

Huntington High School  
Guidance Department

**Recipe for Success:**  
**Student Advocacy Handbook**



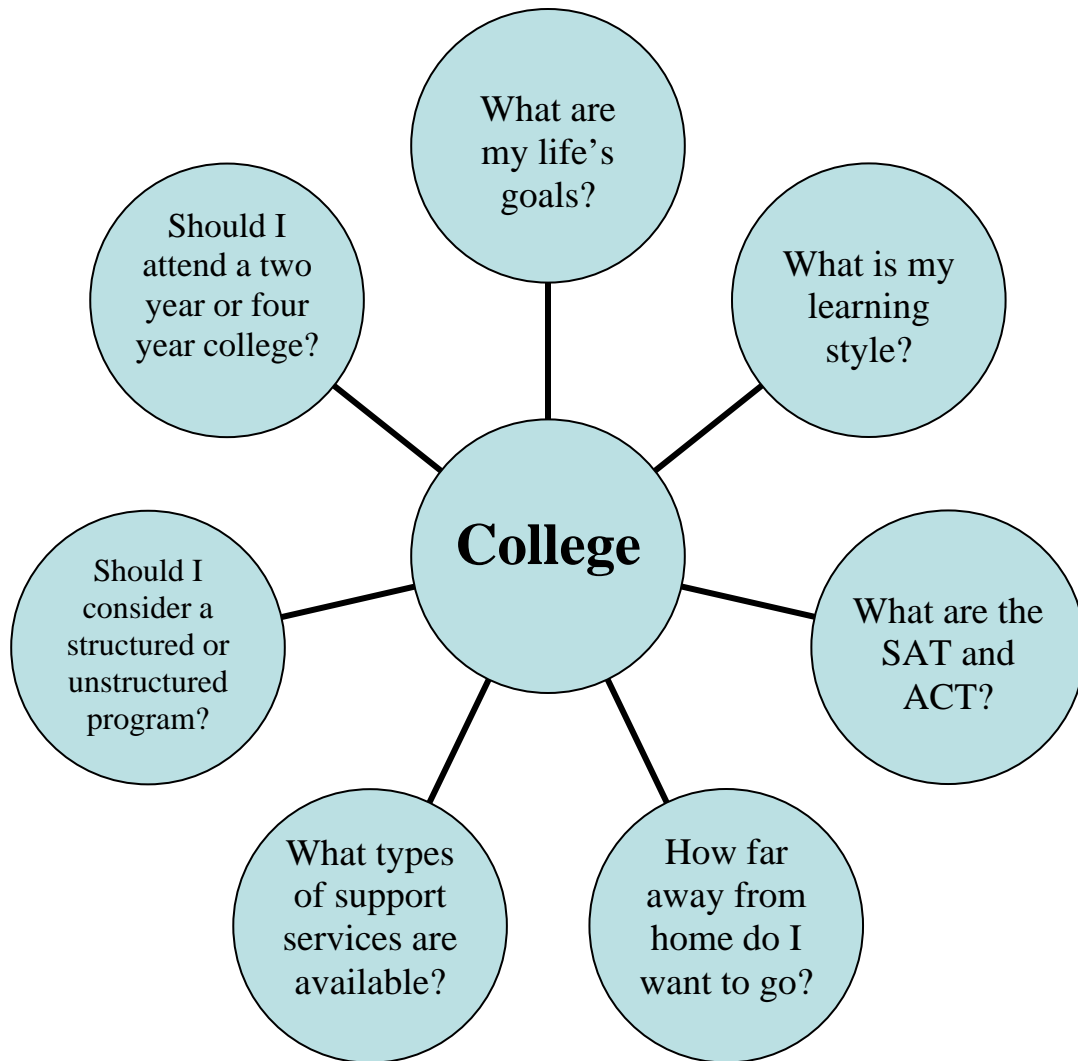
Dear Student and Parent/Guardian,

We in the Huntington High School Guidance Department hope that this handbook will prove to be a valuable resource as you consider postsecondary education. The handbook is designed to provide information you will need to transition successfully from high school.

Titles under which you may find support services vary from school to school. As you begin your search of appropriate intuitions for your needs, you will get to know the terms that are used.

Transition planning is an important aspect of your junior and senior year CSE meetings. Please be sure to consult your roster teacher, CSE team, and guidance counselor as you prepare for your transition into postsecondary education.

