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EDUCATION REFORM ACT GLOSSARY

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The table below provides definitions of terms used in the 2012 Education Reform Act ([PA 12-116](#)) and special session amendments to it ([PA 12-1](#) and [PA 12-2](#), June 12 Special Session).

TERM	DEFINITION	CITATION
Achievement Gap	Significant disparity in academic performance among and between racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups; genders; or students whose primary language is and is not English	CGS § 10-16mm ; PA 12-116 , § 4
Acting Superintendent	A person who, if not properly certified for a superintendent position, a local or regional school board may appoint for a specified period up to one year with the education commissioner's approval. The commissioner may waive certification requirements for the person, if he or she meets certain criteria.	CGS § 10-157a ; PA 12-116 , § 58
Alliance District	A school district that is among the 30 lowest ranked by District Performance Index (DPI). Must implement a state-approved plan to improve student academic performance in order to receive an ECS grant increase for FY 13.	PA 12-116 , § 34

TERM	DEFINITION	CITATION
Category 1 through 5 schools	Categories of schools grouped by factors listed in the statewide performance management and support plan, with Category 1 being the highest, and Category 5 the lowest, performing group. Factors may include (1) School Performance Index (SPI), (2) change in SPI over time, (3) growth in student achievement as measured by standardized assessments, and (4) high school graduation and dropout rates for the entire student population and for subgroups of students.	PA 12-116 , § 18
Chart of Accounts	Part of a uniform system of accounting for school revenues and expenditures for use at the school and school district level. Must include (1) all amounts and sources of revenue received, (2) cash or real property donations totaling an aggregate of \$500 or more, and (3) "select measures," defined by the State Department of Education (SDE).	PA 12-116 , § 15
Charter School	A public, nonsectarian, nonprofit school established under a charter approved by the state and operated independently of any local or regional board of education. State charter schools must be approved by the State Board of Education (SBE). Local charter schools must be approved by the local or regional board of education where it is located and the SBE.	CGS § 10-66aa ; PA 12-116 , §§ 29-32
Commissioner's Network	Up to 25 Category 4 or 5 schools selected by the education commissioner by July 1, 2014 for from three to five years of intensive state assistance, supervision, and intervention to improve student achievement.	PA 12-116 , § 19
Common Core State Standards	A set of K-12 education standards for English language arts and mathematics developed by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers that seek to raise student achievement and provide more uniform curricula and instruction among states. Adopted by SBE in July 2010.	PA 12-1 , June 12 Sp. Sess., § 225
CommPACT School	Collaborative union-management school model that gives a school more autonomy in governance, budgeting, and curriculum. Can be used as a turnaround model for a commissioner's network school.	CGS 10-74g ; PA 12-116 , § 19 (d)
Competitive School District	A district that either (1) has a priority school or former priority school or (2) is not a priority school district but whose town is among the 50 poorest in the state based on adjusted equalized grand net list, student population, and total population.	CGS § 10-16p ; PA 12-116 , § 1
Continuing Education Units (CEUs)	Credits awarded by an approved provider for successful completion of professional development activities for educators. Starting July 1, 2012, educators no longer need 90 CEUs every five years to maintain their certificates.	Conn. Agency Reg., § 10-145d-400; PA 12-116 , § 36

TERM	DEFINITION	CITATION
Cooperative Arrangement	A written arrangement among two or more boards of education to provide school accommodation services, programs, activities, or special education or health services to enable member boards to carry out their statutory duties.	CGS § 10-58a ; PA 12-116 , § 62
Distinguished Educator Designation	SBE designation for a teacher who (1) holds a professional educator certificate, (2) has taught successfully for at least five years in a public school or SBE-approved private special education facility, (3) has advanced education in addition to a master's degree, and (4) meets SDE-established performance standards.	PA 12-116 , §§ 37 & 38
District Performance Index (DPI)	Measure of a district's academic performance derived from its students' weighted performance on statewide mastery tests in reading, writing, and mathematics given in grades three through eight and 10, and science in grades five, eight, and 10.	PA 12-116 , § 34
Early Childhood Education System	A system of comprehensive and aligned policies, responsibilities, practices, and services for young children and their families, including prenatal care and care for children from birth to age 8, to ensure the child's optimal health, safety, and learning. Must include a quality rating and improvement system for home-, center-, and school-based early child care and learning developed by SDE.	CGS § 10-16bb(a) ; PA 12-116 , § 3
Educational Reform District	A school district that is among the 10 lowest when all districts are ranked by DPI. Eligible for various targeted grants and services to address educational needs.	PA 12-116 , § 34
Educator Certificate	A license to hold a teaching, administrator, or special pupil services position in a Connecticut public school. Connecticut has three certificate levels: initial, provisional, and professional.	CGS § 10-145
Election-to-Work Agreement	Agreement for teachers and administrators to work at a commissioner's network school, including provisions required by a school's turnaround plan that conflict with provisions of an existing union contract covering the school. Negotiated between the district and appropriate unions under an expedited bargaining procedure.	PA 12-116 , § 19
Endorsement	Authority to teach particular subjects or grades or work in an administrative or pupil services position in a public school.	CGS § 10-145d
English Language Learner (ELL)	Student with limited English proficiency who, as a result, requires additional educational services.	No statutory definition
Exemplary School	Not defined, but presumed to be a school assigned to Category 1 based on its SPI and other factors. SDE may designate such schools for public recognition.	PA 12-116 , § 13

