



## Proud Aspy Mom Newsletter | March 2022



### Off We Go!

Just when you think you know enough about Autism Spectrum Disorder, navigating the educational landscape and re-visiting your student's Individual Educational Plan, you realize you have SO MUCH MORE to learn! We just realized that as our daughter transitions to college, it is time to let go and let her take the reign. It is truly a humbling process. Who knew that the all the work to get you this far, is just a steppingstone to the next level. As it turns out colleges have an entirely different process.

All students take the PSAT, SAT or ACT in some form to enter college. However, persons with disabilities must also specifically request accommodations through the College Board's Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). The College Board MUST approve the students' accommodations before they are implemented. Depending on the student's individual need there are many accommodations available.

- Time and a half
- Essays - Free Response
- Preferential Seating
- Small Group Seating
- Breaks
- Assistive Technology

Accommodations are important to maintain equity and students should explore how they are best able to thrive in a testing environment. There are two ways to apply. You can apply through your school or individually. It is generally easier if utilize your school's equivalent of a counselor. However, homeschool students, students who cannot access SSD or those who simply do not want to involve the school system can apply on their own. Significant documentation is required to substantiate requests.

It is quite surprising to learn that students who have had substantial support in the K-12 environment now have the opportunity to be anonymous. Those with disabilities cannot be denied entry into college as a result of their disability AND they do not have to disclose their disability. BUT- if they don't disclose the school cannot provide adequate and appropriate accommodations. Also, it is important to distinguish FAPE - Free and Appropriate Education in the K-12 environment vs. academic adjustments that acknowledge and do not discriminate based on disability. The college environment has a duty to review diagnostic, medical and school evaluations and provide support based on that documentation or re-evaluation.

Colleges work with students. They create plans, revisit plans, and hold faculty accountable to plans. I am a witness to this. If the student feels they have no other options and have been discriminated against, they can always prepare a complaint.

### **OCR: Discrimination Complaint Form**

The majority of OCR staff are working remotely because of the pandemic.

Therefore, to ensure receipt of your correspondence, please consider emailing or faxing (202-453-6012) it to our office, where it will receive immediate attention. If neither of these options are available to you, mail your correspondence to the address below, and we will process it as soon as conditions allow.



U.S. Department of Education

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**As parents we must learn to let go and encourage our loved ones to fly on their own. Self-Advocacy is key to success.**

## **Self-Advocacy-What Just Happened**

As parents of those with disabilities - if you are honest, you are always on edge or slightly over the edge. Truthfully, you wonder if your advocacy is over the top or even ENOUGH. At some point it occurs to you that it is NOT your life. You begin to wonder what is going to happen to your loved one. You begin asking yourself, have we done enough? My husband and I have to understand that we did the best we could, and it is time to allow our daughter to ADVOCATE for herself. AND - I must say- she is doing pretty ok.

**For what it is worth here are some suggested questions used to begin the process of letting go and to prep your loved one:**

- Do you want to work?
- What type of career path would you like to pursue?

- Are you open to building a resume?
- Can we practice interview skills?
- Do you want to go to college?
- Do you want to stay close or go far?
- Do we have a support group that you are willing to use if you go far?
- Are you interested in having a relationship? What does your social circle look like?
- Are you interested in driving?
- Are you interested in learning about public transportation?
- Do you think you can live alone - and if so what activities of daily living can you do without support?
- Are you capable of managing a bank account? Credit Card? Bills?
- Realistically - how can we assist you with the act of independent living?

Of course these are questions we each go through quietly with all children, but the analysis becomes essential when you are contemplating next steps. Be KIND to yourself and family. Although the questions seem simple, they are SO VERY difficult. It is important to say out loud to yourself that it is NOT your life. It is time to let them take the reign.

### *What is Self-Advocacy?*

*Self-advocacy is both a set of skills and movement*

*Self-advocacy skills empower people with disabilities to make choices that affect their daily lives and allow for greater independence*

*"Self-advocacy - as a personal and political philosophy - is a movement primarily of and by [people with disabilities] who are making their own decisions, speaking for themselves and for others with disabilities, and taking control over their lives."*

by Haley Moss

**Self-Determination/Self-Advocacy -  
Florida Consortium on Inclusive  
Higher Education**



**Florida Consortium on  
Inclusive Higher Education**

Call 407-823-1099. The grant supporting this website ended October 1, 2020. The site will be available for approximately 6 more months, information will be transferred to Project 10. The development of this website's contents was funded by the University of Central Florida through a grant from the Office of Postsecondary Education, United States Department of Education (2015-16, CFDA 84 ...

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