

GETTING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES READY FOR COLLEGE

Parents, Counselors, Teachers and Students with learning disabilities may use this list as a reminder of helpful skills and necessary steps to take as a high school student with a learning disability progresses toward college.

- 1. Obtain all special testing records before high school graduation.** Some school systems destroy these records upon the student's graduation. Colleges, as well as vocational rehabilitation offices, request these records to assist in providing special services to students.
- 2. Make contact with the local Department of Rehabilitation Services or Office of Vocational Rehabilitation before graduation.** Vocational Rehabilitation offers a variety of services to eligible students with learning disabilities such as vocational assessment, job placement, etc.
- 3. Make sure the student's knowledge of study skills is adequate.** In addition to high school assistance, consider special study skills/ programs offered at community colleges, private agencies or individual tutoring.
- 4. Help students to increase their independent living skills.** Help them to manage their own checking accounts, do their own laundry, clean, do some cooking, etc. If the student will live away from home this is especially important.
- 5. Encourage part-time jobs, volunteer positions, or internships.** These are helpful to improve socialization skills, as well as give a better understanding of work situations and expectations.
- 6. Make sure students have a good understanding of their particular learning disability.** They should know and be able to articulate their strengths and weaknesses, as well as what compensating techniques and accommodations work best for them.
- 7. Encourage students to be their own advocate.** A good first step is to encourage them to discuss their learning disability and needed accommodations, if any, with their regular high school instructors. Most colleges will expect students to advocate for themselves.
- 8. Be sure it is the students choice to attend college.** Do they understand that it may be harder and take more time to manage college level work? Are they committed to spending extra time on studying, and to request and use appropriate accommodations when needed?

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