

FORT LEE HIGH SCHOOL
TRANSITION PLANNING FOR
STUDENTS WITH AN IEP



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IEP Students and College: Planning Your Transition

Adapted from <http://www.campusexplorer.com/>

Get help figuring out what transition services you may need to succeed in college.

What is an IEP?

Mandated by the 2004 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004), the Individual Education Plan (IEP) is an individually tailored education program for students with learning disabilities. An IEP is designed to help each student reach educational goals. It is in essence a way to level the playing field for all students.

Transition Plan

If you currently have an IEP, the IDEA 2004 requires you to follow a transition plan from high school to a post-secondary education. Along with educational training, you will begin building career-oriented skills and learn to become independent.

By the age of 16, your case manager will work with you in developing a transition plan that will focus on more specific planning and goal setting for college.

Building Skills for College

The IEP goals and objectives will help you plan ahead for some of the skills that will help aid you in college and beyond:

- Academic preparation based on your needs, skills, interests, and strengths
- Community experience and development of vocational and independent living objectives

What To Expect In Your Transition Plan

Transition planning is used to identify and develop goals that need to be accomplished in order to assist you in meeting post-high school goals.

Examples of transition services the IEP team may provide to a high school student include:

- Assisting you with researching schools, eligibility requirements, and each college's disability access center services.
- Your special education teacher will provide instruction and modeling in how to advocate for your learning needs in college courses.
- Your general education teacher will provide direct instruction in reading comprehension and written expression.
- Your special education teacher will provide sample SAT test questions in order to assist you achieve the minimum score needed to meet eligibility requirements.
- Your IEP case manager will support you in developing your organizational skills to prepare you for multi-course loads, schedules, and deadlines.

IEP Students and College: Tips and Tactics

- Once you reach higher education, you will no longer have an IEP; the laws of IDEA 2004 do not apply once the student is in college. However, under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), colleges must provide “reasonable accommodations” to those in need. In other words, it’s up to you to document your learning disability and request accommodations from your institution.
- Contact your school counselor or case manager to be directed to programs or clubs that might interest you in your community. It is important to join a group that will offer the support and companionship everyone needs through this important stage in life.

Resource For Choosing A College

www.CollegeAcademicSupport.com

The above link will provide parents and students with information on the following topics

- List of college/universities with supportive learning disability programs
- Available scholarship programs for those with a learning disability
- Questions to ask when selecting a college or university program
- Resources and ways to self-advocate
- Lists and rankings pertaining to college support for students with disabilities
- Study tips and much more

THE BIG DIFFERENCE: Disability Rights and Responsibilities in High School vs. College

One key step to a successful transition from high school to college is to anticipate and be prepared for the differences between the two settings. This is especially true for students with disabilities. In addition to dealing with the same transition issues that all students face, they also have the added challenge of changes in how support services are requested and arranged. In college, students must play a more active role and assume more responsibility. The chart below compares the legal rights and responsibilities in high school versus those in college.

