

Frequently Asked Questions About The Transition From High School to College:

Comparison of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

	IDEA	Section 504	ADA
Who is Covered	Covers students with educational disabilities that require special education services ages 3-21 or until graduation.	Protects all persons with a disability from discrimination in an educational setting based solely on disability.	Protects all persons with a disability from discrimination in an educational setting based solely on disability.
Requirements in the Law	Provides a free Appropriate, public Education in the least Restrictive environment.	Requires any agency, school or institution receiving federal financial assistance to provide persons with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, an opportunity to be fully integrated into the main stream.	Extends coverage of section, 504 to employment, public and private educational institutions, transportation providers and telecommunications, regardless of presence of any federal funding.
Definitions in the Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific disability categories are defined in the law covers students with educational disabilities that require special service from specially trained teachers. • Not all students with Disabilities are eligible. 	Define persons with disabilities who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a physical or mental impairment which limits one or more major life activities; • have a record of such an impairment, or; • are regarded as having an impairment. 	Definition of disability essentially same as Section 504 and extends coverage to persons without disabilities who may be related to or associated with a person with a disability. Includes HIV status, contagious and non-contagious diseases.
Services Provided	Offers educational services that are remedial in addition to services available to all mainstream students (i.e. PE, Art, Field Trips)	Eliminates barriers that would prevent a student from full participation in programs/services offered to the general school population.	Eliminates barriers that would prevent a student from full participation in programs/services offered to the general school population.
Funding	Schools receive federal funding to provide remedial services.	Requires that schools not discriminate based on student's disability and must provide appropriate accommodations, but schools receive no additional financial support to provide support services or auxiliary aids.	Requires that schools not discriminate based on student's disability and must provide appropriate accommodations, but schools receive no additional financial support to provide support services or auxiliary aids.

Evaluation/Documentation	School district is responsible for identifying and evaluating students with disabilities.	Same for elementary and secondary schools Same for college/postsecondary	Students must self identify as having a disability and must provide adequate documentation of disability.
	Evaluations are the responsibility of the school and are performed at no expense to student/parent.	Same for elementary and secondary schools. Same for college/postsecondary	Evaluations/documentation of disability are student's responsibility and expense.
	Parents must consent to evaluations and placement decisions.	Same for elementary and secondary schools. Same for college/postsecondary	Student has responsibility for advocacy, negotiating accommodations plan.
IEP/Accommodations	Individual Educating Plan (IEP) developed with parents, teachers and other specialists involved.	504 Plan developed with parents, teachers, school personnel involved (for elementary/secondary students)	Accommodation plan developed with student, a member of the Student Development Center and approved documentation.
Classroom Placement	Placement must be in the least restrictive environment; may be special classrooms, resource, or regular classroom. (Elementary and secondary students)	Placement is regular classroom with support services to eliminate barriers to the educational experience (Elementary, secondary & college students)	All courses are mainstream with accommodations provided to students who qualify under ADA.