

Transitions: Life after high school...



**"Life is a journey, not a destination."
Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Created by those who believe in you!
Charleston CAN (Collaborative Action Network)

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Introduction

We can all rely on change to occur. Change is part of life for everyone.

Change can bring about various feelings – many occurring simultaneously – excitement, anxiety, happiness, frustration.

Change can be unexpected like a power outage and hard to prepare for. But sometimes it might seem like we have all the time in the world for change - getting ready for vacation, the first day back to school, practicing for your driver's license, or finding that perfect prom outfit.

Preparing for life after high school is in YOUR control. Use this resource as a preparation tool for whatever awaits you.



What do you want to do after high school?

This is probably a question you've received from a teacher, counselor, or a family member.

A lot of [options](#) exist when it comes to deciding what you want to do after high school. Consider the following:

<p><i>Option 1</i> Continuing Your Education (2-year college, 4-year college, trade school, etc.)</p>	<p>For either option, being able to answer these questions allows you to understand who you are now and the direction you want to take.</p>	<p><i>Option 2</i> Employment or Other Interests</p>
<p>How far from home do you want to be?</p> <p>Do you want to attend a liberal arts school where you'll need to take a variety of courses like history, math, and psychology, or do you want to go to a school that is more specific with a focus on a particular skill?</p> <p>If you've taken the SAT or ACT, are your scores at or above what Admissions expects you to have at the school(s) you're interested in attending?</p>	<p>What are your strengths?</p> <p>What are your difficulties?</p> <p>What interests do you have?</p> <p>What skills have you learned in high school?</p> <p>What skills should you work on?</p>	<p>How far from home do you want to be?</p> <p>Are you interested in entering the military?</p> <p>Do you want to take time off from school and be employed somewhere?</p> <p>Have you considered a Gap Year program?</p>



You have a lot of decisions to make.
 You probably won't know what you want to do right away.
 And that's OK!
 Rely on the support from others as you explore your options.

Preparing today for tomorrow

From your freshman to senior year of high school



Freshman Year

- Understand your disability and how it impacts you.
- Figure out what accommodations work best for you and why.
- Make use of any assistive technology (e.g. books in alternate format; Dragon Dictate) that will be helpful to you.
- Think about what subjects you enjoy the most.
- Learn about your IEP or 504 Plan.
- Explore different clubs, sports, and/or volunteer opportunities. Join at least 3 activities you have an interest in.

Sophomore Year

- Do a [search](#) of schools you might be interested in.
- Start thinking about whether you want to take the [SAT](#) or [ACT](#) because you might want to request accommodations for the test, and that takes time.
- Keep learning about what accommodations help you most.
- Determine what study habits help you to be successful?
- Talk to people to figure out if college or a job is the best fit after graduation.











Junior Year

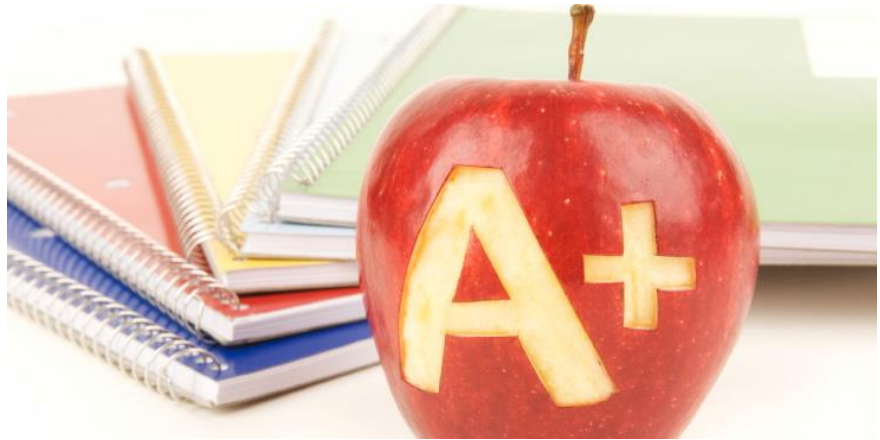
- Plan and visit colleges of interest.
- Take your studies very seriously.
- Ask for assistance in registering for the SAT or ACT.
- Start to research scholarships or other financial ways of paying for school.
- Investigate agencies that assist individuals with disabilities in their educational and/or employment pursuits, such as [Vocational Rehabilitation](#).

