



Parent Booklet

ACHIEVING COLLEGE TRANSITIONS NOW

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Achieving College Transitions Now

ACT Now

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PURPOSE

The purpose of the booklet is to provide background knowledge on the differences between the K-12 educational system and the post-secondary educational system as it pertains to students with disabilities.

This booklet provides information on:

- The laws that govern K-12 and post-secondary institutions — ADA, Section 504, FERPA
- The differences between IDEA 2004, ADA, and Section 504 as they pertain to an academic setting
- Procedures for accessing disability services at the post-secondary level
- Common elements for documentation of disability
- Reasonable and appropriate accommodations at the post-secondary level
- The responsibilities of students for accessing services at the post-secondary level
- Essential student skills for successfully transitioning to a post-secondary institution
- Changes in parent roles and responsibilities when a student transitions to post-secondary education
- Realities of the post-secondary experience as compared to the high school experience

GIVE YOURSELF A HAND

Congratulations!

You and your child are beginning a new chapter in your lives. Think of this as a ceremonial groundbreaking for building a transition bridge from high school to post-secondary education.

As a parent, you are instrumental in guiding your child and his or her decisions. You know your child best and have advocated for him or her throughout his or her school career. Your role was not only active, but visible in the school system.

As your child continues through the remaining years of high school and prepares for post-secondary education, your roles and responsibilities will evolve and change.

Let's begin with an institution's legal obligations from an educational perspective. The following information is designed as an overview, not a legal analysis or opinion.



From High School ...

Services were provided under the *IDEA 2004*. IDEA 2004 is the primary law governing services to students with disabilities at the K-12 level. The laws which cover services for students with disabilities in high school and post-secondary education are different.

A key word for a student's rights under IDEA 2004 is "ENTITLEMENT." The student is entitled to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). As a student with a disability, an Individualized Education Plan is developed by the school in conjunction with the parents which summarizes accommodations and program modifications that will enhance and facilitate the student's success.

... to Post-Secondary Education

In contrast, under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the key word for the post-secondary system is "ELIGIBILITY." A student becomes eligible to attend by meeting admission standards for entry to the post-secondary institution. The student must demonstrate eligibility for reasonable accommodations based upon disability. At the post-secondary level, the laws guarantee "ACCESS;" there is no guarantee of success.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL AND POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

In High School, the SCHOOL DISTRICT:

- **Evaluates** the student
- **Transports** the student to school
- **Develops** the IEP/504 Plan for the student
- **Measures** the academic progress of the student
- **Monitors** the effectiveness of the agreed-upon services and programs for the student
- **Provides** services and accommodations at no cost to the student

In Post-Secondary Education, the INSTITUTION:

- **Determines** the student's eligibility for accommodations
- **Provides** reasonable and appropriate accommodations at no cost to the student

In Post-Secondary Education, the STUDENT:

- **Self-identifies** to the Office of Disability Services
- **Submits** documentation of disability
- **Requests** accommodations
- **Pays** for additional evaluations and/or services of a personal nature
- **Transports** self to class
- **Monitors** the effectiveness of his or her accommodations
- **Follows** the institution's academic progress and code of conduct policies



THE LAWS

The laws which cover services for students with disabilities in high school and post-secondary education are different. IDEA 2004 is the primary law governing services to students with disabilities at the K-12 level.

The Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA, governs services to students with disabilities at the post-secondary level.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects students at both the K-12 and post-secondary levels.

The key words at the K-12 level are "ENTITLEMENT" and "SUCCESS." And at the post-secondary level, the key words are "ELIGIBILITY" and "ACCESS."

THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (ADA)

Title II of the ADA prohibits state and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability. Titles II and III are enforced in public and private colleges, universities, graduate and professional schools. Guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications. Prohibits discrimination based on disability in public entities.

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division

The ADA is primarily an anti-discrimination act enforced by the Office for Civil Rights. This law is designed to provide equal access for students with disabilities to education; it does not guarantee academic success or admission to any institution for that student.

Under the ADA, a "person with a disability" is any person who:

1. Has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities, including eating, sleeping, walking, working and learning
2. Has a record of such an impairment
3. Is regarded as having such an impairment

ADA extends the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of disability established by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.



SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

Section 504 also prohibits discrimination of a student with a disability from accessing an education.

No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States ... shall, solely by reason of her or his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance ...

