



State of Arizona
Department of Education

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Students, Parents, Teachers:

"Taking the Next Steps" is an easy-to-follow guide designed to direct students with disabilities through a step-by-step process for transitioning from high school to postsecondary education.

While students progress through high school, their roles as "self-advocates" should continue to grow as they take on more responsibility for their own educational decisions.

Upon graduation, students have the option to further their education and to become even more confident, self-reliant adults. They also have the responsibility to understand their disabilities, their rights to equal access, and how to apply to enter postsecondary education. "Taking the Next Steps" clarifies these rights and responsibilities.

A student's self-advocacy responsibilities will increase in postsecondary education, and the role of parents and teachers as advocates will continue to decrease. Parents especially need to foster this change and encourage their children to empower themselves with the appropriate skills to be self-reliant. Students will always look to parents and trusted adults for support and advice. Responsibility for the postsecondary experience lies in the hands of the student.

Students, as you read through "Taking the Next Steps", you will be guided through the process of selecting and applying to a postsecondary institution. Now is the time to start advocating for yourself by following the enclosed step-by-step process. This guide is **YOUR** first step in preparing for future successful educational experiences.

Sincerely,

Next Step Development Team

Transitioning FAQ's

10 IMPORTANT THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TRANSITIONING FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

Q: Are the laws for meeting the needs of students with disabilities in college the same as they are in high school?

A: No. In fact, some of the laws that are applicable to K-12 institutions are very different from those that are applicable to the postsecondary institutions (colleges, universities, etc.).

Primary and secondary schools (K-12) are legally mandated to identify students with disabilities and provide a free and appropriate education for these students. Because of this, many students with disabilities and their families think high school disability records automatically transfer to college along with academic records, and that the college then continues services and accommodations provided in high school. **However, this is not the case.** In postsecondary education the responsibility to identify a disability lies with the student, if in fact he or she desires to request services and accommodations on the basis of disability. Also, records regarding disability do not automatically transfer from high school to college. Such records can only be released or transferred to a postsecondary institution with written permission of the adult student (in cases where the student is under the age of 18, parent or guardian permission is also required).

Q: Do colleges and universities provide Individualized Education Programs (IEP's)?

A: No. In postsecondary education, students are responsible for self-identifying themselves as individuals with disabilities, providing disability documentation, and requesting accommodations. The institution is responsible for providing reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Colleges and universities do not provide special education versions of courses, IEP plans, specialized progress reports, etc.

NOTE: Under federal law, family members are not provided with access to student information regarding disabilities, accommodations or academic progress. See important section on page 4, "Student's Right to Privacy and Confidentiality" for more information.