



Students with Disabilities [SWD] in Higher Education: Challenges and Opportunities

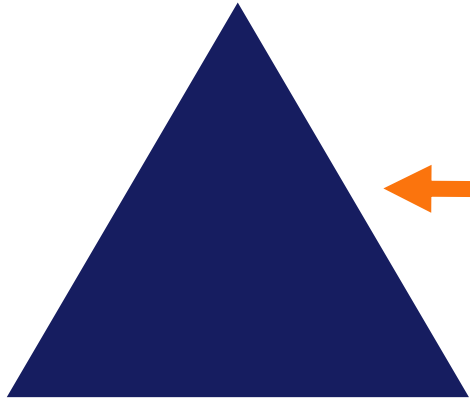
Informational Hearing
House Committee on Higher Education
March 7, 2023



FACT Oregon empowers families and youth with disabilities to pursue a whole life and transforms how people think about disability.

We are the federal and state designated **Parent Training & Information Center (PTI)** for Oregon.

Federal Law and Education Rights Pyramid for Students with Disabilities – K-12



IDEA [Individuals with Disabilities Education Act]: Students eligible for special education have the protection of all the laws in the pyramid.



504 [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973]: The disability civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in programs that receive federal financial assistance.



ADA [Americans with Disabilities Act]: Civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities in four areas; employment, public services, public accommodations and telecommunications.

Eligibility

ADA

- No age or education requirements. It prohibits discrimination against people with disabilities.

Section 504

- SWD or impairments that substantially limit a major life function but who do not meet the requirements to qualify for an IEP.
- 504 requirements continue for SWD through post-secondary education.

IDEA

- SWD who meet eligibility criteria, AND who need specially designed instruction [special education] and related services.
- SWD are eligible until they graduate with a regular diploma or are 21 years old.

What these laws provide	IDEA	504	ADA
A free appropriate public education (FAPE) K-12	X	X	
An Education Plan for eligible students [IEP/504] K-12	X	X	
Accommodations/Modifications K-12	X	X	
Procedural safeguards K-12 / Post-secondary education	X	X	
Requires finding/evaluating kids who may have a disability K-12	X		
Special education/related services K-12	X		
Accommodations for college students		X	
No discrimination at colleges/universities that get federal funding		X	X
Accommodations in workplaces			X
No discrimination in workplaces			X
Access to public places that offer goods and services			X

Special Education

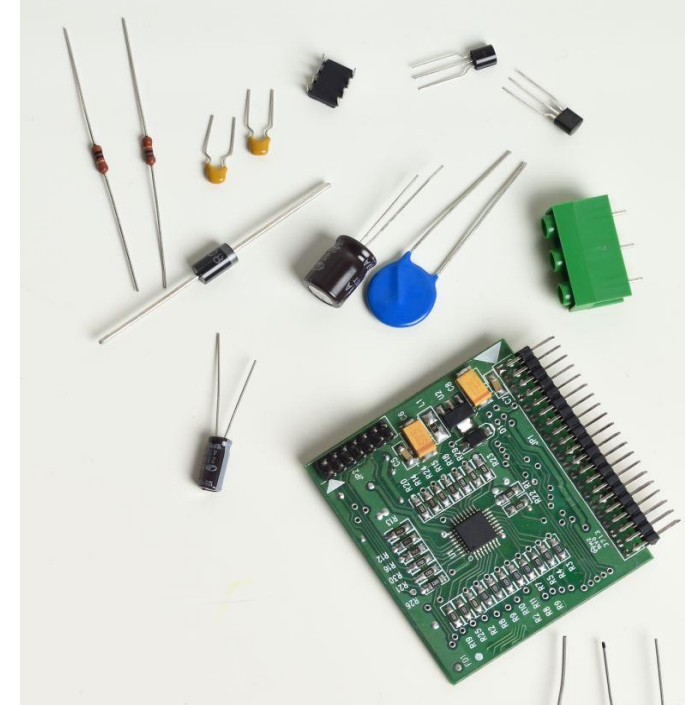
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]

Federal Law ensuring children with disabilities have available to them a Free Appropriate Public Education [FAPE] that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their **UNIQUE NEEDS** and **prepare** them for:

- Further education
- Employment
- Independent living



Transition Components in the IEP



- Assessments to identify **PINS** [preferences, interests, needs and strengths]
- Appropriate, measurable **post-secondary goals for life after school**
- Course of Study
- Agency Participation
- Graduation & Diploma options
- Transfer of rights

Challenge: Graduation Rates

Graduates: Students who earned an Oregon Regular Diploma, participated in a Post Graduate Scholars program, or received an Oregon Modified Diploma.

Completer Rate: Graduates plus Other Completers [Students who received an Adult High School Diploma, Extended Diploma, or a GED].

2021-2022 Data

All Students: 81% **SWD: 68%**

All Students: 84% **SWD: 71%**

Opportunities

- **Ensure ALL** students can access/are prepared for College and/or CTE Programs.
- **Ensure** 18-21 Transition Services are **ROBUST**...in college or career environments!
- **Require ALL** teacher preparation programs provide **disability awareness**.
- **Support** programs like “Think College” and Career & Community Studies - Career Development & Employment Services at Portland State University.



Challenge: *Ableism*

Ableism is the discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior.

At its heart, ableism is rooted in the assumption that disabled people require 'fixing' and defines people by their disability. Like racism and sexism, ableism classifies entire groups of people as 'less than,' and includes harmful stereotypes, misconceptions, and generalizations of people with disabilities.

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Opportunities

- **Require** higher education faculty to participate in **disability awareness** training and **expect** a **culture of inclusion**.
- **Require ALL** teacher preparation programs [**general AND special education**] provide disability awareness!



Challenge: *Identifying Students with Disabilities*

- **Students** in postsecondary education **are not required** to disclose they have a disability.
- **Colleges** and **universities are not required** to identify students that may have a disability.
- **Disability/Accessibility Services** often **do not have** the complete picture of a student needs.

Opportunities

- **Colleges and universities** must **adopt frameworks** that are **designed to better meet the needs of all learners**, like universal design in curriculum and campuses.
- **Ensure** accommodations are available. **Accommodations** allow an individual with a disability to **gain ACCESS** to content and/or complete assigned tasks, and can include altering an environment, curriculum format, or equipment. They DO NOT change the difficulty level or learning outcome (modifications do).





FACT OREGON

Empowering families - Transforming disability

Thank you

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