

**Dotting Your I's and Crossing Your T's: Transitioning from High School to College**  
**Presented by Charles J. Karulak, Ph.D.**

**Dotting Your I's and Crossing  
Your T's: Transitioning from High  
School to College**

The Winston School San Antonio  
Annual Learning Disabilities Symposium

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**Transition: An Overview**

- What is transition? How did transition begin and then evolve?
- What's the story on documentation? Why is it important?
- When should a student begin the transition process?
- The preparation checklist for transition. What is it?
- How does a student qualify for accommodations on the ACT and SAT?

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## **Transition: An Overview - continued**

- How does a student learn about colleges, the process for admission and receiving accommodations?
- What laws protect my rights when making application to the disabilities student services program and as a college student ?
- What are some of the accommodations students may receive in college?
- Developing Skills for Success

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## **What is transition?**

- Transition is a coordinated set of activities:
  - Designed as an outcome-oriented process
  - Promotes movement from high school to post-secondary activities in preparation for a post-secondary education - college.  
(IDEA-1990, 34 C.F.R Section 300.18)

The process for transition planning is a student-centered activity that requires input from a variety of individuals.

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## How did transition begin and then evolve?

How did transition begin and eventually evolve?

A study was done in 1984 to investigate the effectiveness of special education programs by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (OSERS).

Researchers found 50-80 percent of the graduates were reached at home and many lacked any independence.

Initially, the definition of transition was broadened to include those students with learning disabilities who were planning to attend college.

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## What's the story on documentation? Why is it important?

- The beginning process for documentation of a learning disability begins when a student receives a full psychological or educational evaluation. To receive services, the evaluation must be performed no later than three (3) years.
- This evaluation will include an IQ test, test of achievement levels (math, reading) and often a test to measure affect/emotional status of a student.
- The evaluation will include a summary of the assessment used to measure functioning of the student, determine if a student meets the diagnosis of a learning disability, and if so, what recommendations are suggested to improve learning.

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**What's the story on documentation?**  
**Why is it important?**

- What is the difference between an accommodation and a modification? Modifications may reduce the rigor or challenges of assignments or tests. It may compromise learning.
- Students who may have AD/HD will be evaluated by a medical doctor or clinical psychologist. The results of this report are useful when approving accommodations.
- A student must demonstrate and document the use of accommodations while in high school. This information should be placed in the student's file.
- Paper trail is necessary when seeking accommodations in college – keep all documents well organized and easily accessible

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**When should a student begin the transition process?**

- Students should begin the process at age 14 or at the beginning of ninth grade.
- The parent is the primary advocate for their student and input should be gathered from the assessment team or IEP team (counselor, advisor, teacher, and special education teacher/coordinator).
- Explore your student's interests and give them numerous experiences like performing community service, job shadowing, and real life experiences.
- What skills does a person need in order to realize a future dream or goal?
- Talk about attending college at home and encourage your student to learn about the expectation of college

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## **The Preparation Checklist for transition. What is it?**

A timetable with specific suggestions for preparing a student with a learning disability for college. This timetable is the beginning of the transition process.

*Learn to self-advocate!*

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## **Transition Checklist Suggestions**

### **9<sup>th</sup> grade:**

- A student should be involved in IEP meetings.
- Meet with the guidance counselor to learn about required classes that better prepare a student for college.
- Search websites for colleges to learn about the requirements for admissions, costs, programs, student life, living arrangements, etc.
- While on vacation, take a tour of a college.

### **10<sup>th</sup> grade:**

- Continue attendance at IEP meetings and ask questions about college.
- Learn about your own learning differences and develop strategies to compensate.
- Become involved in activities like clubs, sports, community service, etc.
- Participate in a career assessment and investigate the results to determine specific interests/potential careers.

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## **Transition Checklist Suggestions**

### **11<sup>th</sup> grade:**

- Continue attendance at IEP meetings.
- Meet with a representative from a local college that offers disability services.
- Inquire about the requirements for admission. Will the student meet the criteria for admission (at this juncture).
- Attend college fairs.
- Submit application for college testing. Take the SAT or ACT or both.
- Practice presenting a letter from the special education office to your current teachers indicating your accommodations and to establish the logistics to receive the services.

