

PSAYDN Out-of-school Time (OST) Terminology

21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC): A competitive grant that provides federal funding to establish community learning centers that provide academic, artistic and cultural enrichment opportunities during non-school hours, administered by PDE, authorized under Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (P.L. 107-110), as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 ([PDE, 2023](#)).

21st Century Skills: Refers to a broad set of knowledge, skills, work habits and character traits that are believed to be critically important to success in today's world, particularly in collegiate programs and contemporary careers and workplaces ([Glossary of Ed Reform, 2014](#)).

4 C's: The four skills (Collaboration, Communication, Creativity and Critical Thinking) that are essential for modern students to succeed in school and the workplace ([AES Education, 2023](#)).

504 Plan: A student who does not qualify for special education services under The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (an educational law) still may qualify for services under Section 504 (a civil rights law) if the disability is shown to substantially limit their educational performance due to a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities, such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Accommodations often refer to building accessibility, classroom adjustments and curriculum modifications and may be updated or revised as the need changes ([PDE, 2023](#)).

508 Plan: In 1998, Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to require federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology (EIT) accessible to people with disabilities. The law applies to all federal agencies when they develop, procure, maintain or use electronic and information technology. Under Section 508, agencies must give disabled employees and members of the public access to information comparable to the access available to others ([General Services Administration, 2023](#)).

Academic Standards: The knowledge and skills students are expected to learn in a subject in each grade used by states and districts to measure students' progress and performance ([Advocacy & Communications Solutions, LLC, 2022](#)).

Accountability: A set of policies, data and practices used to collect information and protect the integrity of that information to provide a valid measurement of student achievement. This information is used to measure and hold schools and districts responsible for improving student achievement and to identify areas in need of support and improvement ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

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Act 158: Signed into law by Governor Tom Wolf on Oct. 24, 2018, provides alternatives to Pennsylvania's statewide requirement of attaining proficiency on the three end-of-course Keystone Exams (Algebra I, Literature, and Biology) for a student to meet high school graduation requirements other than passing the Keystone exams ([PAPSE, 2022](#)).

Act 48: Act 48 of 1999 established the requirement that all certificate holders must earn 180 hours of professional development every five years. Act 45 of 2007 (24 P.S. §12- 1205.5) defines requirements for continuing professional education taken by Pennsylvania school or system leaders in specific covered positions (i.e., principals, assistant/vice principals, superintendents, assistant superintendents, intermediate unit executive directors, assistant intermediate unit executive directors, or directors of area vocational-technical schools) ([PDE, 2019](#)).

Active Learning: The learning process where students are actively engaging the material. Often utilizing cooperative learning, active learning involves peer discussion, writing, reading, and direct engagement while solving problems, utilizing analysis, evolution, and synthesis ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Adjudicated Youth: Juveniles who have been found guilty of committing an act and are detained ([Youth.gov, 2023](#)).

Advocacy: The act or process of supporting a cause or proposal. Advocacy is any action that speaks in favor of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports or defends, or pleads on behalf of others. This can be done by ongoing activities like: educating and raising awareness for out-of-school-time, sharing your story and experiences, building relationships in the community, writing letters, talking with legislators, and hosting events such as Lights On Afterschool, and speaking up for others, for example, at Advocacy Day. Advocacy is not influencing specific legislation (this is called lobbying), done just one time, and only focused on legislators and other elected officials ([Oregon ASK, 2023](#)).

Afterschool: Also called extended learning time, the term expanded learning time refers to any educational program or strategy intended to increase the amount of time students are learning, especially for the purposes of improving academic achievement and test scores or reducing learning loss, learning gaps, and achievement gaps. Extended (or expanded) school days and school weeks are also used as a strategy for increasing the amount of time students receive instruction; engage in learning opportunities in areas such as sports and arts; learn through non-traditional experiences such as apprenticeships or internships; or get academic support as part of their school days or years ([The Glossary of Education Reform, 2023](#)).

Afterschool Alliance: An organization committed to ensuring that all youth have access to affordable, quality OST programs by engaging public will to increase public and private investment in OST program initiatives at the national, state and local levels ([Afterschool Alliance, 2023](#)).

Agender: An adjective that can describe a person who does not identify as any gender ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

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Apprenticeship: Apprenticeships are innovative training programs that allow employers to develop and prepare their future workforce, while providing individuals with a learn-while-you-earn approach to career development. Apprenticeships include:

- Paid Job – Includes apprentices who are paid employees who produce high-quality work while they learn skills that enhance their employers' needs.
- On-the-Job Learning - Develops skilled workers through structured learning in a work setting.
- Classroom Learning - Improves job-related skills through education in a classroom setting (virtual or in-person).
- Mentorship - Provides apprentices with the support of a skilled worker to assist and enhance critical hands-on-learning.
- Credentials - Offers a portable, nationally-recognized credential to be issued at the completion of the program ([PA CareerLink, 2023](#)).

