

504 and IDEA Comparison Chart

Component of the Legislation	IDEA	Section 504
Purpose	Is a federal statute whose purpose is to ensure a free and appropriate education services for children with disabilities who fall within one of the specific disability categories as defined by the law.	Is a broad civil rights law which protects the rights of individuals with disabilities in any agency, school or institution receiving federal funds to provide persons with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, an opportunity to fully participate with their peers.
Who is Protected	Covers eligible students ages 3-21 whose disability adversely affects the child's educational performance and/or ability to benefit from general education.	<p>Covers all persons with a disability from discrimination based solely on their disability.</p> <p>Section 504 defines a person with a disability as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a physical or mental impairment which limits one or more major life activity; Have a record of such an impairment; or Are regarded as having an impairment.
Services	Provides individual supplemental educational services and supports in addition to what is provided to students in the general curriculum to ensure that the child has access to and benefits from the general curriculum. This is provided free of charge to the parent.	Requires schools to eliminate barriers that would prevent the student from participating fully in the programs and services offered in the general curriculum.
Requirements for delivering Services	<p>Requires a written Individualized Education Plan (IEP) documentation with specific content addressing the disability directly and specifying educational services to be delivered, mandating transition planning for students 16 and over, as well as a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) for any child with a disability that has a behavioral issue.</p> <p>"Appropriate Education" is defined as a program reasonably calculated to provide "educational benefit" to the student. Related services are provided as required for the student to benefit from the educational process and are aligned with specially designed instruction (e.g., counseling, speech, transportation, occupational and physical therapy, etc.)</p>	<p>Does not require a written IEP but does require a documented plan. "Appropriate Education" means comparable to the one provided to general education students.</p> <p>Section 504 requires that reasonable accommodation be made for the child with a disability. Requires the school to provide reasonable accommodations, support and auxiliary aides to allow the child to participate in the general curriculum.</p>
Funding	Provides additional funding to states for eligible students	<p>Does not provide additional funds.</p> <p>Additionally, IDEA funds may not be used to serve children found eligible under section 504 only.</p>