

Frequently Used Acronyms and Terms Glossary for Charter Schools

ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) is a secure large-scale English language proficiency assessment given to Kindergarten through 12th graders who have been identified as English learners ([ELs](#)). It is given annually in [WIDA](#) Consortium member states (which includes Minnesota) to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English (accessed 8/16/13 from the [WIDA website](#))

ADA - The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in employment, state and local government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities, and transportation. It also mandates the establishment of TDD/telephone relay services. The current text of the ADA includes changes made by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325), which became effective on January 1, 2009. The ADA was originally enacted in public law format and later rearranged and published in the United States Code. (Accessed 8/2/13 from the [ADA website](#)).

ADA – Average Daily Attendance is the average number of students in attendance on any given day during the school year. Attendance is computed by dividing ADA by ADM (see below).

ADM - Average Daily Membership represents the portion of the year that a student is enrolled in a school. After each year-end [MARSS](#) submission a new District/School ADM Report is posted by [MDE](#), replacing the prior report. These reports are posted to the [Minnesota Funding Reports \(MFR\) webpage](#). They summarize ADM data by school, grade and type of student (e.g., resident, open enrolled, shared-time) for school districts and charter schools. These data are used in many of the state funding programs.

ADSIS - Alternative Delivery of Specialized Instructional Services is an annual application process for districts and charter schools to apply for state special education aid. The purpose of ADSIS is to provide instruction to assist students who need additional academic or behavioral support to succeed in the general education environment. The goal is to reduce the number of referrals to special education by providing supports early to struggling students. Districts are expected to align the ADSIS program within their existing continuum of supports and collect data as specified in the application and submit evaluation information to [MDE](#) each year to determine program impact.

AGR - Achievement Gap Reduction - The achievement gap reduction measurement assesses how well a school has done in promoting higher rates of growth among the seven lower-performing subgroups (Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, Free/Reduced Price Lunch, Special Education, and English Learners) compared to the average growth rate of their counterparts statewide. Students of color are measured against the statewide average growth of white students, Free/Reduced-Price Lunch students are measured against the statewide average growth of non-Free/Reduced-Priced-Lunch students, Special Education students are measured against the average statewide growth of non-Special Education students, and English Learners are measured against the statewide average growth of non-English Learners.

AYP - Adequate Yearly Progress – The original [NCLB](#) measurement used to identify schools for improvement activities. AYP is based on proficiency, participation, and attendance or graduation rates. The

AYP proficiency goal was previously based on the 2014 goal of 100 percent proficiency. Under the waiver, that goal was replaced with a new goal of cutting the achievement gap in half within six years. Under the waiver, there are no sanctions attached to not making AYP.

BOT – Board of Teaching - The Board of Teaching's primary mission is to assure that Minnesota students are served by licensed teachers who are equipped to deliver effective instruction and meet the instructional needs of all learners. To that end, over the course of the last 40 years, the Board of Teaching has provided leadership in teacher education by establishing and maintaining licensure standards and requirements, approving institutions and licensure programs to prepare Minnesota teachers, and by establishing and enforcing the Code of Ethics for Minnesota teachers. The current authority and responsibilities of the Board of Teaching are delineated primarily in Minnesota Statutes, sections 122A.05–122A.09, 122A.18, 214, and Minnesota Rules, Chapters 8700 and 8710.

BOSA – Board of School Administrators - The Board of School Administrator's purpose is (a) to establish and maintain high standards for a quality administrator licensing system for Minnesota public schools, and (b) to ensure that the highest quality administrators serve the needs of Minnesota citizens. The Board of School Administrator duties are described in [Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.14](#).

CCA – Career and College Assessments are the assessments that meet the state graduation assessment requirements. In order to be eligible for a diploma from a Minnesota public high school, all students must fulfill graduation assessments in writing, reading and mathematics.

CCR - Central Contractor Registration – a U.S. Government supplier database. This registration is completed on the [SAM website](#). This number is only needed when a charter school does business directly with the federal government. It is not needed as part of the application process on [SERVS Financial](#).

CFDA - Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance is a federal government-wide compendium of federal programs, projects, services, and activities available to state and local governments of the United States; domestic, public, quasi-public, and private profit and nonprofit organizations and institutions; specialized groups; and individuals. [See the CFDA website for more information](#).

