yet mastered English.

**English-only Movement:** Attempts to make English the only official language of the United States and to end bilingual education (NCEA).

**English as a Second Language (ESL):** Most commonly includes immersion as well as support to individuals in their native languages. Classes are typically composed of students who speak many different languages, but are not fluent in English.

**Enrichment: Programs** that supplement the regular academic curriculum to keep students interested in learning.

**Equalization Grants:** State funding to provide additional assistance to the poorest school districts. Equalization funding aims to reduce the disparities as to how much can be raised through local tax dollars between the wealthiest and poorest school districts in the state.

**Equity:** The goal of equity is to achieve a high-quality education for all students, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disabilities, or special needs. Studies show widespread inequities in financial support, classroom expectations, texts and technological resources, and quality of teaching, especially in inner cities and among poor populations. Because needs are greater in some situations than others, equal treatment is not necessarily equitable (ASCD).

**Evolution:** Refers to the theory of natural selection, which is the basis for modern studies of biology. Creationists oppose the teaching of natural selection in public schools, especially if it is not accompanied by the idea of creationism as an alternative explanation of biological differences.

**Exceptional Learners:** Students with an IQ in the bottom (mentally challenged) or top (gifted) three percent of the population or who have other physical or mental differences that affect learning.

**Experiential Education:** Education that stresses hands-on experience and activities instead of traditional classroom learning.

## F

**Flat Grant Program:** State aid formula that allocates an equal sum of dollars to each public school pupil in the state.

**Foundation Program:** A state equalization aid program that usually guarantees a certain foundation level of revenues or expenditures for each student or group of students, together with a minimum tax rate that each local school system must levy for educational purposes. In Alabama, ADM (average daily membership) is used in the calculation of the foundation program.

**Free Lunch Eligibility:** The number of students in a school whose family income makes them eligible to receive free lunch under the National School Lunch Act of 1946.

**Functional Illiteracy:** The inability to read or write well enough to perform many necessary tasks in life, such as writing a check, filling out a job application, reading a classified advertisement, or understanding a newspaper headline (ASCD).

## G

**General Education Development Exam:** The GED exam is a high school equivalency test that was first developed in 1942. The program is administered by the Center for Adult Learning and Educational Credentials of The American Council on Education. As of January 2002, the GED consists of five tests that cover language arts-reading, language arts-writing, social studies, science, and mathematics (ASCD).

**Gifted:** A term used to describe a student who demonstrates a high level of ability and who needs special instructional services to achieve at a level equal to his/her ability. Gifted students typically have IQ scores in the top three percent of the population.

**GOALS 2000:** A U.S. Department of Education program that provides grants to states and schools to meet specified national goals.

**Grade:** An assessment (normally by letter on a scale of A-F) of a student's performance on an examination, project, paper or in a course.

**Grade Inflation:** Grading in which most students receive grades at the top of the grade scale.

## H

**Hands-On Math, Science:** Teaching math and science by providing students with activities that requires the application of concepts through experiential learning instead of working only with paper, pencil and classroom lectures.

**Head Start:** A federal program that provides pre-schoolers of low socio-economic status with education, nutrition, health and social services at special centers based in schools and community settings throughout the country. The program is designed to help prepare disadvantaged children for school.

**Heterogeneous Grouping:** Including students with different ability levels in the same class.

**High Stakes Testing:** Making a decision based on a single evaluation or test (e.g., an exam given for high school graduation).

**Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS):** The thought processes beyond acquiring and understanding facts (e.g., using facts, taking ideas apart, creating new ideas, critically evaluating ideas, etc.).

**Home Rule:**

**Home Schooling:** The practice of teaching children at home rather than sending them to school. The home schooled population is growing in the United States.

**Homogeneous Grouping:** Grouping students with similar ability levels in the same class.

**Horizontal Equity:** Equal treatment of equals.

## I

**Illiteracy:** Lack of the skills needed in a literate society. Whereas literacy once meant minimal ability to read and write, the term is now used to refer to many types of knowledge and skills, such as computer literacy. People may also speak of scientific, mathematical, economic, or musical literacy (ASCD).

