

Glossary of Education Words, Terms & Programs

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In the field of education, we often use terms or acronyms for programs, initiatives, or testing that educators are familiar with, but parents or the general public...not so much!

This document is a guide to explaining some of our “education-ese” in Bismarck Public Schools. If we have forgotten something, or you feel we should remove a term that’s common knowledge, please e-mail renae_walker@bismarckschools.org so the list can be revised! If you don’t find what you are looking for here, go to <http://www.bismarckschools.org/district/about/infomap/>.

In alphabetical order:

ACCESS: An assessment given in the spring to all English Language Learner (ELL) students and during the school year as needed to evaluate and report on the academic progress of students whose primary language is not English.

Adult Ed. (Adult Education): The Adult Learning Center is located on the Bismarck State College Campus, 1500 Edwards Ave., Schafer Hall, #220. Services include GED preparation, college prep., Read Right tutoring, math and reading skill building, English Language Learning/ U.S. Civics, Displaced Homemakers, and Careers/Life Skills. Full time and part time classes are available. Call (701) 323-4531 to learn more about this program.

ACT (American College Testing): In North Dakota, state funds are provided so all high school juniors can take the ACT to assess their general academic development and predict their readiness for college. For more information, go to www.act.org.

AP (Advanced Placement): Our high schools offer 11 Advanced Placement (AP) classes: biology, AB calculus, BC calculus, chemistry, computer science, government, physics, psychology, English literature, English composition, and U.S. history. At the end of the course, students who successfully complete AP exams receive college credit from participating colleges and universities. To learn more, visit with a high school counselor.

AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress): A measurement defined by the United States federal No Child Left Behind that allows the U.S. Department of Education to determine how every public school and school district in the country is performing academically according to results on standardized tests. AYP is measured by the North Dakota State Assessment (*see NDSA below*).

ALC (Adult Learning Center): Located on the Bismarck State College Campus, the Adult Learning Center offers services such as GED or college preparation, Read Right tutoring, reading and math skill building, English Language Learning/U.S. Civics, Displaced Homemakers, and Careers/Life Skills. Full-time and part-time classes are available on an open entry/exit basis with students moving at their own pace. (701) 323-4531.

AIMSweb: BPS uses AIMSweb to regularly measure pre-reading and early reading skills, as well as early numeracy development on an individual student basis. This standardized set of assessments are usually 1-minute in length and are given to students in grades K-5 three times

per year to measure their progress in those areas. To learn more, go to www.aimsweb.com.

AD (Activities/Athletic Director): The school district employs an Activities Director to oversee all athletic and fine arts activities in Bismarck Public Schools. Each high school has an AD, who serves as the Athletic Director & Dean of Students.

Aspire: A test given to all sophomores each fall to measure what students know and what they are able to do with their knowledge in English, math, reading and science. There is also an interest inventory to help students explore personal career options. Aspire, formerly called PLAN, is closely tied to the ACT, and results are used by counselors to help students plan so they can be successful in high school and college. To learn more, go to www.act.org.

Assistive Technology: This equipment may be used with special needs students to help them with their learning. Examples are speech-recognition programs, talking calculators, audio books, alternative keyboards, speech synthesizers/screen readers, electronic math worksheets, etc.

BSC (Bismarck State College): Our Career Academy and Tech Center are both located on the Bismarck State College campus, as well as the Adult Learning Program.

BSC (Balanced Scorecard): Bismarck Public Schools uses the Balanced Scorecard process to set and measure goals by school and for the entire school district.

BPS: Abbreviation for Bismarck Public Schools, 701-323-4000, www.bismarckschools.org.

BPS Foundation: A non-profit organization that raises money for Bismarck Public School District projects and teacher mini-grants that otherwise would not be funded by tax dollars.

BECEP (Bismarck Early Childhood Education Program): A composite of four programs serving preschoolers and their families under one administration: Head Start, Early Childhood Special Education, Early Intervention, and Right Track. Bismarck Public Schools is the grantee agency for BECEP and the BPS Special Education Director is its Executive Director.