Differences Between Secondary and Postsecondary Disability Laws

Question	Secondary (High School)	Postsecondary (College)
What is the law?	IDEA and Section 504	ADA and Section 504 (Subpart E)
What is the intent of the law?	<p>IDEA: To provide a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment to students with disabilities.</p> <p>504: To ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability is denied access to, benefits of, or is subjected to discrimination in any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity.</p>	<p>To ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability will be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity.</p>
Who is covered under the law?	All infants, children and youth requiring special education services until age 21 or graduation from high school.	All qualified individuals with disabilities who meet the entry age level criteria or particular program entry criteria of the college and who can document the existence of a disability as defined by the ADA.
Who is responsible for identifying and documenting the need?	School districts are responsible for identifying, evaluating and planning educational services at no expense to the parent or individual.	Students are responsible for self-identification and for obtaining disability documentation from a professional who is qualified to assess their particular disability. They student, not the institution, assumes the cost of the evaluation.
Who is responsible for initiating service delivery?	School districts are responsible for identifying students with disabilities and providing special instruction, individualized education plans, and/or accommodations.	Students are responsible for notifying the Disability Support Services staff of their disability and of their need for accommodations. Accommodations (not special education) are provided on a semester by semester basis in order for students with disabilities to have equal access to the institution's programs, services and activities.
Who is responsible for enforcing the law?	IDEA is basically a funding statute, enforced by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services in the U.S. Department of Education. ADA/504 are civil rights statutes, enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Justice, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).	<p>Section 504 (Subpart E) is a civil rights statute enforced by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), U.S. Department of Education.</p> <p>The ADA is also a civil rights statute enforced by the U.S. Department of Justice, and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).</p>
What about self-advocacy?	The parent or guardian is the primary advocate. Students with disabilities should learn about their disability, the importance of self-advocacy, the accommodation(s) they need, and ways to become a self-advocate.	Students must be able to communicate what their disability is, their strengths, weaknesses, how the disability impacts and functionally limits major life activities. They must be able to identify and justify any requested accommodations.

The Big Difference Between High School and College

Many students — especially those who do not have a family member who has been to college — think college is pretty much like high school, only bigger. But there are some very big differences. Many students who did not do well in high school "blossom" in college. To be prepared, it helps you to know what differences lie ahead. Though academic requirements and student life vary depending on the college you attend, there are basic differences that apply in almost every case. Here are some of the differences you can expect:

Different Treatment — Because you will probably be over 18 years old in college, you will be treated like an adult. This is because you will be an adult. As an adult, you will have to make sure you do what you're supposed to do, you will be responsible for the way you live, and you will have to meet greater expectations from others.

Different Structure — Generally, there are fewer rules and regulations imposed by others in college. You will be expected to make and stick to your own schedule, as well as keep up on all your work. Most professors do not take attendance in class - they expect you to be there to learn. And whether or not you learn is your responsibility. Many students, after a brief period of adjustment, will settle into a balanced lifestyle of work and play. Those who don't usually do not make it through their first year.

Different Responsibility — In college, you will take on more responsibility for your decisions, actions, and lifestyle. This is part of being on your own. Professors and administrators will probably not give you a hard time about your clothes, your hair, or your general behavior (within bounds). But do be prepared to be held accountable for your behavior. There is no one to blame for not waking up on time, not eating properly, or not washing your clothes.

Different Expectation — People will expect more of you and expect you to develop in your own unique way in college. In high school, you are often expected to behave or perform to a minimum standard. Some people will expect you to go beyond minimal performance in college, so you can grow and develop as a person. You will also begin to realize what a great effect you can have — both positive and negative — on yourself, on others, and on the world around you. This can be both exciting and frightening.

Different Academic Subjects — In college, you will be free to explore numerous paths and interests that were simply not open to you in high school. There are more foreign languages, arts, and sciences offered in college. Subjects like philosophy and religion are also taught at college but probably not in high school.

Different Way of Teaching — Some subjects are taught differently in college. In high school, for instance, history may have been mainly names, dates, and places. You had to memorize facts and figures. In college, those facts are not nearly as important as why certain events and actions happened. In college English, less time may be spent on grammar and spelling (it is assumed you have mastered these) and more on writing creatively and criticizing literature. If you major in one of the sciences, you will find that in your junior and senior years, you may be designing your own experiments rather than doing exactly what everyone else in your class is doing. In foreign languages, you will be reading literature in its original language rather than just repeating phrases. And you may be able to work and study in another country for a semester or year.

Be open to falling in love with a subject in college that you may have disliked in high school. Two-thirds of college students graduate with a different major than the one they had in mind when they started - often because they found an old subject taught in a new and more interesting way.

