

Life After York Q & A: Parent to Parent Advice

IEPs and 504s After York

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What's the RIGHT path for YOUR student?

- IEPs become 504s after graduation. (Reference Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act.)
- Elmhurst/Society tends to emphasize the value of attending four-year colleges. Four year college may or may not be the right choice for your student (whether they have a diagnosed disability or not). Students with disabilities have additional barriers to success; that is why they have an IEP or 504 plan - to level the playing field. There are MANY paths to success. What path is right for your student?
- Signs that a four-year college is right:
 - Student is able to manage their workload and academic demands with little/no additional support from parent and/or case manager, other than the documented accommodations.
 - He/she is able to self-advocate.
 - Student has a fairly specific sense of direction in terms of major/field of study.
- Signs that college MIGHT not be right:
 - Student struggles to keep track of school work and other responsibilities without significant intervention by parent or a case manager.
 - He/she is only successful in college prep courses when the material is significantly modified.
 - Student has not taken very many college prep courses and/or have performed poorly (C's or below) consistently in those traditional courses.

What Is the Right Path?

- ▶ If you and your student have an honest conversation about what they want, what motivates them, and where they see themselves, this might shed light on the next logical step for them. What are the options?
 - ▶ Four-Year College direct after graduation
 - ▶ Two-Year College (community college or private school) then transfer to Four-Year
 - ▶ Two-Year College with terminal Associates Degree (done in two years, specific field of study)
 - ▶ Specialty College (culinary, trades, cosmetology, etc.)
 - ▶ Apprenticeship Programs (trades)
 - ▶ Gap Year: Develop specific college-readiness skills, explore career areas, try something new
 - ▶ DuPage WorkNet: Job Training, Financial Assistance for Training, Special Programs
 - ▶ Straight to Work: Look for companies that offer internal training and advancement opportunities

Four-Year and Two-Year Colleges: The Search

- ▶ Start with your child as a STUDENT first. Looks for schools the same way as every other student.
 - ▶ Distance from home
 - ▶ Setting of campus
 - ▶ Size of campus and classes
 - ▶ Majors, extracurricular and other unique characteristics
- ▶ Step back so your student learns to self-advocate and understands their needs and accommodations.
 - ▶ The more independent the student, the more options will be a good fit.
- ▶ Once there is a sense of what kind of school may be a good fit, move into the research process based on needed services.

Determining the Right Level of Services

- ▶ Terminology can vary.
- ▶ Accommodations: Least comprehensive level.
 - ▶ Student adjusts to college on own or with other freshman orientation programs.
 - ▶ Student can seek out and arrange accommodations as needed.
 - ▶ Tutoring available to all students. May not be LD specialists.
 - ▶ High level of self-advocacy.
 - ▶ Typically no additional fees.
- ▶ Services: More comprehensive level but not all-encompassing.
 - ▶ College has structure for providing services and is arranged by an appointed student services office.
 - ▶ Often has weekly check-in with LD specialists.
 - ▶ Some services may require extra fees.
- ▶ Program: Most comprehensive level.
 - ▶ Considerable support with LD specialists.
 - ▶ Staff who monitor more closely.
 - ▶ Typically extra cost.

Required Documentation

- ▶ Go to college websites
 - ▶ Search for terms like: Disability Services, Access and Accommodations, Special Student Services.
 - ▶ Read about their services and program.
- ▶ 504 in high school (Requirements can vary from one institution to another)
 - ▶ Medical documentation may need updating.
 - ▶ Diagnosis may need updating.
 - ▶ Professional who made diagnosis may need to do additional assessments to verify disability.
 - ▶ Will likely want documentation verifying that services were used in HS.
- ▶ IEP in high school (Requirements can vary from one institution to another)
 - ▶ Some accept the testing the high school did as long as it was within three years.
 - ▶ Some require re-testing with an adult scale IQ test.