**Immersion:** As used in bilingual education programs, immersion means having students learn a second language by speaking, hearing, and reading it all day (or part of the day), including being taught several subjects in that language (ASCD).

***In Loco Parentis:*** “In the place of a parent.” Legal requirement that a teacher act towards a pupil as a parent could be expected to act. Teachers and schools can be held liable for a student when at school.

**In-School Suspension (ISS):** An alternative to Out-Of-School Suspension for less severe rule infractions. The goal of ISS is to remove students from interactions with their peers.

**In-service:** Also written as in-service, this is the continuing education needed by people in most professions when they have completed their pre-service training and are employed. In education, in-service training or education is now usually called staff development or professional development.

**In-Service Workshop:** Workshops attended by teachers and administrators on various topics related to education.

**Inclusion:** The practice of educating all children in the same classroom, including children with physical, mental, and developmental disabilities. Inclusion classes often require a special assistant to the classroom teacher. In a fully inclusive school or classroom, all of the children follow the same schedules; everyone is involved in the same field trips, extracurricular activities, and assemblies (ASCD).

**Independent School:** A private school that is not part of a school system and is funded by tuition and private grants.

**Independent Study:** Self-directed learning program driven by student interest.

**Indicator:** A statistic, such as the percentage of students attending school daily, used as evidence of success in accomplishing an abstract goal, such as student interest in learning. The long-term results of education are difficult to measure, so people use measurable indicators — such as drop-out rates, honors won, and test scores — to help judge school quality.

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP):** A plan developed by a student’s parent and teachers that outlines the student’s program of study and the particular education services the child receives.

**Individualized Instruction:** Content and pacing of instruction geared toward students’ individual learning styles, abilities, needs and goals.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** Basic federal law relating to special education. The law was passed in 1990 and requires public schools to provide a free and appropriate public education to disabled school-aged children ages 3 through 21.

**Inquiry Learning:** A learning method that involves students using a variation of the scientific method of inquiry to study a topic in depth. Students may be required to analyze real world problems, formulate hypotheses, collect and analyze data and draw conclusions.

**Instruction:** Refers to the methods that teachers use to convey academic content and materials.

**Integrated Curriculum:** Academic and occupational subject matter taught together to emphasize the relationships among the disciplines.

**Intelligence Quotient (IQ) Tests:** Tests that are intended to measure an individual's mental capacity. However, IQ tests are highly controversial because critics claim the tests only measure a narrow band of intellectual strengths and are biased against minorities. The IQs of about 95 percent of the population are between 70 and 130. Below 70 is considered retarded and above 130 is considered gifted.

**Interactive Learning:** Communication and interactions between the students and the teachers occurs during the instruction.

**Interdisciplinary Learning:** Instruction that applies the methodology, subject matter and language from more than one discipline to examine a central issue, problem or topic.

**Intersessions:** The time-off during sessions in year-round (alternative calendar) schools. Intersessions provide time for remediation and enrichment and allow students who fall behind to get additional instruction.

**Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS):** Achievement tests given to students throughout the country. Replaced by the Stanford 10 Achievement tests in Alabama.

## J

**Job-embedded Professional Development:** Continuous learning opportunities for teachers that are part of their everyday activities. For example, grade-level meetings to discuss student achievement data, mentoring, and group curriculum planning.

**Job Shadowing:** A career exploration activity that entails a student following an employee for a day or more to gain insight into a particular occupation.

**Joint Work:** Shared responsibility for tasks (e.g., team teaching, curriculum committees or other jobs) that create interdependence among teachers. Joint work promotes on-the-job learning by providing opportunities for interactions among teachers.

**Journaling:** Informal writing exercise where students record their thoughts and experiences.

## K

**K-12:** This term refers to kindergarten through grade 12 or the educational levels in the public school systems of the state.