Senior Year

- Continue to do your best in all aspects of your life. Don't get "senioritis". 😊
- Schedule an appointment with the Disability Services representative at each school you'd like to attend (use the questions on pages 12-13).
- Make sure your disability-related documentation is up-to-date.
- Apply to colleges early.

The Successful Student:

-  Creates goals
-  Makes school a priority
-  Finds balance
-  Takes responsibility for their learning
-  Develops a study plan
-  Attends class
-  Participates
-  Talks to their teachers
-  Uses family and friends for support
-  Asks for help if needed



Considering College

Because [many students with disabilities are going to college](#), pages 7-17 will focus on the transition from high school to college. You might want to go to college immediately following high school. Other people take some time off from school before returning.

You might be thinking about attending college because...

- You enjoy learning.
- You're interested in a career which requires a degree.
- You have friends or family that are in college and like the experience.
- You have heard or are beginning to learn about the supports and services available at many colleges.

Can you think of other reasons you might want to go to college?

Are you ready for college?



Question	Yes	Sometimes	No
1. Can you name and describe your disability?			
2. Can you identify what obstacles to learning you have because of your disability?			
3. Do you know how you learn best?			
4. Do you know when to ask for help?			
5. Can you identify what academic subjects are easy or hard for you?			

6. Can you list what accommodations you receive in high school?			
7. Do you have paperwork from a professional that describes your disability? (An IEP or 504 Plan is not enough alone, unless it describes your needs and obstacles).			
8. Do you know what you want to study in college?			
9. Will you know where to get help when you need it in college?			
10. When you consider a future career, are you basing that on your interests and strengths?			
<p>The areas shaded above in the "sometimes" column indicates that your answer should be yes or no.</p> <p>Adapted from: The 411 on disability disclosure workbook</p>			

If you answered *Yes* to many of the questions then you're on your way to being prepared for college. Review this guide so you'll feel confident in your transition to college

If you answered *Sometimes* (if applicable) to many of the questions, you're working hard on getting ready for the new adventure that lies ahead, but study this guide, and ask questions.

If you answered *No* to many of the questions, talk to those around you and figure out the best path to take after high school.

What will college be like?

If you google the “differences between high school and college for students with disabilities” you will see a lot of different [websites](#) come up.

If you enter a higher-education program, it's important to know some key differences.

HIGH SCHOOL VS. COLLEGE	
Services and supports are delivered to you.	You need to seek out the services and supports.
Teachers identify students who need accommodations.	You need to “self-identify” as having a disability and needing accommodations. This means contacting the Disability Services office of the school you’ll be going to.
IEPs, 504 plans are used.	IEPs and 504 Plans are typically not used. You need to contact the Disability Services office and also visit their website to see what kind of disability-related documentation they want.
Information is shared with parents/guardians.	You are primarily the person we will communicate with. Parents/guardians are not involved without your permission.
Your parents/guardians, teachers, and counselors will try to make sure you’re successful.	You are responsible for your own success.
You might have gone to the “Resource Room” or a learning specialist for extra help.	Try to think of Disability Services as ONE of MANY places to go to with your questions or concerns.
<i>Reference: High School to College Transition; Comparison of the IDEA, Section 504, and ADA</i>	

Some colleges offer specialized [programs](#) that are highly structured and include a wide range of academic and behavioral supports.

Examples of schools with specialized programs include: [University of Arizona](#), [University of Connecticut](#), [Marshall University](#), [Landmark College](#), [Rochester Institute of Technology](#), and [Beacon College](#).

Other colleges offer [support services](#) that are less intensive and that require students to 'take the lead' in monitoring their progress and managing their special needs on campus.

