

## Understanding the Differences High School vs. College

A sure way to make a successful transition from high school to college is to think ahead and prepare for the differences between the two settings. This is especially true for students with a disability who face the same issues as their peers. College requires students to be more actively involved in their education and assume more responsibility, be prepared for possible challenges involved in requesting and receiving services.

| Question   | Secondary – High School  | Postsecondary – College/University  |
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| What is the law?   | IDEA and Section 504   | ADA and Section 504   |
| What is the intent of the law?                               | <p><u>IDEA</u>: Every child is entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education or FAPE in the least restrictive environment possible.</p> <p><u>504</u>: To ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability will be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity.</p> | To ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability will be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity.   |
| Disability is defined:                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children who fall within one or more specific categories of qualifying conditions.</li> <li>- Requires that a child’s disability adversely affect their educational performance and/or their ability to benefit from general education.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A person having a physical or mental impairment, which limits one or more major life activity</li> <li>- Have a record of such an impairment.</li> <li>- Are regarded as having an impairment.</li> <li>- No requirement for prior special education services</li> <li>- No specific list of qualifying conditions.</li> </ul> |
| Who is covered under the law?                                | All infants, children and youth requiring special education services until age 21 or graduation from high school.  | All qualified individuals with disabilities who meet the entry age level criteria or particular program entry criteria of the college and who can document the existence of a disability as defined by ADA.   |
| Who is responsible for identifying and documenting the need? | School districts are responsible for identifying evaluating and planning educational services at no expense to the parent or individual. Parents must consent for evaluation & placement.  | It is the responsibility of the student to self-identify if they require assistance. Students are adults; they request a meeting and provide documentation.   |

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| How are services delivered?         | School districts are responsible for providing specially designed instruction, supplemental educational services, and supports in addition to what is provided to students in the general curriculum. | Requires that colleges/universities eliminate barriers that would prevent the student from participating fully in the programs and services offered. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students meet the same admissions criteria as non-disabled peers.</li> <li>- Program and technical standards must be met either with or without accommodations.</li> </ul>                      |
| How are plans developed?            | A team consisting of the parents, student, and educators develops the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan.  | The student and a professional from the college/university meet to develop an Accommodation Plan. Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis and directly tied to the functional limitation of the disability. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IEP's do not carry over high school</li> <li>- Accommodations cannot fundamentally alter the program or course.</li> </ul> |
| How are accommodations implemented? | All educators are required to implement accommodations and/or modification as specified in the IEP or 504 Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Educator Driven</li> </ul>                   | Students decide how, when, or if they will utilize their accommodations (none, one or all). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students meet with their instructors to share their Instructor Letter to access their accommodations.</li> <li>- Student Driven</li> </ul>   |
| Who knows about the disability?     | The disability is openly discussed with the team but confidential to the meeting. Classroom teachers receive a copy of the IEP or 504 Plan.   | The law is clear – disability information is confidential and not shared with instructors or other college professionals, and only with family members with student consent.  |