



## GLOSSARY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING TERMS

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Listed below are definitions for commonly used pedagogical terms. This list will provide an overview of foundational concepts, teaching strategies, classroom structures, and philosophies.

**Academic Standards:** Statements that provide a clear description of the knowledge and skills students should be developing through instruction.

**Act of God Day:**

- An Act of God day is not required to be made up at the end of the year.
- These are non-instructional days.
- Act of God Days may only be requested after the district has used all Proposed Emergency Days built into the proposed calendar.
- Must be approved by the Regional Office of Education.

**Asynchronous Instruction:** Asynchronous instruction is the idea that students learn similar material at different times and locations. The term is often associated with online learning, where students complete readings, assignments, or activities at their own pace and at their own chosen time.

**Authentic Assessment:** In authentic assessments, student learners demonstrate learning by applying their knowledge to authentic, complex, real-world tasks or simulations.

**Benchmark Assessment:** Assessments that are administered periodically throughout the school year, at specified times during a curriculum sequence, to evaluate students' knowledge and skills relative to an explicit set of longer-term learning goals.

**Chronic Absenteeism:** The percentage of students who miss 10% percent or more of school days per year, either with or without a valid excuse.

**Chronic Truancy:** The percentage of students who miss 5% percent or more of school days per year, either with or without a valid excuse.

**Collaborative Learning:** an umbrella term that covers many different methods in which students work together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. Collaborative learning is founded on the concept that learning and knowledge-building are social and require active engagement from students.

**Community Eligibility Provision (CEP):** The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) offered through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program allows school districts to offer free meals to all enrolled students. Families don't have to complete an application to participate in the program.



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**Culturally Responsive Teaching:** A pedagogical framework where instructors center students' cultural identities as an essential aspect of learning. Those committed to this framework deliberately work to connect course content and students' lived experiences to prompt student involvement and motivation. Culturally responsive course design includes cooperative, student-centered instruction and diverse course readings from a variety of voices and perspectives, particularly those voices that may fall outside of traditional norms.

**Differentiated Instruction:** Providing instruction according to the different ability levels in a classroom.

### **E-Learning Day:**

- E-learning Days may only be used when an Emergency Day would otherwise be appropriate and a district has an approved E-Learning plan.
- E-Learning Days are used in lieu of Emergency Days.
- E-Learning Days count toward the required number of student attendance days, and they are not required to be made up at the end of the year.
- These are instructional days.
- Students are expected to complete learning activities.
- Assignments are graded and count toward student progress.
- Student attendance is taken each day.

### **Emergency Day:**

- An Emergency Day is declared when a situation occurs that the district deems an emergency and determines to close all district school buildings.
- Emergency Days must be made up prior to the end of the school year.

**ESSA:** The Every Student Succeeds Act is a US law passed in December 2015 that governs the United States K-12 public education policy. The law replaced its predecessor, the No Child Left Behind Act, and modified but did not eliminate provisions relating to the periodic standardized tests given to students.

**ESSER:** Under the ESSER Fund, established as part of the Education Stabilization Fund in the CARES Act, State educational agencies (SEAs) will award subgrants to local educational agencies (LEAs) to address the impact that the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has had and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools across the Nation.

**Equity:** Each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential.

**Formative Assessment:** Formative assessment is the process of providing feedback to students during the learning process. These are often low-stakes activities that allow the instructor to check student work and provide feedback. An instructor writing comments and suggestions on a draft version of a paper is an example of formative assessment.



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**Growth Mindset:** Mindset refers to the beliefs and attitudes held by a person and can affect their learning outcomes and achievement. Individuals with a growth mindset (also referred to as incremental theory) are process-focused, assess their performance relative to mastery of the material, and believe that intellectual ability is malleable. Having a growth mindset involves sustained effort toward learning new knowledge and reflection on past failures so that one can increase one's knowledge and ability.

**Homebound Instruction:** Home/hospital services are provided to a student when a physician licensed to practice medicine determines that the student will, or is anticipated to be, absent from school for a minimum of 10 days during the school year due to a medical condition.

**Inclusive Teaching:** A mode of teaching that intentionally designs course content and curricula to engage with students of diverse backgrounds, abilities, and lived experiences. The ultimate goal of inclusive teaching is to create a learning environment where all students feel valued and supported to succeed.

**Inquiry-Based Learning:** Inquiry-based learning is an umbrella term that includes pedagogical strategies such as problem-based learning and case-based learning that prioritize students exploring, thinking, asking, and answering content questions with peers to acquire new knowledge through a carefully designed activity. Such activities allow students to authentically engage in and apply the scientific process as scientists rather than following a predetermined protocol.

**Learning Objective/Learning Goal/Learning Outcome:** Statements that articulate the knowledge and skills you want students to acquire by the end of the course or after completing a particular unit or assignment. Learning objectives help instructors shape course content and assessments and increase transparency for students by clearly communicating expectations.

**Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA):** NWEA is a research-based, not-for-profit organization that supports students and educators worldwide by creating assessment and learning solutions that precisely measure growth and proficiency—and provide trustworthy insights to help tailor instruction.

**Pedagogy:** Pedagogy is the method, practice, and study of effective teaching. In order to be effective, instructors must have both subject-based knowledge and pedagogic knowledge and skills.

**Performance Assessment:** When students demonstrate their mastery of material through a "hands-on activity" (assembling an electrical circuit, for example).

**Performance Standards:** Statements that describe what it will take for a student to demonstrate mastery of a standard.



## GLOSSARY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING TERMS

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**Professional Learning Community (PLC):** An ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve. Professional learning communities operate under the assumption that the key to improved learning for students is continuous job-embedded learning for educators.

**Problem-Based Learning:** A form of student-centered teaching that focuses on having students work through open-ended problems to explore course material. Students are asked to define the problem as part of the process, research content outside of class time, and iterate solutions to arrive at their final response.

**Project-Based Learning:** A form of student-centered teaching that engages students with the course content as they work through a project. These projects are typically real-world scenarios and multifaceted. Project-based learning encourages interdisciplinary conversations and group work.

**Standards-Based Teaching:** When teachers use activities and lessons to ensure that students master a predetermined set of requirements or standards.

**Standardized Assessment:** A standardized assessment is any form of test that (1) requires all test takers to answer the same questions, or a selection of questions from a common bank of questions, in the same way, and that (2) is scored in a "standard" or consistent manner, which makes it possible to compare the relative performance of individual students or groups of students.

**Streaming:** Live real-time education broadcasting.

**Student Engagement:** Student engagement describes the ways in which students take part in the learning process and the development of their own knowledge. An increase in student engagement is likely linked to an increase in student learning. Student engagement is often tied to active learning techniques and student motivation.

**Student Growth:** Student growth refers to the learning progress made by students through instructional experiences. The student growth process includes setting student goals, planning instruction and assessment, and reflecting on student progress. Student growth is a substantial factor in evaluating educators.

**Summative Assessment:** Summative assessment is the process of measuring a student's learning at the conclusion of a course (or a portion of the course). Summative assessments are typically associated with grades and can take the form of quizzes, exams, or papers.

**Synchronous Instruction:** Synchronous instruction is the idea that students learn the material at the same time. Examples of synchronous instruction might include lectures, discussions, or collaborative activities. When applied to remote learning, students must be online at the same time.