Different Way of Learning — Many classes will be organized differently from the traditional high school lecture class. Some will be big lecture classes followed by small discussion groups. Some professors will have you read books, write papers, and discuss both in class. You may even have the chance to read independently with a professor or design your own research projects. Grading will be different, too. In some classes, you will have nothing but essay tests. In others, your entire grade will be determined by a single large paper or project. You may even have classes in which a group project is the primary grade.

Different Level of Competition — In high school, you are often graded on whether or not you learn certain things. For example, there are standardized tests given to show that you have achieved a minimum level in certain subjects. In college, you are often graded "on the curve," your grade is determined more by how well you did in relation to your classmates than on a minimum knowledge base. This means there is more one-on-one competition between students. For example, receiving an 85 percent on a test in high school may have automatically been a B. In college, if most people did better than that, it could be a C or C-. You may have been in the top 10 or 15 percent of your high school class, but at college most of your fellow students were also in the top 10 or 15 percent of their high school classes. You may have found it easy to make a 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) grade point average in high school. Earning a 3.5 in college will take much more effort.

Different Day to Day — High school is a place you go to seven or eight hours a day, less than half the days of the year. Many colleges are set up to be your home - you will eat and sleep there, spend time off there, make new friends there, even do your laundry there. Therefore, chances are good that college will have an even greater effect on you than high school did. In fact, it will be a time in your life like no other.

Source: *Eastern Illinois University; ICPAC Information Series, # IS-2*

SAT TESTING ACCOMADATIONS

Some students with disabilities have special testing needs. Eligible students can apply to SSD for accommodations for all CollegeBoard tests, including the PSAT/NMSQT, the SAT, SAT Subject Tests, and Advanced Placement Program® (AP) Exams.

Testing Accommodations

The College Board provides a broad range of accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students who currently use accommodations in school, or have an Individual Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan, are not automatically qualified for College Board testing accommodations. They still must apply for accommodations. Examples of accommodations include tests in Braille or large print, extra breaks between sections and extended testing time. Eligible students must apply and be approved before they can use accommodations on College Board tests.

Accommodations Requests

Most students request help applying for accommodations from their school counselor, case manager or SSD Coordinator. However, a request can be made online by a student or parent without the assistance of the school. All the necessary information must be provided for a request to be considered. Applications may be submitted online to save time and get students a faster response. After a request has been reviewed, the student and school are notified of the decision and any accommodations that have been granted.

Deadlines for Submission

Reviewing accommodations requests takes approximately seven weeks. Start the process during freshman year if possible. Students who receive accommodations can use them throughout their high school careers. Once approved, it's not necessary to reapply.

Required Information

As part of this process, schools provide the College Board with detailed information about the disability. This may include a diagnosis and any evaluation results. Please visit the CollegeBoard website for documentation requirements. <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/ssd/application/guide>

Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Contact Information

College Board SSD Program
P.O. Box 8060
Mt. Vernon, Illinois 62864-0060
Phone: (609) 771-7137
FAX: (866) 360-0114
TTY: (609) 882-4118
Email: ssd@info.collegeboard.org

Planning for College Success for Students With Learning Disabilities

By Vincent J. Varrassi MA, LDT-C

A student with a learning disability planning to attend college needs to take several steps to prepare for selecting the right college and for a successful college experience.

Preparing for College Success

The student must take a rigorous college preparatory program while in high school. It should be a program that is the most challenging in which he or she can experience success. It should be a program in mainstream classes at the 'College Preparatory' level and in regular education to the extent possible. The time to get a sense of your strengths and weaknesses and the level of competition you can handle is now, in high school, not when you are 500 miles from home, without a support network, and attending a college.

Your successes and your challenges in high school will also help you in deciding the type of support you may need at college. Remember, there are no IEPs in college. Different legislation, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, will now provide you with access but this is very different from what you may be used to high school. You need to learn about this difference. Degree programs and course requirements will not be modified to fit you; you need to find the program into which you will fit. The only way to know that is to know more about you and attempting a challenging curriculum in high school is one way to do that.