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights

Under Section 504, there are two Subparts that impact a student with a disability at the post-secondary level. Subpart A defines a “handicapped” person and Subpart E defines what “otherwise qualified” represents in post-secondary education. To receive academic accommodations in post-secondary education, a student must meet the criteria in Subparts A and E. Congress has amended and replaced the term “handicap” with “disability;” both terms have the same meaning. This booklet will use the term “disability.”

Subpart A applies to both K-12 and post-secondary education in defining a “disabled person” as having:

1. A physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, speaking, caring for one’s self, working, performing manual tasks, and learning
2. A record ... or is regarded as having such an impairment

An example may be a student whose leg has been amputated. That student may be considered a disabled person since their impairment limits the major life activity of walking.

The term “otherwise qualified disabled person” is defined differently in K-12 and post-secondary education in Subparts D and E.

Under **Subpart D**, to be “otherwise qualified” in K-12 a qualified disabled person is:

1. Of any age during which nondisabled persons are provided such services
2. Of any age during which it is mandatory under state law to provide such services to disabled persons
3. To whom a state is required to provide free appropriate public education under Section 612 of the Education of the Handicapped Act

Thus, a student is considered an “otherwise qualified disabled person,” simply by meeting the age requirement and being identified as a student with a disability.

Under **Subpart E**, to be “otherwise qualified” in post-secondary education, a qualified disabled person is:

1. A person with a disability who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission to, or participation in, the college’s education or activity

A student with disabilities is considered to be “otherwise qualified” when they meet the academic and technical standards for admission and participation at that post-secondary institution.



“OTHERWISE QUALIFIED”

To be considered “otherwise qualified” at the post-secondary level, it is important to consider three areas:

Admission to the institution

Every institution has specific admission procedures and requirements. Admission requirements may include: SAT/ACT scores, GPA, class rank, and required high school courses.

Acceptance into a specific program or course of study

Although a student is accepted into a post-secondary institution, admission to a specific program within that institution is not guaranteed. To be considered “otherwise qualified,” a student may need to meet additional selective criteria.

Continuation and completion of a specific course of study

To be considered “otherwise qualified” to continue in a specific course of study, a student may need to maintain a certain overall GPA as well as achieve certain minimum grades in all major courses.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1976

Another important piece of legislation relevant to students at the post-secondary level is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, also known as FERPA.

FERPA, also known as the Buckley Amendment, guarantees the privacy of a student’s educational records. When a student enters a post-secondary institution, the access rights to educational records previously held by parents/guardians are now transferred to the student. Educational records will not be shared with a third party, including parents, without the student’s written permission. Final grades are only released to the student.

Parents may feel that because they pay tuition or claim the student as a dependent for tax purposes, they are entitled to such information. A post-secondary institution may have a policy that allows parents to access some educational records if they provide proof that their student is still claimed as a dependent. That being said, FERPA DOES NOT require post-secondary institutions to devise a policy that will grant such parental access.

The post-secondary institutions may disclose, without consent, certain directory information such as the student’s name, address, telephone number, birth date, location of birth, dates of attendance, and class standing (freshman).

Documentation of disability and services being provided to a student at that post-secondary institution cannot be accessed without that student’s written permission.

A student’s record of disability is not noted on any official post-secondary document, including transcripts.

Student grades, progress in courses, and attendance are also protected by FERPA. This means college staff will not discuss this information with parents or others without student’s written permission. This is a big change for the parents who have been very involved in their student’s day-to-day educational experiences.



WHAT DO THESE CHANGES MEAN TO YOU?

Access:

Post-secondary institutions are prohibited from discriminating against a person because of a disability. They must provide ACCESS to the education to otherwise qualified individuals.

Eligibility:

Students must meet requirements to be eligible for reasonable accommodations at the post-secondary level. The eligibility requirements may be different from those in the K-12 system.

Otherwise Qualified:

The term “otherwise qualified” means different things at the K-12 and post-secondary levels. In high school, your child may be qualified for services just by being within the age range and having a disability. However, in post-secondary institutions, your child must meet the admissions standards to an institution as well as the standards for specific programs within an institution.

FERPA:

FERPA means that post-secondary institutions cannot release grades or academic records to parents without the student’s permission. College staff will not discuss this information with parents or others without student’s written permission.

ACCESSING DISABILITY SERVICES

In high school, the student may have a case manager, or someone designated to arrange his or her transition plans and accommodations. The new contact point at the post-secondary level usually is the Office of Disability Services.

In order to access reasonable and appropriate accommodations at a post-secondary institution, students must **initiate** contact and **self-identify** directly to the Disability Services Office.