TERM	DEFINITION	CITATION
Family Resource Center (FRC)	Center located in, or associated with, a public school that provides (1) comprehensive child care and remedial educational and literacy services, (2) families-in-training programs, and (3) supportive services to parents who are recipients of temporary family assistance and other parents in need of such services.	CGS § 10-40 ; PA 12-116 , § 8
Focus School	Schools with identifiable low-performing student subgroups based on measures of student academic achievement and growth for subgroups in the aggregate or over time, but not after June 30, 2014. Such schools are designated as low-achieving and are subject to intensive SBE direction and supervision.	PA 12-116 , § 18
Former Priority District	District that no longer qualifies for priority district status and whose priority district grants are being phased out.	CGS § 10-276a ; PA 12-116 , §§ 65 & 66
Interdistrict Magnet School	A school that (1) supports racial, ethnic, and economic diversity; (2) offers a special and high quality curriculum; and (3) requires enrolled students to attend at least half time. Excludes technical high schools, regional vocational agriculture centers, and regional special education facilities.	CGS § 10-264(a)
Low-Achieving School	A school that is (1) identified as in need of improvement under the state accountability plan and requiring corrective action under the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and subject to intensified supervision and direction by SBE, or (2) a Category 4 or 5 or focus school.	CGS § 10-223e(c)(1) ; PA 12-116 , § 18
Nonprofit Educational Management Organization	An entity that can be chosen to manage a commissioner's network school, under certain conditions. Must be a not-for-profit organization with experience and a record of success in improving student achievement for low-income or low-performing students or that currently operates a Connecticut charter school.	PA 12-116 , §§ 19 & 22; PA 12-2 , June 12 Sp. Sess. §§ 14 & 15
Non-Sheff Magnet School	An interdistrict magnet school that is not part of the state's response to the <i>Sheff</i> decision. Located outside of Hartford and surrounding towns. Generally receives lower state per-student grants than a <i>Sheff</i> magnet school.	PA 12-116 , § 63
Open Choice Program	A voluntary statewide interdistrict school attendance program whose purpose is to (1) improve academic achievement; (2) reduce racial, ethnic, and economic isolation or preserve racial and ethnic balance; and (3) provide a choice of educational programs for public school students.	CGS § 10-266aa(b) ; PA 12-116 , § 12
Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee (PEAC)	A committee established in 2010 to help the SBE develop and implement model teacher evaluation program guidelines and a supporting data system.	CGS § 10-151b(c) ; PA 12-116 , § 51

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Priority District	Districts targeted for additional state educational assistance based on a formula that identifies those with the highest populations or concentrations of students (1) on temporary family assistance and (2) performing poorly on state mastery exams.	CGS § 10-266p
Priority School	School where 40% or more of the school lunches served are free or reduced-price.	CGS § 10-16p
Professional Educator Certificate	License to teach issued to a person with at least (1) three years of successful teaching in a public or SBE-approved nonpublic school while holding a provisional certificate and (2) 30 semester hours of credit beyond the bachelor's degree. On and after July 1, 2016, requires a master's degree in subject appropriate to certification endorsement.	CGS § 10-144c ; PA 12-116 , § 36
Reconstituted Board of Education	State-appointed board governing a low-achieving school district for up to five years. Appointed after the SBE authorizes the education commissioner to displace a district's elected board in order to improve student performance and remove the district from the list of low-achieving school districts.	CGS § 10-223e(h) ; PA 12-116 § 19
Regional Education Service Center (RESC)	Regional entity that provides educational services and programs to boards of education so the boards do not have to provide them individually, including special education services; professional development, recruiting, and teacher and school employee fingerprinting and background checks; administrative and transportation services for the Open Choice program; and, in some cases, operation of interdistrict magnet schools. Must be run by boards of directors made up of at least one member representing and designated by each participating board of education.	CGS § 10-66a-p
School Governance Council	A council established at a low-achieving school consisting of parents; teachers; community leaders; and, if the school is a high school, students. Responsibilities include analyzing school achievement data, participating in hiring the principal and other administrators, and developing and approving a written parent involvement policy. A council may recommend that a school be restructured or converted to a charter school.	CGS § 10-223e ; PA 12-116 , § 23
School In Need of Improvement	School identified for intervention under the federal No Child Left Behind Act and state accountability law based on the failure of the whole school or an identifiable student subgroup at the school to meet annual performance targets for at least two years in a row.	CGS 10-223e ,
School Performance Index (SPI)	Measure of a school's academic performance derived from its students' weighted performance on statewide mastery tests in reading, writing, and mathematics given in grades three through eight and 10, and science in grades five, eight, and 10.	PA 12-116 , § 18