Sincerely,  
Huntington High School Guidance Department





## Laws Governing Postsecondary Education

Colleges are not required to seek out students with learning disabilities and do not have to provide any diagnostic services. They also are only required to provide “reasonable accommodations.” Students with learning disabilities and ADD/ADHD may be entitled to reasonable academic support based on legislation that was enacted in 1973. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, was the first civil rights law that specifically addressed individuals with disabilities. It was also the first law that addressed student with disabilities in postsecondary settings. The law mandates that **all colleges and universities in the United States that receive any federal financial assistance cannot discriminate in the recruitment, admission, or treatment of student with disabilities. This law allows students with documented disabilities to request modifications, academic support, or auxiliary aids that allow them to participate in and benefit from all of the activities and programs that colleges offer.** The law 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 financial assistance.”*

**Under the provisions of Section 504, colleges and universities may not:**

- Limit the number of students with disabilities they admit
- Ask questions on application materials that require the student to disclose a disability
- Ask students to take preadmissions tests without academic assistance for which they may be eligible
- Exclude a student who is qualified from a particular major or course of study
- Counsel students with disabilities out of a particular program due to the disability
- Have rules or policies that discriminate against students with disabilities
- Limit eligibility to student with disabilities for scholarships, financial assistance, fellowships, internships, or assistantships

## Comparison of Secondary and Postsecondary Laws and Settings

ISSUE	Responsibility At Secondary Level- High School	Responsibility At Postsecondary Level- College
Legislation	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
Basis for participation	Entitlement	Eligibility: otherwise qualified
Educational focus regarding disability	Remediation, modification	Accommodations
Who's responsible	School district and parents	Student and college
Goal	High school diploma/college/work	College degree/employment
Class Structure	5x per week; 42 minute classes, graded tests homework	1-3x per week; 1-6 hours per class; 2-4 tests/exams; projects; research papers
Skills	Textbooks, blackboard notes, homework completion	Independence, time management, study skills, computing, self-advocacy
Accommodations	Extended time for testing and/or reading assignments, separate location, readers, resource room, preferential seating, breaks, use of auxiliary aids, etc.	Determined on a case by case, course by course basis. May include adaptive equipment, modified test administration, note takers, tape recorders and tape recorded text books
Assistance	Teachers, resource room teacher, parents	Instructor, student support office staff, tutors or skill center staff



**When you begin** looking at various colleges that match your needs, you should ask the admissions office to put you in contact with the office that provides accommodations for students with disabilities. If you visit a campus, you should make an appointment to meet with the learning specialist to determine if the services at the college meet your needs.

**Information you should** be able to tell a learning specialist about yourself:

- Why you want to go to college
- Why college is a realistic choice for you at this time
- Your type of disability and how it effects your learning
- Examples of the kinds of difficulties you have had in school
- Activities you are good and and/or like doing
- The support services and accommodations you used in high school
- The support services and accommodations you plan to use in college
- How copies of records documenting your disability can be acquired
- The kind of diploma you are receiving
- If you've applied for ACCES-VR or other rehabilitation services and how to contact your guidance counselor

**Information you should ask** the learning specialist:

- What is the focus of the disability support services program-learning strategies, remediation, etc
- What types of academic accommodations are readily available
- How do I acquire support services-tutors, alternative testing, note takers, etc
- Is a reduced course load possible
- Are course substitutions offered
- Is there priority registration for students with disabilities
- How are academic adjustments coordinated
- Is the faculty aware of and cooperative about the needs of students with disabilities
- Is the campus atmosphere acceptant of students with disabilities
- Is there a cost associated with any support services

# Structured Programs, Coordinated Support, or Self Directed Programs?

While all colleges offer students with appropriate documentation academic adjustments and auxiliary aids, utilizing these support mechanisms will vary, falling within three categories: Structured Programs, Coordinated Support and Self-Directed Programs.

