

# Amityville Memorial High School

## *Student Advocacy Handbook*



A resource for special education students  
making the transition from high school to college





Dear Student,

This handbook was created to give assistance to those students that receive special education services while in high school and are preparing to make the transition to college.

While the title used to describe the department that provides support services for students with disabilities may vary from college to college, in this handbook the term learning specialist will be used to designate this provider.

We are certain the information provided in the book will be helpful in making your transition from high school to college a successful one.

Sincerely,

Amityville High School Guidance Department



# TAKING THE SAT/ACT EXAMS

**In general college bound students will take one or more of the following standardized tests:**

- PSAT/NMSQT or Preliminary SAT
- SAT
- SAT Subject Tests
- ACT Assessment



Just as your student may receive testing accommodations through their IEP on all school and state exams, they also can receive these similar accommodations on their standardized tests. In order to ensure your student receives them, it is important they submit their request to the testing boards.

CollegeBoard, the organization that administers the PSAT & SAT exams, has a specific application to request these accommodations in addition to the test registration form. This application can be found in the Guidance Office and should be submitted to your counselor no later than September of junior year.

ACT testing accommodations are approved at the time of registration for the exam. There is a special registration form that can be obtained in the Guidance Office.

If you feel these tests are necessary, the following is the **RECOMMENDED TIMELINE** for taking these exams:

## JUNIOR YEAR

October	Take the PSAT (offered in AMHS on a Wednesday – No Charge)
December	PSAT results given to students – use this information to review and prepare to take the SAT/ACT in the spring.
May	Take the SAT/ACT for the 1 <sup>st</sup> time
June	Take the SAT/ACT for the 1 <sup>st</sup> time or 2 <sup>nd</sup> time (SAT given at AMHS)
July	Review SAT/ACT results and determine plan for senior year – Plan to take the test which you did best on again in the fall of your senior year.

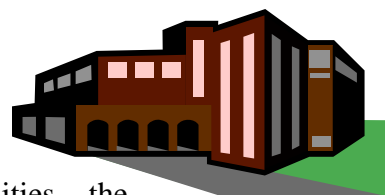
## SENIOR YEAR

October	Take the SAT/ACT for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> time
November	Take the SAT/ACT for the 2 <sup>nd</sup> or 3 <sup>rd</sup> time (SAT given @ AMHS)
December	Take the SAT/ACT, if necessary. (ACT given @ AMHS)

In most cases, your student will NOT be taking the SAT on the Saturday it is administered. You will be contacted by your child's Guidance Counselor for the date(s) your child's exam will be given.

**Amityville Memorial High School CEEB School Code      330-155**

## CHOOSING A COLLEGE



There are many different factors that come into play when choosing a college. Location, size, majors offered and cost are only a few of those factors. For students with disabilities, the accommodations and support services offered are just as important if not more so. You should ask the admissions office to put you in touch with the office that provides those support services for students with disabilities. If you visit a campus, you should make an appointment with the learning specialist to determine if the services available at the college meet your needs. Below are listed several Long Island colleges and the disabilities services contact person.

College Name	Contact Person	Phone	Email
Adelphi University	Carol Phelan	516-877-3145	<a href="mailto:phelan@adelphi.edu">phelan@adelphi.edu</a>
Briarcliffe College	Jacqueline Naughton	516-918-3701	<a href="mailto:jnaughton@bcl.edu">jnaughton@bcl.edu</a>
Dowling College	Eleanor Alster	631-244-3144	<a href="mailto:alstere@dowling.edu">alstere@dowling.edu</a>
Farmingdale State College	Malka Edelman	631-420-2411	<a href="mailto:malka.edelman@farmingdale.edu">malka.edelman@farmingdale.edu</a>
Five Towns College	James Ryan	631-424-7000	<a href="mailto:ryan@ftc.edu">ryan@ftc.edu</a>
Hofstra University	Robyn Weiss	516-463-7075	<a href="mailto:SSD@hofstra.edu">SSD@hofstra.edu</a>
LIU: CW Post	Marie Fatscher	516-299-3057	<a href="mailto:marie.fatscher@liu.edu">marie.fatscher@liu.edu</a>
Molloy College	Barbbara Merola	516-678-5000	<a href="mailto:bmerola@molloy.edu">bmerola@molloy.edu</a>
Nassau Community College	Richard Ashker	516-572-7138	<a href="mailto:richard.ashker@ncc.edu">richard.ashker@ncc.edu</a>
NYIT	Colleen Davidson	516-686-7636	<a href="mailto:cdavid01@nyit.edu">cdavid01@nyit.edu</a>
Queens College	Mirian Detres-Hickey	718-997-5870	
St. Joseph's College	Anna Bess Robinson	631-447-3318	<a href="mailto:abrobinson@sjcnny.edu">abrobinson@sjcnny.edu</a>
Suffolk Community College	Marlene Boyce	631-451-4045	<a href="mailto:boycem@sunysuffolk.edu">boycem@sunysuffolk.edu</a>
SUNY Old Westbury	Lisa Whitten	516-876-4700	<a href="mailto:whittenl@oldwestbury.edu">whittenl@oldwestbury.edu</a>
Stony Brook University	Joanna Harris	631-632-6748	<a href="mailto:joanna.harris@stonybrook.edu">joanna.harris@stonybrook.edu</a>