Area Vocational-Technical School (AVTS): Also referred to as a Career & Technical Education Center (CTC). There are more than 80, PDE-approved technical schools and centers across Pennsylvania that offer students the opportunity to develop critical skills through a combination of classes and hands-on learning experiences, which allow them to apply academics to real-world problems ([PDE, 2023](#)).

Assessment: Methods or tools, such as standardized tests, used by educators to evaluate, measure and document the academic performance, progress, skills and educational needs of students ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

At-risk Students: Students who have a higher than average probability of dropping out or failing school. Broad categories usually include inner-city, low-income, and children experiencing homelessness; English language learners; and students with emotional or behavioral difficulties. Substance abuse, juvenile crime, unemployment, poverty and lack of adult support are thought to increase a youth's risk factor ([Beyond Brown, 2023](#)).

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): Children diagnosed with attention deficit disorder tend to have problems staying on task and focusing on conversations or activities. Children with ADD may be impulsive, easily distracted (e.g., by someone talking in another room or by a passing car), full of unfocused energy, fidgety, and restless ([Beyond Brown, 2023](#)).

Blended Learning: A combination of different modes of learning. Blended learning is often used to refer specifically to combination courses that use both in-classroom and online distance learning techniques ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Career and Technical Education (CTE): Educational programs that specialize in skilled trades, applied sciences, modern technologies and career preparation that frequently offer both academic and career-oriented courses with opportunities to gain exposure to the workforce through internships and industry certification ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

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Career Pathways or Career Readiness: An education and workforce development strategy geared toward a comprehensive look at education and training to provide an individualized plan for students to achieve their goals in pursuing college or work after graduation. Policies related to such strategies attempt to ensure students are college and career ready or have the soft skills to succeed in whatever pathway they choose ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Charter School: A non-religious public school that receives government funding but may be operated independently of traditional school districts under a contract that governs its operations ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Children of Color: Children of color includes African-American, Hispanic, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Native American, or bi/multiracial students ([Afterschool Alliance, 2023](#)).

Chronic Absenteeism: In Pennsylvania, students who have missed more than 10% of enrolled school days across the academic year; this represents 18 days in a 180-day school year (PDE, 2023). This can lead to issues of low achievement, disengagement from school, course failure, and increased risk of dropping out ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Cisgender or Cis: An adjective that describes a person whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

Common Core Standards: The Common Core Standards were developed by the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. They have been adopted by 46 states, and focus on using fewer standards, higher level thinking, and demonstration as an assessment ([Piha, 2013](#)).

Community-based Organizations (CBO): Most often, the term "CBO" refers to afterschool programming providers such as YMCAs or Boys & Girls Clubs, or even museums and libraries. However, a CBO can also be a local sports franchise, a law enforcement group, an arts council, a faith based organization or even a fraternal organization such as the Rotary Club ([Glen Price Group, 2023](#)).

Community Involvement: Activities that increase young people's knowledge of the community beyond their school or home. It allows them to give back to their community and as a result, they experience a sense of connection to it ([Piha, 2013](#)).

Competency-based Education: An individualized approach to learning that allows students to advance based on their ability to master a skill or competency at their own pace rather than following a specific lesson plan for an entire class that dictates how much time is spent on a subject ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Core Academic Areas: Includes language arts, reading, math, science and social studies ([Florida Standards for Quality Afterschool Programs, 2023](#)).

Criminal Background Check Act 34: Part of Act 34 of 1985 and Act 114 of 2006, it requires all prospective employees of public schools, private schools and their contractors' employees who

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will work in direct contact with children. Also required for "student teacher candidates." This is one of three required background checks or clearances (PDE, 2023).

Curriculum: The courses and contents offered by educational institutions. Curriculum may be determined, either partially or completely, by external bodies ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP): Developed and promoted by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), DAP is defined methods that promote each child's optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning ([NAEYC, 2023](#)).

Digital Literacy: The awareness, attitude and ability of individuals to appropriately use digital tools and facilitates to identify, access, manage and integrate, evaluate, analyze and synthesize digital resources, construct new knowledge, and create media ([Piha, 2013](#)).

Distance Learning or Distance Education: An educational field focused on the design of systems that most effectively incorporates the pedagogy, technology and instructional systems for students unable to attend traditional classroom-based schools. Students and teachers can communicate via electronic media or through real-time applications. ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB): The concept is an extension of a more commonly known initiative known as Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI.) DEI is based on the principles of diversity (employing people with a range of social identities), equity (creating systems that ensure equal access), and inclusion (ensuring all voices are heard) ([factorial, 2023](#)).

