



Region 1 Teachers

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Presenter:

Tonya Paulette, Director

UTRGV Student Accessibility Services

UTRGV Student Accessibility Services (SAS)

Fall 2018:

455 students with disabilities were registered with SAS

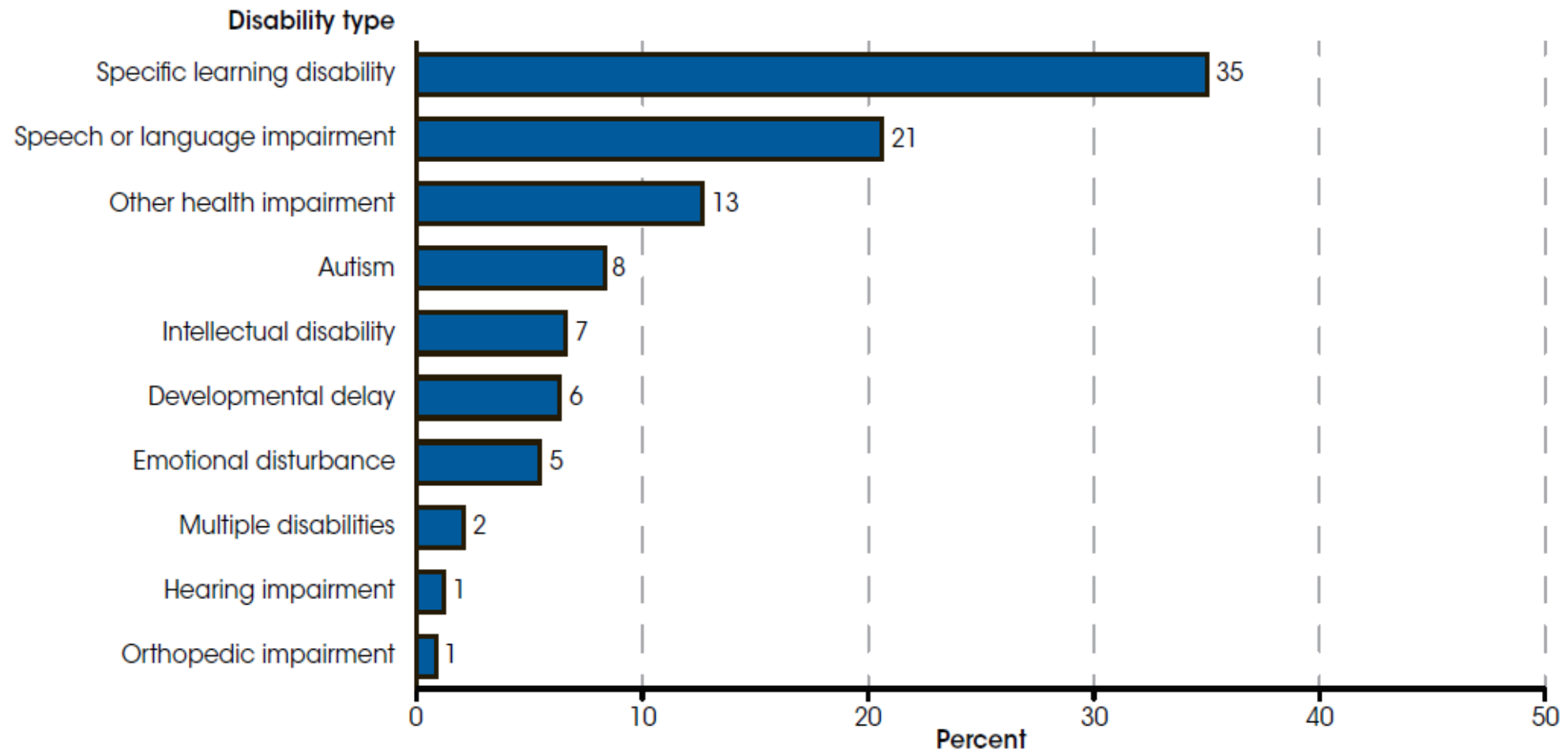
Spring 2019:

388 students

Types of disabilities:

Other Health	33%
Mental Health / Psychological	30%
Learning Disabilities	13%
Autism Spectrum	6%
Orthopedic	4%
TBI	3%
Speech - Language	3%
Vision	3%
Deaf	1% (5 students)
Intellectual	1%
Blind	0.7% (3 students)
Hard of Hearing	2%

Figure 1. Percentage distribution of children ages 3–21 served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B, by disability type: School year 2013–14



NOTE: Deaf-blindness, traumatic brain injury, and visual impairment are not shown because they each account for less than 0.5 percent of children served under IDEA. Due to categories not shown, detail does not sum to total. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded estimates.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) database, retrieved September 25, 2015, from <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/osepidea/618-data/state-level-data-files/index.html#bcc>. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2015*, table 204.30.

https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/Indicator_CGG/coe_cgg_2016_05.pdf

The Legal Foundation

- IDEA – Federal law for early intervention, special education and related services for children 3-21 (or until high school graduation); IEP is designed to **promote student success** in K-12
- Section 504 – Federal law that protects from discrimination based on disability. Subpart E states that students in post-secondary institutions must be granted the opportunity to compete with their non-disabled peers. Section 504 is designed to **promote access**.
- ADA – Federal civil rights law designed to **provide equal access and opportunity** to individuals with disabilities, including students, for participation in programs, services, and activities offered by a recipient of federal financial assistance.