## L

**Lead Teachers:** Teachers who have broader responsibilities and higher salaries than other teachers but who continue to work with students as regular classroom teachers, at least part time. The idea for lead teachers was proposed as a way to improve the quality of schooling in 1986 in the report *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century* from a task force that included leaders of the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and leaders in business and government. The task force noted that education is different from most professions in that opportunities for career advancement are relatively limited. Despite various efforts to improve the status and rewards of teaching, few of today's teachers hold positions that could be considered lead teacher roles (ASCD).

**Learning Contract:** An agreement with the school through which a parent or child makes a verbal or written commitment to the student's education.

**Learning Disability (LD):** A term used to describe a disorder in one of the basic psychological processes. These students may have difficulty in listening, thinking, speaking, writing, spelling or doing mathematical calculations that may be addressed through alternative educational programming and assessment.

**Learning Styles:** Differences in the way students learn more readily. Scholars have devised numerous ways of classifying style differences, including cognitive style (the way a person tends to think about a learning situation), tendency to use particular senses (seeing, hearing, touching), and other characteristics, such as whether the person prefers to work independently or with others. Advocates interpret research as showing that teaching underachievers in ways that complement their strengths can significantly increase their scores on standardized tests. For example, strongly auditory students learn and recall information when they hear it, whereas kinesthetic youngsters learn best through activities such as role playing or floor games (ASCD).

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** A federal procedural safeguard that requires children with disabilities to be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with students who are not disabled (inclusion).

**Life-long Learning:** The idea that, because people in the modern world must continue learning all their lives, schools should teach children how to learn rather than (or in addition to) teaching them fundamental knowledge and skills. Also refers to changing the mission of public schools from teaching only children through age 18 to providing educational opportunities to people of all ages (ASCD).

**Limited-English-Proficient/LEP (English Language Learners/ELL) Students:** Students who speak a language other than English and have not yet mastered English.

**Local Education Agency (LEA):** A public board of education, which maintains administrative control of public elementary or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a state.

**Looping:** An informal term for assigning students to the same teacher for more than one school year. Rather than teaching a new group of students at the same grade level each year, teachers stay with the same group of students as they move from grade to grade. The practice is rare in the United States, but has been common for years in some parts of Europe and is now being tried in some schools in the United States. Advocates say it provides for more continuous learning because teachers don't have to take time to learn about an entirely new group of students each year (ASCD).

## **M**

**Magnet School:** A school with strong emphasis in a particular subject area (i.e. music, science, drama, math). Students are selected through an application process instead of being assigned based on residence.

**Mainstreaming:** Moving a special education student from a special environment into the regular school environment. See *inclusion*.

**Maintenance Programs:** Assists English as a second language students in maintaining skills in their native language.

**Manipulatives:** Objects used to help students understand abstract ideas.

**Master Teachers:** Experienced teachers who mentor new teachers or teachers with less classroom experience to help them become more effective.

**Mastery Learning:** An instructional practice based on the belief that a student's ability to learn depends on the amount of time he or she spends learning or studying a subject, not his or her ability.

**Media Center:** School library and technology resource center.

**Mentally Challenged:** Students with an IQ in the bottom three percent of the population.

**Mentor:** A role model who offers support to another person. A mentor has knowledge and experience in an area and shares it with the person being mentored. For example, an experienced teacher might mentor a student teacher or beginning teacher. Some student mentoring programs are designed to help at-risk students succeed in school. Acting as role models, mentors spend time with individual students once or twice a week — encouraging, listening, making suggestions, and taking the student to events, activities, or the mentor's place of employment to help the student learn about a career and consider further education (ASCD).

**Mentoring:** Process by which an older student, teacher or other adult works closely with and advises another student.

**Merit Pay:** (See Pay for Performance).

**Migrant Education:** Education programs established to meet the needs of children of migrant workers (e.g., farm laborers), who often move from school to school.

