



Preparing Students for College Success: The Role of Family

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A Very Important Concept

The most important concept is that a student with a disability needs ALL the same skills as any other college student, PLUS whatever special skills or strategies needed to accommodate for the disability. It is better to start acquiring skills in an environment they know well (high school) rather than to wait until they arrive on a college campus. Going to college comfortable with oneself and one's needs will make the difference between success and failure.

WNY Collegiate Consortium of Disability Advocates (2006)



The Benefits of Postsecondary Education

- Increased employment and lifetime earnings
- Many new jobs require postsecondary education
- Status
- Increased social circles and networks
- Seen by many as what youth of that age do
- Other benefits?

Types of Postsecondary Opportunities

- Four-year Colleges and Universities
- Liberal Arts College
- Community College or Junior College
- Engineering or Technical College
- Technical School or Vocational School
- Military School
- Business School
- Online schools



Benefits of a Two-year College

Many students find great benefit in starting at a two-year college

- Affordability
- Stepping stone to four-year program
- Class sizes often capped at 25/30
- Better chance of individual attention
- Before you commit, always tour the school and meet with DSS staff to ensure a good fit

Academics: Postsecondary Differs from High School

- Higher instructor-to-student ratio
- Less contact with instructors
- Expectations to achieve independently
- High level of academic competence expected
- Fewer tests cover broader base of information
- No resource rooms

Adapted from "Going to College: Expanding Opportunities for People with Disabilities" (2005)

Questions for Students to Consider

- Can you read up to 200 pages in a week?
- Do you have a system for taking notes?
- Do you know which academic tasks give you difficulty?
- Do you have a strategy for completing tasks you find boring?
- Do you have an academic subject you find interesting?

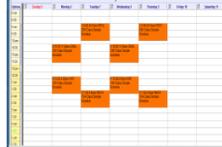
Source: Landmark College's Guide to Assessing College Readiness

Schedule Differences

High School Schedule



College Schedule



Time Management

High School vs. College

- | | |
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| <p>Following rules in high school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory and free • Time structured by others • Adults remind you of responsibilities • Behavior gets corrected | <p>Being responsible in college</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary and expensive • Manage your own time • Manage your own responsibilities • Responsible for your actions and consequences of decisions |
|--|--|



High School vs. College

High School Classes

- Limited class choices
- Generally less than 35 students
- 6 hours a day in class
- Attendance is taken
- Textbooks are provided
- Much studying done during school day

College Classes

- Larger choice in classes
- Classes can be 100 +
- 2-4 hours of class per day
- Attendance not taken, but professors know
- Textbooks expensive
- Most studying done outside of class





High School vs. Grades

High School Grades

- Grades given for most assigned work
- Homework grades can help raise grade
- Extra credit options often available
- Can graduate with a "D" average

College Grades

- Assigned work may or may not be graded
- Tests and papers provide most of grade
- Extra credit options usually not available
- Grade average needs to meet department standard... Usually "C" or better





Other Important Skills

- Memorization techniques
- Study skills
- Test taking strategies
- Note taking
- Reading strategies





IEPs Do Not Go To College

- Students who have IEPs in high school should not expect the same level of services in college
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act become applicable laws
- IEPs can be used (in some cases) for disability documentation and to help identify academic accommodations





The Changing Role of Families

“In high school, the parent is often the main spokesperson and advocate for their child, **but this is not the case in college.**”
WNY Collegiate Consortium of Disability Advocates (2006)

- In college, the relationship is between the school and the student
- Most college students are their own legal guardian and need to be responsible for all aspects of their college experience





The Changing Role of Families (Pt. 2)

- **Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA)** prohibits colleges from discussing confidential information (including grades) with families without a signed waiver
- College instructors generally don't welcome questions or input from families
- Families should continue to be involved with their youth, but more as a mentor than a person who actively coordinates





Understanding FERPA

- “Owner” of education data changes once a student turns 18 or enrolls in PSE.
- Students must sign a waiver to grant permission to share data with families
- Families should have clear expectations with youth about how things like grades will be shared with them





Preparing for College: High School Timeline

- Instill high expectations that college is a possibility
- Begin talking to your youth early
- Use special education IEP and other planning tools to make sure academic skills, self-advocacy skills, and accommodations are addressed
- Beware the impact of waiving requirements or heavily modifying courses
- Start exploring and using assistive technology early





College Placement Exams

- Assesses basic reading, writing, and math
- Compass and Accuplacer common versions
- Low scores can lead to inability to take college courses
- Might require “Mandatory Placement” into pre-college courses
- Prepare as you would for ACT or SAT





“Pre-College” Courses

A college placement test may indicate the need for a student to take additional classes to prepare for college-level work.

