

Differences Between High School and College Accommodations

In high school, services were implemented by a team of educators and parents with the goal of promoting student *success*. In college the responsibility shifts, students must initiate assistance by contacting disability service offices, such as Accessible Education Service, to arrange *access*. This is a fundamental change in the way that students relate to instructors and advisers; as a college student, you will now initiate all services and accommodations.

High School	College
Focus is to promote <i>SUCCESS</i>	Focus is to provide <i>ACCESS</i>
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is implemented at the secondary school level with an aim toward <i>success</i> for all students entitled to a Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) at their Local Education Agency (local educational agency).	The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act guides college-level accommodation policy with an aim toward <i>access</i> for “otherwise qualified” students based on the colleges’ admission criteria.
Modification of instruction and curriculum are commonly provided in response to student learning needs.	Through an interactive interview process, reasonable accommodations are identified to ensure equal access and participation. Students are responsible for meeting the standards of the course, and essential elements of the course objectives are not modified.
The local educational agency is responsible for identifying a student’s disability, determining eligibility for services and implementing appropriate accommodations.	Students identify their request for services to the disability office and provide documentation that verifies eligibility for accommodations specific to a functional limitation.
Cost of evaluations are borne by the local educational agency	Cost of evaluations are borne by the student
Individual Education Plans or 504 Plans are created to guide the student’s instruction and mandate services	Higher education institutions do not develop comparable individual education plans

Teachers and parents arrange services and assistance <i>for the student</i>	<i>Students must initiate</i> request for services and arrange required accommodations
School-based services based on demonstrated need are put in place to promote <i>success</i> , such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special education classes • Co-teaching and resource room • Teaching assistants or personal aides • Speech therapy/OT/PT providers • Extended time exams 	College accommodations are intended to mitigate the impact of disability based on eligibility to ensure <i>access</i> , such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative testing arrangements • Assistive technology/software • Alternative formats • Communication access services
Personal aide services are arranged and provided by school district	College is not responsible for personal aide services
Teachers and parents remind students to complete homework, help in exam preparation, and aid with time management	Students independently plan homework and create reading and study schedules
High school provides a highly regimented, closely monitored schedule with homework assigned at regular intervals	College schedule has more free, unstructured time; classes meet less frequently, more difficult homework, and heavy reading load
Parents communicate routinely with teachers, and can easily monitor students academic progress	Parents have no contact with instructors, and written consent is required to access student progress
Parents and teachers guide and intervene on the student's behalf, recommending strategies and supports	Students need to self-advocate, articulate their needs for services and accommodations proactively, and pursue resources on campus for assistance

Attribution: The Advocacy Consortium and [Learning Disabilities Association of America](#)