BLAST (Bismarck's Life After School Time): An after school program (3-6 pm) for students in grades K-5 run by Bismarck Parks and Recreation using space in our Bismarck Public Schools. For more information, call 701-222-6455. Some of our schools also have before and/or after school programs through the MREC (see MREC).

Block Classes: Middle or high school schedules in which students have fewer classes per day for longer periods of time (e.g. 90 min. vs. 50) for more concentrated experiences in those subjects.

Block Planning: A collaborative time for educators to increase planning time for the classroom.
Department of Public Instruction (DPI): The mission of the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction is to ensure a uniform, statewide system for effective learning.

Cafetorium: A large room in some of our schools used as a cafeteria and as an auditorium.

Camp Ed (CampAdventure): Camp Ed is summer school for students entering grades 1-5 in the fall who want to maintain or improve their academic skills in math and reading. It runs from 8 am to noon in June and July, with a break for Independence Day around July 4. (701-323-4280).

CTE (Career & Technical Education): CTE prepares students for employment and/or post-secondary education in current or emerging professions. CTE provides students with competency-based and applied learning opportunities that build academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning skills, problem-solving, work attitudes, general employability, technical skills, occupation-specific skills, etc. Go to http://www.nd.gov/cte/about/docs/NDCTE_FAQ.pdf.

Central Registration: Bismarck Public Schools registers new students at one central location instead of at each individual school. Registration forms can be found online at www.bismarckschools.org under Registration & Transfer on the left or call 701-323-4110.

COTA (Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant): A person who assists with Occupational Therapy for students who have been determined to need those special services.

Collaboration Room: A room in our newest elementary schools (Lincoln & Lincoln) that can be used for a variety of activities by school staff, students, parents and community members.

Common Core (Common Core State Standards or CCSS): Common Core State Standards spell out the English Language Arts (ELA) and math goals for students at each grade level from K through grade 12. They are clear goals for student learning and direct all teachers to develop a rigorous education, regardless of where students live. The purpose of standards is to ensure that all students who graduate from high school will be successful when they take their initial math and English courses in college (2 or 4 year) or when they enter the workforce. To learn more, go to <http://www.bismarckschools.org/uploads/resources/26263/common-core-info--faqs.pdf>.

CFA: Common Formative Assessment: Common Formative Assessment is a range of formal and informal procedures used by teachers to modify teaching and learning to improve student achievement. It typically involves qualitative feedback, rather than test scores, that focuses on content and performance. Summative Assessment, on the other hand, monitors outcomes or test scores, usually for external accountability to the district, state or federal government.

COE (Cooperative Office Education): COE combines classroom-based education with practical work experience. These “co-ops” provide academic credit for a structured job experience.

Curriculum Alignment: A process of ensuring that school curriculum (what is taught) is aligned from grades K through 12 to maximize student performance. With input from teachers and administrators, school districts identify what is imperative to teach (guaranteed curriculum) and what can realistically be taught during the school year (viable curriculum).

DPI: Abbreviation for the Department of Public Instruction in North Dakota, 701-328-2260, <https://www.dpi.state.nd.us/>.

Discovery Center: Two of our new elementary schools, Liberty and Lincoln, have a larger classroom space at the end of the 2nd-3rd grade and 4th-5th grade wings for teachers to use for special projects, presentations, etc.

DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills): Procedures and measures for assessing the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten through 6th grade. They are short (one minute) fluency measures used to regularly monitor early literacy and reading skills.

EI (Early Intervention): This program helps families of children ages birth to 3 who have disabilities, developmental delays, vision or hearing loss, etc. by using new skills in day-to-day activities. Learning happens between visits with professionals vs. at school or at therapy. Call BECEP, 701-323-4400, or visit <http://www.becep.bismarckschools.org/BECEP/ei-bto3/>.

ED (Emotional Disability): Federal and state regulations define ED as a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree which adversely affects educational performance:

- Inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors;
- Inability to build/maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers/teachers;
- Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances;
- General pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression; or
- Tendency to develop physical symptoms/fears associated with personal/school problems.

