

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Differences Between Secondary Education and Postsecondary Education Regarding Individuals with Disabilities

Secondary Education	Postsecondary Education
<p>Governed by federal laws: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).</p>	<p>Governed by federal laws: Section 504 (particularly subpart E) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).</p>
<p>Purpose: To ensure that all eligible students with disabilities have available a free appropriate public education (FAPE), including special education and related services (IDEA). To ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity (504/ADA).</p>	<p>Purpose: To ensure that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be denied access to, or the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination by any program or activity provided by any public institution or entity (504/ADA).</p>
<p>Eligibility: (for special education services) All infants, children, and youth (0-21 years) with disabilities (as defined by the state Administrative Rules for Special Education, and/or the ADA).</p>	<p>Eligibility: (for student disability services) Anyone who meets the entry level criteria of the college and who can document the existence of a disability as defined by 504/ADA.</p>
<p>Documentation: School districts are responsible for providing trained personnel to assess eligibility and plan educational services.</p>	<p>Documentation: Students are responsible for obtaining documentation of a disability from a professional who is qualified to assess their particular disability. Student must provide the evaluation at his/her own expense.</p>
<p>Receiving Services: School districts are responsible for identifying students with disabilities, designing special instruction, and/or providing accommodations.</p>	<p>Receiving Services: Students are responsible for telling Student Disability Resources & Services staff that they have a disability, and for requesting accommodations for each class. Accommodations (not special education) are provided so students with disabilities can access the educational programs or courses used by other students.</p>

<p>Self-Advocacy: Students with disabilities learn about their disability, the importance of self-advocacy, the accommodations they need, and how to be a competent self-advocate.</p>	<p>Self-Advocacy: Students must be able to describe their disability, identify strengths and weaknesses, and identify any accommodations needed and how to be a competent self-advocate.</p>
<p>Parental Role: Parents are allowed access to student records, they are allowed to make sure student is getting appropriate accommodations, and parent involvement is strongly encouraged.</p>	<p>Parental Role: Parents are not allowed access to student's records without student's written consent. The student must be a self-advocate and request accommodations.</p>
<p>*Most Important Difference* IDEA is about <i>Success</i> Secondary education is mandatory and free</p>	<p>*Most Important Difference* ADA is about <i>Access</i> Postsecondary education is voluntary and costly</p>