

TRANSITION TO COLLEGE: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES/LEARNING CHALLENGES

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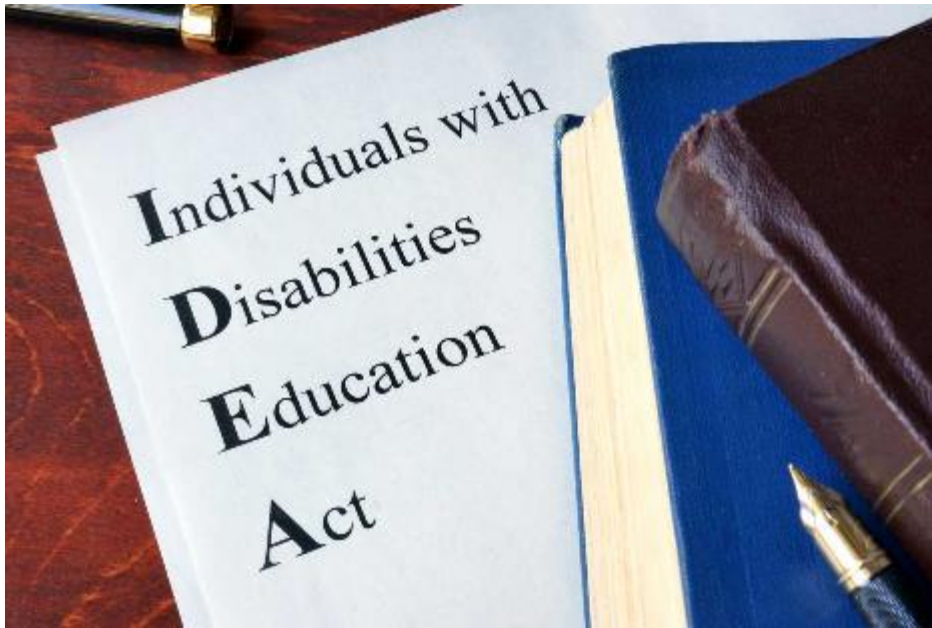
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GRADUATING FROM HIGH SCHOOL, WHAT NEXT?

Goal

- **Not just earning a college degree**
- **Becoming an independent adult**

PREPARING FOR MANY CHANGES AFTER HS



FINDING THE RIGHT COLLEGE...LEVEL OF SUPPORT SERVICES

Level 1

Schools that provide only what is required by law;
“compliance level” services

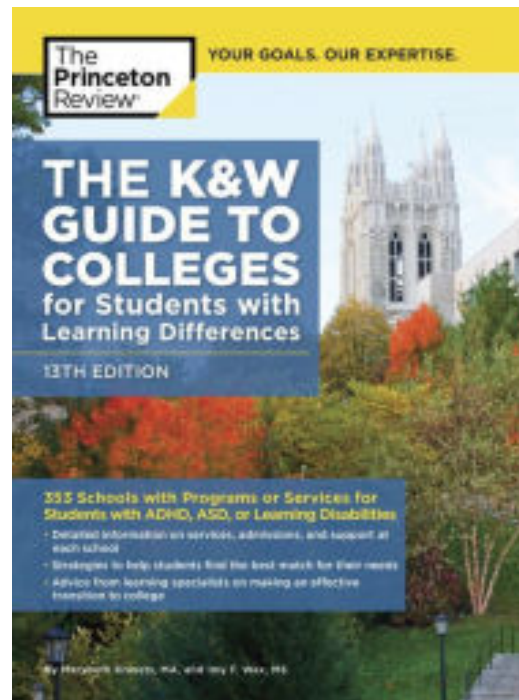
Level II

Offer special classes in study skills and time management or one-on-one time with a learning specialist or academic coach to help student learn study strategies, understand their learning profile, develop self advocacy skills and more... may be free or additional cost

Level III

Expanded fee for service programs in addition to the services in level II such as content area tutoring, specialize academic advising, etc.

THE K&W GUIDE TO COLLEGES FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES, 13TH EDITION (AVAILABLE ON AMAZON)



SPECIALIZED AND ENHANCED COLLEGE PROGRAMS

- Cabrini University
 - Access Plus fee for service program \$800/semester
- www.CollegeAutismSpectrum.com
 - Carnegie Mellon
 - Drexel University
 - Eastern University
 - ...and more!
- <https://www.bestvalueschools.com/rankings/students-with-learning-disabilities/>
 - King's College (PA)
 - Muskingham University (OH)
 - Curry College (MA)
 - Landmark College (VT)
 - Beacon College (FL)
 - ...and more!

ATTENDING COLLEGE....