Dropout Prevention and Recovery: Programs or schools that specialize in assisting students at risk of dropping out or failing to graduate on time that may include wraparound social services, academic supports, mentoring and coaching ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Early Childhood Education (ECE): Education from birth to 8 years old ([PA Keys, 2023](#)).

Early Head Start (EHS): Pennsylvania's Early Head Start programs provide free comprehensive services for eligible children from birth to entry into kindergarten. Early Head Start programs are operated by local agencies in all 67 counties of Pennsylvania. Early Head Start's programs are designed to provide the same kinds of comprehensive child development and family support services to families with children under age 3, and pregnant women that are already involved in Head Start. Early Head Start services include home visits, health and nutrition services, and referrals to other services that may be needed. Families wanting to apply for Early Head Start must be at or below federal poverty level. ([PA Promise for Children, 2023](#)).

Early Intervention Services (EI): The services and supports that are available to babies and young children with developmental delays and disabilities and their families. May include speech therapy, physical therapy, and other types of services based on the needs of the child and family ([CDC, 2023](#)).

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Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC): A place where families can find high-quality early education opportunities, apply for assistance to help with child care costs or access other resources that will set them on a path to success. It is also where child care providers can receive information on improving program quality. Their services include providing child care subsidies, quality improvement programs for child care providers, and connecting families with early learning programs like Head Start, Early Head Start, Pre-K Counts and Early Intervention ([DHS, 2023](#)).

Ecosystem: In education, this refers to the connection and collaboration between the stakeholders in providing students with quality educational resources, for example our science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) Ecosystems with Pennsylvania Statewide STEM Ecosystem ([PSSE](#).)

Educational Technology: The process of designing training or instruction for education used to improve performance and enhance teacher-led learning in classrooms to improve student outcomes ([PAECT, 2023](#)).

E-learning: Computer and communications technology facilitated to enhance learning. E-learning can be utilized through home computers, software, television and mobile technology such as tablets and smart phones. Communications technology uses email, internet access, online discussion forums, and team learning systems for students and teachers to communicate ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Emergency Preparedness Plan: A written plan of action for coordinating the response of program staff in the event of a disaster within the OST program or the surrounding community. [Center for Safe Schools](#)

English Language Learner (ELL) and English Second Language (ESL): English language learners are students whose primary language is not English, are currently working to develop their English, and often benefit from additional supports to improve their English reading, speaking, writing and comprehension skills ([Afterschool Alliance, 2023](#)).

Enrichment: These are most often activities that are not offered in school such as visual or performing arts programming or filmmaking. Enrichment activities can also be related to OST and school-day learning but in a way that makes the learning fuller, more meaningful, and/or rewarding ([Piha, 2013](#)).

Entrepreneurship Education: Entrepreneurship education is the process of providing individuals with the concepts and skills to recognize opportunities that others have overlooked and to have the insight, self-esteem and knowledge to act where others have hesitated. It includes instruction in opportunity recognition, marshaling resources in the face of risk, and initiating a business venture. It also includes instruction in business management processes such as business planning, capital development, marketing, and cash flow analysis (PDE).

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Current federal law governing federal public education policy passed in December 2015, that replaced the No Child Left Behind Act and places a

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greater focus on state and local goal setting and decision-making and broadened accountability indicators beyond test proficiency ([U.S. Department of Education, 2023](#)).

ESSA Report Cards: Required at the state and local level to show how schools perform. These must be published online and easy to understand while still including required information and other information based on parent and stakeholder feedback (Afterschool Alliance, 2023). In fall 2018, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) released the first edition of the Future Ready PA Index, a comprehensive progress report that provides parents and community members with easy-to-understand information about Pennsylvania schools and student success. ESSA requires that each state track data and hold schools and LEAs accountable for the performance of the following student groups: economically disadvantaged students, children with disabilities, English learners, and students from major racial and ethnic groups (Asian, Black, Hispanic, Multiracial, NA or AK Native, Native HI or Other Pacific Islander, and white). (PDE, 2023). [PA ESSA Report Card](#)

Evidence-based or Evidence-based Practices (EBP): This refers to any concept or strategy that is derived from or informed by objective evidence; most commonly, educational research or metrics of school, teacher and student performance ([The Glossary of Education Reform, 2023](#)).

Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO): ELO refers to before school, afterschool, summer, or intersession learning programs that focus on developing the academic, social, emotional and physical needs and interests of pupils through hands-on, engaging learning experiences ([California AfterSchool Network, 2023](#)).