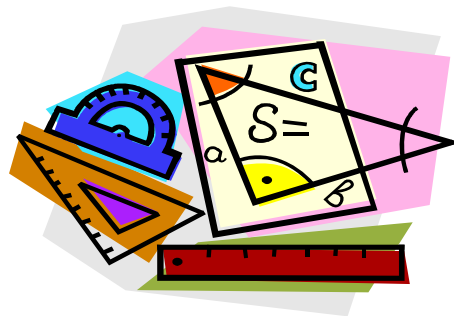
<b>Structured Programs</b>	<b>Coordinated Support</b>	<b>Self-Directed Programs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate admission process and application</li> <li>• Admission criteria usually more flexible</li> <li>• Additional fee for service</li> <li>• Comprehensive support administered by certified LD specialists</li> <li>• Curriculum modifications</li> <li>• Intensive academic monitoring and counseling</li> <li>• Assistance with advocacy</li> <li>• Assistive technology</li> <li>• Very low student to faculty ratio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director may be involved in admission decision or offer recommendations to admission office</li> <li>• Services provided by at least one certified LD specialist</li> <li>• Students involved in developing plans to meet their needs</li> <li>• Students voluntarily request accommodations or related services</li> <li>• Study skills classes, remedial support</li> <li>• Hybrid model</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic services that comply with federal mandate</li> <li>• No separate admission process or application</li> <li>• No extra program fees</li> <li>• Self disclosure and advocacy</li> <li>• Moderate support</li> <li>• Learning strategies instruction</li> <li>• Counseling and tutoring</li> <li>• Student progress is usually not monitored</li> </ul>

Colleges with minimal support programs provide relatively little in the way of extra services but enough to meet federal regulations, such as offering accommodations. Self-Directed/Decentralized college programs may have a specially designated office or person on campus to assist LD students, as well as additional services. Frequently, professors will modify course requirements to meet the needs of LD students. The focus of these programs is to help LD students adjust to college, but students are expected to know when and how to ask for help. A Structured/Proactive program has a full-time program coordinator who administers services beyond mere accommodations. The type of comprehensive program differs from school to school, but they generally include individualized contacts for students, such as help in learning skills and strategies, tutoring, LD specialists, special testing arrangements, and support groups. These programs often have trained disability specialists and adaptive technology. The focus is to adapt school programs to suit the needs of LD students, rather than helping them adapt to existing programs. Coordinated support programs are a blend of both.

**The student will need to decide which model best fits his/her academic needs.**

## Sample Accommodations Granted by Colleges

- Extended time for tests. Usually this means time and a half; double time is granted infrequently. Untimed testing is almost never granted.
- Separate location for tests. Often granted only for students with ADHD
- Preferential classroom seating
- Permission to take breaks during tests
- No scantron answer sheets
- Items and directions read and clarified
- Spelling waived. This accommodation can be interpreted as no deductions for misspellings, use of a handheld spell-checker, use of a word-processor with a spell-check function, or having spelling corrected by a test proctor (spelling waivers also apply to foreign language courses)
- Use of a word-processor for essays
- Use of a scribe for essays
- Use of a calculator
- Permission to tape-record classes, with the professor's consent
- Copies of class notes (these are almost always provided by volunteer student note takers and are not immediately available)
- Books on tape
- Priority course registration (usually only available through Structured/Proactive programs)
- Colleges do NOT have to waive curriculum requirements, such as foreign language or mathematics. Check on each college's policy.
- College professors rarely modify teaching style or exam format. Successful students learn to adapt to professors.
- The college will determine which accommodations will be granted based upon documentation-that is, the results of recent psychological and educational testing. IEP accommodations do not necessarily carry over to college!







## Learning Disabilities and the SAT/ACT

The SAT and ACT standardized tests are used to tell admissions staff members how well prepared you are for college-level academics. The scores also allow colleges to compare your college readiness with other students in a standardized way. The SAT and ACT are the best independent, standardized measures of a student's college readiness. They are standardized across all students, schools, and states—providing a common and objective scale for comparison. High school grades are a very useful indicator of how students perform in college, yet there is great variation in grading standards and course rigor within and across high schools. Remember, too, that your standardized test scores (SAT and/or ACT) are only one of a number of factors that colleges consider when making admissions decisions. Other factors, like your high school transcript, essays, recommendations, interviews, and extracurricular activities, also play a role in admissions decisions.

Students with documented learning disabilities can request special accommodations when taking the SAT or ACT. Depending upon your learning disability, accommodations could include extended time to take the test, an assistant to read the questions out loud, or a specific seating arrangement (students with ADHD, for example, may be able to test in a private room, or a room with fewer students). You should meet with your guidance counselor to apply for special accommodations. You may need to provide additional documentation of your learning disability from your school or a medical professional. Begin this process as early as possible. It may take time to track down the appropriate documentation. And if you're denied special accommodations, you'll want plenty of time to appeal the decision.

