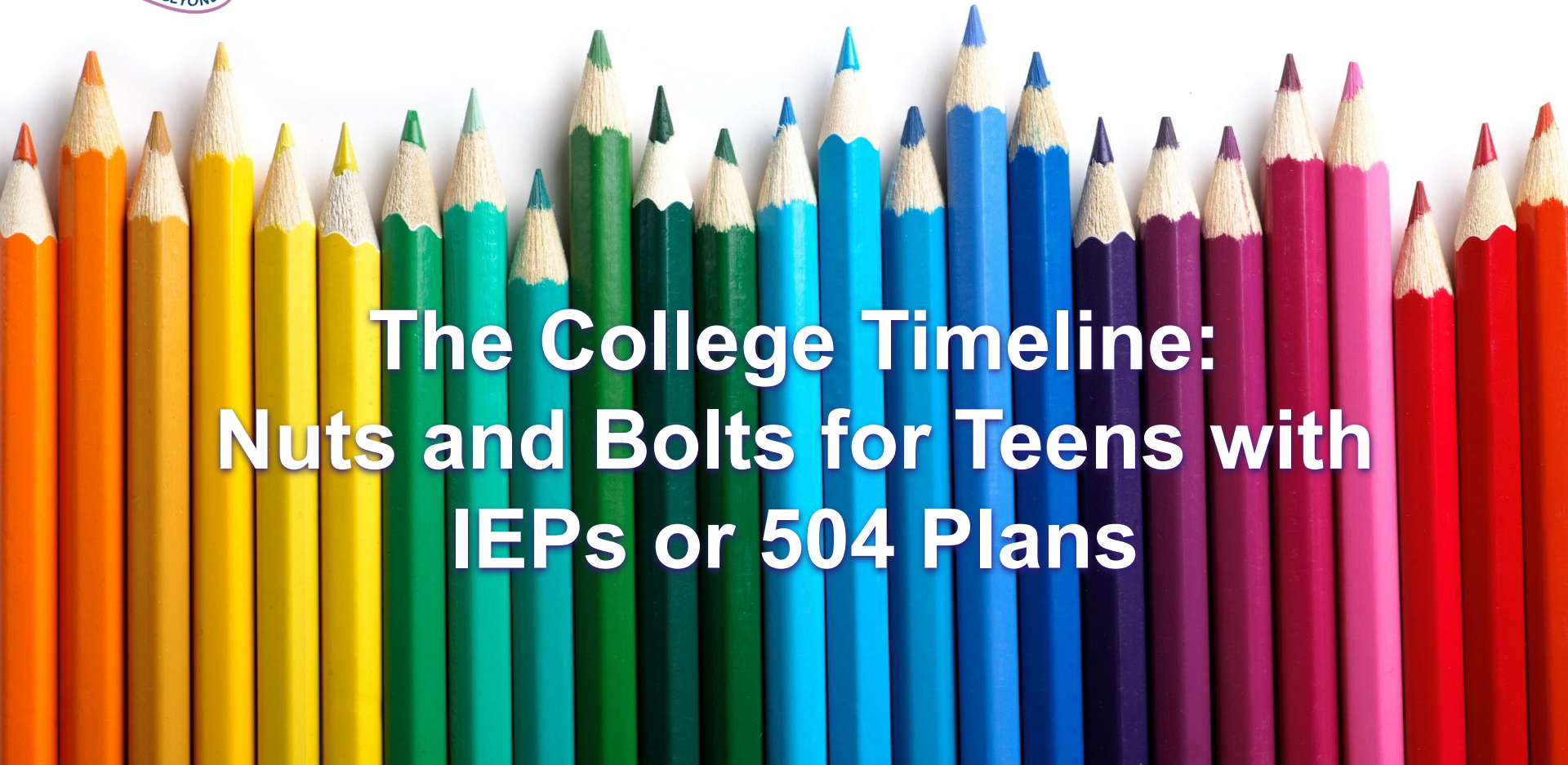
College Access & BEYOND

SPED*NET Presentation March 16, 2022



# The College Timeline: Nuts and Bolts for Teens with IEPs or 504 Plans

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# Our Goal & Objectives Today

*To describe for students with IEPs/ 504 plans and their families how to prepare for transition from high school to college*

a) To identify “college readiness skills” that students should develop in middle school and high school
b) To explain whether a student should self identify as a student with a disability in the college application process
c) To describe tips on how to select a college/university that is the “RIGHT FIT” for them based on their interests, unique skills and needs
d) To illustrate the accommodations process in higher education
e) To explain the parents role in a student’s transition process

# Disclaimer

The information presented by Janine Kelly, Deborah List or SPED*NET Wilton is not intended to be legal, medical or therapeutic advice. It is meant for information purposes only. In addition, given time limitations, this presentation is not fully comprehensive but is an overview of helpful information and considerations.