Each college determines the types of disability support services that will be available. However, typical accommodations most colleges will have available include: tutoring, alternative testing arrangements, computer access, and other assistive technology. It is important to remember that your accommodations may vary from course to course, instructor to instructor and semester to semester.

Keep track of the names, titles and contact information of the support service provider at the colleges you are researching.

College	Contact Name	Title	Phone	Email

# SELF ADVOCACY

It is YOUR responsibility to speak to the learning specialist and advocate for the accommodations you will need to be successful.

**Be prepared to tell the learning specialist the following information about yourself:**

1. Why you want to go to college.
2. Why college is a realistic choice for you at this time.
3. Your type of disability and how it affects your learning.
4. Examples of the kinds of problems you have had in school.
5. Activities you are good at and/or like doing.
6. The support services and accommodations you used in high school.
7. The support services and accommodations you plan to use in college.
8. How copies of records documenting your disability can be acquired.
9. The kind of diploma you are receiving. (If you are receiving an IEP diploma, you need to ask about the college's policies regarding admission & financial aid.)
10. If you have applied for VESID or other rehabilitation services and how to contact your counselor.
11. Your strengths and weaknesses.



**Questions you should ask?**

1. What is the focus of the disability support services program?
2. What types of academic accommodations are readily available?
3. How do I acquire support services? Tutors, note takers, etc.
4. Is a reduced course load possible, if needed?
5. Are course substitutions offered, if needed?
6. Is there a pass/fail option available for core courses? For major courses?
7. Is there priority registration for students with disabilities?
8. Is the faculty aware of and cooperative about the needs of students with disabilities?
9. Is there a cost associated with any support services?
10. Will the accommodations I am requesting affect the required courses of my major? (Ex. New York State requires successful completion of foreign language credits for all Education majors. This requirement is not waived for students who received a language exemption in high school.)

## GENERAL STRATEGIES FOR SELF ADVOCACY

- Self-identify. In order to receive any services in college, you must ask for them. Secure a copy of your most recent evaluation and/or IEP. You will need to provide your college with a copy of these documents.
- Find out what accommodations and support services your college provides, and, should you need them, where and how to get them.
- Rehearse your explanation of the above information with your high school counselor or teacher so that you can explain fully to the faculty and learning specialist the reason for requesting accommodations.

## ABOUT ME

Completing the following form with a resource room teacher or a teacher who is knowledgeable about your disability will help ensure the college personnel providing support services is familiar with you personally. Plan to bring this form with you when meeting the learning specialist for the first time.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Skill Area	Strength	Weakness
<b>Organization</b>		
Following a Schedule		
Study Skills		
Note Taking		
Assignment Recording		
Staying on Task		
Organizing Materials		
Assignment Completion		
<b>Social</b>		
Appropriate Classroom Conduct		
Interpreting Corrective Feedback		
Developing Peer Relationships		
Developing Adult Relationships		
<b>Learning</b>		
Word Recognition Reading Skills		
Reading Comprehension		
Math Concepts		
Computation		
Problem Solving		
Written Language/Composition		
Spelling		
Grammatical Structure		
Auditory Perception		
Visual Perception		
Visual Motor Integration		
Other: _____		

