Common Preschool Terms

**Paring**- A process that occurs in student’s first weeks of preschool. The child explores and plays in the classroom environment alongside a staff member. This allows each student time to transition into preschool free from demands and a structured schedule. It also allows for staff members to bond with each child, getting to know their likes and dislikes. For a more detailed explanation, read the “*Early Weeks of Preschool*” article on the webpage.

**Demands**- Directions and expectations which require a student to complete a task or behavior. Demands are not placed in the PSD classroom until the paring process is complete and the student has begun to adjust to the classroom environment. Examples of demands include remaining seated during circle time, completing an art project, modeling gross motor movements and washing hands to name a few.

**Prompting**- any assistance given to a student to aid in skill development or task completion. Prompts may be verbal, gestural (pointing), and/or physical (hand over hand) . Prompting depends on a student’s individual level with the activity. The least intrusive possible prompts are always used whenever a prompt is necessary.

**Reinforcer**- An item, activity or action which is highly motivating for a student and supports them in completing a task and increasing positive behaviors. Reinforcers are specific to each student's preferences. Examples include favorite toys, snacks, trampoline or computer/iPad time, verbal praise, and high 5’s.

**Self Stimulatory Behavior**- Also known as “stimming” or “stims”, these behaviors refers to repetitive body movements or repetitive movement of objects. Stimming is related to all 5 senses some example are:

* **Visual**  staring at lights, moving fingers in front of the eyes, hand-flapping
* **Auditory**  tapping ears, snapping fingers, making vocal sounds, clapping
* **Tactile**  rubbing the skin with one's hands or with another object, scratching
* **Vestibular**  rocking front to back, rocking side-to-side
* **Taste** placing body parts or objects in one's mouth, licking objects
* **Smell**  smelling objects, sniffing people

**Transitions**- Any movement in the child’s schedule which requires them to move from one activity to the next or to a new environment. The PSD classroom uses a variety of prompts and a picture schedule to support a student’s transitions throughout the day. Examples of transitions included are: going from one center to the next during work time or going from the classroom the gym.

**ITT**- An intensive Teaching Trial is a 1:1 or 2:1 instruction between a student and teacher or paraprofessional based on a student's individual goals. It occurs daily in the PSD classroom during center rotation. Data is collected to ensure a student is achieving goals and guide future instruction.

**Manding**- manding or mands are requests made by a child for items or events that are needed or desired. It is the first step in teaching communication and can be verbal or nonverbal depending on a student’s level. Examples of common mands are for breaks, attention, help, food and or toys. The PSD environment is created to support students learning using mands throughout the school day.

**Sensory Strategies**- Also known as “sensory diets” are centers, tools, activities and instruction throughout the day which provide each child with opportunities to learn how to regulate and control their bodies. The PSD classroom, in coordination with the occupational therapist and if needed, physical therapist, provided students with opportunities for tactile (touch), vestibular (balance) and proprioception (sense of self in space). Sensory strategies/diets can change depending on a student’s needs and are different for each child. Some common tools/strategies utilized are weighted vests, belts, sensory balls, blankets, crash mats, calming corners, yoga, sensory table to name a few.