

General Brown Central School District's



Reference Guide  
of the educational

**ABC's**

*(ACRONYMS; BUZZ WORDS; and  
COMMON VOCABULARY)*

# A

**Academic Intervention Services (AIS):** A program designed to provide extra help in reading, speech language or math based on state, local and building level assessments. AIS is required for students who do not meet the standards on the state assessments in English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies, and can consist of small group instruction, whole class remediation, and one-on-one interventions.

**Advanced Placement (AP):** Advanced Placement is a program that offers collegiate-level courses students are eligible to take throughout their high school coursework. These courses offer students the opportunity to receive college credits prior to entering college.

**American College Testing (ACT):** The ACT is a national college admissions examination that consists of subject area tests in English, mathematics, reading, and science.

**Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR):** A state-required evaluation system for teachers and principals. This is a 100-point system - 60 of which come from supervisor evaluations, with the remaining 40 attributed to student assessment scores, either locally-developed or standardized state assessments.

**Assistive Technology (AT):** Assistive technology is any technological device that provides support to a student. This technology can focus on support for physical disabilities (e.g. amplifiers) or learning disabilities (e.g. iPad applications to increase verbal communication).

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):** This is a term established with the No Child Left Behind Act. Adequate Yearly Progress means that a school has made sufficient improvement in student performance over the course of one year. Schools that have not made adequate yearly progress for two consecutive years are typically required to develop improvement plans.

## B

**Balanced Literacy:** Balanced literacy is an approach to literacy instruction that focuses on both reading and writing with a variety of activities and strategies, incorporating both guided and independent practice.

**Benchmarks:** Regularly scheduled assessments that determine a student's gain in the curriculum taught up to the time the assessment is given. Districts typically use benchmarks to place students in AIS and to make changes to classroom instruction.

**Board of Education (BOE):** A group of community members invested in the local educational system that meets regularly to set policy, provide fiscal oversight, approve initiatives, and provide a setting for communication between the community and the academic institution.

**Booster Clubs:** Organizations formed by parents or invested community members to support the athletic and other extra-curricular programs at the local level. Booster clubs typically hold fundraisers to support a district's extracurricular needs.

**Building Team:** This is a team of faculty members and teachers. Together they review the district's long range plan, help the building set goals according to that plan, then write a building level plan to carry out the district initiatives.

## C

**Code of Conduct:** The District's long-standing set of expectations for conduct on school property and at school functions. These expectations are based on the principles of civility, mutual respect, citizenship, character, tolerance, honesty and integrity. A summary of the Code of Conduct is included with your child's packet of materials that you receive during the first week of school. Copies of the entire Code of Conduct are available for parent review upon request.

**Common Core State Standards (CCSS):** The New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy and the New York State Common Core Learning Standards for Mathematics include all of the national

Common Core State Standards, in addition to the New York-recommended additions approved by the Board of Regents on January 10, 2011. New York State also added Prekindergarten standards. These standards express a progression of skills and knowledge that all students should attain at the end of each grade level to be on track for college and career readiness, a goal of New York State.

**Community Parent Resource Center (CPRC):** A reference area for parents located opposite the main office in the Jr. /Sr. High School.

**Consolidated Application (Federal Grant Monies):** This is also called the Title I/Title II application. It is an application process that consists of the collection of information for several programs and initiatives at the district level designed to help students improve in academics.

**Consultant Teacher (CT):** This is a service for special education students. The service is offered in the classroom by a special education teacher who works with the regular classroom teacher. The two jointly plan and present the class together.

**Committee on Special Education (CSE):** This is a group comprised of teachers, counselors, administrators, and parent representatives who work together to identify students in need of extra help or services during their academic tenure. The committee also develops educational plans (IEP's) for each student that delineates accommodations for testing and modifications in instruction to help each student reach the demands of a given content area and level.