CFR - Code of Federal Regulations is the codification of general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register by the Executive departments and agencies of the Federal Government. [See the e-CFR Data website for current and updated versions of the CFR](#).

Celebration Schools - The 10 percent of [Title I](#) schools with [MMRs](#) between the 60th and 86th percentiles of their grade classification group (elementary, middle school, high school, other) that submit successful applications explaining quantitative and qualitative factors that make the school effective. These schools are publicly recognized for their success. These schools are identified every year.

CLiCS - Cyber-Linked Interactive Child Nutrition System is used to manage [School Nutrition Programs](#).

Cohort Graduation Rate – This method of calculating graduation rates looks at the percentage of ninth graders in a school that graduate within a four-, five- or six-year period. This is a change from the former [AYP](#) graduation rate, which looked at the number of students who graduate and drop out in a one-year period. Minnesota started using the cohort graduation rate for [AYP](#) and [MMR](#) starting in the summer of 2012.

Community Eligibility Provision / Provision 2 and Provision 3 are three [School Nutrition](#) special provision programs where all students are provided free meals and reimbursement for meals is based on claiming

percentages. Not all meals are reimbursed at the free level. Schools with high free and reduced student numbers may consider participating in these programs.

Community Service Fund is used to record all financial activities of the Community Service program. Community Education includes only those activities authorized in Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.19. The focus of these activities is enrichment programs for any age level that are not part of the K-12 education program.

Compensatory Revenue is a component of [general education revenue](#) that must be reserved and used to meet the educational needs of pupils who enroll under-prepared to learn, and whose progress toward meeting state or local content or performance standards is below the level that is appropriate for learners their age. The revenue is based on the prior year's October 1 enrollment and count of students eligible for the [free or reduced price](#) meal program.

Continuous Improvement Schools - The bottom 25 percent of [Title I](#) schools in the state. These schools are identified every year based on being in the bottom 25 percent of their grade classification group (elementary, middle school, high school, other), and are required to write a school improvement plan. Ten percent of these plans are audited by [MDE](#) to ensure fidelity in their implementation. While the bottom 25 percent of schools includes most [Priority](#) and [Focus](#) schools, Priority and Focus schools are not also designated as Continuous Improvement schools.

CSP - Minnesota's Federal Charter Schools Program Grant Project – Opportunity for new charter schools to apply for CSP Planning and Implementation subgrants from the State of Minnesota. Two rounds per year; fall and spring. New opportunity for existing high-quality charter schools to apply for significant expansion or replication grants.

CSPR - The Consolidated State Performance Report is the required annual reporting tool for of each state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico as authorized under Section 9303 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ([ESEA](#)), as amended. Districts and charter schools that receive federal Title funding must annually submit [information for CSPR reporting](#) via [MARSS](#) data and other sources including surveys.

DAC - District Assessment Coordinator, the charter school's/district's main contact for the administration of state assessments.

DHS - The Minnesota Department of Human Services, working with many others, helps people meet their basic needs so they can live in dignity and achieve their highest potential. DHS helps provide essential services to Minnesota's most vulnerable residents. [Visit the DHS website](#).

DIRS - The Disciplinary Incident Reporting System enables both MDE and school districts to comply with state and federal reporting requirements for suspensions, expulsions, special education and dangerous weapons. DIRS is a web-based, password-protected system through which all public school districts must report disciplinary incidents that result in either suspension or expulsion.

District and School Site Verification System - a web-accessible collection tool that enables updates to the [MDE-ORG](#) master directory of organizational units, which controls the processing of data on other MDE major systems such as [MARSS](#), [STAR](#), [UFARS](#), [FNS](#), [IDEAS](#), and the [AYP](#) Report Card. It is essential that contact information be kept up to date. Charters, districts and schools are asked to update changes to contact information whenever necessary throughout the year. A Verification Report can be run from inside this system that lists all the information currently on file for your charter school.

DUNS - A system developed and regulated by [Dun & Bradstreet \(D&B\)](#), that assigns a unique numeric identifier, referred to as a “DUNS number” to a single business entity.

ECSE - Early Childhood Special Education (Birth-5) programs provide supports and services to infants, toddlers and preschool children with disabilities and their families.