**Mildly Mentally Handicapped (MiMH) and Moderately Mentally Handicapped (MoMH):** Terms used in special education to describe students who have below average learning abilities.

**Millage Rate:** The amount, in terms of mills, levied by a taxing authority to generate revenue.

**Multi-age Grouping:** A method of assigning students to a classroom by including students of two or more age levels. Typically students remain in the same class until they have reached a specific skill level or the maximum age for a specific group.

**Multicultural Education:** Inclusion of the contributions of many ethnic, geographic, economic and religious cultures in the educational programming. (See Cultural Diversity).

**Multiple Intelligences:** Concept of intelligences that includes more aspects of mental ability than IQ. Many educational researchers identify seven intelligences: musical, bodily-kinesthetic, logical-mathematical, linguistic, spatial, interpersonal and intrapersonal.

**Multisensory Activity:** Instructional approach that emphasizes all five senses to help students learn (e.g., students may use their fingers to trace letters, follow the text or clap along as words are read).

## N

**National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP):** Often referred to as the National Report Card. National testing program administered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Reading and mathematics tests are given to fourth and eighth grade students nationwide. NAEP reports student performance as average scale scores and by achievement level. NAEP has three achievement levels: basic (partial mastery), proficient (solid academic performance) and advanced (superior academic performance).

**National Board Certification (NBC):** A rigorous program administered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards that includes performance-based assessments and peer review. NBC takes approximately a year to complete and is the top national certification for educators.

**National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS):** An independent, nonprofit organization that awards national certification to teachers who successfully complete a set of rigorous assessments.

**National Educators Association [NEA]:** One of the two large teacher unions (the other is the American Federation of Teachers). NEA describes itself as America's oldest and largest organization committed to advancing the cause of public education. It also has affiliates in every state and in more than 13,000 local communities across the United States (ASCD).

**Network:** Technology linked together to enable users to have access to a larger body of knowledge.

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act:** Law passed in 2001 that emphasizes increased accountability for States, school systems and schools and creates greater choice for parents and students, particularly those attending low-performing schools. The law gives more flexibility for States and Local Education Agencies in the use of Federal education dollars. All states must implement statewide accountability systems, and allow students attending persistently failing schools to use Title I funds for supplementary education services (e.g., tutoring, remedial education and after-school programs).

**Norm Group:** A group of students who serve as a standard against which test companies compare the performance of other students.

**Norm-Referenced Tests (NRT):** Tests that measure students' performance compared to a large, representative group of students nationwide or the norm group. Standardized tests designed to measure how a student's performance compares with that of other students. Most standardized achievement tests are norm-referenced, meaning that a student's performance is compared to the performances of students in a norming group. Scores on norm-referenced tests are often reported in terms of grade-level equivalencies or percentiles derived from the scores of the original students (ASCD).

## O

**On-Site Facilitator:** A person from a school or district that is trained in a specific curricular model. The facilitator mentors teachers in using the model.

**On-Site Specialist:** A specialist at the school site to assist the school staff with the implementation of various school reforms.

**Opportunity Gap:** Differences in resources available to different schools and groups of students. This is a major contributor to the achievement gap.

**Out-of-Field Teaching:** Practice through which teachers are assigned to teach subjects that do not match their degrees, training or education.

**Outcome Based Education:** Goal-oriented plan for education based on the clearly defined results that students are supposed to be capable of demonstrating when they leave school.

## **P**

**Pacing:** The speed at which information is presented and instruction is delivered.

**Paired Reading:** A program where two people (usually of different abilities) read together. The stronger reader assists the other with reading.

**Parent Involvement:** Any program or activity that encourages parents to become involved in their child's education.

**Parochial School:** A school that is associated with a church or other religious institution.

**Pay for Performance (PFP):** Teachers are paid on the basis of their demonstrated competence in teaching and success in raising student achievement rather than seniority.

