

# Transition from High School to College

## Different Laws apply

IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are very different, leading to miscommunication between college and high school staff that have studied only the statues applying to their institution. In high schools, for example: under IDEA, special education program procedures may apply primarily to a specific list of disabilities such as “specific learning disability.” High school students who are in wheelchairs may fall under a subpart of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and be referred to as their “504” clients. They will develop IEPs (Individual Education Plans) for these students simply because that is the procedure they have been required to follow under their IDEA mandated program. However, Section 504 does not create a requirement for IEPs in either high school or post-secondary institutions.

The misunderstanding comes from the practice of assuming that the “504 Plan” developed at a high school will be binding on a college or university. It doesn't.

High School	Post Secondary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)</li> <li>• Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (See Subpart D)</li> <li>• Americans with Disabilities Act</li> <li>• Civil Rights Restoration Act</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973</li> <li>• Americans with Disabilities Act</li> <li>• Civil Rights Restoration Act</li> </ul>
Differences	
<p><b>In high school, the school has responsibilities which include the following:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Identify students with disabilities</li> <li>-Provide assessment of learning disabilities</li> <li>-Classify disabilities according to specified diagnostic categories</li> <li>-Involve parents or guardians in placement decisions</li> <li>-Provide certain non-academic services</li> <li>-Place students in programs where they can benefit (in any way) by placement committee with parent participation and approval</li> <li>-Structure a large part of the student's weekly schedule</li> <li>-Modify educational programs</li> <li>-Prepare Individualized Education Plans (IEP's)</li> <li>-Provide a free and appropriate education</li> <li>-Provide appropriate services by the school nurse or health service</li> </ul>	<p><b>The post-secondary level institutional role changes as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Protect a student's right to privacy and confidentiality</li> <li>-Provide access to programs and services, for persons with disabilities.</li> <li>-Inform students of office location and procedures for requesting accommodations</li> <li>-Accept and evaluate verifying documentation</li> <li>-Determine that a mental or physical impairment causes a substantial limitation of a major life activity (see definition of disability) based on student-provided verifying documents</li> <li>-Determine for students who are otherwise qualified for participation in the program or service, with or without accommodations, whether a reasonable accommodation is possible</li> <li>-Make reasonable accommodations for students who meet the above qualifying criteria</li> <li>-Provide reasonable access to program and service choices equal to those available to the general public</li> <li>-Suggest reasonable adjustments in teaching methods which do not alter the essential content of a course or program</li> <li>-Assure that off-campus and contracted program facilities also comply with Section 504 (Subpart E) and ADA</li> <li>-Inform students of their rights and responsibilities</li> </ul>
<p><i>Other differences may exist for post-secondary institutions that provide housing programs, health services, psychological counseling services, and extensive international programs.</i></p>	

In contrast to the responsibilities of high schools, at the post secondary level, student responsibilities change.

**Students have the following responsibility:**

Self identify or disclose their disability to the designated office for disability services. The office designated to evaluate disability documentation and determine accommodation parameters to suggest to faculty at Rock Valley College is the office of Services to Students with Disabilities.

- Provide verifying documentation to that designated office.
- Obtain assessment and test results and provide them as requested by that office.
- Act as independent adults, use appropriate self-advisory strategies
- Arrange their own weekly schedules
- Contact their instructors to activate and adopt accommodations for each class.
- Arrange for and obtain their own personal attendants, tutoring and individually fitted or designed assistive technologies.

**Post secondary institutions are NOT required to do any of the following:**

- Reduce or waive any of the essential requirements of a course or program.
- Conduct testing and assessment of learning, psychological or medical disabilities
- Provide personal attendants
- Provide personal or private tutors (but tutoring services normally available to persons without disabilities must be accessible to persons with disabilities who are otherwise qualified for those services)
- Prepare “Individual Education Plans”