The term includes children who are schizophrenic, but does not include children who are socially maladjusted unless it is determined that they are emotionally disturbed.

ELA (English Language Arts): ELA instruction includes reading, writing, speaking, etc.

ELL (English Language Learner): A person who is learning the English language in addition to his or her native language.

FACS (Family & Consumer Science): Known as Home Economics until the 1990s, Family & Consumer Science courses typically include nutrition, food preparation, parenting, human development, early childhood education, consumer science, family economics/finances, etc.

FERPA (Family Rights and Privacy Act): A federal law that protects student education records.

Family Liaison: Some Bismarck Public Schools have school-based Family Liaisons who are assessable to all families. Their main role is to support academic achievement and fostering communication and a welcoming school environment for all families.

Flex Mod Schedule: A high school flexible modular schedule allows for some class times to be longer for lectures, labs, etc. and some to be shorter for tutoring, for example. Legacy High School will “personalized scheduling” in 2015-16.

FOSS (Full Option Science System): FOSS is more than a program; it’s a philosophy of teaching and learning through active learning science curricula. FOSS uses scientific tools, kits, and

hands-on methods to engage students in experiences for deeper understanding and learning.

Head Start: Children ages 3-5 can receive free preschool services in education, health, social services, and parent involvement. Eligibility is determined by federal income guidelines. Call BECEP, 701-323-4400, or find income guidelines and other information online at <http://www.becep.bismarckschools.org/BECEP/head-start/>.

HR (Human Resources): HR is the department responsible for attracting, hiring, training, paying, assessing and rewarding employees, as well as ensuring that the organization is compliant with employment and labor laws. For HR in Bismarck Public Schools, call 701-323-4072.

Indian Ed. (Indian Education): Services for American Indian students such as tutors, home/school liaisons, school supplies, cultural programs etc. Call 701-323-4050.

Infofinderi: If you type your address into www.infofinderi.com, you can find which Bismarck public schools your children will attend, grades K-12, based on where you live in Bismarck.

Instructional Coaches: A coach is one who supports others in building their teaching skills, assists others in applying new knowledge, and provides ongoing professional development. They increase the instructional capacity of teachers so they can better incorporate literacy or math into their classroom.

ID (Intellectual Disability): formerly known as Mentally Retarded, this disability is characterized by significant limitations in both intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical skills.

ITV (Interactive Television): Our high schools are part of an interactive TV network with approximately 40 other area schools. Through the use of fiber optic cable and video equipment BPS staff can teach high school students in these outlying schools, or BPS students can receive courses from other school districts. Call 701-323-4041 or visit www.greatwesternnetwork.com.

JOM (Johnson O'Malley): A tribally funded program of the Bismarck School District to meet the academic and liaison needs of American Indian students. It is coordinated by a Parent Advisory Committee of parents and guardians of American Indian students. (701) 323-4050.

JA (Junior Achievement): This program, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, is offered to grades K-6 in Bismarck and Mandan Public Schools. Business people volunteer to teach lessons in economics to school children during a 5-week period. There's also a personal finance class available for BPS 8th graders.

LD (Learning Disability): LD is a classification that includes several areas in which a person has difficulty learning in a typical manner, usually caused by an unknown factor(s). While *learning disability*, *learning disorder* and *learning difficulty* are often used interchangeably, they differ in many ways. *Learning disability* refers to significant learning problems in an academic area. These problems, however, are not enough to warrant an official diagnosis. *Learning disorder* is an official clinical diagnosis, whereby the individual meets certain criteria, as determined by a

professional (psychologist, pediatrician, etc.) The difference is in degree, frequency, and intensity of reported symptoms and problems, and thus the two should not be confused. When the term "*learning disabilities*" is used, it describes a group of disorders characterized by inadequate development of specific academic, language, and speech skills. These include reading disability (dyslexia), mathematics disability (dyscalculia) and writing disability (dysgraphia).