**Pedagogy:** An approach to schooling, learning and teaching that includes content, instructional methods, teaching strategies and how students learn what is taught. See *instruction*.

**Peer Review:** Opportunities for teachers to be observed by colleagues. Peer review allows teachers to see how other educators implement reforms or new instructional programs in the classroom; instructional methods may be exchanged between teachers.

**Peer Support:** The encouragement offered between the students within the classroom or within the cooperative learning group as the group works toward a common goal.

**Peer Tutoring:** An instructional model in which students teach their peers.

**Per-pupil Expenditures:** Money spent on each student in a given school district. Since public schools are financed in part by local property taxes, there is a disparity in per-pupil expenditures across the state.

**Performance Assessment:** Students are evaluated on a variety of things such as their writing, their experiments and their collections of work, rather than on a standardized test alone. They measure students' ability to do something. (See Authentic Assessment).

**Performance Criteria:** A description of the characteristics that will be judged for a task. Criteria may be holistic, general or specific and are usually expressed as a scoring rubric. (See Rubric).

**Performance Indicators:** Specific, well-defined skills that are linked to student achievement.

**Phoneme:** The individual sound made by a letter of the alphabet.

**Phonics:** A reading instructional strategy to teach letter-sound relationships by having students sound out words.

**Portfolio:** A collection of student work usually used to assess students.

**Postsecondary Options Program (PSO):** A program between public schools and public institutions of higher learning. Students may enroll in classes and earn credit hours for both high school graduation requirements and the college or technical school.

**Pre-K (Pre-Kindergarten):** Refers to any program designed for students before they are eligible for kindergarten.

**Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT):** A practice test for students taking the Scholastic Assessment Test. The PSAT is designed to help students identify academic strengths and weaknesses.

**Pretest:** Test given before instruction to determine a student's level of performance in a given skill.

**Praxis I:** Academic skills assessment that tests teacher knowledge in reading, math and writing.

**Praxis II:** Subject assessment tests that are required for teacher certification. Praxis II tests measure knowledge in particular content areas. For most teaching fields, two Praxis II tests are required. In Alabama, teachers can take the Praxis II tests to meet the highly qualified teacher standards.

**Privatization:** Attempts to bring the marketplace or market forces into public education.

**Professional Development:** Activities aimed at improving instruction by providing teachers with necessary skills training and information. Professional development activities range from formal courses and seminars to teacher mentoring and collaboration.

**Proficiency:** When a student masters or is able to do something at grade level.

**Progressive Schools:** Schools with a child-centered approach. Progressive schools emphasize the whole child concept and experiential learning instead of traditional instruction led by the teacher.

**Progress Monitoring:** Obtaining student achievement and assessment data.

**Proration:** A mid-year budget reduction to prevent deficit spending. Proration can occur when revenue estimates are too high or planned expenditures were too great.

**Psycho-educational Programs:** Programs located on regular education campuses or in special centers, which provide services to students with severe emotional and behavior disorders or autism.

**Public School Choice:** Students may attend any district school and the students are not limited to only neighborhood schools.

**Pull-out:** Removing a child from his/her regular classroom setting for remedial or enrichment coursework.

## Q

**Qualitative Research:** Research that uses methods adapted from anthropology and other social sciences, including systematic observation and interviews. Until recently, most educational research was quantitative. Some researchers are now using qualitative methods because they think statistical processes will not produce the understandings they seek. For example, a researcher might spend an entire year visiting a particular school; observing classes, meetings, and conversations; and seeking to identify the way decisions are made and the roles played by various staff members (ASCD).

**Quantitative Research:** Research conducted in a traditional scientific manner using statistical procedures to compare the effects of one treatment with another. For example, a researcher might compare test scores of students taught using an experimental method with the scores of students taught in a more conventional way. Some researchers now see this approach as limited, so make greater use of qualitative research methods (ASCD).

