

jargon

Whether it is agriculture, medicine, finance, construction or education, those who work in a particular field develop a language – jargon – to communicate with their colleagues.

Jargon is often confusing, bare of meaning and, occasionally, gobbledygook. This glossary is here to help trustees bridge the barriers erected by jargon.

Accountability

A process designed to determine whether those responsible for certain tasks or activities have discharged them in the manner intended and have achieved the desired results.

Accountability Pillar

A framework for assessing how the province's education system is performing using a broad range of measures. The information is used by schools, school jurisdictions and the province to determine if learning goals are being met, to develop and implement strategies to improve results, and to report to parents and communities.

Accumulated Operating Surplus (AOS)

The sum of the unrestricted net assets and operating reserves. Represents funds available to cover future deficits. The AOS, together with capital surplus and capital reserves, would form what is called "retained earnings" in the private sector.

Activities: Co-Curricular

Learning activities which complement learning objectives and are conducted outside the classroom.

Activities: Extracurricular

Activities usually outside of the classroom and outside of normal school hours designed to provide opportunities for students to pursue athletic, vocational or avocational interests.

Ad Hoc (typically describes a committee)

Established for a specific purpose, issue, or concern and usually operational for a short period of time.

Administrative Allowance

A sum of money, determined in collective bargaining, usually paid to administrators and supervisors in addition to their regular salary.

Administrative Procedure

Methods and processes before an administrative board (i.e. school board) as distinguished from judicial procedure which applies to court. Administrative procedure can be found in school board policy.

Alberta School Foundation Fund (ASFF)

A regulated fund into which all money raised through education property taxes is pooled and then distributed to school boards. Separate school boards may opt out of the ASFF and continue to directly tax their local residential and corporate ratepayers.

Alternative Program

An education program that emphasizes a particular language, culture, religion or subject matter or uses a particular teaching philosophy (i.e. an outreach program). Special education programs, programs for children who are guaranteed by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to receive instruction in French, or programs of religious education offered by a separate school board are not alternative programs.

Arbitration

The determination of a dispute by an arbitrator; a procedure to determine an interest dispute.

Attendance Board

Body established by the minister of education to review matters respecting the failure of a student to attend school.

Audited Financial Statement

Formal financial statements audited by an independent firm of accountants.

Bargaining Agent

The organization authorized by law that acts on behalf of employees in collective bargaining or as a party to a collective agreement with an employer or employer's organization, whether or not the bargaining agent is a certified bargaining agent.

Bargaining Unit

A defined group of employees with similar, general job characteristics on whose behalf the bargaining agent negotiates with their employer. (i.e. ATA Local, CUPE Local)

Bill

Draft legislation which is introduced into the legislature or Parliament. Upon approval a bill becomes an act.

Blended Program

An educational program consisting of two distinct parts: a school provided program where a) school board is responsible for the delivery and evaluation of achievement and b) a Home Education Program that meets the requirements of the Home Education Regulations, pursuant to the School Act.

Budget Report Form

A form supplied by the provincial government wherein school boards identify their estimated revenues and expenditures for the school year.

Bylaws

The set of rules adopted by an organization for the regulation of its proceedings.

Capital Expenditure

The expenditure of money for items of a relatively permanent nature (i.e. building, school bus). The cost of the individual item must be greater than \$5,000.

Career and Technology Studies (CTS)

Courses that help students move through school towards further education and work. Course options can include everything from digital design to mechanics or cosmetology.

Certificated

Employees, who as a condition of employment, must possess a valid teacher's certificate.

Charter

A charter is an agreement regarding the establishment and administration of a charter school. The charter describes the unique educational service the charter school will provide, how it will operate, and the student outcomes it intends to achieve.

Class Size

The number of students scheduled to receive instruction at one time by one teacher. **Note:** Class size is usually larger than the pupil-teacher ratio because all certificated staff, (principals, teacher librarians, etc.) are included in calculating the ratio.

Cohort

The total group of students registered in a particular grade, including students who may be enrolled in a modified program. These students are all counted in the provincial achievement test results.
Syn. full cohort

Collective Agreement

A written agreement between an employer and a bargaining agent of employees, acting on behalf of a unit of employees (i.e. the school jurisdiction and the ATA) containing provisions respecting terms and conditions of employment and related matters. This agreement is negotiated at bargaining tables and is enforceable through arbitration.

Collective Bargaining

Negotiating with a view to concluding or renewing a collective agreement.

Computer Adaptive Assessment (CAA)

A school-based computer assessment tool that immediately 'adapts' or tailors the difficulty of each test to the individual student.

Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI)

A method of supplementing instruction by having students engage in learning activities with a computer.