Each institution has a department or staff responsible for students with disabilities. It will be listed in each institution’s catalog and on its Web site. Students must follow the specific institution’s procedures to register with Disability Services.



COMMON PROCEDURES FOR ACCESSING DISABILITY SERVICES

Specific steps for accessing services may include:

- Complete application to register with Disability Services. This is institution specific and is separate from the admission application.
- Submit documentation of disability.
- Schedule a personal interview, if required. During this interview, students may be asked to discuss:
 - their disabilities
 - learning strengths and weaknesses
 - history of special education services, if appropriate
 - the impact of their disabilities on the academic environment
 - accommodations previously used and accommodations they may be requesting at the post-secondary institution

DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY

Think of documentation as the student's "ticket" to receive academic accommodations at a post-secondary institution. A student may be admitted to an institution, attend that institution, go to classes, participate in extracurricular activities, eat in the dining halls and stay in the residence halls. BUT the student may not receive any accommodations without submitting appropriate documentation to that institution's Office of Disability Services.

The documentation of disability is the verification that your student's disability currently affects a major life activity, such as learning. It is the proof necessary to be eligible to receive accommodations at the post-secondary level.

Legislation allows each institution to identify specific guidelines and requirements for documentation of disability. As a result, requirements for documentation vary from institution to institution. Students need to become familiar with the specific documentation requirements at the institutions they are interested in.

Although each college has the right to set documentation guidelines, there are common elements of documentation across institutions.



DOCUMENTATION: COMMON ELEMENTS

Clearly stated diagnosis of disability:

The documentation must have a clearly stated diagnosis of disability. In other words, the disability must be clearly stated in the report (i.e. learning disability, ADHD). In some instances, parents try to avoid having their child “labeled” by insisting that the child’s disability not be named in the report. This would make the report unacceptable at the post-secondary institution.

Relevant testing information:

The documentation should note the diagnostic instruments utilized in the testing. The diagnostic instruments used must be acceptable and appropriate for determining that individual student’s disability. Subtest scores as well as total scores should be included.

Interpretive summary:

The results of the diagnostic tests, interviews and observations should be interpreted, analyzed and summarized.

Documentation must be CURRENT:

Documentation must verify that the disability currently impacts a student in an educational setting based upon his or her present or “current” level of functioning. This presents problems for some students, especially those with learning disabilities, whose diagnostic testing may have been completed in elementary school. Even though the student may have a valid IEP, his or her documentation is not considered current if the last psycho-educational evaluation was completed more than three years ago.

It must be understood that neither school districts nor post-secondary institutions are required to test students to meet post-secondary documentation requirements. As a result, the burden to submit current documentation rests with the student. The student may need to secure a private evaluation at his or her own expense.

Accommodations in the post-secondary setting:

Reports must indicate a need for accommodations in an academic environment. Evaluator’s recommendations for accommodations can be helpful in determining reasonable accommodations at the post-secondary level; however these recommendations are considered suggestions. There is no guarantee that these recommendations will be considered reasonable and appropriate.

The documentation reports that are submitted to Disability Services must be:

- On the **letterhead** of the district or professional who completed the evaluation.
- **Typed** — not handwritten.
- **Signed** by the individual who completed the evaluation. An unsigned report may not be accepted by the post-secondary institution.
- **Dated** indicating when the evaluation was completed. This date will be used to determine whether the documentation meets the requirement for being CURRENT.
- Completed by the **appropriate professional**. It is essential that a qualified professional completes the evaluation.



QUALIFIED PROFESSIONALS

Acceptable documentation of a disability requires that an appropriate professional completes the evaluation that diagnoses a disability. Under each post-secondary institution's requirements for documentation of a specific disability, there will usually be information on accepted professionals to diagnose that disability. Following is a short, nonexhaustive list of qualified professionals who diagnose specific disabilities.

<i>ADHD</i>	Licensed psychologist, neurologist, psychiatrist, physician*
<i>Asperger's Syndrome</i>	Neuropsychologist, licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, physician*
<i>Blind/Low vision</i>	Ophthalmologist, optometrist, physician*
<i>Head Injury/Traumatic Brain Injury</i>	Neurologist, rehabilitation specialist, psychiatrist, physician*
<i>Hearing Impairment/Deaf</i>	Otologist, audiologist, physician*
<i>Learning Disability</i>	Licensed or school psychologist
<i>Physical Disability</i>	Physician*
<i>Psychological/Psychiatric Disability</i>	Licensed psychologist, psychiatrist, physician*

* relevantly trained physician

DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

Psycho-educational testing is comprised of a number of tests used in an evaluation to determine the presence of certain types of disabilities. This testing is often used in the identification of a learning disability and may also be required as part of an evaluation for ADHD and other neurological disorders to determine functional limitations in an academic setting. Components of psycho-educational testing include a measure of a student's aptitude and measures of achievement.

