
Cracking the Education-ese Code: Acronyms and Their Definitions

Education policy discussions are often liberally sprinkled with shorthand terms and acronyms that, while they turn somewhat unwieldy phrases into more easily digestible units, may not be familiar to the general reader. Acronyms and terms that appear in this article are explained below:

AMO—*Annual Measurable Objective*. State-defined targets for the proportion of students performing at or above proficiency levels for each subject and grade level tested under No Child Left Behind. Annual measurable objectives must increase gradually over time until they reach the legislatively mandated rate of 100 percent proficiency for the 2013–2014 school year.

AYP—*Adequate Yearly Progress*. Minimum target performance goals that states, local education agencies, and schools must meet to earn rewards and/or avoid federal sanctions. Target performance goals include annual measurable objectives and other academic indicators.

EOC—*End-of-Course Test*. Tests developed by North Carolina to measure progress in core high school subjects like English and algebra. Test results are used to determine state, local education agency, and school adequate yearly progress status.

EOG—*End-of-Grade Tests*. Tests developed by North Carolina to measure progress in language arts, mathematics, and (starting in 2007–2008) science in grades 3 through 8. As with end-of-course tests, end-of-grade test results are used to determine state, local education agency, and school adequate yearly progress status.

ESEA—*Elementary and Secondary Education Act*. The formal name for the federal legislation currently identified as the *No Child Left Behind Act*. First authorized in 1965 and renewed periodically ever since.

LEA—*Local Education Agency*. Generic term for school districts that also includes non-traditional “districts” like charter schools (which are treated as self-contained local education agencies) and state-wide school districts.

LEP—*Limited English Proficient*. Formal term for students whose native language is not English and whose proficiency in English does not yet meet measurable standards of proficiency.

NAEP—*National Assessment of Educational Progress*. Federally developed test administered to a random sample of 4th and 8th graders in every state on a biannual basis. States are required to administer this test under NCLB to help gauge the validity of the results of their state-level assessment systems.

NC DPI—*North Carolina Department of Public Instruction*. The state office that, among other things, develops and oversees the administration of the end-of-grade and end-of-course tests and ensures state compliance with Title I regulations.

NCLB—*No Child Left Behind*. The name given to the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

OAI—*Other Academic Indicators*. Non-proficiency measures that are used to determine adequate yearly progress status, such as graduation and percent-of-students-tested rates.

Title I—The first section of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I authorizes funding for compensatory education programs and outlines the assessment requirements for states that are discussed in this article.

—Trip Stallings