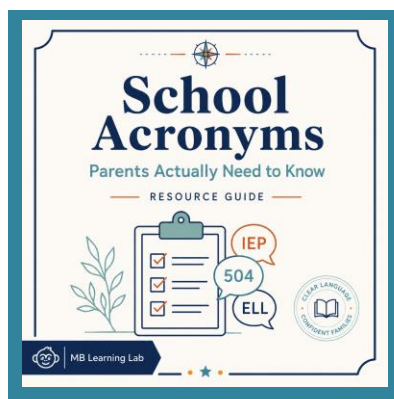




School Acronyms Parents and Caregivers May Need to Know

Monkey Buddies Learning Lab Resource Guide

chrissidennis.com — June 2026

School language can feel like alphabet soup. This guide explains common school acronyms in plain language so families can read forms, attend meetings, and ask clearer questions.

Parent/Caregiver Reminder

You do not have to memorize every acronym. If a school team uses a term you do not know, it is always okay to ask:

“What does that mean in plain language?”

“What does that look like for my child?”

“Is this a support, a service, an assessment, or a legal plan?”

Good school communication should make things clearer, not more confusing.

Print What You Need

This guide is divided into sections so families, tutors, and teachers can print only the pages that match the conversation or concern.

Guide Sections	
Section	What It Helps Explain
Common School Acronyms	General school abbreviations families may see in class, newsletters, or school conversations.
Support & Intervention Acronyms	Terms connected to extra help, progress checks, and support systems.
Special Education Acronyms	Terms families may hear in meetings, evaluations, plans, and school paperwork.
Behavior, Therapy & Access Acronyms	Terms connected to behavior plans, communication, therapy, access, and school participation.
Progress & Meeting Acronyms	Terms connected to data, timing, meetings, and IEP present levels.

School Acronyms

Common School Acronyms

chrissidennis.com — June 2026

Section Reminder

These acronyms are connected to general school language, classroom learning, and schoolwide systems.

Acronym	Parent/Caregiver-Friendly Meaning
ELA — English Language Arts	Reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language skills.
STEM — Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math	Hands-on learning that often includes building, experimenting, problem-solving, and math/science thinking.
PE — Physical Education	Movement, exercise, sports, and physical activity at school.
SEL — Social and Emotional Learning	Skills like managing feelings, getting along with others, solving problems, and making responsible choices.
PBIS — Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports	A schoolwide system for teaching and encouraging positive behavior.
GEN ED — General Education	The regular classroom setting and instruction provided to students who are not receiving special education services for that subject or setting. Some students with IEPs or 504 plans may also spend part or all of their day in general education with supports.

School Acronyms

Support & Intervention Acronyms

chrissidennis.com — June 2026

Section Reminder

These acronyms are connected to extra help, support systems, and checks used to decide whether support is helping.

Acronym	Parent/Caregiver-Friendly Meaning
RTI — Response to Intervention	Extra help given when a student is struggling with a skill. Schools monitor progress to see if the support is working.
MTSS — Multi-Tiered System of Supports	A schoolwide support system for academics, behavior, attendance, and social-emotional needs.
Tier 1 — Core Instruction	The instruction all students receive.
Tier 2 — Targeted Support	Extra small-group help for students who need more practice or support.
Tier 3 — Intensive Support	More individualized support for students who need significant help with a skill.
CBM — Curriculum-Based Measurement	A quick assessment used to track progress in a specific academic skill.

School Acronyms

Special Education Acronyms

chrissidennis.com — June 2026

Section Reminder

These are acronyms families may hear in meetings, evaluations, service plans, and special education paperwork.

Acronym	Parent/Caregiver-Friendly Meaning
IEP — Individualized Education Program	A legal plan for a student who qualifies for special education services. It lists goals, services, accommodations, and supports.
504 — Section 504 Plan	A support plan for a student with a disability who needs accommodations but may not need special education services.
FAPE — Free Appropriate Public Education	The legal right of eligible students with disabilities to receive an education that meets their needs.
LRE — Least Restrictive Environment	A special education term meaning a student with a disability should learn with peers without disabilities as much as is appropriate for that child's needs. The team should consider supports in the general education setting before moving the child to a more separate setting.
IDEA — Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	The federal special education law that protects students with disabilities.
LEA — Local Education Agency	Usually the school district or school representative responsible for making sure services are provided.
MDT — Multidisciplinary Team	A team of people who review information about a student's needs. This may include school staff, specialists, and family members.

School Acronyms

Behavior, Therapy & Access Acronyms

chrissidennis.com — June 2026

Section Reminder

These acronyms are connected to behavior support, therapy services, communication, and access to school participation.

Acronym	Parent/Caregiver-Friendly Meaning
FBA — Functional Behavior Assessment	A process used to understand why a behavior is happening before creating a behavior plan.
BIP — Behavior Intervention Plan	A plan that teaches and supports better behavior by understanding what the behavior is communicating or accomplishing.
OT — Occupational Therapy	Support for fine motor, sensory, self-help, and school participation skills.
PT — Physical Therapy	Support for movement, strength, balance, mobility, or access to the school environment.
SLP — Speech-Language Pathologist	A specialist who supports speech, language, communication, and sometimes feeding/swallowing needs.
AAC — Augmentative and Alternative Communication	Tools or systems that help a student communicate, such as picture cards, devices, or communication apps.
AT — Assistive Technology	Tools that help a student access learning, communication, or the school environment.
ESY — Extended School Year	Special education services provided beyond the regular school year when needed to prevent significant skill loss.

School Acronyms

Progress & Meeting Acronyms

chrissidennis.com — June 2026

Section Reminder

These acronyms are connected to timing, progress data, and meeting language families may hear during the school year.

Acronym	Parent/Caregiver-Friendly Meaning
BOY — Beginning of Year	Data or assessments collected near the start of the school year.
MOY — Middle of Year	Data or assessments collected around the middle of the school year.
EOY — End of Year	Data or assessments collected near the end of the school year.
PLOP / PLAAFP — Present Levels of Performance / Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance	A section of an IEP that explains what the student can currently do, what support is needed, and where the student is starting from when goals are written.

Plain-Language Note About LRE

LRE is a special education term, but the bigger idea matters for everyone: all students deserve a learning environment that is safe, supportive, and appropriate. Sometimes the least restrictive environment for one child may not be the least restrictive environment for the whole group.

Plain-Language Guide Note

This guide is for clear, parent/caregiver-friendly language only. For legal or eligibility questions, ask your school team or district special education office.