Aptitude is a measure of cognitive functioning or intelligence and **achievement** is a measure of performance in academic areas such as reading, mathematics, and/or written language.

There are several tests that may be used as part of an evaluation that would most likely be accepted by a post-secondary institution as psycho-educational testing. These tests include:

Aptitude Instruments

- Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS)
- Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale
- Woodcock-Johnson III: Tests of Cognitive Ability

Achievement Instruments

- Wechsler Individual Achievement Test
- Woodcock-Johnson III: Tests of Achievement

Some instruments may NOT be considered acceptable measures by a post-secondary institution. In general, abbreviated versions of tests or tests designed for use as screening instruments are usually not considered appropriate measures.

Some of these include:

- Slosson Intelligence Test (Slosson)
- Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (K-BIT)
- Wechsler Abbreviated Scale of Intelligence (WASI)
- Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)

It is suggested that the student check with the specific institution for information about accepted measures.

There are also several diagnostic tools which may be recommended as part of the documentation requirements.



DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders:

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) provides a classification of mental disorders and is used by psychiatrists and psychologists to diagnosis individuals. This diagnosis and the corresponding code from the DSM may be required for students with ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome and other psychiatric disorders.

Medical Evaluations:

A medical evaluation, including a medical diagnosis, will be required for disabilities which have a medical basis. These include visual and hearing impairments, neurological disorders, traumatic brain injury, and physical/systemic disorders such as cerebral palsy, seizure disorders and sickle cell anemia.

Specialized Objective Measures Specific to Disability:

There are several additional measures which are specific to the disability being diagnosed. For example, objective measures of attention and memory may be required for the diagnosis of ADHD. These tests may include Conners Continuous Performance Task (CPT), or Test of Variables of Attention (TOVA).

Self Reports, Observations and Clinical Interviews:

Self reports, observations and clinical interviews may also be necessary as part of an evaluation for a diagnosis of a psychological condition.

In the K-12 system, students with varied disabilities are sometimes classified as "otherwise health impaired." At the post-secondary level, however, documentation will be required of their specific disability.

INFORMATION – NOT "DOCUMENTATION"

There are also several documents which will not be accepted as documentation of disability at a post-secondary institution. These include:

- IEP
- 504 plan
- State mandated assessments
- Medical information or diagnosis written on a prescription pad
- Diagnosis provided by someone other than the appropriate professional — it is critical that the individual who has completed the evaluation and diagnosis be someone who is qualified to render the diagnosis.
- Summary of Performance — an addition to IDEA 2004 which requires school districts to provide for the student a summary of the student's academic achievement and functional performance, as well as recommendations on how to assist the student in meeting his or her post-secondary goals.

While these documents may provide additional information regarding the student's disability and may be welcomed as supplemental information, they are not considered adequate documentation of disability.



ACT NOW ON DOCUMENTATION: TIMELY TIPS

Now that you have a better understanding of the documentation requirements for post-secondary institutions, you will need to gather the paperwork you already have and consider whether your student needs an updated documentation. It may be necessary to ask the school to provide copies of your student's most recent evaluation reports and other relevant information. If documentation is not current, you may request that the school district complete an evaluation or have the evaluation completed privately at your expense. It is recommended you check with your health insurance carrier to determine if you have coverage for private evaluations.

It is important to remember that documentation of disability must be submitted to the Office of Disability Services. Documentation should not be attached to the standard admissions application. It is important to understand that there is no obligation on the part of the institution to forward those documents to Disability Services. It is recommended students contact the Office of Disability Services directly and follow their procedures for submitting documentation.

Finally, remember that the student is responsible for providing appropriate and current documentation.

REASONABLE AND APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATIONS

Eligible students with disabilities must request accommodations at the post-secondary institution. This is different from the K-12 system, where accommodations are developed as part of the IEP process and automatically provided by the school district.

In post-secondary education, accommodations must be deemed reasonable and appropriate.

Reasonable accommodations are designed to level the playing field for students with disabilities by allowing them to circumnavigate the effects of a disability in an academic environment. The accommodations are designed to provide equal access to that particular institution's courses, programs or activities. Use of accommodations does not guarantee success.