LEP (Limited English Proficiency): An individual who is age 3-21 and enrolled or preparing to enroll in an elementary or secondary school who was not born in the US or whose language is a language other than English or who is Native America or Alaska Native or a native resident of an outlying area and who comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the individual's level of English Language Proficiency.

LOS (Levels of Service): The BPS gifted and talented program is called Levels of Service. Students with varying levels and types of "giftedness" are served by specialists at our elementary schools. On the middle and high school level, we offer advanced courses for students to take.

LMO (Library Media Office): The BPS Library Media Office loans teaching and learning resources to Bismarck Public Schools to avoid over-duplication of resources. Call 701-323-4076.

Life Ed. (Life Education): The Life Ed program in Bismarck Schools allows older special needs students to develop skills prior to entering the workforce. To learn more, call 701-323-4004.

MAP (Measure of Academic Progress): A computerized assessment given to students in grades 3-9 to measure growth in reading and math (fall & spring) and grades 2, 10-12 (spring). Scores depend on how many questions are answered correctly and the difficulty of each question, so teachers know where students' strengths are and if they need help in certain areas. MAP Primary is used in grades K-2 and for some students in grades 2-12 receiving special education services. More information is available at www.nwea.org.

MREC (Missouri River Educational Cooperative): Some public schools in Bismarck qualify for this lower cost before and/or after school program to be hosted at a school. To learn more, call 701-751-4041 or visit www.mrec.k12.nd.us.

NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress): A mandated federal assessment conducted periodically in grades 4 and 8 in reading, math, science, writing and other subjects to gather objective data on educational progress across the nation. To learn more, go to <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/>.

Neighbors Network: A program through Bismarck Public Schools that supports families in need of intervention whose children are experiencing difficulties which are likely affecting their academic success in school.

NDSA (North Dakota State Assessment): This is the state's fall assessment to annually measure achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics in grades 3 through 8 and 11, and in grades 4, 8 and 11 in science. The state assessment is a standards-based test, which means it measures how well students are mastering the specific skills defined for each grade by the state.

of ND. Reports for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for schools and districts are given by the state each spring based on the fall assessment results. View them at www.dpi.state.nd.us/testing/assess/index.shtm.

Open Enrollment: There is a difference between “open enrollment” and “transfer”. Open enrollment refers to people who live outside of the BPS district and want to register their child to attend Bismarck Public Schools. BPS does not have open enrollment with other school districts. Therefore, if you do not live in the Bismarck School District, you would have to pay tuition. Call 701-323-4057 for more information. Transfers can be requested by parents who live within the BPS district and want their child to attend a school outside of their attendance area. Visit <http://www.bismarckschools.org/district/enroll-transfer/elementary-secondary-transfer-requests/>.

Open Gym: During the fall, winter and spring months, the Bismarck Parks and Recreation Department operates open gym times at several Bismarck Public School gyms on the weekends. For more information, call BPRD at 701-222-6455 or go online to www.bisparks.org.

PAC, PTO, PC: Acronyms for parent groups such as Parent Advisory Council or Committee, Parent Teacher Organization, or Parent Council. All Bismarck Public Schools have one.

PD (Professional Development): Training for teachers and other school employees.

PBL (Project Based Learning): Project-Based Learning is an approach to teaching in which students explore real-world problems and challenges. With PBL, students are inspired to obtain a deeper knowledge of the subjects they're studying through hands-on projects and research. PBL benefits include a greater depth of understanding of concepts, broader knowledge base, improved interpersonal/social skills, enhanced leadership skills, increased creativity, and improved writing and communication skills. Bismarck Public Schools is beginning to train teacher teams in PBL.

PSAT/NMSQT (Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test): An optional national standardized test given in the fall to prepare students for the SAT and ACT college readiness tests, as well as enter students for scholarships from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. It measures critical reading skills, math problem solving skills, and writing skills. To learn more, visit www.collegeboard.com/parents/.

PLC (Professional Learning Community): Teachers and administrators come together to engage in a variety of activities including sharing a vision, working and learning collaboratively, visiting and observing other classrooms, and participating in shared decision making.

