

## Glossary of Educational Terms and Acronyms

The following terms are used by the School District not only in policy and administrative guidelines, but in communications with parents, students, and the public.

### ASSESSMENT

The comparison that is made between what should have been accomplished and what has been actually accomplished. With student learning it is a comparison between what has been learned and what should have been learned.

### ATTITUDE

One of the five major types of learning contained in courses of study, along with facts, concepts, principles, and skills. Students develop (or change) a mind-set towards acting in a particular way. Examples are a mind-set or attitude toward “doing quality work,” “maintaining a clean environment,” “participating in civic affairs,” “not using drugs,” etc.

### COURSE OF STUDY

An organized sequence of activities designed for students to acquire a body of knowledge, attitudes, and skills associated with a particular academic or vocational field. The learning activities may be scheduled over a period of a semester, a school year, or several school years. Examples are a K-6 math program, 11th grade American History, and Junior High School Science.

### CONCEPT

One of the five major types of learning involved in a course of study, along with attitudes, facts, principles, and skills. Students form an abstract idea of a class or type by understanding the characteristics that are true of any instance. For example, a triangle the name for the concept of any plane, closed, geometric figure that has three sides which form three internal angles.

### CONTENT

The name that is used to refer to all of the facts, concepts, principles, attitudes, and skills that students are to learn in any course of study.

### CRITERION (CRITERIA)

A feature or characteristic by which something or someone is to be measured or judged. For example, in judging a student's writing ability, criteria that might be used are "legibility," "spelling," "clarity of expression," "grammar," etc.

### CURRICULUM

All the planned activities, formal and informal, individual and group, in and outside of the classroom, necessary to accomplish the educational goals of the District. (See policy 2210).

### DIAGNOSIS

A determination of the causes for a particular condition, usually based on an assessment or evaluation. It deals with the question, "What are the reasons for...?". In education, it could deal with the reasons students are or are not accomplishing what they are expected to be accomplishing as a result of instruction.

### EVALUATION

A value judgment that is made about an assessment. For example, if assessment shows that a student has satisfactorily achieved 90% of the objectives of a course, the evaluation (judgment) could be that the student's achievement is judged to be "excellent" or "better-than-average," "superior," and the like.

### FACT

One of the five major types of learning involved in a course of study, along with attitudes, concepts, principles, and skills. Students acquire knowledge of verified, specific information about an event, procedure, place, person, or object.

### GOAL

An intention or expectation, usually stated, which requires several tasks to produce the desired result. Most goals involve the accomplishment of two or more related objectives.

### IDEA

The Federal law which defines how states and local school systems will provide education for disabled children. Usually referred to as special education or "special ed." Enforced by the Department of Education (DOE).

### IEP

The acronym for Individualized Education Plan. Such a plan is required for every student who is classified as eligible for special education by Federal and State criteria.

#### INSTRUCTION

The information, questions, and/or directions provided to students by teachers, books, computers, etc., in order that they may acquire some type of learning.

#### LEADERSHIP

A process of working with people where certain knowledge and skills, and attitudes, combined with risk-taking, are used to 1) envision a desired or needed outcome; 2) communicate to others so they participate willingly in the necessary tasks; 3) monitor progress toward the outcome; 4) reinforce and/or remediate actions; 5) evaluate the results.

#### MANAGEMENT

The process or organizing and maintaining needed resources (people, things, time, and money) and ensuring they are utilized appropriately for their intended purpose.

#### MEASUREMENT

A determination of the quantity and/or quality of something. In education, it is usually determined (often by testing) of how much has been learning or how well it has been learned. It is the necessary first step for an assessment and evaluation.

#### MISSION

The stated purpose or intent of a school or school system. The reason it exists.

#### MODEL

In education, the term usually refers to a program or project designed to demonstrate unique activities, structures, and/or organizations.

#### NORMS

In education, the term is primarily related to testing and refers to a set of achievement levels attained by a given number or percentage of students from representative populations or areas of a state or the nation.

#### OBJECTIVE

An intended action or result, often a step in the process of achieving a goal. For students, a learning objective is usually the first level of accomplishment which, when sequenced and correlated with other objectives, allows for the achievement of Course of Study objectives, which, if achieved and correlated with the accomplishment of other Courses of Study objectives, lead to the accomplishment of one (1) or more of the District's Educational Goals for Students.

#### OUTCOME

The situation that exists when one (1) or more goals have been achieved. In plans, outcomes are usually stated in terms of expected accomplishment; goals are usually stated in terms of intended actions. Both emanate from the Mission Statement.

#### PILOT

The try-out of a new or innovative program or activity before making a major, long-term commitment.

#### PLACEMENT

The assignment, for reasons other than educational achievement, of a student to another group, grade, program, or course.

#### PLAN

The thought-out sequence of actions designed to accomplish an objective or goal. Usually describes needed resources, appropriate actions and timelines, contingencies, and procedures for monitoring progress.

#### PRINCIPLE

One of the five major learnings involved in a course of study, along with attitudes, concepts, facts, and skills. Students acquire knowledge of cause-effect relationships in the natural and social sciences, mathematics, and other subject areas.

#### PROGRAM

A series of related, planned activities which are designed to accomplish one or more state purposes.

#### PROMOTION

The advancement of a student from one level of learning to a higher level of learning usually by assignment to a higher group, grade, program, or course.

#### RELIABILITY

In education, the term relates primarily to testing and refers to how consistently test items or a test as a whole measures the same learning among different students.

#### RETENTION

The decision to have a student remain at his/her current level for an additional semester or school year, because the student lacks knowledge or skills needed for further learning and/or exhibits emotional or social immaturity.

### SCOPE

A curriculum term which refers to both the length of a particular course of study and to the amount and types of learnings that will be dealt with from beginning to end.

### SECTION 504

The section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that includes requirements for employment and education of disabled persons. Enforced by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

### SEQUENCE

A curriculum term correlated to SCOPE which describes the order in which learnings will be developed and should cumulate throughout a course of study.

### SKILL

One of the five major types of learning involved in a course of study, along with attitudes, facts, concepts, and principles. Students have learned a skill when they can take certain actions and produce a particular result at a given standard of quality. This type of learning is acquired through repeated practice interspersed with clear, concise feedback on what to change and what to maintain in order to improve the result.

### STANDARDIZED TEST

A test in which the items have been designed by educators outside of the district rather than by the students' teachers and has state or national norms by which to judge the level of each student's achievement.

### STANINE

A term used in reporting test results that refers to one of nine levels of performance on the test.

### TEST

A method, consisting of questions or activity directions, designed to determine what students have acquired in the way of attitudes, facts, concepts, principles, and/or skills. It may also be used to determine how much or how well they can apply what they have learned.

### UNDERSTANDING

A level of knowledge beyond memorization or rote which makes it possible for a student to explain what s/he has learned and/or to apply the knowledge in new and unfamiliar situations.

**VALIDITY**

In education, the term relates primarily to testing and refers to how well test items or a test as a whole actually measures what is intended to be measured or needs to be measured. (See RELIABILITY).

**Acronyms**

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DOE	Federal Department of Education
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FERPA	Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act
IEP	Individualized Education Plan
OCR	Office of Civil Rights
OSHA	Office of Safety and Health Administration
PPO	Pupil Performance Objective
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
WDE	Wisconsin Department of Education