

# PUSD LCAP TEAM Glossary of Terms

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Definitions adapted from ED-Trust [www.edsource.org/publications/education-glossary](http://www.edsource.org/publications/education-glossary)

**A-G Courses:** The set of 15 one-year college prep courses high school students must take to be eligible to enter either the California State University (CSU) or University of California (UC) systems. Required a-g courses beginning with the class of 2003 and beyond include: (a) Two history/social science; (b) Four English language arts; (c) Three math (through Algebra II or Integrated Math III); (d) Two laboratory science (two different disciplines); (e) Two foreign language (same language); (f) One visual/performing arts; and (g) One elective from the above subjects. Students must also meet other criteria to gain admission to the university systems.

**Academic Performance Index (API):** A number, used for school accountability purposes, summarizing the performance of a group of students, a school, or a district on California's standardized tests. A school's number (or API score) is used to rank it among schools of the same type (elementary, middle, high) and among the 100 schools of the same type that are most similar in terms of students served, teacher qualifications, and other factors. Schools and districts also receive separate API scores for any student group - including ethnic subgroups, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities - comprised of more than 10 students with valid test scores. They only receive academic growth targets for "numerically significant" student groups, however.

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP):** Adequate yearly progress is a set of annual academic performance benchmarks that states, school districts, schools, and subpopulations of students are supposed to achieve if the state receives federal funding under Title I, Part A of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). In California, the measures include: (1) specified percentages of students scoring "proficient" or "advanced" on California Standards Tests in English language arts and math; (2) participation of at least 95% of students on those tests; (3) specified Academic Performance Index scores or gains; and (4) for high schools, a specified graduation rate or improvement in the rate.

**Advanced Placement (AP) program and AP exams:** A cooperative educational program between high school students and institutions of higher education that offers high school students the opportunity to complete college-level courses and earn college credit for them. The College Board, which administers the AP program, currently offers 37 courses and examinations in 22 subject areas including biology, calculus, and American history. Examinations are graded on a five-point scale, five being the highest possible score. College credit is earned by achieving a satisfactory score on an AP exam, usually a three or better. In addition, many college admission officials favor students who have completed AP coursework and have taken the exams.

**Average Daily Attendance (ADA):** The total number of days of student attendance divided by the total number of days in the regular school year. A student attending every day would equal

one ADA. ADA is not the same as enrollment, which is the number of students enrolled in each school and district. (Enrollment is determined by counting students on a given day in October.) ADA usually is lower than enrollment due to factors such as students moving, dropping out, or staying home due to illness. The state uses a school district's ADA to determine its general purpose (revenue limit) and some other funding.

**Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA):** A program established with the enactment of Senate Bill 1422 in 1992. The purpose of BTSA is to implement cost-effective models for new teacher development in order to "transform academic preparation into practical success in the classroom, [and] to retain greater numbers of capable beginning teachers." The BTSA local programs are all consortia that include a college or university, a county office of education, one or more school districts, and at least one local teacher organization. Each BTSA program offers beginning teachers ongoing, consistent support from experienced colleagues at the school site. It also includes formative assessments (such as classroom observations, reflective journals, and portfolios) to help beginning teachers assess and improve their own teaching.

**Benchmark:** A detailed description of a specific level of student achievement expected of students at particular ages, grades, or developmental levels. Benchmarks are often represented by samples of student work. A set of benchmarks can be used as checkpoints to monitor progress in meeting performance goals within and across grade levels.

**California English Language Development Test (CELDT):** A test for students whose primary language—as reported by their parents—is not English. These students take the CELDT upon initial enrollment and annually thereafter until it is determined that they have mastered English. At that point they are reclassified as fluent English proficient (FEP) and are no longer counted as part of a school's English learner (EL) population. The CELDT evaluates listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

**Class Size Reduction (CSR):** A program initiated in the 1996-97 school year for kindergarten through third grade. The state now has two programs that provide incentive funding for schools to reduce or maintain class sizes of no more than 20 students per teacher. One program covers kindergarten through third grade classes. A separate program supports smaller classes for core academic subjects in 9th grade.