PowerAnnouncement: Through this system, BPS can reach any or all parents through phone, text and e-mail. Bismarck Public Schools uses PowerAnnouncement to e-mail newsletters and relay information about school cancellations or emergencies. Parents should update their contact information with school secretaries any time they change or add phone numbers or e-mail.

PowerSchool: A student information system in which parents and students can view grades, assignment scores, and attendance for the classes in which students are currently enrolled.

Powergrade: Software that helps teachers to track attendance and student progress/grades.

Read 180: This program uses adaptive technology to individualize instruction in order to raise reading achievement for struggling readers in grades 4-12 who are reading two or more years below grade level. Read 180 provides teachers with important data so they can differentiate instruction for students who are struggling in reading.

Read Naturally: This individualized reading-intervention program addresses the needs of many at-risk readers through phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension using three researched strategies: teacher modeling, repeated reading, and progress monitoring.

Read Right: The Read Right Reading Intervention Program, developed and tested over a 30-year period, is consistent with emerging findings from neuroscience. This method reflects the understanding that each student's brain must figure out for itself all of the implicit aspects required to produce efficient and effective reading. Reading excellence is possible when the brain is doing everything precisely right to construct meaning from text. Consider this: Identifying one word at a time is slow and inefficient and frequently exceeds the capacity limitations on short-term and working memory, causing difficulty in comprehension. The brain doesn't have to decode or identify each and every word to get to an author's meaning. The brain is capable of putting comprehension *first* and using the construction of meaning to drive the reading process. Over-emphasis on individual word identification can, therefore, *prevent the brain* from engaging in all of the complex neural activity required for reading excellence.

Reading (District vs. Title I): BPS has reading specialists in all 17 public elementary schools for students who need supplemental help in this area. In 2013-2014, nine public elementary schools are funded through the District Supplemental Reading Program; eight public elementary schools (Lincoln, Miller, Moses, Myhre, Pioneer, Roosevelt, Saxvik, and Will-Moore) received federal funds through Title I. Title I also serves Wachter and Simle Middle Schools, and eligible non-public schools in Bismarck. For more information, call (701) 323-4250.

RTI (Response to Intervention): RTI is a multi-tier approach to the early identification and support of general education and special education students with learning and behavior needs. Struggling learners are provided with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning.

Right Track: This is a free program that provides in-home developmental screening for children ages birth to 3. It is a family-centered program offered to every ND child so they can have the "best start" in terms of physical, social, emotional and intellectual development. To learn more, call BECEP, 701-323-4400 or visit <http://www.becep.bismarckschools.org/BECEP/right-track/>.

SROs (School Resource Officers): BPS and the Bismarck Police Department fund these specially-trained police officers to help out in schools and with school/student situations.

TC (Teacher Center): There is an area Teacher Center located with the BPS Library Media Office at 806 N. Washington St. from which other area teachers, home school parents, etc. can borrow educational resources. Call 701-323-4076.

Title I: Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act provides financial assistance to

state and local educational agencies to meet the needs of at-risk children. Title I provides instructional services and activities which support students in meeting the state's challenging performance standards. In 2013-14, eight public elementary schools (Lincoln, Miller, Moses, Myhre, Pioneer, Roosevelt, Saxvik, and Will-Moore) received federal funds through Title I; the other nine public schools in Bismarck are funded by the District Supplemental Reading Program.

- Targeted Title I Program: Uses Title I money to provide instructional services and activities only to eligible children, those identified as having the greatest educational need. A Targeted Title I program operates at schools not eligible for, or not choosing to run, a school-wide program under Title I.
- School-wide Title I Program: Uses its Title I allocation to upgrade the entire school's educational program in order to raise academic achievement for all students at the school. School-wide programs do not have to identify particular children as eligible for services or separately track federal dollars.

TI PAC (Title I District Parent Advisory Council): A council that includes Parents and educators of Title I schools/parents that review the district parental involvement policy and the Title I parent involvement budget. The council meets two times a year.

Title VII: A federally funded program to meet the unique educational and culturally related academic needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives such as tutorial services, home/school liaisons, school supplies, cultural programs, etc. (701) 323-4050.