## R

**Readiness for School:** Being physically, emotionally, socially and academically prepared to learn.

**Reading Canon:** The complete list of books accepted by a program.

**Reading First:** Initiative in the *No Child Left Behind* Act that significantly increases the federal investment in scientifically based reading instruction programs in the early grades. The program is intended to ensure that every child can read by the end of third grade.

**Reconstitution:** Process through which the state oversees a low performing school and replaces all or most of the school staff in a district.

**Reflective Practice:** Teachers are encouraged to reflect daily on their teaching to understand which practices are most successful and which needs improvement.

**Reform Team:** A group that provides leadership in the planning and implementation of a school reform model. Such a group may include the principal, an on-site facilitator or specialist, teachers and parents.

**Remedial Services:** Services designed to provide specialized help to students having difficulty understanding concepts in various instructional programs.

**Resource Room:** A special education classroom where students can go for additional help mastering academic skills. Some schools offer this resource to any student who desires help in a given subject area, but usually students with learning disabilities or other special needs are assigned to the resource room for a certain number of hours each week (ASCD).

**Restructuring:** Major changes in the rules, roles and relationships in education.

**Retention:** Policy that holds back students with failing grades at the end of a school year.

**Rote Learning:** Learning through memorization of facts or repeatedly performing a task.

**Rubric:** A guide for scoring student performance.

## S

**Sampling:** In testing programs, a way of estimating how a whole group would perform on a test by testing representative members of the group or giving different portions of the test to various subgroups (ASCD).

**Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT):** Standardized test that may be taken by college-bound students to gain admission to college. The SAT tests students' verbal and mathematical reasoning ability.

**Scholastic Aptitude Test II (SAT II):** Subject Tests: Tests that measure knowledge in high school subject areas such as biology, calculus and American History. The SAT IIs are required or encouraged at many highly competitive colleges and universities.

**School Board:** Legislative body of citizens who are elected to administer their local school system.

**School Choice:** Allows parents to enroll their children in the school of their choice.

**School Climate:** The sum of the values, cultures, safety practices, and organizational structures within a school that cause it to function and react in particular ways. Some schools are said to have a nurturing environment that recognizes children and treats them as individuals; others may have the feel of authoritarian structures where rules are strictly enforced and hierarchical control is strong. Teaching practices, diversity, and the relationships among administrators, teachers, parents, and students contribute to school climate. Although the two terms are somewhat interchangeable, school climate refers mostly to the school's effects on students, whereas school culture refers more to the way teachers and other staff members work together (ASCD).

**School Council:** A local school advisory body comprised of the school principal, two teachers, two parents or guardians and two members of the business community. The school councils may advise on a variety of issues, including student achievement goals, curriculum and instruction, school and community communications and local school board policies.

**School Improvement Teams:** Consists of groups of experienced educators that will be assigned by the Department of Education to assist in diagnosing problems in low performing schools as identified by the Office of Education Accountability. Their responsibilities will include reviewing procedures and curriculum, observing staff and assisting in the development of school improvement plans.

**School Resource Officer (SRO):** A law enforcement officer placed in a school who serves as a resource for students, parents, teachers and administrators regarding legal issues.

**School Counselor:** A certified professional who provides guidance to all students. School counselors have various responsibilities ranging from preventative counseling and referrals to community organizations to promotion of positive attitudes and choices and vocational assessment and career exploration.

**School Reform:** Efforts to improve school performance.

**School Social Worker (SSW):** Professionals with graduate level training in social work. SSWs may work with parents, teachers, administrators, counselors, psychologists and other school staff members to improve students' overall experience at school.

**School-Site Training:** A process for training school staff in a new program where a certified specialist comes to the school to train the entire school staff in implementing the reform.

**School-to-Work:** Programs ranging from on-the-job training to classes taught by local community colleges designed to prepare students to enter the job market.

**School Within a School:** A special program, charter school or magnet school that is housed within a regular school. Schools within schools allow districts to experiment with innovative programs and teaching methods while using existing resources.

