

Policy on the Accommodation of Disabilities

DISCLAIMER: Nothing in this Policy is intended to form a contract, or to guarantee a right to any academic, residential, or student life accommodation

Overview

Miss Porter's School is committed to equal access to all School programs and services and complies with applicable disability nondiscrimination requirements. Consistent with these requirements, the School pursues the goal of equal access through the provision of reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. Under this policy, a student with a disability may be provided with reasonable accommodations in order to facilitate access to the academic and/or student life program. A disability, as defined by applicable law, may include a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, mobility and orthopedic impairments, sensory impairments, psychological disorders, chronic health impairments, and learning disabilities.

Please note that while a request for accommodations can be initiated at any point in the school year, accommodations cannot be applied retroactively.

An Accommodations Committee, composed of relevant school personnel and chaired by the Director of Academic Growth, reviews requests for accommodations and makes accommodations decisions in all cases involving students at the beginning of each academic year, and at least monthly thereafter.

Requesting Accommodations

Newly enrolled students with disabilities which require academic, residential, or student life accommodations in order to access the school program should complete the Application for Accommodations form in the August Schools health portal, and upload the appropriate documentation as outlined below. The Accommodations Committee will review requests and supporting documentation each August and determine reasonable and appropriate accommodations in keeping with the School's policy. If an accommodation is granted, an Accommodations Plan will be sent to the family, published in the student's MyPorter's profile, and shared with relevant faculty, staff and administrators.

MISS PORTER'S SCHOOL

ACADEMICS

In some cases, a disabling condition may be diagnosed after a student's matriculation; in these cases, the student should contact the Director of Academic Growth as soon as possible after a formal diagnosis. The requestor will be required to open a formal request in the August Schools health portal, and to upload complete documentation of disability in keeping with the School's policy, after which a determination will be made as to possible reasonable accommodations by the Accommodations Committee. Please note that after the start of the academic year it may take up to approximately one month to review documentation and determine eligibility for accommodations once complete documentation is received. Once reasonable and appropriate accommodations are determined in keeping with the School's policy, an Accommodations Plan will be published and shared as indicated above.

Limitations

The School has established this Policy to make reasonable accommodations to School policies, practices, and procedures, unless such an accommodation would fundamentally alter the School's programs and services.

However, the School is not in a position to and does not:

- Make accommodations or provide support for services which fundamentally alter the nature of the School's curriculum or other programs;
- Fundamentally alter consistently applied academic and student life policies which are based on established academic and behavioral standards;
- Make accommodations that would impose an undue burden upon the School;
- Guarantee success or bear responsibility for ensuring that students achieve a particular outcome in their academic courses or school program;
- Pay for or provide items or services of a personal nature such as personal care assistance, personal purchases, personal medical, adaptive, or computer equipment; private transportation, or educational supplies used by all students (pens, paper, computer supplies, etc.). These are the responsibility of the student and family;
- Pay for outside tutoring, outside counseling, or psychoeducational testing and evaluation, or outside personal or academic coaching. All students may access the support and services of the Teaching and Learning Center and the Colgate Wellness Center at no cost to them.

Please understand that not all diagnoses constitute disabilities, and that not all disabilities require accommodation.

Disability Documentation

In order to determine eligibility for accommodations, the student and their family are responsible for providing appropriate and thorough documentation to the School. **Stand-alone doctor's notes and/or previous accommodations plans, 504 plans, and/or Individual Education Plans (IEPs) that do not meet the guidelines below are not able to be considered in isolation.** The School is unable to consider incomplete requests.

Documentation must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Documentation must be current:
 - For learning disabilities or ADHD, evaluations must be less than two years old at the time of enrollment. For requests that are submitted after September of a student's first year at Miss Porter's School, evaluations must have been completed within the previous three months.
 - For psychological disorders that qualify as disabling, documentation must be current within one month at the time of enrollment and must be updated at the start of each academic year by a current provider.
 - For temporary medical conditions (concussion, orthopedic injury, mononucleosis, etc), documentation must be provided upon a student's return to campus and must include both a start and end date for accommodations. If any changes or extensions to the accommodations plan are warranted, updated documentation must be provided.
 - For physical or medical conditions or sensory impairments that will require accommodations throughout a student's time at Porter's, full documentation should be provided at the time of enrollment, and should be updated if any changes to the accommodations plan are warranted.
- Documentation must be from an appropriately credentialed provider (e.g. physician, psychologist, neuropsychologist, etc.).
- Documentation must firmly establish a recognized formal diagnosis, with ICD-10 or DSM-V codes as applicable. Conditions such as "test anxiety" or "challenges with writing," while difficult for students, do not constitute a formal diagnosis and cannot be accommodated.
- Documentation must describe presenting problems and relevant developmental, educational, and medical history.
- Documentation must describe substantial limitations (adverse effects on learning or other major life activities) resulting from the impairment, as supported by test results. It is important to note that not all diagnoses, while real and valid, create substantial limitations that would require accommodations within the School program.

MISS PORTER'S SCHOOL

ACADEMICS

- Documentation must include any and all relevant testing using reliable, valid, standardized, and age-appropriate assessments to determine functional limitation. These assessments should include intellectual, achievement, neuropsychological, and rating scale measures from multiple sources, and other standardized measures to determine functional limitations as appropriate to the diagnosed disability.
- Documentation must specifically request particular accommodations and describe how the recommended accommodations will create access to the academic or student life program and/or alleviate the impact of the disability. General requests to “provide accommodations” for a situation are insufficient, and accommodations that are not designed to create access to learning and student life opportunities are not likely to be approved.
- Please note that not all requested accommodations may be compatible with the school program; accommodations that fundamentally alter the nature of the School’s curriculum or program cannot be granted. Requests for exemptions from aspects of the program are generally not considered to be accommodations that will create access to the program.

In all cases, the School reserves the right to request additional documentation in order to reach a decision. Any appeals of accommodations decisions should be made in writing to the Chief Academic Officer.

Standardized Testing Accommodations

Standardized testing agencies (College Board, ACT, etc) have a separate process for application for accommodations, and may have substantially separate requirements for documentation.

The receipt of accommodations at Miss Porter’s School does not guarantee receipt of accommodations on standardized tests, and while the School can facilitate the application for standardized testing accommodations, the School is not responsible for decisions made by outside testing agencies.

Please consult the School’s [Policy on Applications for Accommodations for Standardized Testing](#) for more detailed information.