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School Readiness Program	Nonsectarian program that (1) meets SDE standards, (2) provides at least 450 hours and 180 days of developmentally appropriate learning per year, and (3) is open to eligible 3- and 4-year-olds as well as 5-year-olds not eligible to enroll in school.	CGS § 10-16p
School-Based Health Center (SBHC)	Free-standing medical clinic located within or on the grounds of a school. SBHCs are licensed primary care facilities that provide a range of physical and mental health services and, in some sites, dental services to students in grades pre-K to 12.	No statutory definition; Definition based on information from Connecticut Association of School-Based Health Centers
Sheff Magnet School	An interdistrict magnet school that helps the state meet desegregation goals established as a result of the <i>Sheff v. O'Neill</i> decision. Located in Hartford or its surrounding region.	CGS § 10-264/
Small District	District with fewer than 1,000 students.	PA 12-116, § 15
Special Master	Person appointed by SBE to collaborate with the board of education and school superintendent of a low-performing school district to (1) implement the district's improvement plan developed under the state education accountability law; (2) manage and allocate the district's federal, state, and local funds; and (3) report regularly to the SBE on the (a) district's progress in implementing its improvement plan and (b) effectiveness of its school board and superintendent. Appointments last for one year unless extended by SBE.	PA 11-61 § 138 ; PA 12-116, § 18
Statewide Performance Management & Support Plan	Plan consistent with federal law that (1) identifies districts in need of improvement, (2) classifies schools in Categories 1 to 5 based on SPI and other factors, and (3) identifies focus schools.	PA 12-116, § 18
Student Subgroups	An identifiable group of students whose mastery test data and annual academic progress is separately tracked. The subgroups are (1) black students, (2) Hispanic students, (3) English language learners, (4) low-income students (eligible for free and reduced-price lunches), and (5) students with disabilities.	Subgroups are listed in Connecticut ESEA Waiver Flexibility Request , (approved) May 24, 2012, p. 88
Teacher	For purposes of evaluation, tenure, and collective bargaining, a professional employee of a local or regional board of education below the rank of school superintendent who holds a certificate or permit issued by SBE.	CGS §§ 10-151, 10-151b, 10-151c ; PA 12-116, §§ 51-57
Teacher Education and Mentoring (TEAM) Program	Program for beginning teachers that (1) is aligned with SBE-approved teaching principles, (2) includes guided teacher support and coaching by teacher mentors, and (3) requires new teachers to complete five instructional modules to help them develop particular teaching skills.	CGS § 10-145o

TERM	DEFINITION	CITATION
Tenured Teacher	A teacher who has (1) completed 40 school months, or 20 school months if previously tenured in another school district, of continuous employment with the same school district and (2) had his or her contract renewed for the following school year. A tenured teacher may be terminated only on six statutory grounds and after a statutorily specified hearing process.	CGS § 10-151 ; PA 12-116 , § 57
Turnaround Committee	Committee of specified school officials, parents, teachers, and the education commissioner or his designee appointed for a school selected for the commissioner's network. Committee must (1) help with the required instructional and operations audit of the school, (2) develop a school turnaround plan using statutory models, and (3) monitor how the plan is implemented.	PA 12-116 , § 19
Turnaround Plan	A plan to improve educational performance at a commissioner's network school. Adopted by the turnaround committee or, if necessary, by the education commissioner. The plan must (1) include a description of how it will improve student academic achievement in the school, (2) address deficiencies identified in the operations and instructional audit, and (3) use one of the turnaround model options specified by law.	PA 12-116 , § 19
Turnaround Plan Referees	Five people whom local or regional boards of education for commissioner's network schools and their employee bargaining units may use when negotiating matters in turnaround plans that conflict with existing collective bargaining agreements. Referees determine whether such matters must be negotiated under existing or limited bargaining parameters. Referees must (1) have expertise in education policy and school operations and administration and (2) be mutually agreed upon by the education commissioner and the unions representing teachers and administrators.	PA 12-116 , §§ 20 & 21
Wraparound Services	Non-educational support services provided to students and families to help improve student performance. May include (1) social-emotional behavioral supports, (2) family involvement and support, (3) student engagement, (4) physical health and wellness, and (5) social work and case management.	PA 12-1 , June 12 Sp. Sess., § 232

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