**Scope and Sequences:** A detailed outline of the goals for a particular curriculum area and the specific objectives for each grade level.

**Seamlessness:** The philosophy of developing one integrated education system from kindergarten through the workforce. The concept fosters communication and cooperation between local school districts, higher education institutions and the workforce. Seamlessness incorporates the concept of lifelong learning and assists students in transitioning smoothly to different phases of their educational career.

**Section 504:** Federal law that prohibits discrimination against disabled students.

**Self-esteem:** Term denoting a widely accepted psychological aim of education. High self-esteem and a positive sense of one's self translates into higher achievement, greater happiness and more civility to others.

**Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED):** Term used in special education that refers to students whose emotions interfere with their classroom performance. Students with SEDs may have an inability to build and maintain satisfactory relationships with peers or teachers, a general mood of unhappiness and a tendency to develop fears associated with school and personal problems.

**Service Learning:** Combines community service with a structured school-based opportunity for reflection. Students acquire skills and knowledge through experiential learning while serving their communities.

**Severe Behavior Disorder (SBD):** Term used in special education that refers to students who display behaviors that seriously interfere with the learning environment and the individual's ability to benefit from it.

**Site-Based Decision Making:** A method of operating a school system in which many decisions traditionally made at the system or state level are made at the school or site level.

**Small Group Instruction:** Classroom practice that allows teachers to tailor instruction to groups of students based on skill level. Students are grouped by ability and work with a teacher in these small groups to improve such skills in all areas of curriculum.

**Social Promotion:** Practice of allowing students who have failed to meet performance standards and academic requirements to pass on to the next grade with their peers without completing or satisfying the requirements.

**Socio-economic Status:** May be used to describe an individual's or a family's level of wealth and/or education.

**Southern Regional Education Board (SREB):** Education research lab comprised of the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware.

**Special Education:** Special instruction for mentally challenged or gifted students.

**Special Instructional Assistance (SIA):** A state funded program for kindergarten, first and second grade at-risk students. It provides additional funding to the regular instructional program to reduce class size, purchase additional teaching materials and involve parents in their children's education.

**Special Needs:** A student who has disabilities or is at the risk of developing disabilities that may require special education services.

**Staff Development:** An activity or process intended to assist educators improve their skills, attitudes, knowledge and/or performance in their roles or to stay up-to-date with research and state law.

**Standards:** Those requirements either in state law or rules passed by the Alabama Board of Education under which Alabama schools operate. Standards define what students are expected to know and be able to do.

**Standards-Based Instruction:** Instruction that is specifically geared towards meeting standards.

**Standardized Test:** A test taken by many students under identical conditions in which the results are compared statistically to standard norms.

**Stanford 10 Achievement Test:** A norm-referenced test that reflects how well students perform in reading, mathematics, language, science, social science and listening relatively to a nationally representative sample of students in the same grade and tested under the same conditions. All Alabama students take the test at grades three, five and eight.

**State Report Card:** Report produced for each school in the state of Alabama. School performance is compared to previous school and local school system performance, absolute student achievement standards and comparable school group performance.

**Student Empowerment:** Students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own education in order to improve their achievement.

**Student Support Team (SST):** A group of educators at a school who meet to discuss academic and behavior problems of specific students. The Student Support Team makes suggestions to the classroom teacher to help the child improve.

**Summer School Programs:** Remedial and enrichment programs conducted for small groups of students in the summer. Most summer school programs are intended to catch students up to their grade-level peers.

**Supplemental Services:** Services provided outside the regular school day to help students attain proficiency levels.

**Support Services:** Assistance that includes transportation, childcare, home visits, translators, home visits and referrals to other agencies. Support services are based on the premise that students' families need support, which will enhance the students' education.

**Systemic Change:** Change that gets to the core of education structure and concepts. For example, instead of changing the grade scale, authentic assessment is used to determine a student's competency in a given subject area.