All colleges that receive federal funding from the government (likely all the schools you'll consider) are required to have an office at the college that provides support to individuals with disabilities.



Questions for Disability Services

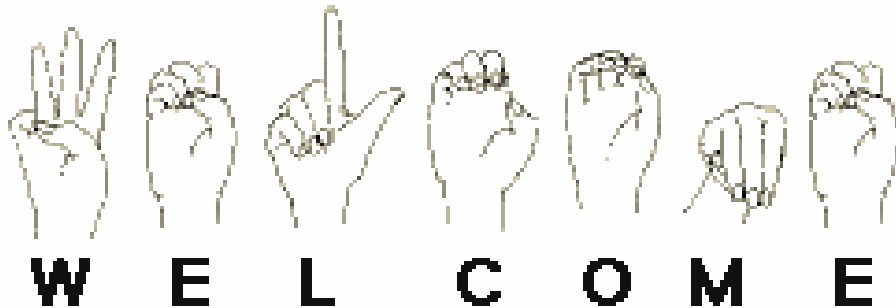


You can learn a lot of information about a school and the different supports provided from tutoring to figuring out what you want to study or major in, but talking with a campus representative can really help in figuring out which school is the best fit for you.

Your parents/guardians probably have a lot of questions for the person who works in the Disability Services office.

It's better and more preferred if you have questions prepared. After all, you are going to be the one that accesses these services and supports.

Here are some questions you might consider asking, and those who work in Disability Services will welcome it!



Questions	Response from Disability Services Representative
What kinds of support are offered here? What accommodations and services can I receive?	
How do I go about getting accommodations?	
When should I begin the process of setting up services?	
My testing is _____ years old. Will you accept it or do I need to be retested? To whom should my testing be sent?	
Do I need to tell my professors about my accommodations?	
Is there a tutoring center? What can they help me with?	
During registration, can someone in this office review my schedule with me to make sure I'm staying on track?	
What assistive technology do you offer here?	

Do you offer any housing accommodations for people with disabilities?	
Is it possible to meet with someone here on a weekly basis for check-in or extra help?	
If I'm not doing well, will I be alerted by someone?	
Does this college have a math or foreign language requirement?	
Are there waivers or substitutions for math and foreign languages?	
How many students are you serving through disability services? How many people work in this office?	
Is there an additional fee for any of the support services offered at the college?	
Reference: Planning a College Visit	

Can you think of other questions?





NEW COLLEGE STUDENTS:

- Must be motivated and proactive!!
- Seek IMMEDIATE on-campus assistance with:
 - Finding out Admission requirements
 - Completion of Financial Aid (FAFSA)
 - Going through Orientation
 - Choosing a Major/Program of Study (Academic Advisor/Counseling Services)
 - Developing an Academic Plan
 - Seeking assistance with Registration
 - Applying for Disability Accommodations – Must be a Self-Advocate and must Self-Identify Disability
- Be Seat-Ready on Day One!



College Students Sharing their Advice



Students from a few area colleges shared their experiences making the transition from high school to college.

Student 1

What was the most helpful resource you used during your first year at college?

The most helpful resource for me wasn't what most people probably normally consider a resource. But I found that my fellow students were incredibly helpful. From locating classes, to explaining assignments, to sympathizing with problems, other students had quick answers and simple solutions.

How would you describe the transition from high school to college?

The transition from high school to college is exactly as bad as you make it. It can seem overwhelming, but take things one day at a time. There's a lot more freedom, but also more responsibilities. No one is going to come after you if you skip class or don't turn an assignment in, but if there's a problem you are the one expected to handle it. College is the first step out the door and into the real world, so it's important not to trip up too much.

What three pieces of advice would you give to incoming students?

Make friends; they're the difference between going to college and enjoying college.

Be adaptable; sometimes things don't happen the way you want or expect so the best thing you can do is learn to work with what you have.

Remember that professors are people too; don't be intimidated or afraid to speak up, they were all once in the same place you're in now.

Student 2:

What was the most helpful resource you used during your first year at college?

It was the tutoring center.