Contracts

Continuing: A contract of employment between a board and a teacher that remains in force from year to year.

Interim: A contract of employment between a board and a teacher, for not more than 360 teaching days, but may be less than a complete school year.

Probationary: A contract of employment between a board and teacher for a complete school year, during which the teacher is on probation.

Temporary: A contract of employment between a board and a teacher for the purpose of replacing a teacher who is absent from his/her duties for a period of 20 or more consecutive teaching days.

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC)

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) is an intergovernmental body founded in 1967 by ministers of education to serve as:

- a forum to discuss policy issues
- a mechanism through which to undertake activities, projects, and initiatives in areas of mutual interest
- a means by which to consult and cooperate with national education organizations and the federal

government

- an instrument to represent the education interests of the provinces and territories internationally
- All provinces and territories are members.

[Council On Alberta Teaching Standards \(COATS\)](#)

This council is advisory to the minister of education on programs for the preparation of teachers and the requirements for Alberta teaching certificates; conditions under which suspension or cancellation of certificates are justified; policy, practice and outcomes in the area of teacher evaluation; and certain short term projects such as the Initiation to Teaching Project.

[Count Date](#)

Refers to the date on which student enrolment is counted for the purpose of calculating funding. If the count date is Sept. 30, only those enrolled on that date can be included in the count. If the count date of Sept. 30 falls on a weekend, the last school day in September shall be used as the count date. This count is for kindergarten to Grade 9 students.

[Credit Enrolment Units \(CEUs\)](#)

A conditional grant allocated to school boards for senior high school courses that are based on an Alberta Program of Study and delivered through appropriate access to instruction. Funding is ongoing and is distributed at several points during the school year.

[Cumulative Record Card](#)

A form containing information about a student. Typically, the card contains information such as vital statistics, test results and student attendance.

[Daily Physical Activity \(DPA\)](#)

The goal of Daily Physical Activity (DPA) is to increase students' physical activity levels. DPA is based on the belief that healthy students are better able to learn and that school communities provide supportive environments for students to develop positive habits needed for a healthy, active lifestyle.

[Debenture](#)

Similar to a bond (a long-term debt of an organization), but usually secured by assets.

[Early Childhood Services \(ECS\)](#)

The umbrella term for programming provided to children between the ages of two and a half and six years of age. This includes program delivery to young children with severe or mild/moderate special needs, English as a Second Language or Francisation programming and kindergarten.

[English as a Second Language \(ESL\)](#)

Programs designed for students whose mother tongue is not English.

[Francisation](#)

Program that helps students attending Francophone schools who do not have sufficient French language skills.

[Francophone](#)

Education program offered for students with rights under Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to receive school instruction in French.

[Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FOIP\)](#)

Legislation which sets out rules regarding the collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

[Funding Framework](#)

Formula for distributing funds to school boards.

[General Equivalency Diploma \(GED\)](#)

Method of obtaining a high school equivalency diploma that requires a registered individual complete and pass five subject tests.

[Grade Level of Achievement \(GLA\)](#)

Teachers providing Alberta Education with their judgment of their student's achievement in meeting the program of studies outcomes in Grades 1 to 9 language arts and mathematics.

[“Grandfather” a Clause](#)

To continue an existing service or benefit for identified individuals or groups of people when that service or benefit is being phased out or eliminated.

[Grievance](#)

Any disagreement between the parties to a collective bargaining agreement with respect to the meaning or application of a collective agreement or any violation of a collective agreement.

[Impasse](#)

In negotiations, the point at which

bargaining cannot proceed further as agreement cannot be reached on the remaining issues in dispute.

[In Camera Meeting](#)

A private meeting which is not open to the public. Syn. meeting in committee; executive session; conference committee

[Increment](#)

Salary increases for employees, usually for each additional year of experience, to a maximum amount.

[Individualized Instruction](#)

A method in which the teacher provides instruction according to the abilities or interests of the individual student.

[Individualized Program Plan \(IPP\)](#)

A concise plan of action that is designed to address the student's special needs, and is based on diagnostic information which provides the basis for intervention strategies. All students with exceptional needs, from severely disabled to the gifted and talented, require an IPP. Syn.

Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

[In Loco Parentis](#)

A Latin phrase meaning "in place of the parent." It is a common law element that establishes the role of school board personnel as being that of reasonable and prudent parents in their relationship to students.

[Instructional Materials Centre \(IMC\)](#)

A centrally-located facility for the storage, distribution, and production of audio/visual aids and instructional materials. Syn. media centre, LRSC

[Integration](#)

Programs for students with exceptional needs are provided in regular class environments. Syn. mainstreaming

[Learning Disability](#)

An inability to learn due to some physical, mental, or emotional affliction, usually capable of being corrected. May be categorized as mild, moderate or severe.