# Who We Are

We are professionals who work with students with disabilities and their families. We have raised and advocated for our own children and have devoted our careers to supporting others on their unique journeys.

# Change the Mindset

**Finding the RIGHT FIT**
**vs**
**the BEST, MOST COMPETITIVE**

- “BEST” does not mean “RIGHT FOR YOU”
- Acceptance does not mean success
- Find the one that’s the “right fit”
- Individualized process

# Understand Your Student

## (The Assets Based Approach)

What do they want to do?

What are their goals?

What are their strengths & interests?

What are their weaknesses & needs?

Do they want to go to college?

Do they understand the commitment?

# Building College Readiness Skills

## Academic skills

**Language**- Can they communicate, explain and analyze thoughts and ideas in speech and in writing

**Reading Comprehension**

**Writing** - Can they narrate, explain, analyze, persuade/argue in written form

**Critical Thinking**- Can they objectively analyze and evaluate an issue in order to form an expressible opinion - liberal arts

**Problem Solving**- Can they analyze and communicate a problem, research and create solutions, depend on others, make a decision & work with others

**Note Taking, Research and Citation Skills**

# Building College Readiness Skills

## Executive Function Skills
## (Important for ALL students!)

- Goal setting
- Organization
- Planning
- Time management
- Self monitoring
- Self control
- *Study skills
- *Note taking

# Building College Readiness Skills

## Independence/Life Skills

**++Self Advocacy-** Can they make decisions? Can they explain their strengths, needs and learning style? Do they understand their rights and responsibilities as a student? Can they ask for help? Can they manage their health care?

**Self Sufficiency-** Can they maintain their living space? Do laundry? Shop? Fill a prescription? Make doctor's appointments? Maintain a bank account and budget themselves? Take the bus? Drive? Navigate an airport and take a flight on their own?

**Self Care-** Do they have good hygiene? Do they have good eating and sleeping habits? Do they get up in the morning on their own? Exercise regularly or have other productive ways of relieving stress? Do they take necessary medication as directed? Can they care for themselves and follow a treatment plan when they are sick?

**Work Skills-** Can they follow directions, respond to criticism, relate to a supervisor, show up on time.

**Social Skills-** Do they understand the elements of a healthy friendship? Can they interpret social situations, problem solve, understand perspectives of others? Respect other people's space and belongings?