ED - Education Department of the United States of America. Also see [USDE](#) or the [ED website](#).

EDGAR - Education Department General Administrative Regulations -Title 34 of code of federal regulations for grant programs financed with federal United States Department of Education funds. Please visit [Ed.gov Grants and Contracts](#) for information on Title 34.

EDRS - Electronic Data Reporting System - Charter schools in their fourth year or later update their estimated enrollment data via EDRS. For charter schools in their first three years, [MDE](#) uses a paper report and requires rosters and mid-year [MARSS](#) submissions. EDRS is also used by schools to submit special education expenditure data for use in the calculation of state and federal special education aids.

EGMS - Electronic Grant Management System is used for information on competitive as well as formula funding made available through MDE. Grant opportunities are summarized by title, program area, eligible applicants, and dollar amount. Documents available on the site include instructions on how to apply and eligibility criteria. [Visit the EGMS website for a list of current grant opportunities](#).

EL - English Learner (previously referred to as **Limited English Proficiency (LEP); English Language Learner (ELL); English as a Second Language(ESL)**). Students who are identified as English Learners (ELs) should be served in an instructional program designed for ELs, defined as either an English as a Second Language (ESL) or Bilingual Education (BE) program by Minnesota statute. Districts and charter schools have discretion in selecting appropriate language programs, but the program chosen should be considered sound by experts in the field. The program should be designed to meet varying needs across proficiency levels and address the Minnesota [English language development \(ELD\) standards](#). For example, students at the beginning levels of English proficiency need more intensive services than students at transitional levels of English proficiency and teachers of all content areas are responsible for the academic language of their subject area for English learners in their classes. The model implemented by the district or charter school should be clearly articulated and available to parents, staff, and students.

ESEA - Elementary and Secondary Education Act, currently authorized as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 ([NCLB](#)). Programs under the ESEA promote student achievement through school and district reform, to include a focus on accountability for results, an emphasis on scientific research and doing what works, expanded parental options, and expanded local control and flexibility.

F&R - Free and Reduced lunch price status. Schools that participate in [School Nutrition Programs](#) accept applications for free and reduced-price school meal benefits at any time. Approval is based on comparison of the household’s income to current U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) household income guidelines. All schools use the Application for Educational Benefits form to certify students as eligible for the free or reduced-price meal program. These data are used to compute compensatory revenue. Schools send an Application for Educational Benefits form to the households of all enrolled students at the beginning of each school year. A letter accompanies the form and explains meal benefits and how to apply. Schools that do not participate in [School Nutrition Programs](#) or that are [Provision 2 or 3](#) schools or participate in [Community Eligibility](#) should still request that families complete the Alternate Application for Educational Benefits form, because students in families whose household income meets the free or reduced-price meal criteria are eligible to generate [compensatory revenue](#) for the school.

FAPE - Free Appropriate Public Education - [IDEA](#) requires that a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) be made available to all students with disabilities between the ages of 3 and 21, inclusive. In Minnesota, FAPE is available to all persons under the age of 21. The closely related right to FAPE for students with disabilities is expanded under state law to include students from birth until July 1 after the student with a disability turns 21. The expansion does not extend beyond secondary school or its equivalent except as under the state's graduation incentives program.

Federal Setting - Refers to the percentage of time a student spends in special education: Federal Setting I, 0-21 percent; Federal Setting II, 21-60 percent; Federal Setting III, 60 percent or more; Federal Setting IV, separate special education site; Federal Setting V, public hospital, day treatment, correctional facility, etc.

FERPA - Family Educational Rights to Privacy Act (The Buckley Amendment) The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education (USDE). FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students." (Accessed 8/2/13 from the [USDE website](#))

FFY - Federal Fiscal Year which runs from October 1 - September 30 and is numbered with the starting calendar year. For example, FFY 2014 or FFY 14 runs from October 1, 2014-September 30, 2015.

FIN - Finance dimension of [UFARS](#) and its associated numbers.

FNS - Food and Nutrition Services division of [MDE](#). Food and Nutrition Services helps local charter schools and districts work to decrease salt and fat, increase fiber and use low fat dairy products, whole grains, and fresh fruits and vegetables in students' meals.