Another way to know what you will need in college is to really understand what your learning disability is and how it impacts on your academic studies. One way to do that is to actively participate in your IEP meetings and in the Child Study Team evaluation process. It is all about you, and now is the time to understand all that is being said and discussed about you: your learning strengths, your talents and your areas of weakness.

Think about it. You spend hours and hours going through all the evaluations conducted by psychologists, learning disabilities specialists, etc. and too often, you do not really understand the results of all those evaluations. Meet with your case manager or guidance counselor. Make sure your evaluations are current. Ask that all those reports be explained to you. Understand why you were given certain accommodations in high school and ask what accommodations you are likely to need in college. All of this information will help you and your parents decide what type of support you will need when you go to college; whether you can go to "Any college, USA" to which your grades and SAT's will admit you or whether you must consider going to a college that has a specialized program of support where you can get services like tutorial support or help with organization and advisement. Not every college has this type of program and even among the colleges that do have programs, the programs differ from college to college.

Choosing the Right College

Once you are equipped with knowledge of the level of competition you can handle, facts about your learning disability and how it will affect you in college work, and the kind of support you are going to need, you can then begin to think about selecting the right college for you. There are many sources available in your guidance offices and in bookstores like Border's and Barnes and Noble which list colleges that have support programs. **Don't forget about the website <http://www.CollegeAcademicSupport.com> too!**

But do not start there. Start by first answering the kinds of questions that all students should consider when looking for a college. After all, you are a student who happens to have a learning disability, but that is not all that there is about you. You have interests, you may be into sports, you may have a desire to commute or live away from home, you may be interested in an unusual major available at a limited number of colleges.

All of these things should go into your search as they would for any student. Once you go through all of this with your counselor and

parents, your counselor can start to recommend schools for you to consider based on these criteria and your academic standing. As that list is developed you can then look up those schools in books like the "K&W Guide" or the Peterson's "Guide to Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorders." These books will have lists of colleges with programs from every state in the country. They will also have brief descriptions of those programs and what kind of support you can expect to receive there. Contact information for each program and school will be available, and now it is time for you to start calling and visiting those programs to see and hear firsthand what they can and will do for you.

Remember Section 504 is very different from IDEA, the Special Education legislation. Part of knowing that difference is to know that colleges can determine the level of support they will put into their programs. Section 504 will enable you to receive the accommodations to which your testing and documentation entitle you, but that is not the same thing as an organized support program.

Ask, Ask, Ask

Ask the Director of the Support Program

- How he or she selects students;
- If SATs or ACTs are required;
- How you apply to the program;
- What kind of support you can expect to get, (ask them to be specific);
- If their tutors are students or professional staff;
- What accommodations are typically available to eligible students (not you!-They cannot tell you what you would get until you are a student and they have your material to review);
- If there is an additional charge for the program;
- If there is a required summer component;
- If there is an optional summer component to help you get started.
- Remember, you are the client. You have a right to ask these questions and it would be foolish not to ask them

Summing Up

- Take a challenging high school program, one that's challenging but one in which you can succeed.
- Become familiar with all of your evaluations, IEPs, 504 plans. Know who you are, what works for you, and what you'll need.
- Make sure your documentation is current. When requesting accommodations at college, you must have documentation (testing) that is recent, within the last few years. Different colleges can require different timelines. Find out yours.
- Research colleges not just by whether they have a "program" or not but also by whether or not you would be going there if you didn't need a program. If it is not a place you would ever consider if you didn't need a support program, why would you want to go there?
- Be ready to work! College is going to be a challenge. It gets harder, faster. Semesters are just barely longer than a marking period in high school. No third marking period to make up work. No fourth marking period to ask for extra credit. Take control of your time so it doesn't take control of you.
- Relax. Thousands have gone before you and succeeded. You can too if you follow the steps outlined here.

Vincent J. Varrassi MA, LDT-C was the Campus Director of The Regional Center for College Students with Learning Disabilities at Fairleigh Dickinson University.

GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START AND LEARNING TO SELF ADVOCATE: A GUIDE FOR SUCCESS

WHAT YOU WILL NEED TO SELF ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF

You will need to understand the nature and need of your learning disability. Your disability can be explained to you by your case manager or the school psychologist who has reviewed your evaluations.

- You will need to insure that all necessary documentation is on file with the college's office of special services or student assistance.
- You will need to know what modifications you currently need. You should now be able to explain why you need accommodations using information about your disability.
- You will need to know who on campus can help you with concerns and questions regarding your modifications.
- You will need to know the college policy for the learning disabled and have a plan set up with them for a possible 504 plan.
- You will need to be proactive in seeking out those who can help you.

College marks the time when each student is responsible for identifying his/her individual needs and then advocating for specific accommodations. The responsibility for obtaining special services rests with the student.

Remember:

Act as your own advocate by talking to your teachers & arranging for your own accommodations.

PLANNING YOUR DORM ROOM

Often space is limited in a dorm room, but a clever planner can be a considerate roommate and still find enough space to make a room conducive to study. Ensure dorm furniture is positioned in a way you feel comfortable and ready to work.

SET UP A FILING SYSTEM

Carefully label the following three folders during the summer and pack them.

1. Important Documents

(What should be included in this folder is listed below)

- College catalog of the year you entered college. If requirements change, you can usually avoid taking additional courses if you can prove they were not required initially.
- Copies of written permission to substitute courses or alter requirements. You will need them when applying for graduation.
- Semester course catalogs contain important information such as: last date you can add or drop courses; last date you can withdraw from a course and still receive a tuition refund; first and last days of classes; holidays on which college is closed.

2. Financial Records

(What should be included in this folder is listed below)

- Tuition receipts.
- Bookstore purchases.
- Receipts for paid library fines (Note: Keep canceled checks. If there is a mix-up about an unpaid bill a college may hold up grades and transcripts.)

3. A File Folder for Each Course

(What should be included in each individual folder is listed below)

- Use a different color folder for each course.
- All tests and exams returned to you should be placed in this folder.
- Copies of all papers you submit.
- Keep assignments in a place where you can find them - in a pull-out manila folder in each course file or in a pocket-folder in the course section of your loose-leaf paper.

SET UP A SUPPLY STATION

A **storage tower** is a popular furnishing because it offers narrow shelves, making the most of limited space. One shelf could be used for supplies that should include (minimally):

- A supply of loose-leaf paper
- Pens
- Pencils
- Highlighters
- Stapler and staples
- Post-it notes
- A supply of folders and labels
- A set of good quality colored pencils
- A dictionary
- A thesaurus
- A laptop
- Computer zip drives
- Other supplies may be needed for special courses such as math, art or music.
- Scientific calculator
- Graph paper
- Metric ruler

- Compass
- Special art supplies

SET UP A COMPUTER STATION

Consider the location and capacity of the outlets when you are planning the location of your laptop or computer. Purchase a strip outlet with a surge protector that will safely reach your computer site.

SET UP A PLANNING AND SCHEDULING STATION

Complete your desk or wall with a large calendar and use it to schedule short and long-term assignments and appointments. Put it where you will see it first thing in the morning and last thing before you go to sleep.

OBTAIN A SYLLABUS FOR EACH COURSE

Before classes begin, a **syllabus** may be obtained from the professor or department secretary; it is a **course outline** containing important information including:

- Required books and reading assignments
- Written assignments and test dates
- Graded projects and papers
- Instructor's office hours and phone number

USE THE SYLLABUS

- Highlight due dates.
- Set up a long-term schedule indicating due dates for papers, topic choices, outlines, etc.
- Note exam dates and study sessions.
- Place in your loose-leaf notebook for quick reference.