Talk with your son or daughter about options

Part time Take 1 Or 2 courses	Full time 12+ credits- typically 5 courses
Community College/Technical School Cost savings Transfer credits	Four Year College Costly
Public University	Private College/University
Commuter	Resident

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

	IDEA	ADA
Type of law	Education, Entitlement	Civil Rights statute, eligibility
Responsibility	Parent and school	Student
Ensures	Success	Access
Services	Evaluation, remediation special accommodations	Reasonable accommodations
Focus	Diagnostic label	Level of functional impairment
Disability	One of 13 categories	Impairment in a major life activity

APPLICABLE LAWS: FEDERAL EDUCATION VS CIVIL RIGHTS

High School

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Act)

Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973

IDEA is about SUCCESS

College

ADA Americans with Disabilities Act
Of 1990

Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973

ADA is about ACCESS

WHO IS IN CHARGE NOW AND MAKING DECISIONS?

Middle and High School:

Parents/Guardians
Teachers
Counselors
IEP Team

College:

Student



FERPA

- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parents the right to have access to their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records.
- **When a student turns 18 years old, or enters a postsecondary institution at any age, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parents to the student** (“eligible student”). The FERPA statute is found at 20 U.S.C. § 1232g and the FERPA regulations are found at 34 CFR Part 99.

CAN A STUDENT'S DISABILITY BE USED IN THE DETERMINATION OF COLLEGE ADMISSION?

- **NO- federal laws protect qualified student from being denied admission on the basis of disability**
- **Student must meet the essential requirements for admission**
- **The student may choose to disclose if they feel it may have an impact on the college decision/explain variations in scores**
- **Student is accepted as an otherwise qualified student**

ACCEPTANCE TO COLLEGE

- “Otherwise Qualified” student
 - Must be able to attend and participate in classes and complete course outcomes
 - Academic standards are same for all students- instruction is not modified/academic standards are not lowered
 - Responsible for behavioral standards/codes of conduct established for all students
 - Able to advocate for self with minimal assistance

ONCE ACCEPTED, IS MY STUDENT REQUIRED TO DISCLOSE THEIR DISABILITY?

- **NO-** however if academic accommodations are needed, the student must identify as having a disability. Disclosure of a disability is always voluntary.
- However, the school should be notified to be assigned to accessible facilities for classrooms and accessible housing

JOURNEY TO BECOME AN INDEPENDENT SUCCESSFUL ADULT...

After acceptance to college

- 1. Meet with Disability office
- 2. Provide updated (3-5 years) documentation/testing of your son/daughter disability
 - IEP and 504 plans (IEP's are not used in college however, they may provide useful information for the disability coordinator.
- 3. Participate in an intake session/interview with the disability office to determine reasonable accommodations
- 4. Prepare for the intake meeting by having your son or daughter review their testing and come prepared with questions that he or she may ask

WHO DO DISABILITY OFFICES SERVE?

- Students with Physical, Psychological and Learning disabilities such as:
- Physical impairments, Chronic illness
- Hearing and Visual impairments
- Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia
- Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder ADHD
- Anxiety disorder
- Autism Spectrum
- Traumatic Brain injury
- ...and more

THE MISSION OF COLLEGE DISABILITY/ACCESSIBILITY OFFICES

- committed to providing accommodations and services to students with disabilities
- to ensure equal access for students with disabilities to all campus programs, opportunities and activities including on campus housing/residence halls

- **Why should my student register with the disability office at their college?**
- Registering with the disability office, opens the door for the student to receive/use legally allowed services and accommodations

- **Are there substitution courses for foreign language and math?**
- Maybe- it depends on the college and their requirements. With sufficient documentation, course substitutions may be granted, also dependent on student's major.

DOES YOUR CHILD KNOW ABOUT THEIR DISABILITY, STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES?

- **Be honest and support your child's understanding of their learning challenges**
- **Have the IEP team explain to you the reason why certain accommodations are provided to your student**
- **Ask questions and be informed so that you can prepare your child to be his or her own self advocate in college and in life**

WHAT ARE ACCOMMODATIONS

- Remove any barriers to learning, assessment and access to college programs and campus
- Examples -