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

<https://disabilities.uchicago.edu/idea-ada-and-section-504>

Transitioning from High School to College

- **Unlike a high school, a postsecondary institution is not required to provide FAPE.**
 - Rather, a college / university is required to provide appropriate and reasonable academic adjustments, as necessary, to ensure that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability.
- **Disclosure of a disability is always voluntary.**
 - Unlike a school district, a postsecondary institution is not required to identify a student as having a disability or to assess a student's needs. the student must locate the office that provides services for students with disabilities, self-disclose to the office, request accommodations, and provide documentation to support the need for accommodations.

Transitioning from High School to College

- A postsecondary institution is not responsible for arranging for a student with a disability to receive accommodations (unless the student self-discloses and follows institutional procedures to request/receive accommodations).
- A college student must initiate the accommodation process according to institutional procedures and each time accommodations are needed.
 - UTRGV: Students are required to register with SAS each semester
 - For example, the student must provide a purchased copy of a textbook in order to have it converted to an alternative format.
 - For testing accommodations, the student must provide the office with the dates and times of his or her exams, and may be required to have more participation in the arrangements for such accommodations.

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

<https://disabilities.uchicago.edu/idea-ada-and-section-504>

Transitioning from High School to UTRGV

Key points

- In K-12, accommodations and services are usually designed to *maximize a student's potential*.
- At the post-secondary level, accommodations are granted to create a “**level playing field**,” rather than to help a student reach his or her greatest potential. The focus is on **access** versus success.

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

<https://disabilities.uchicago.edu/idea-ada-and-section-504>

Registering with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) & Requesting Accommodations



**Student must
be admitted
to UTRGV**



**Self-
identification /
disclosure of
disability**



**Disability
documentation
guidelines***



***Recent
evaluations -
within 3 years***

Requirements of
licensing boards for
exam

accommodations

Recommendation:
Before high school
graduation, request
an updated FIE

*SAS website:

www.utrgv.edu/accessibility

Documentation Requirements (per OCR)

- Institutions of higher education “may set reasonable standards for documentation. Some schools require more documentation than others.”
- The required documentation may include one or more of the following: a **diagnosis** of your current disability, as well as supporting information, such as the **date of the diagnosis, how that diagnosis was reached**, and the **credentials** of the diagnosing professional; **information on how your disability affects a major life activity**; and **information on how the disability affects your academic performance**.
- “The documentation should provide enough information for you and your school to decide what is an appropriate academic adjustment.”

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

The Interactive Process in Higher Education

Required by
ADA

In considering
accommodation
requests under
the ADA, it is
not one size fits
all.

Each individual
case should be
carefully and
independently
considered.

Communication
should occur
with a student
throughout the
decision-making
process.

Potential Roadblocks

• Scenario 1

- **A student self-discloses a diagnosis of dyslexia and seeks accommodations through UTRGV SAS.**
- Assessed during 2nd grade and was provided services under Section 504
- Report indicates “*characteristics of dyslexia*” and “*some scores fall in the average to above average range*”



Potential Roadblocks

Scenario 2

A student provides a FIE report indicating “Emotional Disturbance.”

- Emotional Disturbance (ED) is a Special Education eligibility under IDEA
- Under ADA, ED is not a disability.
- *SAS may* be able to provide support *temporarily*, while the student seeks a new evaluation (at his/her own expense), depending on the report content and year of the evaluation.

Scenario 3

A student requests dismissal from special education services during high school.

- How might this impact the student in college?

Potential Roadblocks

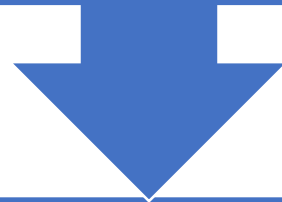
Review of Existing Evaluation Data (REED)

- A reevaluation may not occur more than once a year unless the parent and the LEA agree otherwise and must occur at least once every three years unless the parent and the LEA agree that a reevaluation is *unnecessary*.

[https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Special Student Populations/Special Education/Programs and Services/State Guidance/Review of Existing Evaluation Data Frequently Asked Questions/#2](https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Special_Student_Populations/Special_Education/Programs_and_Services/State_Guidance/Review_of_Existing_Evaluation_Data_Frequently_Asked_Questions/#2)

Student Self-Advocacy

Students should know how to self-disclose their disability and describe their functional limitations (i.e. the impact of the disability).



Students should be able to describe the types of services they received through special education in high school.

Good understanding:
“Time and a half on my exams”

Adequate understanding:
“Testing in a separate area”

Poor understanding:
“I’m not sure” or “...special needs services”

Accommodation Differences from High School to College

Extended time on assignments

- Different schedule of classes in college
- Typical: 1-3 additional days, *if approved*, depending on the curriculum requirements and student's disability

Extended time on exams

- “Take as much time as you need” and “You have all day to finish” *versus* “You will get your approved time and a half starting at 8:00 am and ending at 9:30 am.”

Short, frequent breaks

- Example: 2-five minutes breaks during a 50-minute lecture class

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Tonya Paulette, Director

tonya.paulette01@utrgv.edu

Edinburg: 956-665-7005

Brownsville: 956-882-7374