

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DOCUMENTED DISABILITIES: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL & COLLEGE

Legal Differences	
High School	College
Services are provided under IDEA or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.	Services are provided under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.
The IEP is mandated and followed.	The high school IEP ends. There is no IEP at the college level. IEP information may assist when requesting reasonable accommodations but is not binding on the postsecondary institution.
Student has a right to a Free And Appropriate Education (FAPE). Therefore, special programs may be created to meet the student's needs.	Colleges have no obligation to guarantee an education. The creation of special programs is not required. Colleges must provide access and opportunity to participate in educational programs.
Parents are actively involved in planning and decisions. High school personnel talk freely with parents.	Under the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA), parental rights transfer to the student at the age of 18 or when attending an institution of postsecondary education. Students must give written permission to personnel to talk to parents.
Accommodations are provided to ensure the success of the student.	Reasonable accommodations are provided to ensure equal access. Success is the responsibility of the student.
School districts are responsible for identifying and evaluating disability.	The student must self-identify and provide appropriate documentation based on the college's documentation guidelines. Colleges are not responsible for covering the cost of evaluations.
Progress toward IEP goals is monitored and communicated to the parent(s) and student.	Students are required to monitor their own progress and communicate their needs to instructors.
Academic Differences	
High School	College
High school personnel have the responsibility to try to modify inappropriate behavior caused by disability.	Students are responsible for their own behavior and must adhere to the student code of conduct.
Tests are often modified or shortened or questions are modified.	All students are expected to meet the same standard of academic performance. Tests cannot be changed in any way that would alter their capacity to measure the skills being tested.
Shortened or modified assignments, as well as extra time to complete assignments, are often given.	Students are expected to do the work essential to the program of study and meet the same standard of academic performance as all students.
Teachers are asked to adapt their teaching style to the student.	Faculty has academic freedom in delivery, course content, requirements and method of evaluation.
Accommodations are given for all subjects and do not have to be supported by diagnostic evaluation.	Accommodations are given only in the area of disability and must be supported by documentation.

Students are scheduled to see resource personnel on a regular basis or can come to the resource room on a drop-in basis.	Students must initiate requests for services, following school procedures. All students are encouraged to visit MCC's Learning Centers for tutoring support.
Students' studies are directed by special education teachers.	Students are expected to have skills to organize, plan, and study independently.
Special educators inform instructors about a student's accommodation needs.	Students register with the Disability Support Services (DSS) office to receive accommodations. Students take Letter(s) of Accommodation to their instructor(s) to give notice of their accommodation needs.
Teachers check and grade completed homework.	Homework is not always assigned. When given, homework may not be graded or count as part of the final grade. Tests and major papers often constitute the majority of the grade.
Teachers approach students to provide assistance and remind students of assignment and test dates.	It is the student's responsibility to check the syllabus for assignment due dates and test dates, monitor progress in class, and initiate contact with the instructor to ensure that requirements are being met.
Students are sometimes given the opportunity to retake tests, resubmit assignments, or do extra credit when grades are low.	Students are rarely given the opportunity to retake tests, resubmit assignments, or do extra credit when grades are low.
Other Differences	
High School	College
Secondary schools must provide a student with documented disabilities any regular or special education and related aids and services necessary to meet the student's needs as well as meeting the needs of students without disabilities.	The appropriate accommodation must be determined based on the student's disability and individual needs. Academic adjustments will not lower or substantially modify the essential requirements or fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program or activity or cause undue financial or administrative burdens to the institution or program.
Transportation is provided.	Transportation and mobility on campus is the student's responsibility.
Often, paraprofessionals are provided if a student needs personal care or behavioral management assistance.	Colleges are not responsible for providing services of a personal nature or behavioral management assistance (personal attendants, tutors, behavioral coaches, readers for personal study, etc.).
Adaptive technology is minimally used.	If necessary, students may request and are expected to use available adaptive technology in order to function independently.
Students have access to special educators to read and clarify reading selections.	Students may request and use audio textbooks if their documentation supports this accommodation.

For more information, please contact the Disability Support Services Coordinator on your campus.