Focus Schools - The ten percent of [Title I](#) schools making the biggest contribution to the state's achievement gap, and high schools with graduation rates of less than 60 percent. These schools are identified in one of two ways: the lowest FRs (see below) in their grade classification group (elementary, middle school, high school, other), or graduation rates of less than 60 percent. These schools work with their district to develop a school improvement plan that directly addresses poor performance either within a subgroup, or in graduation rates. These schools are identified once every three years.

Food Service Fund is used to record financial activities of a charter school's food service program. Food service includes activities for the purpose of preparation and service of milk, meals and snacks in connection with school and community service activities.

FR - Focus Ratings - Minnesota's measurement for identifying **Focus Schools** (see above). The FR is generated by combining the proficiency and growth of the seven subgroups for which there is an achievement gap (Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, Free/Reduced Price Lunch, Special Education, and English Learners).

FRP - Financial Reporting Form -The financial reporting form used by MDE for competitive and targeted/single source grant recipients (grantees) to request grant disbursements.

FRPL - Free/Reduced Price Lunch ([see F&R](#)).

FTE - Full Time Equivalent - a full-time staff member is 1.0 FTE.

FY - Fiscal Year (also see [SFY – State Fiscal Year](#); [FFY- Federal Fiscal Year](#))

General Education Revenue is a combination of several revenue components generated by public schools and available for use during the regular school year and summer for general and special school purposes.

General Fund is used to account for educational activities, charter school instructional and student support programs, expenditures for charter school administration, normal operations and maintenance, pupil transportation, capital expenditures, and legal expenditures not specifically designated to be accounted for in any other fund.

HLQ - Home Language Questionnaires are used to ascertain the home language of all enrolled students. Completion of the HLQ is the first step in identifying potential English Learners ([EL](#)).

HQ – Highly Qualified – Under the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act, teachers of core academic subject must demonstrate federal “highly qualified” status. This can be accomplished with a bachelor’s or higher degree in the core subject or an MTLE content test for the core subject.

IDEA - The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B. (Accessed 8/2/13 from the [IDEA website](#).)

IDEAS - Integrated Department of Education Aids System - The aid system through which state aid entitlements are reported and aid payments are calculated and paid out to charter schools and districts.

IEP - Individualized Education Program - An IEP is a formal written agreement and plan for provision of special education, including related services, to a child with a disability. It is developed, reviewed and revised through a team process in accordance with [IDEA](#) regulations. The required elements of an IEP are detailed in IDEA regulations and [Minnesota Statutes, section 125A.08](#).

ID - Intermediate District - In Minnesota, "Intermediate District" means a district with a cooperative program which has been established under Laws 1967, chapter 822, as amended; Laws 1969, chapter 775, as amended; and Laws 1969, chapter 1060, as amended, offering integrated services for secondary, postsecondary, and adult students in the areas of vocational education, special education, and other authorized services (Minn. Stat. § 136D.01).

ISD - Independent School District - This is a Minnesota school district with a geographic boundary within which students are considered residents.

LEA - Local Education Agency (e.g., charter LEA, school district), a public school district in the United States.

Lease Aid - Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.11, Subdivision 4 reads in part: “When a charter school finds it economically advantageous to rent or lease a building or land for any instructional purposes and it determines that the total operating capital revenue under section 126C.10, Subdivision 13, is insufficient for this purpose, it may apply to the commissioner for building lease aid for this purpose.”

MARSS - Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System - collects student data required by more than one area of [MDE](#) via one system. Minnesota Automated Reporting Student Web Edit System (MWES) is the system used to gather Minnesota district information. This crucial data is the primary data MDE uses to make

payment of funds to local school districts. Data collected by MARSS are used for a variety of purposes, including state aid and levy calculations, federal grant allocations, federal and state civil rights reporting, unduplicated child count, and National Center for Education Statistics ([NCES website](#)).

MCA - Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment and alternate assessment **Minnesota Test of Academic Skills (MTAS)** are the state tests that help districts measure student progress toward Minnesota's academic standards and also meet the requirements of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ([ESEA](#)). Students take one test in each subject. Most students take the MCA, but students who receive special education services and meet eligibility requirements may take the alternate assessment instead. The list below gives the tests available for each subject, with grades given in parentheses behind each test.