Experiential Learning: Better known as learning by doing or hands-on learning, experiential education is the process of engaging students actively in an experience with benefits and consequences in an authentic manner ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Family Engagement: A family partnership in which educators, including early childhood education professionals, teachers and other education professionals, and family members have a shared goal of positive learning and development for the child in their joint care, whether a child is an infant, elementary school student, or teenager getting ready for college, a career, or participation in the community ([PDE, 2023](#)).

Federal FBI Criminal History Records - Act 114: One of the three required clearances, Act 114 of 2006 has required that ALL prospective employees of public and private schools, including their independent contractors and their employees, but excluding employees who do not have direct contact with students, undergo background checks ([PDE, 2023](#)).

Financial Literacy Education: Teaching students to use knowledge and skills to manage one's financial resources effectively for lifetime financial security. Topics include: earning income, spending, saving, investing, managing credit and managing risk ([JumpStart Coalition, 2023](#)).

Formal Education: Formal education is a type of education or a form of learning that is structured and systematic. Qualified and professional teachers give instruction and teaching in formal education. The learning environment is organized and well-structured, with set guidelines to keep discipline. The methods of teaching and curriculum used are pre-scheduled, strict,

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planned and deliberate. Learning is split into sections and semesters. At the end or completion of each section and semester, students' performances and knowledge are tested using standardized tests and exams ([School & Travel, 2023](#)).

Gender Dysphoria: Psychological distress that results from an incongruence between one's sex assigned at birth and one's gender identity ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

Gender Expression: How a person presents gender outwardly, through behavior, clothing, voice or other perceived characteristics. Society identifies these cues as masculine or feminine, although what is considered masculine or feminine changes over time and varies by culture ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

Gender Identity: One's own internal sense of self and their gender, whether that is man, woman, neither or both. Unlike gender expression, gender identity is not outwardly visible to others ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

Gender Transition: A process a person may take to bring themselves and/or their bodies into alignment with their gender identity ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

Gender: Defined as a social construct of norms, behaviors and roles that vary between societies and over time. Gender is often categorized as male, female or nonbinary ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

Gender-expansive: An adjective that can describe someone with a more flexible gender identity than might be associated with a typical gender binary ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

Gifted and Talented: The National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC) says "a gifted individual is someone who shows, or has the potential for showing, an exceptional level of performance in one or more areas of expression." For example, a person may be exceptionally talented as an artist, a violinist or a physicist ([Beyond Brown, 2023](#)).

Hands-on Learning: Learning that takes place through action or doing.

Head Start (HS): Pennsylvania's Head Start programs provide free comprehensive services for eligible children from birth to entry into kindergarten. Head Start programs are operated by local agencies in all 67 counties of Pennsylvania. Head Start programs provide children with a developmentally appropriate early childhood education. The program ensures young children get health checkups and treatment, oral health screenings, and are fed a nutritious hot meal every day. Families wanting to apply for Head Start or Early Head Start must be at or below federal poverty level ([PA Promise for Children, 2023](#)).

Higher Education or Higher Learning: The education provided by institutions such as colleges and universities that reward academic degrees upon completion ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Historically Under-represented Groups: Groups that are documented to have been represented across time in the educator population in proportions below their representation in the general population. These include, but are not limited to, people of color and the economically disadvantaged ([PDE, 2023](#)).

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Homeschooling: Teaching children at home instead of sending them to public or private schools ([Beyond Brown, 2023](#)).

Individualized Education Plan (IEP): An IEP is a written plan for the provision of services for the education of students who are disabled or gifted. The district has a responsibility under Child Find for children "thought-to-be" eligible for special education services and/or accommodations. This responsibility includes locating, identifying and evaluating all students with suspected disabilities, including but not limited to evaluating students for whom a request for an evaluation has been made. Two criteria exist for an IEP, both of which must be met:

- The student must meet one of the 13 disability categories defined by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004.
- The student must need special education; that is, the child requires specifically designed instruction to receive educational benefits ([PDE, 2023](#)).

Informal Learning: Learning that is unstructured and takes place away from traditional, formal learning settings, like a classroom. It has no clear goals or set objectives as it's often unplanned and self-directed by the learner ([O'Neill, 2023](#)).

Inquiry-based Learning: It is a method of education that is focused on question-asking: students that have meaningful questions are encouraged to ask them, especially if they do not have easy answers ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Instructional Design: A process of developing instruction and analyzing learning needs to develop a method that transfers skills and knowledge to students ([University of Pittsburgh, 2023](#)).

Instructional Leadership: The resources provided in a program or school to meet a school's mission, one-on-one communication, communication in both small and large groups, collaboration between stakeholders, and an established clear, articulated vision that drives decision-making and creates cohesiveness in the team.