**Committee for Pre-School Education (CPSE):** Some students are identified for extra help or services before they reach Kindergarten. These services are determined and provided through this committee. Services and the child's progress are reviewed in the spring before the child begins Kindergarten. The Committee then decides if the services are continued or if they are no longer necessary.

**Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM):** This is a method for assessing student progress in core academic areas on a regular basis. With tests ranging from 1 to 5 minutes in length, teachers get a quick view of how students are doing with regard to skill development in a given content area. This helps teachers to make changes in instructional methods with the goal of increasing student achievement.

**Curriculum Coordinator (CC):** An individual hired to supervise and lead Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12 curriculum development and instructional programs. Responsible for curriculum mapping, aligning district curricula to the Common Core, facilitating data chats, modeling instructional strategies and offering staff development opportunities to staff, support personnel and administrators.

## D

**Data Chats:** A "data chat" is a meeting where teachers, service providers, and administrators come together to discuss a standardized assessment and student performance. Overall gaps are identified and strategies to improve instruction are determined, along with areas for retesting.

**Dignity for All Student Act (DASA):** The Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act also known as DASA) was signed into law on September 13, 2010. The legislation amended State Education Law by creating a new Article 2, Dignity for All Students, and revising Section 801-a regarding instruction civility, citizenship, character education, tolerance, respect for others, and dignity. It combats bias-based bullying, harassment, and discrimination in public schools, and includes awareness and sensitivity in the relations of people including individuals of different races, weights, national origins, ethnicity, religions or religious practices, mental or physical abilities, sexes, sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions. East Side utilizes the Responsive Classroom model as their Character Education program and embraces the philosophy that the social curriculum is just as important as the academic curriculum.

**Domains:** Domains are areas of learning. Typically, assessment results will focus on how students perform in each domain. Examples of domains include (in Math): Geometry, Numbers and Operations, and Algebra.

## E

**English Language Arts (ELA):** This subject area includes studies of reading, vocabulary, spelling, listening, speaking and writing.

**English as a Second Language (ESL):** These are students who do not use English as their first language of communication. ESL students receive supplemental instruction to support their development in the English language.

**Effective Teaching (ET):** This is a collection of strategies that have been deemed best practices in helping students reach their highest level of performance. Strategies range from the provision of immediate and quality feedback to explicit instruction to cooperative learning opportunities.

**Employees' Retirement System (ERS):** Retirement system for non-instructional employees.

**Excellence and Accountability Program (EAP):** A shared-decision making committee, in each building, that works to improve student achievement.

**Expenditures:** The amount of money spent. Typically, schools must account for all expenditures in their annual budget and predict expenditures when establishing the cost of running the district for another year.

## F

**Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):** The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level.

**Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) -** Allows members of the public to access records of governmental agencies.

**Fund Balance:** This is the total amount of money remaining once all expenditures have been accounted for. The fund balance begins with a collection of revenue, or money coming in. Often, this is in the form of state aid or federal grant monies, tax levies, and possibly leftover monies from the previous year's budget.

## G

**Grants:** Monies provided to groups or organizations to serve a specific purpose.

**Guided Reading:** This is one strategy in reading instruction. This strategy utilizes small group instruction, where students meet collectively in smaller groups with the classroom teacher to practice fluency and comprehension skills.

## H

**Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA):** A federal law that protects personal medical information.

## I

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP):** An individualized plan for any student who qualifies for special education services.

**Individual Professional Action Plan (IPAP):** The IPAP makes up the Individual Evidence Portfolio that consists of five per cent of a teacher's teacher effectiveness composite score within the APPR. IPAPs consist of goals that are developed to increase student achievement and to cultivate professional growth during the school year. Every teacher and teacher assistant is required to develop an IPAP goal each year.

**Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA):** Federal law which ensures special education and related services to students with disabilities.

**Instructional Support Teams (IST):** A team of teachers and support staff who meet regularly to brainstorm strategies for students experiencing difficulties. The team develops a plan to help the student be more successful, then follow up and rates the success of the plan.

