The College Admission Process for Students with Learning Disabilities and ADHD
College versus High School

What parents and students need to be aware of:

- Difference in Laws
- Parental Support
- Difference in Requirements
How the Laws are Different

- **Individuals With Disabilities in Education Act**
  - IDEA is an Education Entitlement Law

- **The Americans With Disabilities Act Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act**
  - ADA is a Civil Rights Law
High School and IDEA

- Students Entitled to an Education Until Age 21 or Graduation
- Parents Have Rights and May Access Information
- School District Responsibilities: Interventions, Evaluations, Identifications, Cost and Advocacy
- Interventions May Include Individual Educational Plan (IEP), Goals and Objectives, and Modifications to the Curriculum
- All Professionals and Family Have Access to Students Records
College: A.D.A & Section 504

- Equal Opportunity in All Settings
- Parents Have No Rights and Cannot Access Information
- Accommodations: No IEP, Colleges are not obligated to waive courses or other academic requirements
- Student Must Self-Advocate and Disclose
- Student Responsible for Costs
- Records Are Available to Support Services Staff and All Others Must Have Signed Permission From Student
Testing with SAT or ACT

- Eligibility
  - IEP
  - 504 Plan
  - Plan based on current Psycho-Educational Evaluation
- Accommodations Must Already Take Place in School
- School Testing Required for Some Accommodations
- Accommodations Available Once During Testing Period for School Testing
SAT Accommodations

- Evaluation Within the Last 5 Years Verifying the Disability
- When Appropriate, a Reading Evaluation Must Be Included
- Computers May Be Approved for Writing Section
- School Testing: Have 4 Day window to Administer Test
- SSD Students Register on Line
Variable section eliminated for extended-time students

All 100% extended-time students will be tested over 2 (long) days

All 50% extended-time students will test in 1 (long) day

Two-page limit for computer typed essays; no spell check or other aids allowed

Streamlined application process

Students register only once in high school. Do it early!
ACT Accommodations

- Evaluation Verifying the Disability Within Last 3 Years
- Request Must Include: Evaluation Dates, Subtest Scores and %ile Scores, Functional Limitations Affecting Learning, & Specific Recommendations
- Students Apply online for each test date then counselor submits documentation
- Some accommodations require school based testing and some allow multiple day testing
- National Test Centers Will Offer Extended Time on Each Test Date
Determining When a Student is Ready for a 4-Year College

Has he or she taken standard college prep curriculum?

- 4 years of English
- 3 years of math (Algebra 1 & 2 and Geom)
- 2 years of history/social science
- 2 years of lab science
- 2 years of foreign language
- 1 year of visual or performing art
Can the student achieve academic success independently?

- Modified classes necessary?
- Any areas of subject deficiencies?
- Grade point average of 2.4 or above?
- Upward trend in grade point average?
- Executive Function?
- Self advocacy skills?
Executive Function Skills Required to Succeed in College

Executive Function Skills:

- Planning
- Organization
- Self-regulation (sleep, personal hygiene, nutrition, time management)
- Reasonably independent and mature
Executive Function and College Life Cont.

- Unstructured Schedule
- Long Term Assignments
- Social Life
- Food Choices
- Roommate

*College is a Test of Executive Function for All Students!*
Types of College Support Programs

- Structured Programs
- Coordinated Services
- Basic Service Programs
Structured Programs

- Comprehensive – significant support
- Students may be required to sign contract
- Usually, substantial program participation fee
- Some programs have a separate admission process
Services may include:

- Staff Trained in Learning Disabilities
- Special Orientation Programs
- Curriculum Modifications
- Assistance with Advocacy
- Academic Monitoring and Counseling
Some Colleges With Structured Programs

- Curry College
- American University
- Landmark College
- Marist College
- Lynn University
- Fairleigh Dickinson University
- University of Arizona
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- Mitchell College, CT
- University of Denver
Coordinated Services

Moderate levels of Support provided with access to a Learning Disabilities Specialist (at Least part-time) who assists students in coordinating academic adjustments. Faculty trained to be receptive to accommodations.