# How to Help Build Skills

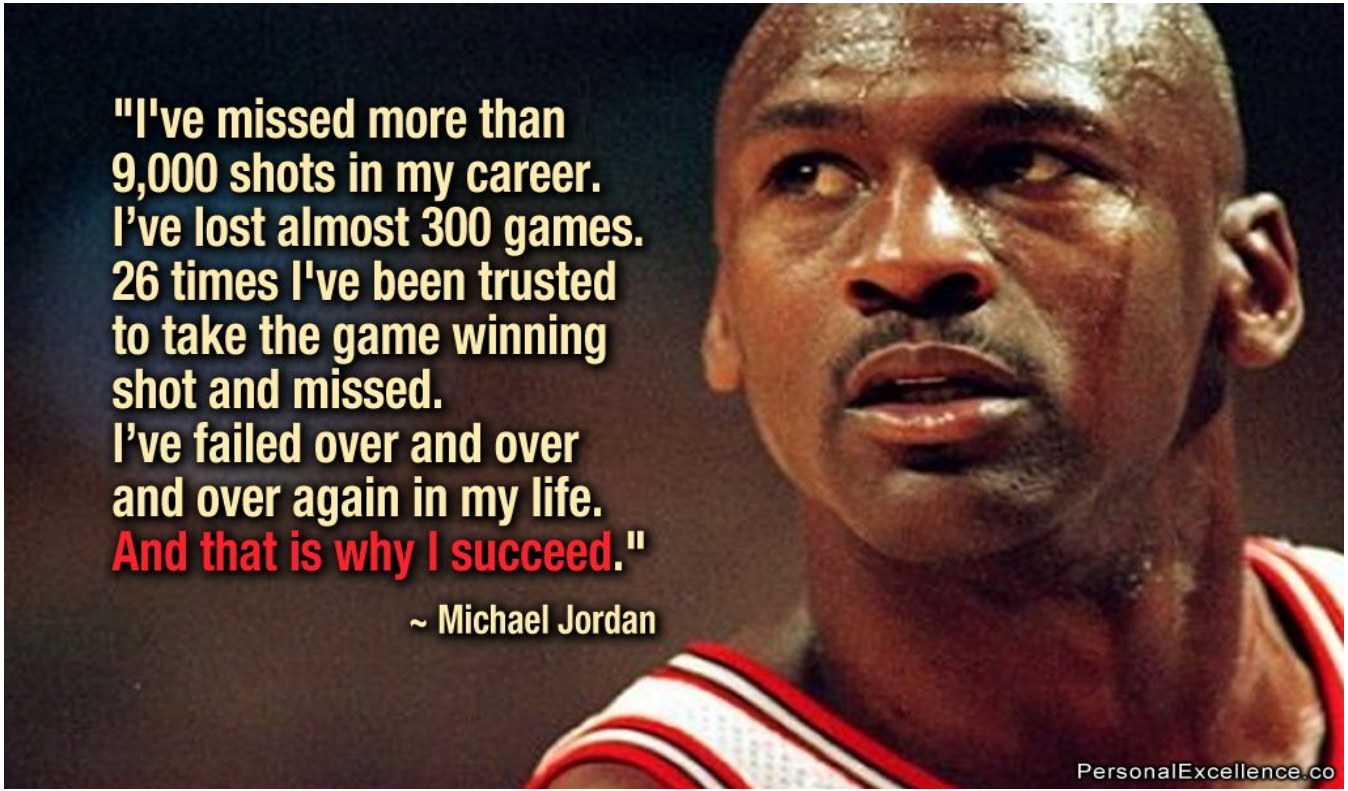
## Work with your School Team

- Set goals that address skills they will need in college
- Include a goal for self awareness and self advocacy
- Build a plan that encourages independence
- Fade all modifications from the IEP
- Have student work with guidance on graduation, admission requirements, SAT/ACT accommodations
- IEP's & 504's DO NOT TRANSFER

## Work with Student at Home

- Practice independence skills everywhere
- Teach life skills -laundry, cooking, transportation
- Allow for problem solving
- Help them learn from their mistakes
- Talk to them about their strengths often
- Help them understand their needs
- Consider transition program or gap year

# LET THEM FAIL ⇨ LET THEM LEARN



# To Self Identify or Not

## Pros

- Access disability resources
- Tap into the supportive environment
- Reach out to faculty early
- Get set up for success
- Its confidential

## Cons

- You are on your own…
- What if..?
- It not retroactive - of they didn't apply and they are failing - may be too late to change the ultimate outcome of whether the pass the class.

Myth: Departments talk

# Gather Necessary Documentation

## Check each college website- requirements vary

Example: Learning Disability

- Psychological/educational evaluation completed within 1-2  years before enrollment
- Statement of functional impact learning and living by qualified professional
- Student questionnaire

All students:

- FERPA waivers on file
- Power of Attorney for health care state where student attends and primary place of residence

Example: OHI (Other Health Impairment)

- Medical records or medical summary by treating physician
- Statement of functional impact- by qualified professional learning and living

# What to Look for at a College/University

- ❑ Website review
- ❑ Accessibility standards - reviews in books, online etc
- ❑ Accessibility office initial meeting BEFORE application is submitted
- ❑ Built in program vs separate fee program
- ❑ Housing considerations
- ❑ Talk to current students
- ❑ Campus visit
- ❑ Does it “feel right?”

ADA Compliant Website

# Modifications vs Accommodations

- **Modifications** change "**WHAT**" is learned and therefore change the content of the grade -specific curriculum. An **accommodation** is a change that helps a student overcome or work around the disability. These changes are typically physical or environmental changes. Accommodation changes "**HOW**" things are learned.

- **Accommodations** are typically grouped into **four categories**:
  - *Presentation*
  - *Response*
  - *Setting*
  - *Timing/scheduling*.

