

## Key differences between IDEA and Section 504

Identification	
IDEA	Section 504
The student must have a disability that falls within one or more specific categories of qualifying conditions: autism, specific learning disability, speech or language impairment, emotional disturbance, traumatic brain injury, visual impairment, hearing impairment, deafness, intellectual disability, deaf blindness, multiple disabilities, orthopedic impairment, and other health impairments.	The student must have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity (e.g., walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, eating, sleeping, standing, lifting, bending, reading, concentrating, thinking and communicating).
The student's disability must adversely affect educational performance, and as a result of the disability, the student requires special education and related services.	The student's disability must prevent equal access to or benefit from the school's programs or services.
Evaluation	
Full comprehensive evaluation, including psychological evaluation. Decision by multi-disciplinary team, including parent.	Evaluation using relevant information from a variety of sources. Decision by a group of knowledgeable persons.
Parent consent required.	Parent consent required.
Annual review of student's IEP. Mandatory re-evaluation every three years.	"Periodic" re-evaluation required, but no prescribed time period.
Independent evaluation at district expense if parents disagree with the district's evaluation.	No provision for independent evaluation at District expense.
Dispute Resolution	
District complaint	District complaint
State complaint	Not available
Federal complaint (Office for Civil Rights)	Federal complaint (Office for Civil Rights)
Due process hearing by state-appointed hearing officer within 45 days.	Due process hearing by District-appointed hearing officer.