Services May Include:

- Learning Strategies Instruction
- Counseling
- Tutoring
- Assistance With Advocacy
Colleges With Coordinated Services

- All UC and CSU and CC Campuses (if staffing is preserved)
- Boston College
- Brown University
- Cornell University
- University of San Francisco
- Santa Clara University
- Stanford University
Basic Service Programs

These Programs Provide the Minimum Amount of Support Necessary in Order to Comply With the Law.
Colleges With Basic Service Programs

- Oregon State University
- University of Redlands
- Loyola Marymount University
- University of the Pacific
- Emory University
- Marquette University
- Oberlin College
- Whittier College
A Sampling of Types of Services:

- Adaptive Technology Lab
- Extended time on quizzes and exams
- Exams administered in distraction-free room
- Alternative Testing formats (e.g. oral exams in lieu of written exams)
- Early Registration and Reduced Course load
- Text to Speech
- Books on tape and enlarged handouts
- Use of a tape recorder to record lectures**
- Talking calculators**
- Spell checkers**
- Note-taking services
- Advocacy Seminars
- Learning Disability Support Group

** Students might be required to provide their own equipment
The Right Match?

- Structured Programs Work Best for Students Who Need Close Monitoring and High Levels of Support.

- Coordinated Programs Work Best for Students Who Want to Be “Mainstreamed” but Know They Will Need Support.

- Basic Service Programs Work Best for the Highly Motivated, Independent Self-Advocators.
College Selection Cont.

- *Find the Right Match*

- Family needs to visit College Campuses

- Meet With the Disabled Students Services Office During Campus Visits

- Be realistic About the Level of Support Needed and Be Certain the Level of Support Provided Meets Students Needs
Disclosure of LD is not required, but....

- Can help to explain relative weaknesses
- Can help to explain low test scores
- Can show persistence in overcoming adversity
- Should not be the defining part of the application.
Special Application Issues

If college has a PROGRAM to which LD students must apply:

- A separate application may be required, in addition to regular application
- Documentation must be sent to program
- Program director MAY be involved in admission of student to college & program
Preparing Students for Transition to College

- Realistic Assessment of Current Support at Home and at School
- Step-by-Step Program to Reduce Support and Build Independence
- Student needs to attend and understand IEP meeting
- Realize that Learning Programs will Communicate only with Students, Not Parents
- Students Must Understand and be Prepared to Advocate for the Support They Need
- Appropriate, Timely Documentation is Essential
- Accommodations should be requested before beginning of school
Prepare Student to Access Support

- Students should practice self disclosure, the elevator speech
- Student should set up meeting with service coordinator before or during orientation
- Student should be able to read and understand documentation and must provide documentation before or during this meeting, to see if adequate
- Students need to know what services & accommodations they will need
Remind Students to Use all Campus Resources

- Tutoring/Learning Centers
- Career Counseling Centers
- Counseling Centers
- Writing Centers
- Peer Mentoring Programs
- Academic Advising Centers
- Health Centers
Which LD Students are Successful?

- Understand and can articulate their LD
- Began advocating for self in high school
- Can study on their own
- Know how to get help when they need it
- Resourceful-can figure ways to get around problems
- Resilience-know how to recover from failure
Resources

- www.Collegeboard.com
- The K & W Guide to Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities by Kravets and Wax
- College Guide for Students with Learning Disabilities by Sclafani and Lynch
- Colleges That Change Lives by Loren Pope
- Where You Go Is Not Who You’ll Be by Frank Bruni
Final Thoughts

- Make Sure Students Have Appropriate, Timely Testing
- Students and Parents Need to Understand Test Results
- Encourage Self-Advocacy
- During application process students should communicate With College Learning Support Programs As Well As With Admission Offices