Student with Dyslexia

Barrier - printed word Accommodation - Audio text

Student with ADHD and a learning disability

Barrier - easily distracted; slower processing

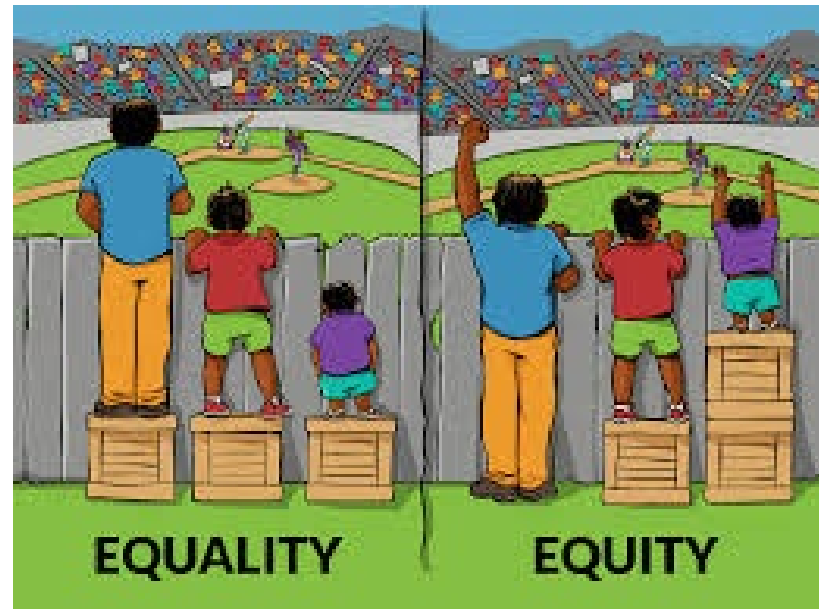
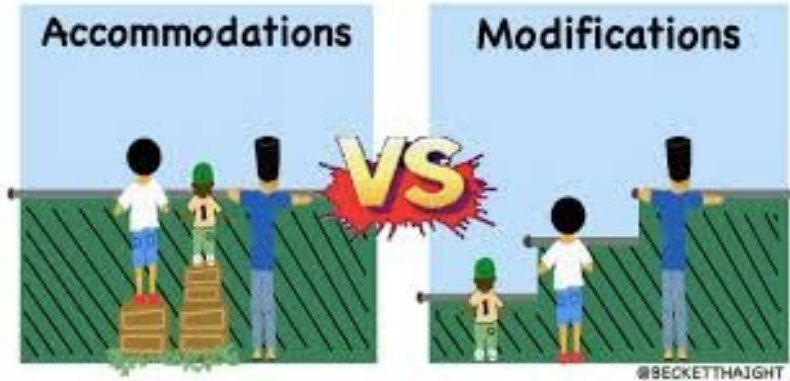
Accommodation - testing in a distraction reduced room

Student with a Visual Impairment/hearing impairment

Barrier - Unable to access course content

Accommodation - Enlarged font handouts/captioned videos

LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD FOR EQUAL ACCESS



HOW WILL PROFESSORS KNOW WHAT ACCOMMODATIONS ARE NEEDED?

Each College or University will create an accommodations letter that the student share with their instructors.

This document may be automatically emailed to each instructor or the student provides a copy on their own.

First step in Self-advocacy!



WHAT CAN STUDENTS AND PARENTS DO NOW FOR THE TRANSITION?

- Step 1: Know the law and research preparing for success in college
- Step 2: Student understands their rights and their responsibilities

DEVELOP SELF ADVOCACY SKILLS

Advocacy =

“Being able to communicate one’s needs and rights”

Communication skills are critical for success in college

Practice with your student how they can speak for themselves

Role play scenarios- practicing eye contact, personal space issues, body language, tone of voice

Develop good email skills- effective written communication skills are essential

- Faculty and staff assume that students are ready to accept responsibility for meeting class requirements
- Help them learn from experience now- make their own decisions and then learn from them if mistakes are made.



PREPAREDNESS FOR COLLEGE

- **Academic Skills**
 - Reading and writing
 - Study habits
 - Prepared for class/ timely completion of assignments
- **Personal skills**
 - Interacting with others in the classroom
 - Social interactions on campus/residence halls
 - Ability to accept feedback, constructive criticism, rejection
 - Peer pressure related to drugs, dating and drinking

INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS

- **Knowing how to independently care for self:**

- Knowing medical needs

- Doing laundry

- Transportation

- Personal hygiene

Executive function skills -

organizing, time management, initiating tasks

Time management

- 12-18 hours/week of structured classroom time

- Knowing how to use free time - turning off electronic devices

- Scheduling class times (morning , afternoon, evening, on-line, hybrid

FACTORS FOR COLLEGE SUCCESS

- (Thierfeld, Brown, 2013)
- Resilience = The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties
- Social Communication/interaction
- Executive Function/Self regulation skills = skills are the mental processes that enable us to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and juggle multiple tasks successfully.
- Academic Ability....not the most important. Very intelligent people struggle with the other success factors

BUILDING RESILIENCE

Adapted from Thierfeld Brown,

Accommodations - over supporting a student can be detrimental, too, by eliminating all risk and chance of failure

Teach problems solving skills- If this happens....then what do you do...

Empower your student to seek assistance and to recognize when changes are needed; “What do you think you can do to solve this problem or achieve a different outcome?”

Instead of asking WHY, ask HOW: let student determine how things are going to work out

If your student makes a mistake, teach them to accept responsibility and learn from the mistake

Help them manage their emotions and “bounce back”

“Practice what you preach” model and show your student how to build resiliency by sharing your own experiences

IS MY CHILD EMOTIONALLY READY FOR COLLEGE?

- [G:\Transition to college\Is Your Child Emotionally Ready for College_ - WSJ.pdf](#)

QUESTIONS ????

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