

Students with Disabilities: Planning for College



Transitioning from high school to college is an exciting step for students with disabilities. Understanding the differences between high school and disability support services in college is crucial for success. In college, accommodations from a high school IEP/504 plan do not automatically transfer; students must advocate for their needs under the Americans with Disabilities Act.



Research and Build a College List

Investigate disability support services at each college, such as assistive technology, housing accommodations, dining services, tutoring, counseling, and medical care.

Here is our fillable “Make Your College List” in Google Sheets:
bit.ly/DSSCollegeList



Prepare for the College Transition

- **Self-Advocacy:** Participate actively in IEP/504 or transition meetings. Learn to communicate your needs effectively—practice by meeting with your teachers to explain your accommodations and needs.
- **Self-Awareness:** Understand and be able to name your accommodations. Work with your IEP/504 coordinator and school counselor to identify which accommodations will likely be accepted by a college.
- **Independence:** Develop organizational strategies that foster independence from family or school staff.



If you want to learn more, please visit

<https://www.delawarestudentsuccess.org/success-for-students-w-disabilities/>

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Understand Differences Between High School and College Accommodations

Colleges are not required to provide specific accommodations that may have been available in high school, such as:

- Accommodations that fundamentally alter programs (e.g., substituting a multiple-choice test for an essay test).
- Personal services (e.g., personal assistant care).
- Accommodations that produce equal results (e.g., altered standards like writing shorter papers).



Explore Colleges with Unique Programs for Students with Disabilities

- **University of Delaware:** Offers the non-degree Career & Life Studies Certificate (CLSC) program, designed for individuals with intellectual disabilities.
- **Delaware Technical Community College:** Partners with Delaware's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to provide educational support for transition students in degree and non-degree certificate programs.
- **University of Massachusetts, Amherst:** Provides free learning specialist sessions for students with disabilities in degree programs.
- **CharlestonLIFE:** A four-year, fully inclusive non-degree certificate program for students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.
- **Beacon College and Landmark College:** Degree-granting colleges for students with learning disabilities, ADHD, and/or autism.
- **Gallaudet University:** Degree-granting university for students who are deaf and hard of hearing.



Additional Resources:

- **Delaware's Disability Hub:** A comprehensive resource for disability-related information.
- **National Center for College Students with Disabilities:** Offers support and resources for students navigating higher education.
- **Job Accommodation Network:** Guides workplace accommodations and disability employment issues.

Questions? Ask your school counselor, IEP/504 coordinator, or reach out to a college's Disability Support Services Office directly.

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