



Disability Services

Transitions for College Students with Disabilities & their Parents

APPLICABLE LAWS

IDEA

- Children with disabilities are absolutely entitled to a “Free and Appropriate Public Education.”
- Either an IEP or a 504 Plan drives all services and accommodations, involves the teachers and counselors, and requires parental approval.
- Section 504, subpart D, includes the language, “Free and Appropriate Public Education” for the public schools, and accommodations may include a shortening of assignments or the use of notes on tests when other students cannot use them

ADA

- Access to education is the focus of the law; students have civil rights and they must advocate for themselves in order to receive accommodations.
- 504 plans and IEPs do not exist on the college level.
- Section 504, subpart E, is the first civil rights legislation that applied to colleges. It upholds the institution’s right to maintain the academic standards, and no accommodations may be permitted that will fundamentally alter a class or program. Shortening assignments and using notes are considered unreasonable.

High School to College: Are you ready?

PARENT ROLE

HIGH SCHOOL

- Parents advocate for students.
- Parents can communicate with the student's high school teachers.
- Parents have access to student records and participate in the accommodation process.

COLLEGE

- Students advocate for themselves.
- College instructors communicate directly with students, not with parents.
- Parents do not have access to any college records unless the student provides written consent.

5 E's to Ease the Transition Process: Encourage, Expose, Enlighten, Evaluate, Empower

Accommodate when necessary, Empower at every opportunity

High School to College: Are you ready?

TEACHER/INSTRUCTOR ROLE

HIGH SCHOOL

- Public schools often modify curriculum and/or alter pace of assignments.
- Teachers use a multi-sensory approach.
- Weekly testing, mid-term, final, and grades assignments
- Teachers may be expected to learn all they can about the disability of a student in one of their classes.
- “Untimed tests” for a student with a disability.

COLLEGE

- Colleges are not required to modify curriculum or assignments.
- Instructors tend to rely on lecture; they may or may not use a multi-sensory approach.
- Testing and assignments frequently vary.
- Instructors need to know only that which applies to the accommodations the student requests.
- “Untimed tests” are not reasonable, but time extensions may be reasonable, typically time-and-a-half.

High School to College: Are you ready?

STUDENT ROLE

HIGH SCHOOL

- Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to the school.
- Attendance is taken and reported.
- Public school personnel know about a student's placement.
- Many teachers and staff are involved in the IEP discussion.
- Most teachers know about a student before he or she enters the classroom and have a good idea of what the student's needs are.

COLLEGE

- Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to the student.
- Student is responsible for attending class, and may be dropped from a course due to excess absences based on college attendance policy.
- DS never contacts an instructor without the student's permission.
- The student must initiate accommodations with his or her instructor for each course every semester.
- Students have the civil right to refuse accommodations they don't need or want, and if the student does not request an accommodation, it is assumed he or she does not want it.

Self-Advocacy Skills

STUDENT ROLE

Does the student:

- **Know his/her rights under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act?**
- **Know how to ask for help?**
- **Feel comfortable talking about his/her disability?**
- **Know how to approach instructors to discuss approved accommodations?**