# LEGISLATION REGARDING PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Legislation that governs secondary education (K-12) is different than the legislation that governs post secondary education (college). Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 governs over secondary education and Sections 504 & and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) governs over post secondary.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, requires that an institution which receives any federal financial assistance be prepared to make appropriate adjustments and reasonable modifications to policies and practices in order to allow the full participation of students with disabilities in the same programs and activities available to non-disabled students. Whatever the disability, a school district must identify an individual's education needs and provide any regular or special education and related aids and services necessary to meet those needs as well as it is meeting the needs of students without disabilities.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is an entitlement law that guarantees that school districts provide free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for all elementary and secondary students. This law no longer applies once a student receives a high school diploma or reaches age 21. This act also requires that transition plans and services be included in the annual Individualized Education Program (IEP) for secondary education students with disabilities who are age 14 or older. The transition plan is a set of activities that are designed to prepare the student for outcomes that are envisioned for their adult life. They may include postsecondary education, employment, vocational training, independent living, etc.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II requires postsecondary schools to provide appropriate academic adjustments as necessary to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability. The appropriate academic adjustment must be determined based on your disability and individual needs. Academic adjustments may include auxiliary aids and modifications to academic requirements as are necessary to ensure equal educational opportunity (ex. arranging for priority registration; reducing a course load; substituting one course for another; providing note takers, recording devices, extended time for testing). Your postsecondary school is not required to lower or effect substantial modifications to essential requirements. It does not have to make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of a service, program or activity or would result in undue financial or administrative burdens. Finally, it does not have to provide personal attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study.



## **COMPARISON OF SECONDARY AND POSTSECONDARY LAWS AND SETTINGS**

<b>ISSUE</b>	<b>SECONDARY</b>	<b>POST SECONDARY</b>
Legislation	IDEA & Section 504	ADA & Section 504
Basis for Participation	Entitlement	Eligibility
Educational Focus	Remediation	Accommodations
Who's Responsible	School District & Parent	Student & College
Class Structure	5x per week; 45-50 minute Classes, graded tests, homework	1-3x per week, 1-6 hours per class, 2-4 tests, projects, papers
Skills	Note taking, homework completion and textbooks	Time management, study skills, self-advocacy
Accommodations	Readers, one to one aides, resource room	Determined case by case, tape recorders, note takers
Assistance	Teachers, resource room, parent	Instructor, learning specialist

# **MAJOR SKILLS NEEDED TO ENSURE SUCCESS AT COLLEGE**

## **Classroom Preparation**

- Self Advocacy skills – know your disability and what support services you need to be successful
- Note taking skills
- Study habits/Test taking skills – preview new material & review previous lecture before each class
- Be prepared for class
- Importance of homework
- Organizing requirements for courses – put all assignments due dates in a daily planner
- Classroom Etiquette – stay in seat, raise your hand, stay in the room
- Class Attendance – be on time and attend all classes – hearing the lecture may be a critical factor in learning new material

## **Memory Strategies**

- Learning is synonymous with reviewing – read over notes frequently throughout the semester
- Enlarge, underline, and highlight your notes to strengthen your visual memory of the material
- Know what helps you memorize - rewrite your notes, read notes aloud, record yourself so you can listen to them again later

## **Test-Taking Strategies**

- Find out what examination format will be used (essay, multiple choice, short answer)
- Write down on the back of the exam or in the margins, any formulas, terms, dates, names that you have memorized and will need for the exam
- Read test directions carefully, underlining the verb that describes what you are to do to (i.e. Compare, list, summarize, etc.)
- Begin by answering the easy questions first. Circle the hard ones and go back to them after you have answered all the easy ones
- If you come to a question you do not understand, paraphrase it for the proctor to confirm you have the correct understanding

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE**

## **VESID**

The Office of Vocational and Educational Service for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) is a New York State organization that provides assistance to students and parents of students with any disability (physical, learning, emotional, etc.) enabling them to reach their post secondary goals. In the past, VESID has been able to provide services such as vocational assessments, vocational counseling, assistance with transition from school to the world of work, job training, education and placement, job follow-up, and financial assistance for college.

VESID services are offered to EVERY special education high school senior. Your student will be given an application for VESID services by the end of their junior year and it should be returned and submitted to his/her guidance counselor. A meeting will then be set up at the high school with a VESID counselor for you and your child to discuss their post high school plans and any services VESID is able to offer.

## **Career & Employment Option, Inc.**

Career & Employment Options, Inc. (CEO) has been contracted by the Amityville Union Free School District to provide transition and employment opportunities for students in special and general education. The CEO staff is in the high school on a regular basis and will work with your student to address employment services and college support services for students with special needs who are pursuing college careers.

A referral form for services from CEO, Inc. can be obtained by your student's Guidance Counselor. Services offered, but not limited to, are resume development, job coaching, internship and/or employment placement, and assistance with college & financial aid applications.

## RESOURCES USED

The following resources were used in compiling this guide for the students of the Amityville School District:

Adelphi University Student Advocacy Handbook, Copyright 2003 by the NNYPTCT

CEO, Inc homepage, [www.ceoincworks.com](http://www.ceoincworks.com)

Long Island Works & LIRACHE

US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights homepage, [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

US Department of Justice Americans with Disabilities Act homepage, [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)

Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities homepage, [www.vesid.nysed.gov](http://www.vesid.nysed.gov)