

Supporting Students with Disabilities in the Transition from High School to College

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Agenda

Learning Objectives:

1. Understand the difference between high school and college legal rights and responsibilities and accommodations
 - a. 'Access versus Success'
2. Develop transition plans to assist students move from the classroom to campus
3. Prepare students to an appointment with a student accessibility office on a college campus

Legal Differences

K-12	College
IDEIA, ADA, 504 (subsection D)	ADA, 504 (subsection E)
FAPE in LRE	Equal access
Special education program- curriculum modification	Accommodations to access same degree/technical requirements
Parent, teacher/district-led	Student-driven (self-disclose as SWD)
Annual CSE meetings; case management	Student self-advocacy for help as needed
Compensatory education	Student financial responsibility \$
Supplementary supports and services (counseling, OT/PT, Speech)	College not responsible for support services as accommodations

IEP

- High school graduation is the goal
- 13 disability categories to qualify
- Free education
- Annual CSE meetings run by the school district
- Includes description of student disability
- School/case manager ensures that all necessary parties have access to the IEP
- Annual goals that students are working towards

Provide accommodations for students with disabilities in the classroom setting

Accommodation Letter

- Focus is on equal access
- Wide range of disability/medical diagnosis to qualify
- Students need to set up meeting with disability office
- Does not require annual reviews
- Student is in charge of distributing accommodation letter
- Letter only includes the accommodations that the student needs
- Disability is not disclosed unless the student chooses to disclose

Access versus Success

1. Access= ensuring access to programs, services, and activities that everyone else has access to
2. Access does not mean ensuring academic success, personal wellness
3. Many accommodations might be helpful or beneficial for most college students- but what do all students have access to that the students with the disability does not (e.g., private study space, teachers' notes)
 - a. *What is necessary* to ensure equal access for a student with a disabilities

Example:

- 'Extensions on Tests/Assignments'
- What is the barrier?

Modification Versus Accommodation

Is it a Modification? Change in WHAT the student is taught or expected to learn	Or an Accommodation? Change in HOW the student will learn
Fewer questions	Additional time
Shortened assignments	Assistive technology
Adjusted grading	Large print
Lower text level	Breaks

Accommodation= Adjustment to policy, program, service to ensure equal access

Accommodation Decision-Making

1. Accommodations, programs and services in an IEP/504 **do not automatically transfer over to college**
2. Students engage in an **interactive process** with college disability services to identify:
 - a. Is this a disability-related barrier (or more for success, benefit, etc)?
 - b. Is this a reasonable accommodation (or would it be a modification/'fundamental alteration')?
 - i. Degree and technical requirements (e.g., nursing programs)
3. Sometimes is case-by-case approval
4. Third party documentation is not prescriptive

High School Experience

- Parents/teachers facilitate CSE meetings
- Attendance! School calls parents if students are not in class
- Resource room/consultant teacher to support executive functioning and organization
 - What is the difference between a college course syllabus and daily agendas and reminders from teachers?
- Free - does not cost money to retake courses
- Limited input in classes that students take

Transition Planning

- Review websites for college disability offices
 - What is the process for accommodations?
 - Disability services request process is separate from admissions
- Work on transition plans beyond career assessments and strengths and weaknesses
 - How involved are students in the transition process?
 - Do students understand their disability? What accommodations do they need and why?
- Practice interviewing students to prepare for meeting with the disability office
- Assess independent living skills
 - Money management, laundry, public transportation, general problem-solving, safety

Transition Planning

- Coursework
 - Consider AP or college-level courses
 - Practice time management/organization, critical thinking, assistive tech tools, and other higher level academic skills
- Discuss academic and social aspects of college- the ‘what ifs’- who is the support network on and off campus
- Work with the family to understand shift in legal rights and responsibilities
 - Colleges are not legally required to communicate with parents about accommodations
 - Requires student written consent
 - Information about grades, academic standing, conduct, etc. not shared
- Get a job!
 - Learn how to balance life/academics
- ACCESS-VR, Commission for the Blind
 - AT training? Coaching?

Prepare for Accessibility Meeting

- Describe your disability. How does your disability impact in you the classroom/other areas of the college experience?
- What is your experience with accommodations in the past? What has worked/not worked?
- What strategies and coping skills have you used in the past?
- Documentation requirements vary by Disability Service office policy and procedure

Things to consider/look for:

- Disability Service offices vary in scope, staffing, offerings (e.g., social skills groups)
- Typically are not wrap-around support services. Staff often cannot meet with students regularly, do academic coaching, or regular case management.
 - Ask about other supports available at the college

What About Housing Accommodations?

- High schools do not provide housing accommodations, therefore additional documentation beyond an IEP may be required
- Most students would be more comfortable in a single room
 - Access vs. Success - What barriers exist in the housing environment due to the disability?
 - Anxiety about living with a roommate is generally not a barrier- it is actually a part of the college experience and residential curriculum
 - Residence Halls are not designed to be study spaces!
- Some questions students should be prepared to answer:
 - What are some disability related barriers you have encountered or anticipate encountering in the residence hall?
 - How do you handle anxiety/ADHD outside of a living situation?
- Medical documentation does not guarantee requested accommodation
 - Colleges may be able to offer reasonable alternatives

Social-Emotional Support

- Student is in charge of communicating their needs
 - Colleges need permission from the student to speak to parents/guardians (FERPA)
- High school extracurricular activities vs. clubs and committees
- Students live in residence halls- 'Resident Assistants/Coordinators'
- Personal transportation is not provided
- Counseling services offered through the college Counseling Center
 - Typically designed for short-term and/or group services
 - Cannot guarantee long-term, individualized counseling. Often refer off-campus
 - Ask about psychiatric consultation services and medication delivery (students are responsible for self-management of medications)

Resources

- [Western New York Collegiate Consortium of Disability Advocates \(WNYCCDA\) Resources](#)
- [Elizabeth Hamblet Website](#)
 - *'7 Steps to College Success: A Pathway for Students with Disabilities'*
- [National Technical Assistance Center on Transition](#)
 - *'The Nuts & Bolts of Getting Ready for College'*; *'The Realities of College Life'*
- ['Navigating College: A Handbook on Self-Advocacy'](#) [for students with Autism]
- [Auxiliary Aids and Services for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities \(U.S. Dept of Education\)](#)

Q&A

Thank you for attending!

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