Remedial courses:

- Count toward GPA
- Do not apply towards program requirements
- Can be re-taken three times and still be paid for using financial aid
- Have an impact on degree planning, student success (risk of dropping out), and cost





Time and Disability

- What about time and getting things done?
- Society decides the norms.
- In 1912, people with dyslexia were not considered disabled. 80+% of jobs were on farms or in factories.
- More stimuli from more sources are helping and hurting students.





Executive Functions

- A set of mental processes that helps connect **past experience with present action.**
- Includes activities such as planning, organizing, strategizing, paying attention, remembering details, and managing time and space.
- Limited executive functions can derail academic progress especially as coursework becomes more intense in high school and then in college.

Can be assessed and can be improved



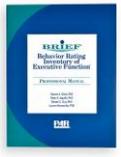
Executive Functions Examples

- Inhibit
- Shift
- Emotional Control
- Initiate
- Working Memory
- Time Management
- Organization of Materials
- Monitoring



BRIEF

Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function



<http://www.wpspublish.com/store/p/2689/behavior-rating-inventory-of-executive-function-brief>

Understanding Supports in Postsecondary Education





Disability Student Services

- Most postsecondary schools have a point person for students with disabilities
- A school does not need to have a “program,” just a point person
- DSS staff can help identify and negotiate academic accommodations
- Quality and depth of services can vary greatly from school to school, so meet with DSS person before you commit
- DSS offices not a “single point of contact”.





Appropriate Disability Documentation

- Each college establishes its own criteria
- May need HS records, letters from professionals, etc.
- Some colleges may require additional information
- Talk early in the process with the Disability Student Services provider to learn the requirements





Academic Accommodations in College

- Colleges need only provide “equal access to education”
- Accommodations ensure access not success
- Accommodations should be at no-cost to student
- “Personal services” are the responsibility of the individual, not the college
- Colleges have the final say on what accommodations can be used





Accommodation Examples

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Common Accommodations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra time for tests • Quiet space for test taking • Use of assistive technology • Tape-recording classes • Oral tests instead of written • Test reader • Assistance with note taking • Sign language interpreters | <p>Not Accommodations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutoring • Modified curriculum • Personal Care Assistants • Extra time to complete homework • Transportation • Equipment such as laptops, software, scooter, hearing aids, etc. |
|---|---|





Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)

- VRS can provide supports to people with disabilities who want to enter postsecondary education.
- Might help with cost of postsecondary education if linked to employment plan
 - Counselors assigned to every high school
 - Can help with the decision to attend college or in choosing a school
 - Offers help with accessing other training options such as apprenticeships and on-the-job training





Miscellaneous

- Are there special scholarships or financial aid for students with disabilities?
- Accommodations are also available on ACT and SAT
- “Emotional Disturbance”—not a recognized diagnosis
- Students with intellectual disabilities





Resources

Effective College Planning

<http://www.ccdanet.org/>

US DOE College Prep Checklist

<http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/prepare-for-college>

ASAN – Navigating College

www.navigatingcollege.org





Transition Websites

- www.ncset.org
- www.washington.edu/doi/
- www.ncwd-youth.info
- www.thinkcollege.net
- www.pacer.org/transition





References

Executive Functions by Raymond J. Chin MFA

http://www.sau70.org/special-education/ExeFunc_11-2-09.pdf

Behavior Rating Inventory of Executive Function by PAR

Strengths Institute at the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare

<http://www.socwel.ku.edu/strengths/index.shtml>

Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Adult ADHD by Mary V. Solanto





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