- **Unreasonable accommodations** alter requirements that are **essential** to the program of instruction or to meet licensing prerequisites, cause fundamental alteration in the nature of the program, impose undue financial or administrative burden, or pose an appreciable threat to personal or public safety.

- **Higher education only addresses accommodations.**

ADA/ 504

| Accommodation | Modification |
| --- | --- |
| • A strategy used to help a student with learning needs access the same curriculum as their peers. | • A strategy used to help a student with significant learning needs achieve the same curriculum as their peers. |
| • Curriculum learning expectations and outcomes are the same. | • Curriculum learning expectations and outcomes are different. |
| • Occurs in the general education classroom. | • Occurs in the general education classroom. |
| • Tools, materials, technology, visual aids, physical space, and timing are used to help the student ***access*** the curriculum. | • Tools, materials, technology, visual aids, physical space, and timing are used to help the student ***achieve*** the curriculum. |
| • Grading is the same. | • Grading is different and appropriate to the student's specific developmental level and learning needs. |

IDEA

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Two disability-related civil rights laws govern the obligations of postsecondary institutions with respect to the accessibility of digital learning materials and online courses—Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all postsecondary institutions that receive federal funding, including schools that accept federal financial aid.[3] Title II of the ADA applies to all public colleges and universities, regardless of whether they receive federal funding;[4] Title III of the ADA applies to private colleges and universities.[5]

## DISABILITY-RELATED CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS

### Section 504

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities that receive federal funding.

29 U.S.C § 794(a)

### Title II of the ADA

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all public entities, including public colleges and universities, regardless of whether they receive federal funding.