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## **Transition Checklist Suggestions**

### **12<sup>th</sup> grade:**

- Narrow choices for college, complete applications, and send documents to the college.
- Submit the student's documentation for services to the disability services office after acceptance.
- Student should be representing himself at IEP meetings.
- Meet with a representative from the disability services office to determine accommodations or academic adjustments.
- Student may need to take a college placement test.

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## How does a student qualify for accommodations on the ACT and SAT?

- If a student has a documented learning disability, he may be eligible for accommodations on College Board tests like the American College Test (ACT) and the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT). Even though a student may meet the following criteria, it does not guarantee a student will receive accommodations.
- Other tests: Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) during 11<sup>th</sup> grade
  - PLAN to prepare for taking the ACT (10th grade)
  - Advanced Placement Tests (AP)
  - SAT Subject Tests (used by some colleges for admission)

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- To be considered for eligibility, a student must:
  1. have a learning disability that necessitates testing accommodations
  2. have documentation on file at his school that demonstrates the need for requested accommodations
  3. receive and use the requested accommodations per his learning disabilities used for school based tests and related activities.

➤ Four major areas for testing accommodations (partial description of each area):

  1. Presentation of materials – large print, reader, audiocassette
  2. Responding to test questions-verbal/dictate to scribe, tape recorder
  3. Time/Scheduling of the Test – frequent breaks, extended time, multiple day testing
  4. Setting or site for testing – small group, private room, alternative test site

For more information: [www.collegeboard.com/ssd/student/eligible.html](http://www.collegeboard.com/ssd/student/eligible.html)

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**How does a student learn about colleges, the process for admission and receiving accommodations?**

- Researching colleges that are a good fit for the student; not necessarily the best fit for the parent!
- Suggestions and personal requirements to consider when finding a good fit:
  - refer to the preparation checklist
  - attend college fairs
  - proximity of college to the student's home
  - meet with your school guidance counselor
  - seek college programs that match your areas of interest
  - visit colleges of interest
  - surf the internet

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- Suggestions and personal requirements to consider when finding a good fit – continued

- speak with students who may attend a college of interest
- does the size of a college make a difference
- take into consideration the course schedule
- what are the class sizes
- are course substitutions offered
- assess program/degree plan strength and weaknesses according to the needs of the student

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**How does a student learn about colleges,  
the process for admission and receiving  
accommodations?**

*The Process for Admission:*

- learn about the requirements for admission
- provide ample time to prepare all documents for admission – follow a timetable
- make copies of all documents for each college application and place in a file for safe keeping
- complete the application for admissions
- is the student required to write an essay
- does the student need letters of recommendation

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**How does a student learn about  
colleges, the process for admission and  
receiving accommodations?**

- is there a record of student activities, academic awards, and any other important recognitions
- is the student's transcript up-to-date
- has the student taken all college entrance exams and are the results included with the college application
- is there an application fee
- when are all documents due – is there early admission
- application to several colleges
- check with school officials to make sure all school records have been sent
- be persistent and monitor the timetable

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**How does a student learn about colleges, the process for admission and receiving accommodations?**

*The process for receiving accommodations:*

- Contact a representative from the disabilities services office for a meeting
- Is there an additional application and/or fee to participate in this program
- You need to disclose your disability to the college and request specific accommodations
- Supply all forms of documentation indicating learning disability and accommodations used while in high school

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**How does a student learn about colleges, the process for admission and receiving accommodations?**

- Does the student meet the criteria for accommodations
- Timeframe for securing accommodations
- Once accommodations have been approved, who informs the college faculty about these services
- The student must always advocate for himself

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### What laws protect my rights when making application to the disabilities service program and as a college student ?

- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- American Disabilities Act (ADA-1990)
- Section 504: civil rights law that created access for qualified students attending college to receive accommodations
- Section 504 states: No otherwise qualified handicapped individual in the United States. . .shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance. (Rehabilitation Act, 1973)

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- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- SUBCHAPTER II - PUBLIC SERVICES [Title II]
- PART A - Prohibition Against Discrimination and Other Generally Applicable Provisions [Subtitle A] The law states:
  - Subject to the provisions of this subchapter, no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity. (Sec. 12132)
  - An individual with a disability as defined by the ADA:

has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

For example: a college would be responsible for making academic adjustments and for providing auxiliary aids and services to otherwise qualified students with disabilities - for example, readers, interpreters, adaptive equipment for classroom use - if these are needed for equality of opportunity.

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**What are some of the accommodations students may receive in college?**

- College accommodations depend upon a student's particular disabilities and how they impact him in the college setting. Some accommodations include:
  - Regarding examination accommodations
    - extended test time
    - reader
    - quiet room

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regarding course accommodations

- taped textbooks
- use of a tape recorder to take lectures
- instructions orally and in writing
- readers for assignments
- note taker
- use of a computer to complete written work
- priority seating
- tests produced in large print
- use of a calculator
- a copy of the instructor's notes

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SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS PLAN			
Student's Name _____		Date of Birth _____	SS# _____
Address _____		City _____	Zip _____
On the basis of educational, psychological, and/or medical reports (see attached letter), this student has been identified as having a documented disability in the area(s) of: _____			
Assessment Information			
	Original Assessment	Interim Assessment	Updated Assessment
Date (Month/Year)			
Age/Grade of Student			
Name			
Job Title			
Institutional Affiliation			
Qualifications			
Verification of Diagnosis: _____			
Based on the assessment information, it is recommended that the following accommodations be allowed/provided for this student:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Permission to tape lectures	<input type="checkbox"/> Tests produced in large print		
<input type="checkbox"/> Extended test time	<input type="checkbox"/> Oral or alternative test		
<input type="checkbox"/> Alternative test setting	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorded textbooks		
<input type="checkbox"/> Readers for assignments	<input type="checkbox"/> Use of a calculator		
<input type="checkbox"/> Readers/cassette for tests	<input type="checkbox"/> Note-taking assistance		
<input type="checkbox"/> Use of a computer for written work	<input type="checkbox"/> Extended time for written work		
<input type="checkbox"/> Preferential seating	<input type="checkbox"/> Editing/writing assistance		
Specify, if necessary: _____			
Charles J. Karulak, Ed.D. Headmaster	Diana Kenny, M.A. Director of Testing Services	Tina L. Hall, M.A. School Counselor	5

### Developing Skills for Success

- Self-awareness
- Identifying a students strengths and weakness
- Knowing your learning styles
- Social Skills
- Problem Solving Skills
- Self-concept, self-esteem and self-confidence
- Self-advocacy skills
- Communication skills-I PLAN-SHARE Behaviors
- Goal setting (attainment) and self-monitoring

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**Developing Skills for Success**

- Use of calendar and checklists
- Enduring work ethic
- Self-discipline
- Students to be held accountable by parents and teachers
- Students to meet all deadlines including being on time for any activity Developing strong study skills
- Developing test-taking strategies
- Formation of Study Groups/Academic Alliances
- Memory-short term, long term, and active working memory
- Recognizing quality work

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**Developing Skills for Success**

- Cooperation, being respectful, sincerity, and manners
- Recognizing "chaos"
- Study skills and strategies
- Note taking skills and notebooks
- Useful types of technology – basic software applications- Kurzweil-navigating the Internet-tape recording-various forms of media-laptops or Alpha Smarts-PowerPoint
- Calendars, planning and organizing
- Community connections
- Resiliency
- Acknowledging problems with attention and strategies to address this challenge

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### Developing Skills for Success

- Recognizing "chaos"
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Kurzweil-navigating the Internet-tape recording-various  
forms of media-laptops or Alpha Smarts-PowerPoint
- Calendars, planning and organizing
- Community connections
- Resiliency
- Acknowledging problems with attention and strategies to  
address this challenge
- Addressing and maintaining any emotional issues

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