Title IX: A federal education act banning sex discrimination in schools in athletics or academics.

Transfers: There is a difference between “transfers” and “open enrollment”. Transfers can be requested by parents who live within the BPS district and want their child to attend a school outside of their attendance area. Visit <http://www.bismarckschools.org/district/enroll-transfer/elementary-secondary-transfer-requests/>. Open enrollment refers to parents who live outside of the BPS district and want to register their child to attend Bismarck Public Schools. BPS does not have open enrollment with other school districts. So, if you do not live in the Bismarck School District, you'd have to pay tuition. Call 701-323-4057 for more information.

School Dude: BPS uses this online facility use calendaring system to enable schools and community members to view and book facilities within our school district such as gyms, auditoriums, etc. Go to <http://www.bismarckschools.org/district/calendars/> for separate links for community members or school staff, or call 701-323-4503.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math): STEM education combines rigorous academic concepts with real-world problem-based and performance-based lessons in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. The goal is to enable students to be successful in post-secondary education and/or employment by requiring different and more technically sophisticated skills, including the application of math and science skills and concepts.

SCRC (South Central Reading Council): The ND Reading Association is divided into councils;

Bismarck's is South Central. The NDRA goals are to actively promote literacy locally and globally, provide a variety of professional development opportunities, increase partnerships with other organizations, assist local councils with member services, provide opportunities to become literary leaders, and use technology to promote reading. Visit www.ndreadon.com.

Summative Assessment: Summative Assessments monitors outcomes or test scores, usually for external accountability to the district, state or federal government. Formative Assessments, on the other hand, are a range of formal and informal procedures used by teachers to modify teaching and learning to improve student achievement and typically involve qualitative feedback rather than test scores that focus on content and performance.

Staff Developers: These are highly trained teachers who help other educators improve instruction. Teachers work collaboratively, often in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to set goals and refine and expand classroom practices that improve learning for all students.

SBG (Standards Based Grading): While traditional grading averages all of student work and may include subjective factors, Standards Based Grading focuses solely on proficiency. Teachers use these scores to indicate the level of proficiency a student is demonstrating during the school year:

- 4.0 - Demonstrates understanding that exceeds the grade level standard or target
- 3.0 - Demonstrates proficiency with the grade level standard or target
- 2.0 - Demonstrates partial understanding of the grade level standard or target
- 1.0 - Demonstrates beginning understanding of the grade level standard or target
- 0.5 - Demonstrates misunderstandings about prerequisite knowledge and/or skills necessary to meet the grade level end of year standard (expectation) or target

The goal is that learners will achieve the critical content and their work will earn a grade of 3.0 by the end of the school year or at the end of instruction for each grade level standard so that learners are more likely to be prepared for and find success at the next grade level. Students commonly demonstrate proficiency levels of .05 or 1.0 at the beginning of instruction for any new standards in their grade level. To receive a 4.0 score, students must demonstrate that their level of understanding exceeds the standards set for their grade level.

Strolling Strings: This is a group of 50 middle and high school string players (violin, viola, cello, and string bass) sponsored by Bismarck Public Schools. They memorize a 20 piece, 45 minute program of light classical and popular music and perform across the state and nation. To learn more, contact director Abby Walker, 701-323-4800, abby_walker@bismarckschools.org.

Students in Transition (Homeless Program): Bismarck Public Schools is committed to ensuring that children who are homeless have access to quality education. Eligible families or youth are those who lack a stable, adequate, and permanent place to sleep at night (motel, car, camper, tent, or with relatives/friends. Call (701) 323-4051.

Student Services: This refers to school resource people such as counselors, social workers, etc.

Summer Activity Centers: Run by Bismarck Parks and Recreation in some of our schools to provide safe summer child care and activities for elementary students. Call 701-222-6455.

VRE (Vocational Resource Educators): These teachers provide educational assistance to students with disabilities in the vocational technical education program.

Zpass: A pass that students scan when they get on/off a BPS/Harlow's bus for improved safety.