

Major Differences Between High School and Postsecondary Disability Services

High School	Post Secondary
Applicable Laws	
I.D.E.A Section 504, Rehabilitation Act	A.D.A. Section 504, Rehabilitation Act
Required Documentation	
I.E.P	Varies depending upon the disability and must include testing documentation.
School provides evaluation at no cost to student	Student must provide the evaluation at his own expense.
School retests over time	Student provides retesting
Student Role	
Student is identified by school	Student self-identifies to Special Populations
School sets up accommodations	Student is responsible for securing accommodations
Parental Role	
Access to Student Records	No access to student records without student's written consent
Participation in accommodations	Student requests accommodations
Mandatory involvement	Student is self-advocate*
Instructors	
Modification of curriculum	Not required to modify
Use of multi-sensory approach	Not required. Lecture is predominant.
Weekly testing, mid-term, final, and graded assignments	May test once or twice with few assignments
Attendance taken and reported	Attendance often not taken but student can be dropped after missing 10% (1 class)
Grades	
Grades modified based on curriculum	Grades reflect the quality of work submitted
Conduct	
Disruptive conduct may be accepted	Students who are disruptive and Unable to abide by the institution's Code of conduct are deemed "not qualified" and can be dismissed
Most Important Differences in Summary	
I.D.E.A. is about Success	A.D.A. is about Access
High School is mandatory and free	Postsecondary is voluntary and expensive

A Word about the A.D.A.

The A.D.A. extends civil rights protection to persons with disabilities. A “person with a disability” is anyone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (public institutions are covered under Title II), students with documented disabilities may request accommodations that will enable them to participate in postsecondary education programs. A “qualified person with a disability” is defined as one who meets the requisite academic and technical standards required for admission or participation in the postsecondary institution's programs.

Institutions are expected to give “reasonable accommodations”. Among the accommodations which postsecondary institutions can make are:

- Removal of architectural barriers
- Interpreters
- Note takers
- Assistive Technology
- Extra time on tests and assignments (Time and a half in most cases)
- Tape recorders

The emphasis of the ADA is on accessibility for those who wish to pursue education at the postsecondary level. There is no obligation on the part of a college to make fundamental changes in its courses for students with disabilities.

*Students with disabilities who complete high school will enter the work force or a postsecondary educational environment. Having attained the age of legal majority, they will be expected to exhibit self-advocacy and to communicate their own needs for reasonable accommodations in work or educational environments.