Reading: MCA (grades 3-8, 10) or MTAS (grades 3-8, 10)

Mathematics: MCA (grades 3-8, 11) or MTAS (grades 3-8, 11)

Science: MCA or MTAS (grades 5, 8, and high school)

MCCC - The Minnesota Common Course Catalogue is a course classification and data collection system intended to provide uniform information about courses that are taught by Minnesota teachers and completed by Minnesota students.

MDE - Minnesota Department of Education's mission is improving educational achievement for children from Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade.

MDE-ORG - The Minnesota Department of Education-Organization Reference Glossary is a searchable database. It includes a variety of Minnesota school, district and education-related organization directories. Please make sure your school's information in MDE-ORG is always up-to-date.

MIDMS - MDE ID Management System is the name of the MDE security system that authorizes use of its secured websites.

MMB - Minnesota Management and Budget's mission is to increase state government's capacity to manage and utilize financial, human, information and analytical resources in order to provide exceptional service and value for Minnesota's citizens.

MMR - Multiple Measurements Rating - Minnesota's measurement of school performance. The MMR measures proficiency, student growth, achievement gap reduction, and graduation rates. Schools earn points in each category. The percentage of possible points that a school earns is the school's MMR.

MOE - Maintenance of Effort - The [IDEA](#) requirements for MOE requires that federal funds "...may not be used to reduce the level of expenditures for the education of children with disabilities made by the Local Education Agency (LEA) from (state and) local funds below the level of those expenditures for the preceding fiscal year..." (34 C.F.R. § 300.203). This requirement is referred to as maintenance of effort. Annually, the Division of Program Finance, Special Education Funding and the Data Team review the MOE of each [LEA](#), including each local school district, charter school and special education cooperative and reports the state's MOE to the federal office.

NCLB - the No Child Left Behind Federal Act of 2001 dictates how states must hold schools accountable through statewide assessments and mandated interventions. Minnesota received a waiver to certain provisions of NCLB in February 2012.

Non-Licensed Community Expert - [Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.25](#). A [special permission](#) granted to a school district to hire an individual who is not a licensed teacher, but has a specific area of expertise that is related to the teaching assignment.

Non-Renewable License - [Minnesota Rule 8710.1410](#). The non-renewable license is valid for up to three years and allows a professionally licensed individual to teach out-of-field in a subject as s/he works toward full licensure. A district only needs to apply for this license once (using the [Special Permissions System](#)) and does not need to advertise for the position after the first year.

OGAN - Official Grant Award Notification - the [MDE](#) competitive and single-source/targeted award document that includes by reference terms and conditions of approved application materials, including assurances, approved workplan and approved budget.

OGAA - Official Grant Award Amendment - an amendment to the [MDE](#) competitive and single-source/targeted award document that includes by reference terms and conditions of approved application materials, including assurances, approved workplan and approved budget.

PAR - Personnel Activity Report - form required to be completed by [MDE](#) grantees of applicable federally financed grant programs where work on federally assisted MDE grant projects must be accounted for separately from other revenue sources and divided by separate cost objectives.

PBIS - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports - a state-initiated project that provides districts and individual schools throughout Minnesota with the necessary training and technical support to promote improvement in student behavior across the entire school, especially for students with challenging social behaviors. It establishes clearly defined outcomes that relate to students' academic and social behavior, systems that support staff efforts, practices that support student success, and data to guide decision-making.

PBL - Project-Based Learning is an instructional program where students complete coursework for credit at an individual pace that is primarily student-led and may be completed on site, in the community, or online. Charter schools that wish to or are running a project-based program, even if it is completed in a seat-based setting, need to submit an application for approval to [MDE](#).

PERA - Public Employees Retirement Association administers retirement plans (for non-instructional staff) to charter schools and school districts. Its programs are qualified retirement plans under Section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Perkins - Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, which provides federal money for career technical education schooling.

Personnel Variance - [MN Rule 8710.1400](#). A [special permission](#) granted for fully licensed teachers to serve in positions for which they are not licensed (out-of- field). Personnel variances are granted to a school district for an individual for no more than three years and must be renewed annually.

PSEO - Postsecondary Enrollment Options allows high school juniors and seniors, and some sophomores, to earn college credit while still in high school through enrollment in and successful completion of college-level courses.