Accommodations are provided at the post-secondary level to qualified students with disabilities and may be defined as a change in the physical environment or in how the content was accessed or evaluated. For example:

- An accommodation for accessing content may be providing an audio version of a text.
- An accommodation for the evaluation of course content may be extended test time.

Reasonable accommodations are NOT designed to provide an unfair advantage over any other student. They are not designed to change the standards of learning, essential functions of a course, or to lower the expectations of performance of students with disabilities. They do not guarantee success. In fact, the laws state that the accommodation services "are not required to produce the identical result or the level of achievement for disabled and nondisabled persons."

Modifications are not typically granted in post-secondary education. They may be defined as changes in the course content to be learned or evaluated. Examples of modifications include adaptive curriculum, cueing on tests and test word banks.



Reasonable and Appropriate Accommodations Include:

- Enlarged print
- Books on alternate format (on tape, digital)
- Notetaker — volunteer or paid
- Captionist
- Scribe
- Sign Language Interpreter
- Taping of lectures
- Seating access for wheelchair user
- Test accommodations: extended time, reader, scribe, distraction-limiting environment
- Assistive technology: screen readers, dictation software, etc.
- Housing accommodations: wheelchair-accessible room, visual fire alarm

Reasonable Accommodations Do Not include:

In contrast, the following modifications are not commonly considered reasonable and appropriate accommodations at the post-secondary level:

- Word banks for tests
- Modified content tests
- Unlimited time on tests
- Retesting
- Altered course standards
- Course waivers – course waivers are very rare; however, course substitutions may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- Guaranteed housing because of disability
- College-provided attendant care or aides. If a personal attendant is used, it is the student's responsibility to contract with and pay for those services.
- Waiver of college's Code of Conduct — If a student with a disability exhibits behavior that is in violation of the post-secondary institution's student Code of Conduct, or interferes with another student's educational experience, the student may be subjected to any disciplinary actions deemed appropriate. Regardless of disability, all students are expected to abide by the institution's Code of Conduct.

ACT NOW ON ACCOMMODATIONS: TIMELY TIPS

Accommodations

- Must be requested by the student
- Must be based upon the functional limitations as noted in the documentation of disability
- Are determined on a case-by-case basis
- Are not retroactive
- Are not guarantees of equal outcomes for students
- May be offered as specifically requested or effective alternatives may be provided

Accommodations your child received in high school may not be considered reasonable and appropriate in post-secondary education. It is recommended you have a discussion with your student and IEP team about reasonable accommodations your student might need in college and make changes as necessary to best prepare your child for transitioning to a post-secondary educational experience.



FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO POST-SECONDARY: CHANGING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Your child will have new responsibilities when he or she leaves high school and begins his or her post-secondary education. It is essential for parents to understand this and prepare their student for their new role. Your current role as an advocate for your child will also change to one of guide and resource.

Who's Responsible

In high school, the responsibility to evaluate and pay for an evaluation, develop a plan, provide services, and measure the success of those services and programs fell to the local public school district.

At the post-secondary level, the responsibility shifts from the local school district to the student. For example, the student will be responsible for the cost of his or her evaluation as well as the cost of his or her education. A student's IEP is no longer valid at the post-secondary level. If a student is eligible for academic accommodations at the post-secondary level, that institution will provide the reasonable and appropriate accommodations at no cost to the student. However, the student will be responsible for judging the effectiveness of their reasonable accommodations.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE

	High School	Post secondary
<i>Evaluation of disability</i>	School District	Student
<i>Cost of evaluation</i>	School District	Student
<i>IEP/504 plans</i>	School District	Not valid
<i>Cost of education</i>	School District	Student
<i>Provide accommodations</i>	School District	Institution
<i>Cost of accommodations</i>	School District	Institution
<i>Judge effectiveness of accommodations</i>	School District	Student

This requires that we all start changing the way we think. You, as the parent, need to be aware of this change so that you can prepare your child for this transition.



EXPECTATIONS AND REALITIES

Change is inevitable for your child as he or she transitions to post-secondary education. Let's take a look at some of the differences between a high school and post-secondary experience.

Classes

In high school, your child, for the most part, is on a standard schedule for the entire school day and school week. The school year is approximately 180 days. At the post-secondary level, a student has a variable class schedule. Classes may meet at different times on different days and may only meet three days a week. The school year is typically divided into two semesters, usually 15 weeks per semester.