Intersex: An umbrella term used to describe people with differences in reproductive anatomy, chromosomes or hormones that don't fit typical definitions of male and female ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

K-12: Kindergarten through 12th grade.

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA): A tool used to evaluate whether students entering kindergarten have the skills and knowledge necessary for success in kindergarten. Some states use results from such assessments in part or in whole to evaluate teacher effectiveness/quality and/or to rank school district performance ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Knowledge and Competencies: A style of learning that emphasizes the use of skills to demonstrate knowledge or mastery of a subject. Such strategies typically emphasize flexibility by allowing some combination of online learning, projects, community service, internships and early college opportunities that makes academic content relevant to each individual student ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

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Legislator: A member of an elected group of people who have the power to make or change laws ([PA General Assembly, 2023](#)).

Lesson Plan: The detailed course description for a lesson, put together by the teacher or instructor. Many lesson plans are similar, but there is no single way to create a correct plan ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Letter of Agreement (LOA): A simple document that specifies the parties, scope of work, terms of payment, and a definition of completion that is signed by all parties for a project or event.

Lights on Afterschool (LOA): Launched in October 2000, Lights On Afterschool is the only nationwide event celebrating OST programs and their important role in the lives of children, families and communities. The effort has become a hallmark of the OST movement and generates media coverage across the country each year. Afterschool Alliance organizes Lights On Afterschool to draw attention to the many ways OST programs support students by offering them opportunities to learn new things and discover new skills. The events send a powerful message that millions more kids need quality OST programs ([Afterschool Alliance, 2023](#)).

Listserv: LISTSERV is a program that provides automated mailing list functionality, such as MailChimp and Hubspot ([Youth.gov, 2023](#)).

Lobbying: Any attempt by individuals or private interest groups to influence the decisions of government. There are two types. Direct lobbying, which is defined as communication with a legislator, an employee of a legislator or legislative body, or any covered executive branch or other government employee who may participate in the formulation of legislation. The second is grassroots lobbying which is defined as an attempt to influence specific legislation by encouraging the public to contact legislators about that legislation. A communication constitutes grassroots lobbying if it refers to specific legislation, reflects a view on that specific legislation and encourages the recipient of the communication to take lobbying action. This type of communication is known as a call to action. You do need to be mindful of your funding sources and any lobbying restrictions they may have. Some grants do have restrictions on lobbying and it is important to be aware of those restrictions ([Landes, 2017](#)).

Local Education Agency (LEA): School districts (intermediate units, career/techs, etc.) ([Afterschool Alliance, 2023](#)).

Low income: Earning less than 80% of the median income in the U.S. ([PA Department of Human Services, 2023](#)).

Low-performing School: Schools identified as poor performing based upon proficiency rates that may be eligible for funding associated with government reform efforts ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Magnet Schools: Alternative public schools, most of which focus on a particular area of study, such as performing arts or science and technology, but also offer regular school subjects. Students from any part of the school district may enroll, and the schools often have waiting lists ([Beyond Brown, 2023](#)).

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Mandated Reporter: The following adults are considered mandated reporters and are required to report suspected child abuse if they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of child abuse:

- A person licensed or certified to practice in any health-related field under the jurisdiction of the Department of State.
- A medical examiner, coroner, or funeral director.
- An employee of a healthcare facility or provider licensed by the Department of Health, who is engaged in the admission, examination, care or treatment of individuals.
- A school employee.
- An employee of a child care service who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
- A clergyman, priest, rabbi, minister, Christian Science practitioner, religious healer or spiritual leader of any regularly established church or other religious organization.
- An individual paid or unpaid, who, on the basis of the individual's role as an integral part of a regularly scheduled program, activity or service, accepts responsibility for a child.
- An employee of a social services agency who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
- A peace officer or law enforcement official.
- An emergency medical services provider certified by the Department of Health.
- An employee of a public library who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
- An individual supervised or managed by a person listed above, who has direct contact with children in the course of employment.
- An independent contractor who has direct contact with children.
- An attorney affiliated with an agency, institution, organization or other entity, including a school or regularly established religious organization that is responsible for the care, supervision, guidance or control of children.
- A foster parent ([PA Promise for Children, 2023](#)).

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): An agreement between two or more parties outlined in a formal document. It is not necessarily legally binding, which depends on the signatories' intent and the language in the agreement, but signals the willingness of the parties to move forward with a contract ([Investopedia, 2023](#)).

Mental Wellness: The awareness of one's own ability to cope with stressors of day-to-day life while maintaining the ability to function effectively when socializing, working, learning and taking care of personal health and hygiene. A person that fits the definition of mental wellness has a positive sense of well-being and hope, despite daily stressors and challenges ([Guarino, 2018](#)).