Priority Schools - The five percent most persistently low-performing schools in the state. These schools are identified as those in the bottom five percent of [MMRs](#) in their grade classification group (elementary, middle school, high school, other). These schools are required to collaborate with [MDE](#) and the [Regional Centers of](#)

[Excellence](#) to develop a school turnaround plan based on the federal turnaround principles. These schools are identified once every three years.

Proficiency - The proficiency measurement in the [MMR](#) looks at a weighted percentage of subgroups that made [AYP](#). Schools earn points based on the number and size of subgroups that meet their AYP targets.

Provision 2 and Provision 3 / Community Eligibility Provision are three School Nutrition special provision programs where all students are provided free meals and reimbursement for meals is based on claiming percentages. Not all meals are reimbursed at the free level. Schools with high free and reduced student numbers may consider participating in these programs.

Pupil Fair Dismissal Act - When a student is removed from school for disciplinary reasons, the student is assured certain rights.

Q Comp was enacted through a bipartisan agreement in the Minnesota Legislature in July 2005. It is a voluntary program that allows local districts and exclusive representatives of the teachers to design and collectively bargain a plan that meets the five components of the law. The five components under Q Comp include Career Ladder/Advancement Options, Job-embedded Professional Development, Teacher Evaluation, Performance Pay, and an Alternative Salary Schedule.

Regional Centers of Excellence provide technical assistance to school leadership and implementation teams for [Priority](#) and [Focus Title I](#) schools across the state. Through regular, ongoing dialogue and support, these specialists assist principals and teachers in improving academic outcomes for all students by working in partnership with the school staff. [MDE](#) supports and oversees the efforts of the three Regional Centers by collaborating with staff from across the agency to provide guidance that will result in coordinated support to meet the needs of school leadership teams and enable them to improve achievement for all learners.

Reward Schools - The highest-performing 15 percent of [Title I](#) schools in the state. These schools are identified based on being in the top 15 percent of their grade classification group (elementary, middle school, high school, other) in the [MMR](#). These schools are identified and recognized for their good work every year.

Rtl - Response to Intervention is a framework that is used to improve outcomes for all students. Rtl helps to ensure the provision of high-quality instruction and interventions that are matched to the needs of students requiring additional academic and behavioral supports. After initial screening of all students, changes in instruction or goals can be made according to the level of student need. Student progress is monitored frequently and instruction is then differentiated and modified, as necessary (adapted from [NASDSE website](#), 2005).

SAM - System for Award Management is used to validate and complete Central Contractor Registration ([CCR](#)). The SAM system is a [web-enabled](#) government-wide application that collects, validates, stores, and disseminates business information about the federal government's trading partners in support of the contract award, grants, and the electronic payment process.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal civil rights statute that assures individuals will not be discriminated against based on their disability.

SERVS - The State Educational Record View and Submission system was designed to simplify, consolidate and automate data collection processes. SERVS Financial helps districts, schools and other eligible entities apply for funding opportunities, submit reimbursement requests and track budgets.

SFA – School Food Authority is the organization that sponsors a School Nutrition Program ([SNP](#)). Typically SFAs are districts, private schools or charter schools. Charter schools may initiate a [Joint Agreement](#) with a SFA to administer their SNPs.

SFIN - SERVS Financial (an acronym of an acronym – see **SERVS**)

SFY - State Fiscal Year runs from July 1 - June 30 of each year, numbered with the ending calendar year. For example, SFY 2015 or SFY 15 refers to July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2015.

SIG - School Improvement Grant funds are for the purpose of turning around the identified persistently lowest achieving schools in the state by substantially raising the achievement of students attending those schools.

SNP – School Nutrition Programs include breakfast, lunch, afterschool snacks and the fresh fruit and vegetable program. SNP is a section of the Food and Nutrition Service ([FNS](#)) division of MDE which provides technical assistance and monitoring of school meal programs in Minnesota for compliance with state and federal regulation.

SOD - Statutory Operating Debt - According to Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.81, Subdivision 2, SOD exists if the school's operating debt is more than 2 ½ percent of the most recent fiscal year's expenditure amount. By January 31 of the following year of SOD, the school board is required to create and implement a Special Operating Plan which is formally approved through a board resolution and submitted to the [MDE](#) commissioner for approval.