In high school, class attendance is required. At the post-secondary level, attendance policies vary. Some professors will follow the institution's attendance policy, and your child may be withdrawn from a class due to non-attendance.

Class sizes may be different at the high school and post-secondary level. In high school, classes generally have no more than 30 students, while in college, classes may have well over 100 students.

Instructors

The change in teaching styles is one of the more challenging aspects for students transitioning to a post-secondary experience. In high school, your child was taught by professionals trained in teaching methodologies. However, at the post-secondary level, professors are considered "experts" in their field, but are often not trained as teachers. Professors will often lecture for the entire class and include information not covered in the textbook. It may be necessary for your child to take notes from the lecture without the benefit of having those notes written on the board.

Studying

The expectation for independent work by the student outside of the classroom setting increases from what they may have experienced in high school. Students will be expected to study, review class notes, complete homework, and conduct research independently. A general rule of thumb is that a student will need to do two to three hours of work outside of class each week for every hour they spend in class.

Testing

Testing policies may also be different at the post-secondary level. Exams are generally given only a few times a semester and cover large amounts of material.

In high school, teachers may schedule tests so they do not conflict with a student's other classes or activities. This will not be the case at a post-secondary institution.

Grades

There may be fewer graded assignments in a post-secondary course. In addition, extra-credit options are generally not available. Although students may be able to graduate from high school with an overall grade of D, at the post-secondary level, students must meet program and graduation requirements in order to earn their degree. Typically this means that a student must achieve an overall 2.0 or C average to graduate.



Independence

One of the biggest changes for your child will be the increased independence a post-secondary experience allows. Students may have been accustomed to having their progress monitored in high school by their teachers and parents. Report cards were distributed four times a year, with the opportunity for parent/teacher conferences. At the post-secondary level, students must monitor their own academic progress and determine if they need to seek academic support. They must take the initiative to contact a professor to discuss their performance in the course. Due to FERPA, professors will not speak to parents regarding their child's progress.

Students must also independently manage their medications and health needs.

ACT NOW ON EXPECTATIONS AND REALITIES: TIMELY TIPS

There are some things you can do now to increase the likelihood of your child's successful transition.

- Consider your student's strengths and needs when determining their number of classes, class size and class schedule.
- Encourage your student to develop note-taking strategies to prepare for college lectures.
- Encourage your student to engage in effective regular study strategies.
- Provide them with opportunities to develop test-taking strategies using college-based reasonable accommodations. It will be important to determine what accommodations your child is currently receiving and discuss with the IEP team how those accommodations might be adjusted to more closely resemble those that would be available at a post-secondary institution.
- Establish a goal of maintaining a grade of C or better in all high school classes.
- Provide opportunities for students to monitor their academic progress and manage their time and personal needs.



SELF KNOWLEDGE AND SELF ADVOCACY

Two essential skills that will facilitate a successful transition are self knowledge and self advocacy. Self knowledge is how well students know themselves, their disabilities, and their learning strengths and challenges. Self advocacy is the ability to describe their learning needs and request accommodations to meet those needs.

Self Knowledge: What Your Student Needs to Know

The student should have the self knowledge to answer these questions:

- What is my disability?
- When was it diagnosed?
- What are my academic strengths and challenges?
- What strategies do I use to learn?
- What academic accommodations have I used?

Many of these questions will be asked of your child at a Disability Services interview.

Self Advocacy: What Your Student Needs to Do

Self advocacy skills are essential for students since they will be required to do several things as they transition to a post-secondary setting. They must:

- Self-identify to Office of Disability Services
- Submit appropriate documentation of disability
- Request reasonable accommodations
- Utilize accommodations
- Monitor effectiveness of accommodations

ACT NOW ON SELF KNOWLEDGE AND SELF ADVOCACY: TIMELY TIPS

To facilitate self knowledge and self advocacy, parents can:

- Frankly identify and discuss the student's disability
- Facilitate awareness of academic strengths and weaknesses
- Provide opportunities for students to practice self advocacy by requesting accommodations from their teachers
- Require student to participate in transition planning and IEP meeting



ACT NOW TO PREPARE

In closing, here are some recommendations to prepare for this transition:

- **P**lan for your student to become an active member of the IEP team
- **R**ealize that your student will be responsible for making his or her own decisions shortly
- **E**ncourage your student to discuss his or her disability and learning needs
- **P**romote your student's self-advocacy skills
- **A**ssist your student in understanding the realities of college
- **R**esearch post-secondary institutions with your student
- **E**njoy this time of transition

REFERENCES

- Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.
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