**Common Core State Standards (CCSS):** The Common Core State Standards, often referred to as "Common Core" are a set of educational standards that describe what students should know and be able to do in English language arts and math in each grade from kindergarten through 12th grade. California is among the more than 40 states that have adopted them in an effort to establish clear, consistent educational standards across state lines. California students will begin to take standardized tests measuring their knowledge of the Common Core in spring 2015.

**Early Assessment Program (EAP):** Begun in 2004, the Early Assessment Program (EAP) was developed through a partnership between the California State University (CSU), the California Department of Education, and the California State Board of Education. High school juniors whose schools participate in EAP can choose to take expanded versions of CSTs in English language arts (including an essay) and math (Algebra II and Summative High School Mathematics CSTs only) to determine their college readiness. The results are used by the CSU system to exempt students from college placement tests or let students know that they need additional preparation during their senior year. Growing numbers of California Community Colleges grant such exemptions as well.

**English Learner (EL):** Students whose home language is not English and who qualify for extra help. EL students were formerly known as "Limited English Proficient" (LEP). (See CELDT and FEP.)

**Free/Reduced Price Meals:** A federal program to provide food-typically lunch and/or breakfast-for students from low-income families. The number of students participating in the National School Lunch Program is increasingly being used as a way to measure the poverty level of a school or district population. The number of children in this program can affect schools' or districts' eligibility for grants or other funding aimed at helping lower-income families.

**Graduation Rate:** There are two approaches for determining the number of students who earned high school diplomas. One approach takes the number of graduates and divides it by graduates plus dropouts over the last four years. This method can overestimate the graduate rate because local schools often under-report the number of students who drop out. A second graduation rate calculation divides the number of graduates by the ninth-grade enrollment four years prior. This method can underestimate the graduation rate in part because it does not account for students who graduated early, moved, or took alternative paths such as passing the California High School Proficiency Exam.

**Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP):** A key accountability requirement of the state's Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), the LCAP is a three-year plan, which every district must create and update annually with input from the community. The LCAP is intended to explain how the district will use state funds to improve educational outcomes for all students based on eight state priorities, with special attention to high-needs student who received additional money. The State Board of Education approved a template for the LCAP in January 2014. For more information, please see our Local Control Funding Formula Guide.

**Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF):** Signed into law on July 1, 2013, the Local Control Funding Formula, also known as LCFF, overhauls California's school finance system, replacing "revenue limits" and most "categorical funds" with a per-pupil base grant plus additional money for high-needs (low income, English learner, and foster youth) students. For more information about the new funding formula, please see our Local Control Funding Formula Guide.

**Professional Development:** Programs that allow teachers or administrators to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to perform their jobs successfully. Often these programs are aimed at veteran teachers to help them update their skills and knowledge. Researchers have found that effective professional development focuses on academic content and requires adequate time, resources, and working conditions. Examples in California are the University of California (UC) Professional Development Institutes and Mathematics and Reading Professional Development Program. (See Principal Training Program.)

**Proficiency:** Mastery or ability to do something at grade-level. In California, students take California Standards Tests (CSTs) and receive scores that range from "far below basic" to "advanced." The state goal is for all students to score at "proficient" or "advanced."

**Single Plan for Student Achievement:** A required plan for schools that participate in any state or federal program included in the state's consolidated application. The plan, which is developed by the school site council, must describe how the school will spend the funds received through the consolidated application to improve student achievement. The school district governing board must review and approve the plan. This replaced the disparate plans required for some state and federal programs.

**Special Education:** Programs to identify and meet the educational needs of children with emotional, learning, or physical disabilities. Federal law requires that all children with disabilities be provided a free and appropriate education according to an Individualized Education Program (IEP) from infancy until 21 years of age.

**Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA):** A regional group for purposes of administering Special Education services effectively and efficiently. Districts are organized into SELPAs; some are countywide, a single large district, or part of a district; and some combine several smaller districts.