Mentor: An individual with expertise who can help develop the career of a less experienced individual in their field. A mentor often has two primary functions for the mentee. The career-related function establishes the mentor as a coach who provides advice to enhance the mentee's professional performance and development ([American Psychological Association, 2012](#)).

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Multicultural Education: Schooling that helps students understand and relate to cultural, ethnic and other diversity, including religion, language, gender, age and socioeconomic, mental and physical differences. Multiculturalism is intended to encourage people to work together and to celebrate differences, not to be separated by them ([Beyond Brown, 2023](#)).

Multidisciplinary Curriculum: Refers to curriculum in more than one discipline or subject area. People may use this term and related ones differently, but, in general, a multidisciplinary curriculum is one in which the same topic is studied from the viewpoint of more than one discipline. For example, students may study weather using a variety of disciplines. They might study the current science behind measuring air pressure, learn about the history of weather prediction, and read and write poetry about weather ([Beyond Brown, 2023](#)).

National Afterschool Association (NAA): NAA supports, develops and advocates for OST professionals and leaders. NAA provides field leadership, advocacy, professional development and a community for OST professionals with opportunities for sharing, learning and growth ([National Afterschool Association, 2023](#)).

Needs Assessment (General): The process for identifying the desired outcome for a student, project, program, etc. and the methods needed to reach the overall goal ([Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2023](#)).

Needs Assessment (State): A process required in many titles in the ESSA law (i.e. Title I Schoolwide, school improvement, Title IV-A) but which can also be conducted as a comprehensive needs assessment process which can breakdown silos between titles and consider how funding streams can be braided together with the students' needs at the center ([Afterschool Alliance, 2023](#)).

Nonbinary: Used by people who do not describe themselves or their genders as fitting into the categories of man or woman ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

Online Learning: The delivery and facilitation of academic coursework via computer and electronic communication. Online learning may be utilized in a "blended" environment wherein it is combined with classroom instruction but may also refer to online schools wherein all content is provided electronically ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

On-the-job Training: Develops skilled workers through structured learning in a work setting ([PennDOT, 2023](#)).

Out-of-school Time (OST): Programs that provide quality services to school-aged youth through formal and structured opportunities. OST program goals and content can vary considerably, but most programs seek to engage youth and provide learning, enrichment and leadership opportunities to support youth academic success and overall development.

OST Educators/Youth Development Professional: Staff that provide instruction and supervision for before and afterschool programs on a school campus or facilities such as academic programs, specialty programs (e.g., sports teams, STEM, arts enrichment), and multipurpose programs that provide an array of activities and enrichment ([CDC, 2023](#)).

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Paraprofessional: An educational assistant in a teaching-related position within a classroom or school who provides support for licensed staff or works with students ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS): A set of tools and ideas developed to improve student behavior by addressing problems in the classroom before they develop by focusing on conflict resolution between students ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Pre-K: Ages 3 to the entry age for Kindergarten ([PDE, 2023](#)).

Prior Learning Assessment (PLA): The process of evaluating and awarding credit for college-level learning acquired outside of the traditional classroom. This type of learning is also known as informal and non-formal learning. Prior learning is sometimes referred to as experiential learning, often based upon previous employment or life experience ([Empire State University, 2023](#)).

Private School: an independent, non-government school supported by a private organization, private individuals and students' tuition ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Problem-based Learning (PBL): A concept of active learning driven by open-ended problems, collaborative working in small groups, and the use of facilitators rather than teachers ([Penn State University, 2023](#)).

Professional Certification: A certification earned to show proficiency as a qualification for job performance, indicating the person has specific skills, abilities or knowledge in the eyes of a certifying body ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Professional Development: specialized training to provide advanced learning opportunities for school administrators and teachers to improve their professional knowledge, skills and effectiveness ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Project-based Learning (PBL): A teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem or challenge. In project-based learning, the project is the vehicle for teaching the important knowledge and skills students need to learn. The project contains and frames curriculum and instruction. PBL requires critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and various forms of communication. To answer a driving question and create high quality work, students need to do much more than remember information. They need to use higher order thinking skills and learn to work as a team. ([Buck Institute for Education, 2023](#)).

Public School: A school supported by public funds, usually a combination of federal, state and local dollars ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Quality Standards: Provide a caliber baseline and requirements, specifications and/or guidelines that can be used consistently to ensure instruction and learning excellence for teachers and students. Often measured with rubric and assessed with testing, observation and/or grading ([California Afterschool Network, 2023](#)).

