

High School vs College Disability Services

The chart below highlights some of the important differences between high school and college. It may help you to identify areas of needed growth for the student as well as to support a change in approach for parents.

High School	College
The law is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	Laws are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
IDEA is about success	ADA is about access
Education is a RIGHT and must be accessible to you.	Education is NOT a right. Students must apply to attend.
Core modifications of classes and materials are required.	No modifications are required – only accommodations.
In high school, education may be modified and individualized according to the students' needs.	At the college level, course work does not need to be modified, and special education services are not provided.
Students are helped by parents and teachers, even without asking directly.	Student must request accommodations from the Office of AccessAbility Services.
School is responsible for arranging for accommodations and modifications.	Student must self-advocate and arrange for accommodations.
Parent has access to student records.	Parent has no access to student records without student's written consent.

Teachers meet regularly with parents to discuss their child's educational progress.	College faculty members seldom, if ever, interact with parents and expect the students to address issues with them directly.
School district develops Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and must follow this legal document in the provision of educational services.	Student must identify needs and ask for services. NO IEP exists and is not considered legal documentation.

Information/Chart adapted courtesy of © 2010 Think College. Think College is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts, Boston