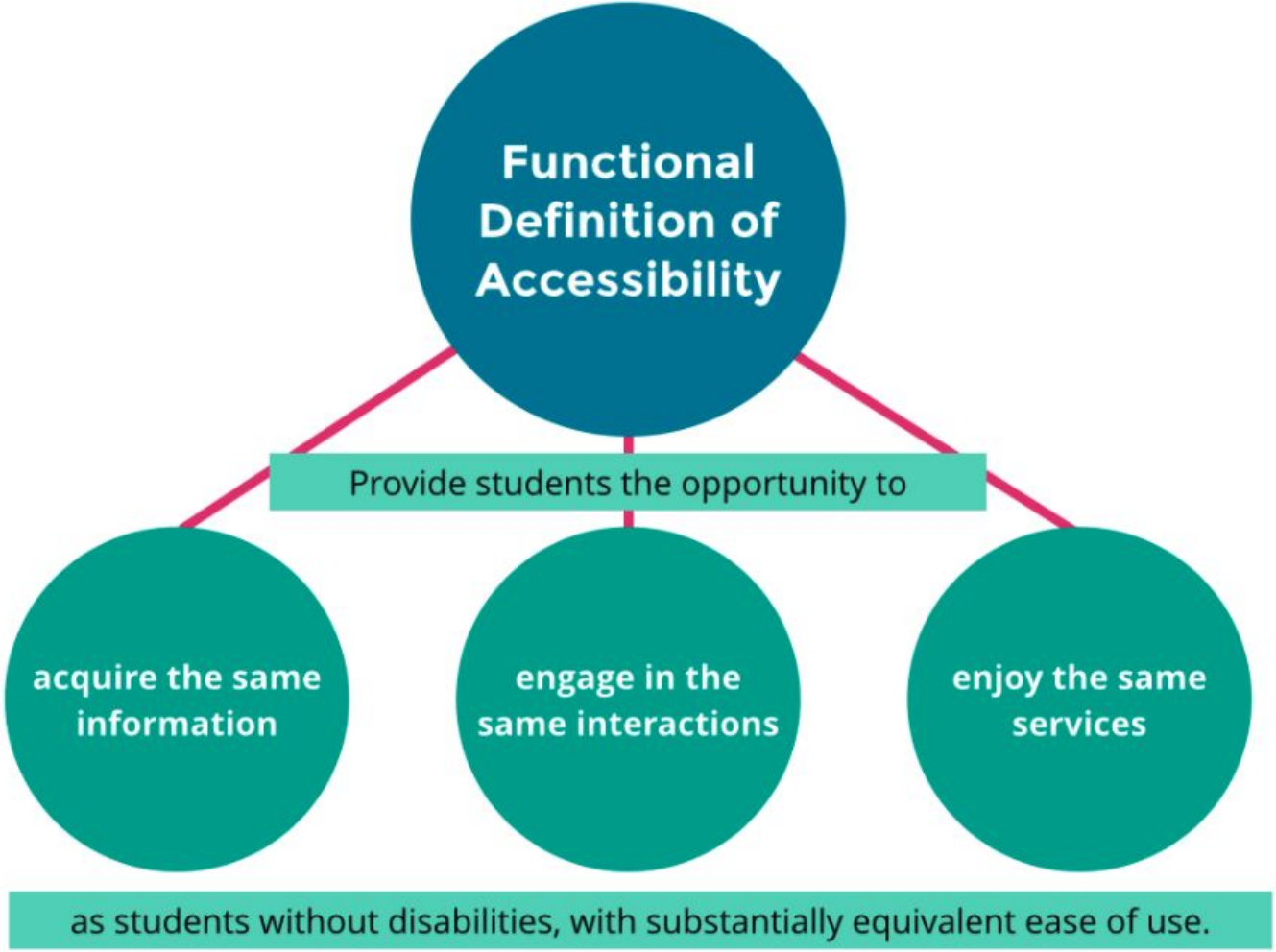
42 U.S.C. § 12132

### Title III of the ADA

Prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in places of public accommodation, including private postsecondary institutions.

42 U.S.C. §§ 12181(7)(J), 12182(a)

Cast, 2022


Functional Definition of Accessibility
Provide students the opportunity to
acquire the same information
engage in the same interactions
enjoy the same services
as students without disabilities, with substantially equivalent ease of use.

Cast, 2022

# Common Accommodations in Higher Ed

★ Notetaker (dysgraphia, dyslexia, ADHD, medical needs etc)

★ Extended time for assignments, tests

★ Alternative location for testing (testing center rooms for less distraction)

★ Assistive technology (text reader app, closed captioning)

★ Alternative text formats (large print text books)

★ Writing support (ADHD, language based learning disabilities)

*Possible review by Committee:*

★ Housing (medical needs, anxiety)

★ Flexible schedule/decreased course load

★ Priority registration (to address time or location needs)

# Faculty Responsibilities Under ADA/504

- Under federal law, faculty are **responsible** for making their courses and course content accessible.
- Faculty are not required to change the **essential content of their courses**. Due to academic freedom, <u>essential content is up to the discretion of the faculty</u>.
- Communication between student and faculty is critical to ensure successful implementation of accommodations.

# Legal Limitations of Protections

- ➔ Architectural limitations of access (landmarks)
- ➔ Code is a baseline
- ➔ Faculty academic freedom

# Are YOU ready?

- ❑ **P**lanning
- ❑ **P**reparation
- ❑ **P**aperwork
- ❑ **P**acking
- ❑ **P**arents Weekend

# Helpful Resources

## Links

https://ldadvisory.com/

https://thinkcollege.net/college-search

https://www.additudemag.com/adhd-and-college-survival-guide/

https://ncld.org/news/policy-and-advocacy/life-with-ld-navigating-the-transition-to-college/

https://cws.auburn.edu/shared/content/files/50/WISE_Study_Tips.pdf

https://www.disability.illinois.edu/improving-memory-and-executive-functioning

https://www.nccsdclearinghouse.org/prospective-college-students.html

https://www.cast.org/

# Helpful Resources

## Books

***How to Raise an Adult: Break Free of the Overparenting Trap and Raise Your Kids For Success*** by Julie Lythcott-Haimes (2015)

***From High School to College: Steps to Success for Students with Disabilities*** by Elizabeth C. Hamblet (2017)

***The K & W Guide to Colleges for Students with Learning Differences – 15th Edition*** by Marybeth Kravets, M.A., and Imy F. Wax, M.S. (2021)

***The Parent's Guide To College For Students On The Autism Spectrum*** by Jane Thierfeld Brown, EdD, Lorraine E. Wolf, PhD, Lisa King, MsEd and G. Ruth Kukiela Bork, MEd (2012)

***Taking Flight: College for Students with Disabilities, Diverse Learners, and Their Families*** by Perry LaRoque, PhD (2021)

# Deep Breath

# With Appreciation

- SPED*NET Wilton
- Wilton Public Schools
- Wilton Library
- Newtown Sped PTA

# Contact Information

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