

Difference Between High School and College Disability Services

A quick comparison of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

A reference guide for students, families, and professionals.

High School

College/ University

Applicable Laws

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I.D.E.A.• Section 504• Rehabilitation Act | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ADA• Section 504• Rehabilitation Act |
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Required Documentation

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual Education Act (I.E.P.) 504• School provides evaluation at no cost to student.• School conducts evaluations at prescribed intervals. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Varies depending on the disability. I.E.P. and 504 are not sufficient, must include the testing on which the accommodations are based.• Student must get evaluation at own expense.• Student generally not required to be re-tested after initial documentation approval unless additional accommodations warrant more documentation. |
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Student Role

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student is identified and supported by parents/teachers.• Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to the school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student must self-identify to the Disability Services Office or designated office.• Primary responsibility for accommodations belongs to the student. |
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Parental Role

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent has access to student's records and participate in accommodation process.• Parent advocates for student. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent DOES NOT have access to disability-related records unless student provides written consent.• Student advocates for self. |
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Teachers/Professors

Many modify curriculum and /or alter pace of assignments.

- Use multi-sensory approach.
- Weekly testing, mid-term, final, and graded assignments.
- Attendance taken and reported.

Not required to modify curriculum.

- Tend to rely on lecture. May or may not use multi-approach.
- Testing and assignment and frequency vary.
- Attendance often not taken; student is responsible for attending class.

Grades

Grades may be modified based on the quality of curriculum

Grades reflect the work submitted.

LEGAL ISSUES

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

According to these laws, no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of a public entity.

"Person with a disability" means any person who:

1. has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities [including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working]
2. has a record of such an impairment, or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment

"Qualified" with respect to post-secondary educational services, means "a person who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the education program or activity, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies or practices; the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers; or the provision of auxiliary aids and services."

Disability covered by legislation include (but are not limited to) AIDS, cancer, cerebral palsy, diabetes, epilepsy, head injuries, hearing impairments, specific learning disabilities, loss of limbs, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, psychiatric disorders, speech impairments, spinal cord injuries, and visual impairments.