



College Bound with an IEP or 504

What you need to know

Not all 4-year colleges are the same!

- Some colleges specifically target students with disabilities
- Some colleges provide special programs for students with disabilities, and these programs may require a significant cost above and beyond tuition
- Some colleges offer nothing beyond the generic academic supports available to all students at that school

2 year colleges. . .

often have a great deal of academic support available due to the nature of their population

- Can be a very good value in terms of cost
- Can provide a smooth transition from high school to college
- Some 2 year schools have residential campuses and/or articulation agreements with 4 year

Accommodations vs. Academic Support

- By law, colleges and universities **are required** to provide accommodations for **qualified** students (i.e. extended time for testing, large print testing materials, etc.). There is no charge for accommodations.
- Unlike high school, supports are **not required**, and when they are available they may be fee-based services. It is up to you to find out what is available at any school you are interested in, and to be certain that you qualify for- and, if necessary, can afford - whatever is available

How do I qualify for accommodations in college?

You will generally need **recent** (usually within 2 years) cognitive, psychological and/or medical testing to support your request for accommodations

- The testing results must be from the adult version of the evaluation as opposed to an assessment designed for children or adolescents
- Your documentation must clearly support the accommodation(s) that you are requesting

How do I know that I have the right documentation?

Ask the college!!

- It is very important that you check with the schools you are considering attending to be sure that you have documents and/or assessments that meet their specific requirements
- If something is lacking, you must be sure to provide it prior to attending the school
- Your high school IEP or 504 Plan alone (in most cases) will not be sufficient to ensure your eligibility for accommodations at a college or university
- The only way that you can be sure is to ask!!

504 vs. IEP Documentation

- When a student has an IEP, once every three years the district re-evaluates the student and may at that time administer additional testing which may be adequate for the purpose of securing testing accommodations at the college level.
- When a student has a 504 Plan, initial testing might have occurred in elementary school. New testing generally not administered.

How does my disability affect my college applications?

- **It doesn't.** In the vast majority of cases, a student must meet all admission requirements expected of all applicants. There is no special consideration for or against a student with disabilities.
- However, there are certain schools where a students can apply concurrently to a program within the school that is in place for students with disabilities, and a student may be admitted to that program and conditionally admitted to the college as a result.

Should I keep my disability a secret when I apply?

- Every college representative we speak with says that you should feel free to discuss any concerns related to your disability. They will not hold it against you in any way.
- You should not waste applications on schools that will not meet your needs. You should do your homework - including speaking to representatives from the college's office of disability services - prior to deciding if the school is potentially a good match for you.

Important differences between high school and college

In high school, the district is responsible for the identification and evaluation of disabilities at no cost to the parents

- In college, the student must self-identify and provide appropriate documentation of the disability
- If an evaluation is required, it will be at parental expense

In high school. . .

the program ensures that the student takes advantage of supports and testing accommodations

- In college, the student must self-advocate
- If the student does not take advantage of testing accommodations, you will not be notified and no one will look for the student to encourage the student to do so
- If the student does not take advantage of supports - even when you have paid thousands of dollars for the program - you will not be notified and no one will look for the student to encourage the student to do so

FERPA

FERPA is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. It doesn't apply to high school students so information is shared with parents.

- In college, without written permission from the student, personnel cannot discuss the student with you
- Even with written permission, the information available to you will not be nearly as extensive as what is available in high school

Why all of this matters

- Many students with disabilities do very well in high school at least partially as a result of the supports and accommodations that were provided
- When these students go to college, if in addition to all of the other challenges of the transition their supports and accommodations are no longer available, they may really struggle

What can I do now in high school to prepare?

- It is important to understand during each annual review when considering accommodations and modification that you work towards independence in high school in order to meet with success in college.
- Advocate for yourself! Participate fully in your PPT & 504 meetings to share what accommodations and modifications work for you.

Please communicate honestly about yourself

- When students go to college they may want to have an entirely fresh start and avoid anything having to do with their disability
- If accommodations are a necessity for the student to succeed, the student must be prepared to take advantage of them
- If academic supports are necessary, the student must be prepared to take advantage of them

Before your child begins his/her freshman year

- Be sure that you and your child are in agreement with regard to expectations and obligations
- Be sure that your child is fully familiar with everything available at the college that can be helpful, knows how to access that assistance and - if accommodations are being requested - that all necessary documentation is in and the request is approved prior to the start of the semester

Helpful Links

- <http://www.greatschools.org/special-education/health/913-college-planning.gs?page=all>
- <http://www.collegexpress.com/lists/list/colleges-where-students-with-learning-disabilities-can-and-do-make-it/401/>
- <https://www.edsmart.org/students-with-disabilities-college-guide/>

Helpful Links (cont.)

- http://www.college-scholarships.com/learning_disabilities.htm
- <http://www.bestcolleges.com/resources/disabled-students/>

For college entrance examinations (PSAT, SAT, AP, ACT and SAT Subject Tests) testing accommodations:

- <https://www.collegeboard.org/students-with-disabilities>
- <http://www.actstudent.org/regist/disab/>

College Websites

- www.mitchell.edu
- www.nv.edu
- www.landmark.edu
- www.iona.edu
- <http://www.sunywcc.edu/student-services/disability-services/>

Other Resources

- The K&W Guide to Colleges for Students with Learning Differences, 12th Edition: 350 Schools with Programs or Services for Students with ADHD or Learning Disabilities, by **Princeton Review**
- College Success for Students with Physical Disabilities, by **Chris Wise Tiedemann**



THANK YOU for joining
us this evening!