

Acronyms and jargon

These are commonly found acronyms.

If we've missed any, let us know and we will update the next edition.

AAC	Alberta Assessment Consortium
AAISA	Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies
AAMD&C	Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
AAPCS	Association of Alberta Public Charter Schools
ABC	Association for Bright Children
ACFA	Association canadienne-française de L'Alberta
ACLD	Association for Children with Learning Disabilities
ACOL	Alberta Commission on Learning
ACSTA	Alberta Catholic School Trustees' Association
ACYI	Alberta Children and Youth Initiative
ADLC	Alberta Distance Learning Centre
ADM	Assistant Deputy Minister
AE or AB ED	Alberta Education
AERR	Annual Education Results Report
AFL	Assessment for Learning
AHEA	Alberta Home Education Association
AISCA	Association of Independent Schools and Colleges in Alberta
ALIS	Alberta Learning Information System
AMFC	Alberta Municipal Financing Corporation
AP	Advanced Placement
ASAA	Alberta Schools' Athletic Association
ASAP	Alberta Schools Alternative Procurement (design and construction of a group of schools using a P3 process)
ASBA	Alberta School Boards Association
ASBIE	Alberta School Boards' Insurance Exchange
ASBOA	Association of School Business Officials of Alberta
ASCA	Alberta School Councils' Association
ASEBP	Alberta School Employee Benefit Plan
ASFF	Alberta School Foundation Fund
ATA	Alberta Teachers' Association
ATA Local	The local ATA union authority
ATRF	Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund
AUMA	Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
CALM	Career and Life Management

CASA	Canadian Association of School Administrators
CASS	College of Alberta School Superintendents
CEA	Canadian Education Association
CEO	Chief Executive Officer (superintendent of schools)
CETS	Credit Enrolment Tracking System
CEU	Credit Enrolment Unit
CMEC	Council of Ministers of Education in Canada
COATS	Council of Alberta Teaching Standards
CPF	Canadian Parents for French
CSA	Council on School Administration
CSBA	Canadian School Boards Association
CTS	Career and Technology Studies
DIPS	Diploma Exams
DM	Deputy Minister
DPA	Daily Physical Activity
EAP	Employee Assistance Program
ECS	Early Childhood Services (Kindergarten)
ESL	English as a Second Language
FAS	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
FCSS	Family and Community Social Services
FNMI	First Nations Métis Inuit
FOIP	Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
FPFA	Fédération des parents francophones de l'Alberta
FSL	French as a Second Language
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GED	General Equivalency Diploma
GLA	Grade Level of Achievement
HSE	High School Equivalent
HR	Human Resources (personnel services)
IB Program	International Baccalaureate Program (a comprehensive curriculum of general education responding to the needs for greater challenge in the upper secondary level)
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IEP	Individual Education Plan
IMC	Instructional Materials Centre
IMP	Infrastructure Maintenance Program
IMR	Infrastructure and Maintenance Renewal Program
IPP	Individualized Program Plan

K and E	Knowledge and Employability courses
LAC	Local Advisory Committee (for ECS)
LDAA	Learning Disabilities Association of Alberta
LRB	Labour Relations Board
LRC	Learning Resources Centre
NSBA	National School Boards Association
OH and S	Occupational Health and Safety
P3	Public Private Partnership
PAAC	Program and Assessment Advisory Committee
PD	Professional Development
PDAC	Policy Development Advisory Committee
PSBAA	Public School Boards' Association of Alberta
PAT	Provincial Achievement Test
PLC	Professional Learning Community
POM	Plant Operations and Maintenance
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
PUF	Program Unit Funding
PUG	Program Unit Grant
RAP	Registered Apprenticeship Program
RBB	Results Based Budgeting
RRC	Regulatory Review Committee
SACSC	Safe and Caring Schools and Communities
SBDM	Site Based Decision Making
SEP	School Education Plan
SERP	Supplementary Executive Retirement Program
SHI	Student Health Initiative
SIB	School Improvement Branch
SIS	Student Information System
SiPP	Supplemental integrated Pension Plan
STEP	Summer Temporary Employment Program
STR	Student Teacher Ratio
TPA	Teaching Profession Act
TQS	Teacher Qualification Service (ATA-operated. Assesses teachers' years of educ. for salary/pension purposes)
TRF	Teachers' Retirement Fund
TSQB	Teacher Salary Qualification Board
WCB	Workers Compensation Board
YRE	Year Round Education

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.

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. Once it's approved a Bill becomes an Act.

Blended Program

An educational program consisting of two distinct parts: a school provided program where a) 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 to regulate its proceedings.

Capital Expenditure

Spending money on something relatively permanent like a building or a school bus. The item must be worth more 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 to establish and administer 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 the 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 tailors a test's difficulty to each student.

Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI)

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 of Canada (CMEC)

The Council of Ministers of Education of 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 advises 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 and policy, practice and outcomes in the area of teacher evaluation.

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 Sept. 30 falls on a weekend, the last school day in September is used as the count date. Kindergarten to Grade 9 students are counted.

Credit Enrolment Units (CEUs)

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

Cross Curricular

Learning activities that cross into more than one subject area to provide a deeper, richer experience for learners.

Cumulative Record Card

This form contains information about a student 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) but usually secured by assets.

Early Childhood Services (ECS)

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

Edulink

Software designed to assist schools, central offices and Alberta Education to electronically exchange student information.

English as a Second Language (ESL)

Programs designed for students whose mother tongue is not English.

Expulsion

Disciplinary action that results in the permanent removal of a student from a particular school.

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)

This legislation 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

A disagreement between the parties to a collective agreement about the meaning or application of the collective agreement or any violation of the collective agreement.

Impasse

In negotiations, the point at which bargaining cannot proceed because no agreement can be reached on the remaining issues in dispute.

In Camera Meeting

A private meeting which is not open to the public. Syn. Committee of the whole, 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 teaching method which sees the teacher modify his/her instruction according to the abilities or interests of the individual student.

Individualized Program Plan (IPP)

A plan of action designed to address a student's special needs, 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 relationship to students.

Instructional Materials Centre (IMC)

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

Integration

Placing children irrespective of ability, intelligence, or handicap into a regular classroom. Syn. Mainstreaming

Learning Disability

An inability to learn due to a physical, mental, or emotional affliction, which may be corrected. 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. Example: two, six, seven, 15, 21, 30, 39. The median is 15.

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.

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. The chair and vice-chair are elected at this meeting.

Pedagogy

Strategies or style of instruction.

Program Unit Funding (PUF)

Funding available to ECS program operators to provide individual programs for children with severe disabilities. This funding is available for a maximum of three years and is 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

Project Based Learning

An active learning experience, as compared to a more traditional book / desk style of learning.

Pupil-Teacher Ratio (PTR)

Number of students in a school or school system divided by the number of certificated teaching staff.

Registered Apprenticeship Program

Experiential learning undertaken by a senior high school student:

- as an integral part of a planned school program;
- which is under the co-operative supervision of a teacher co-ordinator and the employer;
- where a student is a registered apprentice;
- where the program meets the Acts and regulations of Alberta Enterprise and Advanced Education relating to apprenticeship training; and
- 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

This term refers to students who have 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:

- cessation of work;
- refusal to work;
- 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.

SuperNet

The Alberta SuperNet was built to connect public institutions across the province – schools, hospitals, colleges, universities, libraries, and municipal offices – to a broadband network for high-speed Internet access, video conferencing, and other services.

Suspension: Student

When a principal or teacher suspends a student from attending school.

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

The formula established by the provincial government to how full a school is. It is 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.