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Restorative Justice: A disciplinary approach focused on repairing relationships between students, especially those damaged by bullying, by focusing on communication and forgiveness ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Return on Investment (ROI): A performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency or profitability of an investment or compare the efficiency of several different investments. ROI tries to directly measure the amount of return on a particular investment, relative to the investment's cost. In OST specifically, the ROI reported by the [Joint State Government Commission in 2021](#) concludes, "...for every dollar invested in an OST program in the Commonwealth, \$6.69 is returned in potential benefits associated with reducing high school dropouts, teen pregnancy, substance abuse disorder, crime and delinquency" ([PSAYDN, 2021](#)).

Rubric: Specific descriptions of performance of a given task at several different levels of quality. Teachers use rubrics to evaluate student performance on performance tasks. Students are often given the rubric, or may even help develop it, so they know in advance what they are expected to do ([Beyond Brown, 2023](#)).

School Choice: Education policy that allows parents to select an alternative school or program for their student other than the one otherwise assigned by the district or based on geography ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

School Improvement: States must reserve 7% of Title I funds for school improvement activities for schools identified as in need of comprehensive or targeted support and improvement (Afterschool Alliance, 2023). School Improvement Grants (SIG), authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Schools Act of 1965 (Title I or ESEA), are competitive grants given to Pennsylvania's lowest-performing schools to substantially raise the achievement of their students. The process of identifying schools for support—termed "Annual Meaningful Differentiation" by the federal statute—results in three federally-prescribed designations:

- Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI): Schools facing the most significant challenges in academic achievement, student growth, and other areas; and
- Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (A-TSI): Schools in which performance by one or more student groups is at or below the level of the CSI schools.
- Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI): Schools in which performance by one or more student groups is at or below state-established standards ([PDE, 2023](#)).

School Performance Profile (SPP): See ESSA Report Card.

School Support and Accountability (SSA): See ESSA.

Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) or Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, & Math (STEAM): Educational programming and curriculum emphasizing science, technology, engineering, math and (in the case of STEAM) art as its core focus ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

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Service-learning: An approach to teaching and learning in which students use academic and civic knowledge and skills to address genuine community needs (NYLC, 2023). Specifically, service-learning integrates instruction and reflection with meaningful community service to teach civic responsibility, facilitate lifelong civic engagement, and enrich the learning experience, in addition to strengthening communities in which service-learning occurs ([ProctorFree, 2023](#)).

Sexual Misconduct/Abuse Disclosure Release - Act 168: This review requires the applicant to disclose all former employers that were school entities and/or where the prospective employee had direct contact with children, and the employment history review conducted by the hiring entity must include all such employers listed by the applicant. School entity includes any public school, including a charter or cyber charter school, private school, nonpublic school, intermediate unit, or area vocational-technical school operating within Pennsylvania (PDE, 2023).

Sexual orientation: The enduring physical, romantic and/or emotional attraction to members of the same and/or other genders, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and straight orientations ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL): The process of learning and applying the skills of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. SEL plays an important role in school climate and youth development. Schoolwide SEL programming has been shown to support achievement gains in students and contribute to post-graduation success. It is an integrated part of the PA Career Ready Skills, wellness and mental health and student-centered approaches to discipline, including restorative practices and trauma-informed strategies ([PDE, 2023](#)).

Soft Skills: Employability skills (See also, 21st Century Skills) of an adaptive nature are critical elements: collaboration, communication, flexibility, problem-solving, initiative and critical thinking. Employers identify these skills as most important for job success in the 21st-century economy. These skills are the core of the Pennsylvania Career Ready Skills ([PDE, 2023](#)).

Special Educational Needs: Special needs education or special education refers to separate schools, classes or instruction specifically designed for students categorized as having special educational needs. These students require additional support and adaptive methods to participate and meet learning objectives in an educational program. The reasons may include different physical, behavioral, intellectual, emotional and social capacities. Instruction may follow a similar curriculum; however, each student's needs are taken into account by providing specific resources (e.g., specially trained personnel, equipment or space) and, if appropriate, modified educational content or learning objectives ([UNESCO, 2023](#)).

Stakeholder: People with a personal interest in the system. It includes those who directly participate in it or who it can affect. In OST, these include internal stakeholders, such as boards, administration, support staff, teachers, students and parents. External stakeholders include state agencies and organizations, businesses, government and local authorities, legislators/policymakers, taxpayers, voters, community members, philanthropists, and colleges and universities ([Indeed Editorial Team, 2023](#)).

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Standards: In current usage, the term usually refers to specific criteria for what students are expected to learn and be able to do. These standards usually take two forms in the curriculum:

- Content standards (like what were formerly called goals and objectives), which tell what students are expected to know and be able to do in various subject areas, such as mathematics and science.
- Performance standards, which specify what levels of learning are expected. Performance standards assess the degree to which content standards have been met. The term "world-class standards" refers to the content and performances that are expected of students in other industrialized countries. In recent years, standards have also been developed specifying what teachers should know and be able to do ([Beyond Brown, 2023](#)).