[Leave of Absence](#)

A period of time granted to an employee to be absent from work, with or without pay.

[Mainstreaming](#)

Placing children irrespective of ability, intelligence, or handicap into a regular

classroom. Syn. integration

[Mean](#)

The average of a group of scores.

[Median](#)

The middle score in a list arranged from highest to lowest but not necessarily the average or mean score. Example: two, six, seven, 15, 21, 30, 39: median is 15; mean is 17.1.

[Mediation](#)

The process by which a third party attempts to facilitate a resolution to a dispute between two parties.

[Memorandum of Agreement](#)

The document signed by the parties involved in negotiating a collective agreement. The memorandum is subject to ratification by the school board and the union membership.

[Middle School](#)

A form of school organization providing instructional services to children aged 10 to 14 (Grades 5 to 8).

[Mild/Moderate](#)

One of the terms given to the group of specific categories that allow school jurisdictions to identify those children and students who require special education. This includes students with learning disabilities, emotional/behavioural disabilities, mild or moderate cognitive disabilities, hearing disabilities, visual disabilities, communication disabilities or delays, gifted and talented, physical and medical disabilities or multiple disabilities.

[Mill](#)

Unit of measurement used for calculating taxes on property. One mill is 1/1000 of the assessed property value. i.e. If the assessed property value is \$1,000, one mill yields \$1.

[Non-Resident Student](#)

A student whose parents reside in a school jurisdiction other than the one in which the student is enrolled.

[Organizational Meeting](#)

The first meeting of the school board after a general election or on the anniversary of a general election. The chair and vice-chair are elected at this meeting.

[Program Unit Funding \(PUF\)](#)

Can be obtained by ECS program operators to provide individual programs for children

with severe disabilities. Available for a maximum of three years and designed to provide continuous support up to Grade 1.

Programs of Study

Identify what students are expected to learn and be able to do in all subjects and grades.

Public Private Partnership (P3s)

Concept for providing schools through, but not limited to:

- financing options such as developer build/lease back
- partnerships to provide new schools in new subdivisions
- partnerships involving school boards, private sector developers, municipal government and community organizations
- re-use excess school space
- sharing facilities with post-secondary educational institutions and business organizations.

Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR)

Obtained by dividing the number of students in a school or school system by the total number of certified teaching staff.

Registered Apprenticeship Program

Experiential learning undertaken by a senior high school student:

1. as an integral part of a planned school program;
2. which is under the co-operative supervision of a teacher co-ordinator and the employer;
3. where a student is a registered apprentice;
4. where the program meets the acts and regulations of Alberta Advanced Education and Technology relating to apprenticeship training; and
5. which constitutes a separate course based on 25 hours per credit.

Regulation

A rule or order having the force of law issued by the executive branch of a government. In school systems, a regulation derives from board policy and is viewed as a directive for action.

Resident Student

A student of the school jurisdiction in which his or her parents reside and who is a student for which a board receives funding.

School Councils

A group of parents of students attending the school that provide functions set out in section 17 of the School Act. According to the School Act, each school council shall be established in accordance with the regulations for each school operated by the board.

Severe Disabilities

One of the terms given to the group of specific categories that allow school jurisdictions to identify those children and students who require special education. This includes students with severe emotional/behavioural disabilities, severe cognitive disabilities, severe delays involving language, deafness, blindness, severe physical and medical disabilities or severe multiple disabilities.

Site-Based Management

Involves principals, staff members and school councils in making decisions about instructional programs and services at the school level and how funds are allocated to them. Syn. site-based decision-making

Special Education

Special education refers to the education of students and ECS children identified with mild, moderate, or severe disabilities or as gifted and talented.

Standardized Tests

A test administered according to standardized procedures which assesses a student's performance by comparison to standards. In the case of provincial achievement tests, the standards are acceptable standard and standard of excellence.

Strike

Includes:

1. cessation of work;
2. refusal to work;
3. refusal to continue to work by two or more employees acting together for the purpose of compelling their employer to agree to terms or conditions of employment.

Suspension: Student

When a principal or teacher suspends a student from classroom attendance.

Teacher

In Alberta, an individual employed by a school board who, as a condition of

employment, must possess a valid Alberta teaching certificate.

Utilization Factor

A provincial government formula which determines the extent to which the student capacity of a school is filled. Expressed as a percentage.

Year: Fiscal

The year within which an organization collects and spends money.

Year: School

In Alberta, a board establishes the opening and closing dates of all schools under its jurisdiction for the following 12-month period.