SPED - short nickname for Special Education.

SPS – Special Permissions System – This is a [BOT](#) online system where districts and charter schools can apply for variances, waivers, and community experts.

SSOS – Statewide System of Support is one of the services offered through the [Regional Centers of Excellence](#). The SSOS works exclusively with [Title I](#) funded schools designated as [Focus](#) or [Priority](#) due to low student achievement levels, persistent achievement gaps or low graduation rates. The vision for this system of support is to establish a consistent, cohesive regional infrastructure for effectively and efficiently providing equitable access for school improvement support throughout the state.

STAR - STaff Automated Reporting is a web-based system used by school districts, charter schools and cooperatives to report employment and assignment information to [MDE](#). This system is also used by districts to access the licensure/assignment discrepancy report and to complete "highly qualified" reporting.

Student Growth - Individual student growth is a measurement of how a student scored relative to the expected score. The expectation of how a student will score is based on their previous year's score. Schools receive a growth score based on the average growth scores of all their students.

SWIFT - Statewide Integrated Financial Tools integrates all the administrative functions across state agencies, including financial, procurement, reporting, human resources, and payroll.

TDE – Teacher Development and Evaluation - Minnesota districts and charters must create and implement teacher development and evaluation systems that comply with requirements in Minnesota statute. [See the educator evaluation page on the MDE website](#) or e-mail mde.schoolsupport@state.mn.us for more information.

TDIS - Teacher Discipline Inquiry System - A 2008 state law requires a school board or other school hiring authority to contact the Board of Teaching before hiring a new teacher to determine if disciplinary action has ever been taken against the individual. TDIS is a password-protected online search application created for this purpose. School boards or other appointing authorities should designate an individual to access TDIS.

Test WES - Districts and charter schools perform a variety of activities in Test WES before statewide testing begins and after it ends. Tasks in Test WES include working with precode files, requesting an alternate assessment waiver, performing essential posttest edits, submitting an [Adequate Yearly Progress \(AYP\)](#) appeal and verifying site readiness for online testing.

Title I Schools - Schools that receive federal funding based on their level of poverty. Only schools that accept Title I funding are considered Title I schools. The identification of [Priority](#), [Focus](#), [Continuous Improvement](#), [Celebration](#)-Eligible and [Reward](#) schools under Minnesota's waiver are only directed at Title I schools.

TRA - The Teachers Retirement Association is a Minnesota statewide public pension fund that provides retirement, disability and death benefits to Minnesota public school teachers, administrators, college faculty, retirees, their families and beneficiaries.

TSES - Total Special Education System is a reference and corresponding template for documenting special education policies, procedures and programs. The purpose of the template is to provide a format that references the required elements for compliance with district responsibilities for total special education systems as required by Minnesota Rule 3525.1100.

UFARS - The Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards is a system that collects data submitted by districts and charter schools, in compliance with reporting requirements.

USDE - United States Department of Education, also referred to as **ED (Education Department)**. ED's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access. [More information is available at ed.gov.](#)

Vendor Number - Every company or organization, including a charter school receiving payments from the state, is considered a vendor. The first step to authorize the State of Minnesota to make electronic funds transfer (EFT) payments to a charter school's bank account is to register for a vendor number. In order to receive or view payments, every vendor must register online with the State of Minnesota's administrative agency, known as Minnesota Management and Budget ([MMB](#)).

Waiver – Also known as **innovative waiver** or **board waiver** - [Minnesota Statutes, section 122A.09](#), Subdivision 10. A [special permission](#) granted for one or more licensed individuals to teach out of their subject area to accommodate experimental (innovative) programs or for an assignment for which there is no appropriate licensure. A waiver is commonly used in an alternative setting such as, but not limited to, a care and treatment center, alternative learning center or charter school. Waivers are granted annually and there is no limit on the number of waivers an individual can be granted since there is no license that allows an individual to teach multiple content areas.

WIDA - World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment advances academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students through high quality standards, assessments, research, and professional development for educators (accessed 8/16/13 from the [WIDA website](#)). Minnesota is a member of the WIDA Consortium and uses WIDA's [ACCESS for ELLs](#) assessment.