## J

## K

## L

**Local Educational Agency (LEA):** Educational departments (state and federal) refer to school districts as local educational agencies. This is often used on grant application forms.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** Students have the right to learn in an environment that allows them to achieve an optimal level of performance. To the maximum extent possible, disabled students should be educated with nondisabled peers. Laws are in place to protect a student's right to learn in the least restrictive environment.

**Long Range Strategic Plan:** An intentional plan that guides the district in educational decision making in each building. The plan is developed every three to five years by a representative group of stakeholders (Board of Education members, teachers, parents, students and administrators). Each school's building plan is based on the long-range strategic plan.

**Language Other than English (LOTE) - Foreign Language**

## M/Mc

**Modules:** With the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards, New York State has awarded contracts for the development of curriculum for grades K-12 in ELA and Math. Each unit is referred to as a module, which is one component of content knowledge and skill development within that grade level's curriculum. EngageNY.org has more information on the modules for all grade levels in Math and ELA.

**McKinney-Vento Act:** A federal law that covers children and youth who don't have fixed, adequate and regular nighttime residence, such as those living in an emergency or transitional shelter; with friends or relatives due to loss of housing or economic hardship (also known as doubled up); in a motel, hotel or campground; in a car, bus or other public place; in an abandoned building or some other inadequate accommodations; in temporary situations while awaiting foster care placement.



# N

**No Child Left Behind (NCLB):** The federal legislation that requires accountability for students and teachers by yearly assessments in Grades 3-8.

**Network Teams:** These are teams comprised of teachers and administrators either within one school district or across several districts underneath a BOCES region. These teams are responsible for implementing the Race to the Top initiatives, including Data-Driven Instruction, APPR (Annual Professional Performance Review), and Common Core.

**New York State Alternate Assessment:** A NYS Assessment given to students with severe disabilities.

# O

**Occupational Therapy (OT):** A related service for students with disabilities

**Office for Civil Rights (OCR):** Federal organization which oversees compliance with civil rights laws (ex. Title IX complaints)

# P

**Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO):** Parent-Teacher Organizations are designed to support the extra-curricular initiatives of a school building and/or district, and act as a liaison to the external community of the school building and/or district. PTO's often sponsor programs and activities and regularly meet with teachers and administrators to establish and monitor goals and progress.

**Post-Assessment:** A cumulative test that determines the extent of a student's knowledge and skills in a given curriculum. When appropriately aligned with a pre-assessment, a post-assessment can determine a student's growth from the beginning of a course to the end of a course.

**Pre-Assessment:** A diagnostic tool that allows districts to obtain a snap shot of a student's knowledge and skills coming into a new curriculum.

**Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT):** The Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test is a standardized test that provides firsthand practice for the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). The test measures critical reading skills, math problem-solving skills, and writing skills.

**Physical Therapy (PT):** A related service for students with disabilities.

## Q

## R

**Race to the Top (RTTT):** Federal legislation for mandatory student academic success and teacher and principal accountability.

**Response to Intervention (RtI):** A multi-tiered approach to help struggling learners. Students' progress is closely monitored at each stage of intervention to determine the need for further research-based instruction and/or intervention in general education, in special education, or both.

**Resource Room (RR):** A special education service for students who have been identified by CSE with a learning disability. Students who receive this service receive supplementary instruction in their area of disability from a special education teacher individually or in a group for a portion of the school day. Groups are no larger than 5 students with similar needs.

**Revenue:** The generated amount of incoming funds. Schools typically generate revenue through state aid, federal grants, and tax levies. There are few other methods for a school to use to generate revenue.

**Running Record** - A method of determining at what level a child comfortably reads 94% of the time. To administer a running record, teachers give students a book they haven't seen before to read aloud and discuss. The teacher determines the level where the student is comfortable reading 94% per cent of the time, based on his or her ability to decode the text and understand it.

## S

**"Safe to School":** A voluntary program for parents that verifies when your child is absent from school and that he or she is home safe and not lost along the way.

