

**Comparison of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
(Section 504), & The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

	IDEA (K-12)	Section 504	ADA (College)
Requirements of the Law	Provides free appropriate education in the least restrictive environment.	Requires any agency, school or institution receiving federal financial assistance to provide persons with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, an opportunity to be fully integrated in to the mainstream.	Provides opportunity for accommodations in employment, public & private education institutions, transportation providers & telecommunications, regardless of presence of any federal funding.
Who is Covered	Covers students with educational disabilities that require special educational service until graduation of High School.	Protects all persons with a disability from discrimination in educational setting based solely on disability.	Protects all persons with a disability from discrimination in educational setting based solely on disability.
Services Provided	Offers educational services that are remedial in addition to services available to all mainstream students (i.e., PE, Art, field trips).	Eliminates barriers that would prevent a student from full participation in programs/ services offered to the general school population.	Eliminates barriers that would prevent a student from full participation in programs/services offered to the general school population.
Evaluation and Documentation	School district is responsible for identifying & evaluating students with disabilities. Evaluations are the responsibility of the school & are performed at no expense to student/parent. Parents must consent to evaluations & placement decisions.	K-12: Parents must consent to evaluations & placement decisions.	College Students: Students must self-identify as having a disability and must provide adequate documentation of disability; if evaluation is needed, expense is student's responsibility; Student has responsibility for advocating and requesting accommodations.
IEP/Accommodations	Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed with parents, teachers & other specialists involved.	504 Plan developed with parents, teachers, school personnel involved with student.	Accommodation plan developed with college student and Accessibility Specialist on campus.
Classroom Placement	Placement must be in the least restrictive environment; may be special classrooms, resource, or regular classroom. (Elementary & secondary students).	Placement is in regular classroom with support services to eliminate barriers to the educational experience. (Elementary, secondary, & college students).	All courses are mainstreamed with accommodations provided to students who qualify under ADA.
Personal Devices (Wheelchairs, hearing aids, personal attendant, etc.)	Provided by school district if determined to be necessary (and included in IEP).	Section 504 does not provide funding for personal devices.	Colleges not required to provide personal devices or services.
Role of Parents	Parents must be included in decision making.	Parents must be included in decision making.	Postsecondary students are considered adults; by law, university staff cannot speak to parents without written student authorization.