

# Transitioning Accommodations to Postsecondary

Setting the stage, delineating the process, and  
clarifying what you can expect.

St. Patrick's Day 2022

# Legal differences.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) covers everyone throughout the lifespan.

## K-12 Laws

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004)

Section 504 (subpart D)

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/reg/ocr/edlite-34cfr104.html>

## Post-Secondary Education Laws

Section 504, (subpart E)

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/reg/ocr/edlite-34cfr104.htm>

- IDEA doesn't apply to colleges= **IEP "expires" upon graduation**
- Section 504, subpart D does not apply to colleges= **your 504 plan is not enforceable, but if you have a disability you are still covered by 504 subpart E**

# What does this mean for my student?

- Whose responsibility?
  - Disclosure
  - Application/Registration.
  - Parent role
- Documentation/Evaluation. College ask/ HS send
- Purpose. Support vs. Access
- Selecting accommodations and measuring effectiveness.
  - Meetings?
  - Review/Feedback?
- Plans vs Letters of Accommodation
- Accommodations
  - Commonly approved requests
  - Commonly unapproved requests
  - No universal model

## Preparation:

Self-determination and self-advocacy skills are 2 key determinants of readiness for college.

Links to parent resources-

Self Advocacy Overview:

[-https://www.understood.org/articles/en/6-tips-for-helping-your-high-schooler-learn-to-self-advocate](https://www.understood.org/articles/en/6-tips-for-helping-your-high-schooler-learn-to-self-advocate)

Tools, Tip, and Resources:

<https://www.parentcenterhub.org/priority-selfadvocacy/#resources>

[Self determination survey for students and families](#)

# Entitled\* vs. Eligible\*\*

IDEA in High School= **Entitled**

504 in HS and College/University= **Eligible**

Colleges and Universities will not know you have a disability unless you tell them you do.

**If is the student's responsibility to **prove eligibility and need.****

- **When looking, research, call, email, and ask questions! (Student/not parent)**
- **Register as soon as you accept, but know there is no deadline. You can register anytime if things change.**
- **Ensure you have documentation according to the guidelines.**
- **Understand your disability, limitations, and needed accommodations.**
- **Interview often required- practice being able to articulate orally what's happening with you and what you need.**
  - **[Accommodations request prep form](#)**

# Process Details

**When to register?** As soon as you have an active student ID number

**Who to contact to start the process?** Office of Disability Services/ Accessibility Services.

**How do I register?** Each school has the right to set their own process/ Research

**What will I need to have to register?** Documentation (guidelines) and firm understanding of your needs, the accommodations you will need, and why.

**What can I expect?** A registration process, you need to produce documentation (new evaluation may be needed if your's doesn't meet guidelines), and an interview or meeting. It may take a month or more, so start early. If approved you will get a letter of accommodation.

**How often do I need to reapply?** Most schools do not ask that you re-register each term/year, but you might need to reapply for specific accommodations to receive letters for your new professors.

# Key Things to Remember

- They will NOT come find you and they are not allowed to ask.
- Documentation needs to be as thorough as possible
- Recent
- If additional testing is needed, student \$ (usually)
- Usually your IEP or 504 plan is not enough to determine disability, but does provide solid documentation regarding accommodations that have been used and the effectiveness of those accommodations. HS will provide you will copies of any documentation we have in the system before graduation.
  - Keep it in a safe place. After 18 we can not release more to your parents without your signature.

# Essential Components of Effective Documentation

- Signed, dated and typed letter on professional stationery from a **certifying professional** such as a medical doctor, psychologist or neurologist who has credentials for diagnosing a disability.
- Clearly stated diagnosis with DSM
- Description of **assessment** and relevant history.
- Description of **functional limitations or educational impact.**
- **Current enough** documentation to determine present impact and validate the accommodation request.
- **Recommendations** for accommodations, including what has been helpful in the past (your 504 plan or IEP are great resources for this bullet)
- Some schools *may* require **a full evaluation** for psychological or emotional disabilities and most PCP do not do these.

# Plans Vs. Letters

**I.D.E.A.: FAPE, PROGRESS**

**Section 504, subpart D: FAPE, ACCESS**

**ADA and section 504 subpart E: ACCESS**

**IEP: context, data, goals, progress, modifications, and supports**

**504 Plan= context, accommodations, support**

**LOA= approved accommodation**



# Commonly Approved Academic Accommodations

- **Exams: extended time (1.5/2), distraction-reduced location, breaks during exams, use of a reader, use of speech to text software, alternative answer format, ability to reschedule exams *IF* more than one per day.**
- **Note Taking: Access to a peer's notes, recording, assistive technology**
- **AFT: Alternative Formatted Text or closed captioning**
- **ASL Interpreting: Certified ASL Interpreters in academic or affiliated setting**
- **Assistive technology in the classroom\*, as needed**
- **possibly course substitutions (need a language waiver? Call and ask)**
- **Priority registration or reduced course load with full time status**

\*Colleges are **not required** to provide the most advanced AT. Colleges are **not required** to provide AT for personal use outside of class.