Strategic Planning: A systematic process to identify and analyze problems, to set goals and objectives for addressing those problems, to select and implement evidence-based strategies for solving those problems, and then to evaluate the success of the strategies ([National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, 2023](#)).

Student Internship: An internship is a short-term work experience offered by companies and other organizations for students to get some entry-level exposure to a particular industry or field.

Student Job Shadow: Job shadowing is a form of on-the-job learning that allows interested students to closely follow, observe, and at times perform tasks of an employee performing the role.

Student Learning Objective (SLO): SLO is a process to document a measure of educator effectiveness based on student achievement of content standards. SLOs are a part of Pennsylvania's multiple-measure, comprehensive system of Educator Effectiveness authorized by Act 82 ([PSEA, 2023](#)).

Student-centered Learning: A flexible, forward-thinking approach to curriculum design and delivery puts students at the center and ensures that learners receive an education that is relevant in today's world. Often seen as "putting students in the driver's seat" and focuses on real-world problem-solving, discussion and reflection ([Penn State University, 2023](#)).

Subsidized Child Care: Child care programs that receive funding to cover the costs of care or parent fees (Illinois Professional Development System, 2023). See also, [Child Care Works](#).

Summer Enrichment: Supplemental learning opportunities, such as camps, offered during the summer months to help lessen the learning gap that can take place when school is not in session ([PDE, 2023](#)).

Summer Learning Loss: The learning loss students can experience in the summer, also called the "summer slide," happens when children don't engage in educational activities during the summer months ([PDE, 2023](#)).

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Technical Assistance (TA): The provision of targeted and customized supports by a professional or professionals with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients ([Illinois Professional Development System, 2023](#)).

Technology Integration: The use of technology resources -- computers, mobile devices like smartphones and tablets, digital cameras, social media platforms and networks, software applications, the Internet, etc. -- in daily classroom practices, and in the management of a school ([Gilbertson, 2007](#)).

Transgender or Trans: An adjective used to describe someone whose gender identity differs from the sex assigned at birth. A transgender man, for example, is someone who was listed as female at birth but whose gender identity is male ([Wamsley, 2021](#)).

Truancy: An intentional or unexcused absence from school that may result in disciplinary action or legal ramifications depending on the criteria established by state law ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Tuition Assistance Program (TAP): A program that enables employees to participate in college courses, professional development courses, skill-building classes, or other education opportunities, and have some or all those costs covered by their employer. These programs are typically run through a company's human resources department ([Straighterline, 2023](#)).

Under-resourced: Characterized as having insufficient resources and tending to serve large numbers of disadvantaged and/or low-income students ([NASFAA, 2021](#)).

Virtual Learning: Refers to an environment where students study a digital-based curriculum taught by instructors that lecture online via video or audio. This instruction can take place either in a self-paced (asynchronous) environment or in a real-time (synchronous) environment ([Coursera, 2023](#)).

Vouchers: financial assistance provided by a government to allow a student to attend a school, chosen by the student or student's parents, that is not their normally assigned school ([ACS LLC., 2022](#)).

Webinar: A webinar is an online seminar that allows participants from anywhere in the world to come together in a virtual classroom to share information via the internet. Webinars use virtual classroom software to host participants. These platforms provide for the use of other web tools such as presentation slides, text chat and web cameras. Examples would be Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Google Meet ([CDC, 2023](#)).

Youth Development and Youth Leadership: Youth development is a process that prepares young people to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood through a coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences which help them gain skills and competencies and direct their own lives. Youth leadership is part of that process. To achieve this, youth are provided with mentorship, peer-to-peer and leadership activities, exposure to role models, training in self-advocacy and conflict resolution, and other development activities that promote service-learning and social and emotional growth ([U.S. Department of Labor, 2023](#)).

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Youth Development Credential (YDC): This is a renewable, entry-level credential that provides an opportunity for adults working with kindergarten through 12th-grade youth to gain professional recognition by demonstrating their competence and knowledge as they work in youth-serving programs. Pennsylvania does not currently have a YDC program for all OST professionals.

Youth Voice: Youth-led opportunities where youth actively participate in planning, decision-making, facilitation, reflection and evaluation on issues that matter to them, taking action they see as important. Adults act as partners and provide mentorship, but work is driven by youth ([NYLC, 2023](#)).

Zero Tolerance: Provisions in legislation or official policies that require specified punishments for given offenses, no matter how slight the offense. Zero tolerance rules are adopted to send a message about unacceptable behavior, and adherents support them for that reason ([Beyond Brown, 2023](#)).