Participating parents are asked to call the school before 7:30 a.m. and leave a message on the answering machine when a child will be absent or tardy (or on the first day of an extended absence). The school will call the home of a student enrolled in the program if we have not received a telephone call.

**Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT):** The Scholastic Aptitude Test is the benchmark standardized assessment of the critical reading, mathematical reasoning, and writing skills students have developed over time and that they need to be successful in college. Nearly every college in America uses the test as a common and objective scale for evaluating a student's college readiness.

**State Education Department (SED):** Sometimes referred to as NYSED, this is the abbreviation for the department that establishes state policies for education in New York. The State Education Department is responsible for establishing policy that supports P-12 education as well as state-funded higher education, managing state and federal funding for education, standardized assessment, and developing standards for learning.

**Stakeholder(s):** A person or group of people who are impacted by an organization's policies and programs. In an effective organization, all stakeholders' are given the opportunity to participate in the planning and implementation of policies and programs.

**Student Learning Objectives (SLO):** Learning objectives that assess the learning growth of students in classrooms where there is no state assessment.

## T

**Tax Levy:** This is the total amount of money that our District collects in taxes, following voter approval. Each homeowner / property owner pays a portion of the tax levy, which is calculated based on the assessment value of their property. Property owners must pay school taxes regardless of whether or not the homeowner has children attending the district.

**Tax Cap:** New York State recently imposed a "tax levy limit." This is, in general, the highest amount a district can levy for school taxes. With the computation of a formula, each district has a cap on what they can require district residents to pay. If a school wishes to issue a levy that is higher than this limit, they must have a supermajority (60 percent) approval from the public when the budget is voted on. If the levy is at or below the limit, a simple majority (50 percent) is required.

**Tenure:** Tenure is an employment status a teacher may earn by successfully completing a period of probationary employment and then, upon the superintendent's recommendation, being granted this status by the school board.

**Teachers' Retirement System (TRS):** The retirement system for all instructional employees.

## U

**Unaccompanied Youth:** An unaccompanied youth is an underage person who is not in the custody of a parent or guardian. This could be a result of the person running away from home, being kicked out of the home, or abandonment by the parent(s)/guardian(s). Unaccompanied youth and their educational rights are protected by law.

**Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK):** A state initiative aimed at providing preliminary instruction to 4 year-olds before entering kindergarten. UPK was initially started to target urban, low-income families, but has since become a program across the state. Schools are eligible for grant monies to begin a UPK program.

## V

## W

## X

## Y

## Z

**8:1:1:** A classroom containing 8 students, 1 special education teacher, and 1 teaching assistant. This class is for students with disabilities who have similar needs. Primarily, 8:1:1 classrooms serve students with behavioral challenges.

The 8:1:1 (8 students to 1 teacher and 1 teacher assistant) program is designed to meet the needs of students with emotional and behavioral needs determined to be intensive and requiring a high degree of individualized attention and intervention. This program provides each student with support and instruction centering on their academics, as well as attitude and behavior. Instruction for core subjects will take place in the general, integrated and/or special taught classroom. The foundation of the 8:1:1 program is clear and consistent rules and expectations. 8:1:1 classroom instruction incorporates lessons to improve students' organizational skills, time/anger management skills, the understanding of choices and consequences, and how to act responsibly and accept responsibility. The goal of the 8:1:1 program is to promote academic and social/emotional success for each student.

**15:1** A classroom containing 15 students and a special education teacher. This class is for students with disabilities who have similar needs. Students in the 15:1 program will be placed in general, integrated and/or special taught classrooms for their core subjects, electives and physical education based on academic and social/emotional needs. Students may attend vocational education programs at the Bohlen Technical Center and/or Community Based Training as part of their individualized education plan, beginning in high school.

**504:** A type of academic accommodation plan for students who have a medical condition that may impede learning.

**3020-a (of education law):** The legal process for removing or otherwise disciplining or firing a tenured teacher.