# Non Academic Accommodations

**Housing: location, single, quiet, climate**

**Mobility: location, transition time, ramps, shoveling**

**Dietary: labels, access to required foods, time**

**Service animals or emotional support animals.**

- Register and **apply asap** upon acceptance
- Research, **ask**, and know your rights
- **NEVER assume. ALWAYS ask.** Define your concern and solution in the context of your disability and access

# Common HS accommodations that are uncommon in college

- **Extended time on assignments**/alternative due dates (often allowed in acute emergencies and occasionally as an accommodation)
- **Personal** assistance- support in class/ tutoring/ check-ins/ reminders/ case management/organizational support
  - Campus resources available for all students
- **Modified** formats or **reduced** assignments or assessments
- Assessment **retakes**/Changes in assessment schedule
- Assignment forgiveness (discretion of professor)
- **Progress monitoring** or **parental support**

# How Can Parents and Families Support Transition

- Hold and communicate high expectations for your student.
- Create opportunities to practice independence skills in all settings. Provide visual steps, checklists, or reminders, but let the student do the task.
- Allow students to make decisions and practice self-determination. Be a sounding board before the decision and help them to process the results of those decisions.
- Create opportunities for self-advocacy by having your student lead the 504 or IEP meetings by the end of HS. Always ask what do you think and why?
- Practice these conversations repeatedly in the safety of your home and give your student a notecard or sentence stems to scaffold their role.
- Make sure your student is leading the college search process and is the one initiating communication with the school.

[Open letter to parents](#)

[FERPA in college](#)

# Responsibilities after you have your Letter of Accommodation (LOA)

1. Delivering the approved accommodation letter to each professor, each semester- electronically or in person
2. Requesting the accommodation when it is needed from your professor or the DS depending on the need/frequency
3. Communicating any changes or developments as related to your disability
4. Working closely and proactively with the office of DS if you have any concerns about or problems with your accommodations.
  - A little bit of sugar can go a long way

Respectful and effective communication are the keys to success: articulate your needs, know what works for you, be reasonable and respectful, and expect the same in return.

# What if I disagree with the decision of the DSO

- All schools have someone in charge of overseeing accommodations and compliance with ADA
- The school must also have grievance procedures- *Research and Ask*
- If you are dissatisfied with the process or outcome you may file a complaint with the OCR
  - <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>
- Always go to the source to find out your rights
  - <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/auxaids.html>

All that said, always remember to communicate why the content you seek is important to you and why you need the accommodation to access the content

Since college accommodations are all about access, grades should not be brought into your argument (the pivot point that differentiate HS-Post Secondary). Frame your concern to highlight how and why your access is limited and since professors are humans too, adding a bit of sugar articulating why their content is important to you never hurts.

# Summary

- **Responsibility** shifts to the student. The family becomes your support system, no longer your manager.
- Your HS plan is a great source of information and most schools will use it as a jump off point, but it's legal authority stops at graduation.

## Research documentation requirements.

- Documentation must clearly state a disability and demonstrate why you need any accommodation you seek- **Review your documentation and practice talking about it.**
- **Many accommodations are possible, some are not.**
- Always ask for anything you think you really need. You ask, not parents!
- You must consistently be your best advocate.
- Communication is key, seek and use all the resources available on campus

# Resources to know

## Campus Disability Resource Database

Here you can find disability-related information from degree-granting colleges and universities across the United States.

<https://www.cedardatabase.org/>

## AHEAD- Association on High Education and Disability

<https://www.ahead.org/home>

## National Center for College Students with Disabilities- Crisis resources

<https://www.nccsdclearinghouse.org/crisis-resources.html>



# Additional studies and information

## Legal Understanding

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/reg/ocr/edlite-34cfr104.html>

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html#:~:text=To%20be%20protected%20under%20Section,as%20having%20such%20an%20impairment.>

## College Readiness

<https://ldadvisory.com/college-readiness>

## Process of Seeking Accommodations

<https://www.bestcolleges.com/blog/how-to-access-college-disability-services/>

<https://ldadvisory.com/accommodation-advice-college/>

## Documentation

<https://ldadvisory.com/myths-about-learning-disabilities-adhd-and-documentation-for-college-accommodations/>

<https://ldadvisory.com/adhd-may-need-testing/>