How would you describe the transition from high school to college?

I thought it was pretty easy – just need to study a little harder.

What three pieces of advice would you give to incoming students?

Study.

Join a club.

Have fun and be smart.

Student 3

What was the most helpful resource you used during your first year at college?

Going to see professors during their office hours.

How would you describe the transition from high school to college?

Not too different, but with more freedom.

What 3 pieces of advice would you give to incoming students?

Study a lot.

Have a social life.

Go in with an open mind and learn what it is you want to do.

Student 4

What was the most helpful resource you used during your first year at college?

Tutoring support and Disability Services. The people in both centers helped me get through my first year of college.

How would you describe the transition from high school to college?

Difficult. I had a lot of assistance in high school. My teacher in high school helped me with everything. Coming to college was difficult because I had to learn how to start over again.

What 3 pieces of advice would you give to incoming students?

Get out of your comfort zone and try new things.
Meet as many people as you can.

Get to know your professors. They will help you.

Student 5

What was the most helpful resource you used during your first year at college?

The Counseling Center and the accommodations received through Disability Services.

How would you describe the transition from high school to college?

It wasn't too bad academically! I felt ready school-wise to succeed in my classes. Emotionally, it was hard to let go of home and leave my family. Therapy helped though and coming to the college I'm at was the best decision I ever made.

What 3 pieces of advice would you give to incoming students?

Get help and ask for help when you are struggling – psychologically or academically. College has many resources for students to take advantage of.

Go out of your comfort zone.

Stay true to yourself. Have fun, but make smart decisions.

Resources

<p><i>Knowing yourself</i></p>	<p>Faces of Learning</p> <p>Going to College – A Resource for Teens with Disabilities</p> <p>Self-Assessments</p>
<p><i>Options for pursuing higher education</i></p>	<p>Postsecondary Educational Options – Information Sheet</p>
<p><i>Telling others about your disability</i></p>	<p>Disability Disclosure in an Academic Setting – After High School</p> <p>Eastern Michigan University – Disability Resource Center</p>
<p><i>The law</i></p>	<p>Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know your Rights and Responsibilities</p> <p>Pacer Center - Champions for Children with Disabilities - ADA Q &A: Section 504 and Postsecondary Education</p>
<p><i>Preparing for the college experience</i></p>	<p>Transitioning to College – Key Area Differences</p> <p>Getting into College</p> <p>Resources for Students and Parents</p> <p>Landmark College – Transfer, Career, & Internship Services</p> <p>Helping Students with Disabilities Successfully Transition to College</p>

<i>South Carolina resources</i>	Vocational Rehabilitation Commission for the Blind AccessAbility SC Assistive Technology Program
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Contact Information Charleston SC area Colleges

Two-Year or Four-Year Institutions

<i>Art Institute of Charleston</i>	Disability Services
<i>Charleston Southern University</i>	Disability Services
<i>College of Charleston</i>	Center for Disability Services/SNAP
<i>Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC)</i>	Disability Services
<i>The Citadel</i>	Disability Services
<i>Trident Technical College</i>	Services for Students with Disabilities
<i>USC Beaufort</i>	Counseling and Disability Services

Vocational/Trade School

<u>American College of the Building Arts</u>	<u>Admissions</u>
<u>Virginia College</u>	<u>Admissions</u>

Online

<p><u>Palmetto College (University of SC system)</u></p>	<p><i>Start On Campus</i></p> <p>Your journey can begin on one of the four Palmetto College campuses, where you receive your first two years of college credit. USC Lancaster and USC Union is in the northern part of the state, <u>USC Salkehatchie</u> (<u>Disability Services</u>) is in the lowcountry and USC Sumter is in between,</p> <p><i>Finish Online</i></p> <p>Once you have 45 credit hours from any accredited college, you can complete your bachelor's degree online.</p>
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You have **BRAINS** in your **HEAD**.
You have **FEET** in your **SHOES**.
You can **STEER** yourself
any **DIRECTION** you **CHOOSE**.
-Dr. Seuss



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