## T

**Tax Capacity:** The ratio between per capita personal income and taxes per capita.

**Tax Effort:** The extent to which a state utilizes its tax base for social services, including highways, law enforcement, health care, and education.

**Teach for America:** A national nonprofit organization that selects top college graduates in all academic majors to teach for two years in urban and rural hard-to-staff public schools.

**Teacher Collaboration:** Teachers plan, organize or teach together in an effort to improve each teacher's teaching skills.

**Teacher Evaluations:** Methods of assessing teachers' success in improving student achievement. Evaluations may include portfolios, observations, data and other evidence of student achievement.

**Teacher Licensure:** The process by which teachers receive state permission to teach.

**Teacher Networks:** Professional communities of teachers that focus on specific subject matter.

**Tech-Prep Program:** A program of study that allows high school students to move on to the next level of objectives at either a vocational/technical institute or college.

**Technical Education:** Instruction that prepares a student for employment immediately upon the completion of high school.

**Thematic Units:** Instruction tied together by key concepts. Teachers integrate information from a variety of disciplines into the instructional units.

**Title I:** A federal program for K-12 students that provides additional funding to help students who are "at-risk" of falling behind academically. Title I is the largest federal aid program for elementary and secondary schools. The program provides money to school systems based on the number of low-income families in each district (i.e., students eligible for free and reduced lunch).

**Title II:** A federally funded program that provides assistance to state and local educational agencies and institutions of higher education with teacher education programs. Title II funds programs to improve teaching and learning, reform teacher preparation and certification standards and to develop better performance based assessment and professional development strategies.

**Title VI:** Part of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance, including schools. Title VI prohibits the denial of equal access to education to students with limited proficiency in English.

**Title VII:** A federal program designed to improve the English proficiency of bilingual students.

**Title IX:** Law barring gender discrimination in education facilities that receive federal funds. Most Title IX cases filed against K-12 schools involve sex equity in athletic programs.

**Total Quality Management:** A concept for managing schools that focuses on client satisfaction and encouraging employees to seek continual improvement.

**Training of Trainers:** A design for training a school in a new instructional method where one or more people are sent to special training and then provide training to the whole school.

**Tracking:** The practice of dividing students into class size groups, which exist for the major part of the school day or year, based on the student's perceived ability or prior achievement and then designing and delivering instruction to each group.

**Transition Plan:** Plan separate from the IEP that documents goals for a special education student to aid him or her in making the transition from school to work.

## U

**Underachiever:** A student who is performing at a significant level below his or her ability.

## V

**Values Education:** The process of providing opportunities for all students to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes related to citizenship within a democratic society.

**Vertical Equity:** Unequal treatment of unequals. Students with greater educational needs may receive additional resources to provide such students with an equivalent educational opportunity.

**Voucher:** A state allocation of money given to parents to allow their children to attend a school of the parent's choice, either public or private.

## W

**Whole Child Education:** Idea that education should focus on the whole child instead of just academic development. Whole child education places a strong emphasis on social and emotional development and self-esteem. The concept recognizes the essential needs of education, health, mentoring, human services, sports and recreation and arts and culture.

**Whole Language:** An approach to the teaching of language based on the belief that language is not learned as separate skills and pieces, but as a body of knowledge.

**Work-Based Learning:** Learning activities that involve work experience. Work-based learning integrates academic and occupational curriculum with worksite experience.

## Y

**Year-Round Schools:** Schools with alternative calendars. Students spend the same number of days in class as those on traditional calendars, but breaks are shorter and more frequent.

**Youth Infusion:** The principle of intergenerational teamwork and shared decision-making. Youth infusion is gaining popularity in high schools with the hope that seeking student input will make students happier and more willing to follow student policies.

## Z

**Zero Tolerance:** Policies that mandate predetermined consequences or punishments for a specific offense regardless of the circumstances surrounding it.

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*This chapter was developed by Caroline Watral and Jennifer Pyron.*