Exam	SAT	ACT
Forms	With your guidance counselor complete the <u>Student Eligibility Form</u>	With your guidance counselor, complete one of these forms: 1. Application for <u>ACT Extended-Time National Testing</u> or, 2. <u>Request for ACT Special Testing</u>
When	As early as possible, preferably in the spring of freshman year before you take the PSAT the following fall.	As early as possible. The final deadline is usually four weeks prior to the test date.
Next steps	You'll receive an eligibility letter that will describe the accommodations for which you've been approved. The letter will include an SSD Eligibility Code.	If you're approved for extended-time, this will be noted on the admission ticket that you'll receive in the mail. If you're approved for other testing accommodations, you will also be notified by mail.
Registering	Use your SSD Eligibility Code when you register for the test	To request extra time, submit your request with the regular registration packet. To request other accommodations, submit the application for special testing before you submit the regular registration packet.

# Key Factors in a Student's Success

- Level of interest
- Motivation
- Independence
- Self direction
- Self advocacy skills
- Knowledge about self
- Academic abilities
- Acquiring information about college programs and services
- Utilizing appropriate resources for support

In order to succeed in postsecondary education, students need to know themselves and be prepared in the following ways:

- Understand and be able to describe their strengths and capabilities
- Understand their disabilities and the accommodations they need
- Develop academic and career goals
- Practice using accommodations and devices that help them learn and succeed
- Develop and use effective strategies for studying, test preparation, and time management
- Collect and maintain a file of current school records & disability documentation information

New college students must do the following to receive services and accommodations:

- Identify themselves as students with disabilities
- Provide the required disability documentation
- Request services each semester
- Comply with the college's student code of conduct
- Complete any follow-up activities required by the campus to ensure services

**Perhaps the most important concept to grasp** is that you need all the same competencies as any college student **PLUS** whatever special skills or strategies are needed to cope with your disability. It is better to start acquiring skills in an environment you know well (i.e. high school) rather than wait until you arrive on a college campus. Coming to college comfortable with yourself and your needs can make the difference between success and failure.



## **What makes a successful student?**

Demonstrated competency of the basic skills (reading, writing, and math) is necessary for success in college level courses where content mastery will be evaluated.

Most instructors expect you to spend at least 3 hours outside of class doing assignments or reading for every hour spent in class. For example, if you are registered for 12 credits, you should be spending a minimum of 36 hours per week outside of class doing assignments and preparing for the class. Often students with learning disabilities need to spend considerably more time than this to be successful.

Coming to college as a full time student is a full time job. If you cannot make this commitment at this time, you may want to consider enrolling part time or attending college at a later date.

### **Desirable traits for college success:**

- Possessing a positive attitude
- Being flexible
- Having knowledge about academic policies and deadlines
- Using good communication skills
- Being able to organize yourself
- Having a clear sense of your goal
- Being independent
- Knowing when and how to seek help

### **Ways to make your college transition successful:**

- Understand and be able to thoroughly describe your disability
- Be the central part of decision making
- Do your own academic work
- Find the right college for yourself and your personality
- It is wise to start slowly and, in the long run, get better grades and graduate
- Learn, and use to your advantage, laws that protect the rights of people with disabilities
- Make it a practice to meet your professors and discuss your disability with them
- Make friends and share your college life/challenges

# Major Skills Needed by All Students Entering College

## Classroom Preparation

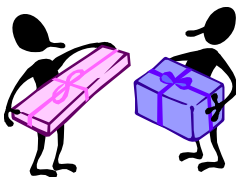
- Self advocacy skills-knows his/her disability and what accommodative services are necessary to be successful
- Note taking skills
- Adequate study habits/test taking skills
- Being prepared for class
- Importance of homework
  - Writing name/date correctly on paper
  - Organizing work (use of folders, etc.)
  - Neatness of work
  - Turning in work on time
- Classroom etiquette
  - Stay in seat
  - Raise hand/don't interrupt
  - Stay in the room
- Importance of being on time for class

## Necessary Social Skills

- How to interact appropriately with teachers/mentors/students
- How to introduce yourself to someone
- How to let someone know you like them (dating etiquette)
- How to interact in social situations
- Dealing effectively with peer pressure (drinking, drugs, sexuality)
- How to deal appropriately with rejection
- Ability to use the telephone effectively
- Problem-solving and decision making skills

## Living Independently for the First Time

- Structure of environment (or lack of structure)- more choices, more freedom
- Transportation to and from campus, job, internship
- Ability to use leisure time effectively
- Knowing how to locate the help and assistance he/she needs
- Adequate knowledge of medical needs in regard to medication and health problems and being able to articulate these needs to others
- Basic independent living skills-money management, cooking, laundry, shopping