PURCHASE BOOKS

- Call the bookstore to find out when books for the semester will become available. Book rental options may be available.
- Find the section in the bookstore marked with the course number. (Listed on your schedule and in the semester catalog.)
- Save money by purchasing "USED" books. If used books are not available in the bookstore, post notices throughout the school requesting used texts from students who previously took the courses or search online or check websites such as amazon.com.
- Save bookstore receipts in the event you need to return a book (usually permitted until the end of Add/Drop) or you need reimbursement from your financial aid account. (These should be placed in your Financial Records folder.)

BECOME FAMILIAR WITH COURSE CONTENT

- Read the chapter titles in your textbooks to find out what the courses are about.
- Read the introduction to each section assigned in the course syllabus.
- Preview the first reading assignment.

BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

Finding resources in the library can be very time consuming, but you can cut down research time if you:

- Learn the computerized catalog system and the process on how to take out books.
- Locate the reference section and specific sources you will be using during the semester.
- Locate the aisles covering specific subjects for your courses; e.g. psychology, sociology, colonial literature, etc.
- Purchase computerized cards for making copies from the machines (if the library uses them).
- Find out what is available in the video, audio, and computer sections.
- Find out where books are kept when professors put them on reserve (to be read in the library only).
- Access library resources through the internet.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK A LIBRARIAN FOR HELP!

TAKE EFFECTIVE NOTES DURING LECTURES

- Date and number pages.
- Listen more than you write.
- Crease each page 1/3 from left edge.
- Write key words and phrases on remaining 2/3 of page.
- As soon as possible after class lecture, use the margin to fill in notes from a classmate's notes or textbook.

Highlight or Outline Important Material from the Text

- General rule - Highlight no more than 1/3 of the text.
- Write a brief outline to organize the material.
- Divide the chapter to be covered into sections.
- Leave space for additional details to be taken from class lectures.

Use a Tape Recorder

- Whenever possible, read notes and study cards aloud and keep a tape recorder running. (Always ask permission from the professor first)
 - Keep in mind your smart phone most likely has a record feature.
- Play back information while getting dressed or straightening your room.

Study With a Buddy

- Spread the word that you want to form a study group.
- Post on bulletin boards.
- Talk to classmates during class break.

- Once you agree to study together, set up consistent times and places to meet.
- Note study sessions on your calendar.
- Use a nearby vacant classroom to study between classes.
- Divide material and share duplicated notes.
- Make up questions and test each other.

FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS

Nothing contributes more to academic success than the ability to follow directions.

Try these tips:

- Record details of assignments.
Include page numbers, chapter titles, subjects, etc.
- Write down additional instructions given by the professor.
“Be prepared to discuss the experiments of Pasteur and Redi.”
- Write down details not found on the syllabus.
These may pertain to the format, length, depth of written assignments, etc.
- Note the wording used by the instructor.
“In a two-page essay, describe...”
“Present an in-depth analysis of...”

MANY STUDENTS RECEIVE POOR GRADES ON ESSAYS BECAUSE THEY MISUNDERSTAND THE ASSIGNMENT. ONE WAY TO AVOID THIS PROBLEM IS TO CREATE A ONE-PAGE PLAN AND ASK THE PROFESSOR IF IT FULFILLS THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ASSIGNMENT. BE A FREQUENT VISITOR OF YOUR PROFESSOR DURING HIS OFFICE HOURS. NOT ONLY WILL THIS HELP YOU BUILD A RAPPORT WITH HIM/HER BUT ALSO BECOME MORE FAMILIAR WITH THE ASSIGNMENTS.

Important Things To Remember

- Speak to your school counselor or case manager about receiving testing accommodations on the SATS.
- Once you leave high school you will no longer have an IEP. It will be up to you to advocate for a 504 plan.
- Self-advocacy refers to the process in which you request modifications and / or accommodations that reflect your learning needs.
- Plan for success by using the “Getting Off To A Good Start and Learning to Self-Advocate Guide”.

Please do not hesitate to contact your school counselor or case manager with any questions or concerns you may have. Enjoy the process!