

The Transition to College for Students with Disabilities

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Disability Disclosure During the Application Process

- College admission applications cannot include questions about disability
- Application essay should focus on areas such as academic strengths, college prep programs, unique experiences that highlight motivation or maturity
- Disclosure of disability is required at college only after the student is accepted and seeking accommodations

Insufficient Information About the Transition Process

- Students and parents often realize the difference between high school and college only when the level of service provision drops off and/or is not automatically extended

Resources: U.S. Dept of Education

‘Dear Parent’ Letter

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/parent-20070316.html>

‘Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities’

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

Absence of Links Between School Systems, Schools, and Service Providers

- Colleges are not legally obligated to assist students with disabilities in making the transition from high school
- Many high schools and colleges don't have designated intermediaries to establish the relationship and communication that would enhance the transition process
- Role of Department of Rehabilitation and private Education Consultants

Understanding the Demands of College

- Fewer contacts with instructors
- Expectations of higher levels of academic capability
- Fewer tests covering larger amount of material
- Changes in the support systems that students previously had in high school
- Higher expectations to achieve independently
- Changes in social and independent living demands
- In general, more stringent graduation requirements

High School versus College

- Difference in Laws
- Parental Support
- Understanding Individual Disability
- Developmental Growth
- Management Skills
- Self-Advocacy

How the Laws are Different

- Individuals With Disabilities in Education Act
- The Americans With Disabilities Act Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
 - IDEA is an Education Entitlement Law- focus is on success
 - ADA is a Civil Rights Law- focus is on equal access

High School and IDEA

- Students Entitled to an Education Until Age 21 or Graduation
- Parents Have Rights and May Access Information
- School District Responsibilities: Interventions, Evaluations, Identifications, Cost and Advocacy
- Interventions May Include Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Goals and Objectives, and Modifications to the Curriculum
- All Professionals and Family Have Access to Students Records

College: A.D.A & Section 504

- Equal Opportunity in All Settings
- Parents Have No Rights and Cannot Access Information
- Accommodations: No IEP, Colleges are not obligated to waive courses or other academic requirements
- Student Must Self-Advocate and Disclose
- Student Responsible for Cost of Evaluation
- Records Are Available to Support Services Staff and All Others Must Have Signed Permission From Student

Testing with SAT or ACT

- School Testing Versus National Center Testing
 - Accommodations Available at Each
- Test Once During Testing Period for School Testing
- Eligibility- Disability Documentation Specifics Differ
 - IEP
 - 504 Plan
 - Psycho-Educational Evaluation (recency, history, score reporting, etc.)
 - Accommodations Must Already Take Place in School

Resources

- Getzel, E. E. and Wehman, P. (2005) Going To College: Expanding Opportunities For People With Disabilities (v. 1). Paul H. Brookes Publishing.
- Peterson's and Seghers, L. (2007). Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities or AD/HD. Original Ed. Peterson's.
- Pope, L. (2006). Colleges That Change Lives: 40 Schools That Will Change the Way You Think About Colleges, Rev. Penguin.
- www.Collegeboard.com
- Wax, I.F. and Kravets, M. (2007). K & W Guide to Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities, 9th Ed. Princeton Review.

Before College Admission

- Make Sure Students Have Appropriate, Timely (Up-To-Date), and Age Appropriate Disability Evaluation and Documentation
- Students and Parents Need to Understand Test Results
- Encourage Self-Advocacy
- Communicate With College Disability Services Programs As Well As With Admission Offices