School System Acronyms You’ll Want to Know!

**ELL**

= English Language Learner

* This refers to students whose first language is not English
* Programs might also be called ESL (English as a Second Language)

= Parent Teacher Student Association

**PTSA**

* An organization of parents that work together with the school administration, teachers, and students to create a better school community.
* Parents pay a small fee to join, and benefit by staying well-connected with the school, helping with events, and taking an active role in their child’s education.
* The PTSA plans and leads many events and programs for the school, including sponsoring field trips, school shows, assemblies, and more.

**GPA**

= Grade Point Average

* When your child enters middle school, they will begin receiving grade reports with the letters A, B, C, D or F to show their progress.
* In high school, all four years of letter grades will be averaged together to give each student a GPA, which they will present to colleges and universities during the admission process.

A= 4 points

B= 3 points

C= 2 points

D= 1 point

F= failure, 0 points

* A “4.0 GPA” means a student has earned A’s throughout all 4 years of high school.

**GATE**

= Gifted And Talented Education

* Gifted or enrichment program (now often referred to as Highly Capable programs) are available at most schools for some students.
* Parents who would like their child tested may contact their school district about testing. Testing usually occurs only once per year.

**IEP**

= Individualized Education Plan

* Programs specifically designed for students who have a disability, either intellectual or physical.

**AP classes**

= Advanced Placement classes

* Courses for high school students that offer college-level curriculum.
* At the end of the course, students will take an AP exam and can receive college credit for the course if they score high enough.
* Colleges and university like students to challenge themselves with AP classes during high school, and admissions directors will look at this specifically when making admissions decisions.

**IB program**

= International Baccalaureate program

* A Swiss-based, internationally recognized college-preparatory curriculum, originally developed for international schools.
* The program is now offered at some public high schools in in the U.S. (for example, BSD offers this curriculum at Interlake HS)

**SAT**

= Scholastic Aptitude Test

**ACT**

= American College Testing

* These are the two college entrance exams offered in the U.S. Both tests are accepted at most universities.
* Students can decide which test they prefer. They do not have to take both tests.
* Students can take the exams multiple times and submit their best score to the university for admission.
* Most students take the exams during their junior year of high school or the beginning of their senior year of high school.