# Self Advocacy

**Students must be able to advocate for themselves. Students should:**

- Be taught what self advocacy is and how to follow through on it
- Role play advocating for themselves as soon as possible
- Be able to explain their own disabilities
- Know the differences in laws: IDEA vs. Section 504 and ADA
- Be responsible for their own needs, negotiating, compromising and making their own decisions whenever possible
- Be encouraged to be as independent as possible
- Arrange for services from outside agencies before they leave high school
- Investigate and understand their preferred learning styles and know how to adapt to various teaching styles

## Developing Your Own Self Advocacy Skills

Identify your strengths and weaknesses:

- Academic
- Social
- Personal

Know how to describe:

- Your strengths and weaknesses
- The impact the disability has on your life
- The academic and life skills accommodations that benefit you

Arrange your accommodations by:

- Knowing your rights
- Knowing your responsibilities
- Knowing your college's policies and procedures regarding academic accommodations
- Understanding aggressive, passive and assertive behavioral patterns
- Role playing for various interactions
- Debriefing methods for working with faculty and staff



Please complete this form with your S/O or roster teacher. This information will help ensure that the college personnel providing support services are familiar with you personally. Plan to bring this form with you when meeting the learning specialist for the first time.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Completed By \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

<b>SKILL AREA</b>	<b>STRENGTH</b>	<b>WEAKNESS</b>
<i>Organization</i>		
Following schedule		
Study skills		
Note taking		
Assignment recording		
Staying on task		
Organizing materials		
Assignment completion		
<i>Social</i>		
Appropriate classroom conduct		
Interpreting corrective feedback		
Developing peer relationships		
Developing adult relationships		
Personality		
<i>Learning</i>		
Word recognition reading skills		
Math concepts		
Computation		
Problem solving		
Written language/composition		
Spelling		
Grammatical structure		
Auditory perception		
Visual perception		
Visual motor integration		

# ACCES-VR

ACCES-VR is the New York State Office for Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation. ACCES-VR can help an eligible person with a disability to....

- Plan for a career
- Participate in paid work experiences
- Get training to achieve work goals
- Find a job that matches the person's abilities, interests and needs
- Work with employers or colleges to make sure the person receives reasonable accommodations when needed

Students may be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services if they receive special education services or other assistance due to a disability. A disability may be a medical condition such as diabetes or epilepsy, an orthopedic or other physical condition, or a mental, emotional or learning disability. A counselor will work with the student and see if s/he is eligible and what types of services are needed to prepare for work. To be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, the person must have a physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability that interferes with their ability to work. The person must also need and be able to benefit from the services in order to get and keep a job. If a student is eligible, the student and the vocational rehabilitation counselor will plan a program to help you prepare to go to work. The plan is called an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Services may include...

- Work evaluation planning
- Counseling
- Skills training at a college or community rehabilitation center
- Adaptive equipment
- Support services while completing training
- Placement services
  - Job-seeking skills training
  - Employer referrals
  - Work tryouts and on the job services such as work coaching or arranging for reasonable accommodations

There is no cost for advice and planning assistance provided by the vocational rehabilitation counselor or for determining if and how ACCES-VR can assist. Once it is decided that the student is eligible, family resources and level of need are considered in providing some services that may be needed by the student to accomplish the job goal. A family may be expected to share in the costs of services such as attending college, purchasing equipment, or making necessary modifications to the home. Financial need is not considered for job development, work tryouts, on the job training and supported employment.



## **Sources of Additional Information**

K&W Guide to Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities or ADHD, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Princeton Review, 2010)

7 Steps for Success: High School to College Transition Strategies for Students with Disabilities (E.C. Hamblet, 2011)

Colleges That Change Lives (L. Pope, 2006)

Individual college websites

New York State Adult Career and Continuing Education Services-Vocational Rehabilitation, [www.acces.nysed.gov](http://www.acces.nysed.gov)

New York State Learning Disability Association, [www.ldanys.org](http://www.ldanys.org)

LD Online, [www.ldonline.org/indepth/college](http://www.ldonline.org/indepth/college)

College Board, [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com)

Council for Exceptional Children, [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)

Long Island Parent Center at CW Post, [www.liparentcenter.liu.org](http://www.liparentcenter.liu.org)