

Academic Support for Children with Bleeding Disorders

All US children are guaranteed the right to a free and appropriate public education, or FAPE. This right is guaranteed by two federal laws: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, or IDEA (Public Law 101-476).

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is a civil rights law that protects anyone with a disability who attends a federally funded program, activity, or institution. Section 504 uses a broad definition of “disability” (most children with a bleeding disorder will qualify) and its goal is to provide those who are disabled the same educational opportunities as those who are not disabled. It does this by providing for accommodations and, to a lesser degree, modifications and services (see definitions below). Accommodations are designed to “level the playing field,” are usually written in a document called a “504 Plan.” 504 plans do not provide for specialized instruction.¹

IDEA is a federal education law that requires schools to serve the educational needs of eligible students with disabilities. IDEA fulfills the right to FAPE by providing accommodations and modifications as well as special education services. IDEA has a narrow definition of disability and, in addition, the disability must negatively affect the student’s ability to learn. Students who qualify for IDEA need special education and related services—spelled out in a document called an Individualized Education Plan or IEP—to make progress and benefit from the general education program. Few children with bleeding disorders qualify for an IEP.

Definitions:

Accommodations are changes in *how* a student accesses information and demonstrates learning. An accommodation is a change, exception, or adjustment to a rule, policy, practice, or service that may be necessary for a person with a disability to access the curriculum. They do not alter the instructional level or content, and they do not lower standards or achievements. 504 Plan accommodations are offered in the “least restrictive environment,” meaning the student’s regular general education classroom, not in a special education classroom.

Modifications are changes in *what* a student is expected to learn. Modifications may include changes in instructional level, content or curriculum, performance criteria, and assignments. A wide variety of modifications are often included in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for special education, but modifications are not common in 504 Plans.

Services may include tutoring, home teachers, physical therapy, counseling services, and many others.

Developing Accommodations:

Developing accommodations is highly individualized, and accommodations must match student needs. You will not need all of the accommodations on this list—pick those (or write your own) that will best meet your child’s needs. Avoid the temptation to check off accommodations using this or other lists or including unnecessary accommodations. Also, although some people put accommodations regarding their child’s health, medication or supplies in the 504 plan—it is better to describe these in your child’s Individualized Healthcare Plan (IHP), which should then be added to the 504 plan. (All children with a bleeding disorder should have an IHP as well as an Emergency Care Plan (ECP), which describes actions for faculty and staff to take until medical help arrives, should your child have a bleeding emergency at school.) There are hundreds of possible accommodations, however, the majority of accommodations for students with bleeding disorders tend to fall under just a handful of categories such as attendance, tardiness, homework and access to the nurse’s office or bathroom.

1. Although Section 504 does provide for “specialized instruction” in a 504 plan, students who require specialized instruction and outside services are usually eligible for services under IDEA and provided with an individualized education plan, or IEP.

HFSC Recommended List of Reasonable 504 Plan Accommodations

- My child's Individualized Healthcare Plan is incorporated into the 504 Plan

Attendance

- All medically-related absences are excused, with no loss of credit
 - Note, an accommodation excusing medically-related absences does not absolve the parent from complying with the school district's absence reporting procedures
 - Parents of students who regularly miss school due to medical reasons should look into obtaining a Chronic Illness Verification Form: (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ai/cw/documents/chronicillness.doc>) which, after being completed by the school district and your child's doctor, allows you to excuse medically-related absences without a doctor's note.
 - If your child is expected to be absent for an extended period (typically five days or more) due their health condition, contact your school district to request a home or hospital teacher through the Home and Hospital Instruction Program. This program serves students who incur a temporary disability, preventing attendance in the regular day classes (California Education Code Section 48206.3). See the California Department of Education website for further information: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/eo/hh/>
- Student will not be penalized for excused absences by being assigned extra work or being denied participation in an activity.
- Student attendance shall not be part of the grading system.

Tardies

- Student will be allowed to leave class five minutes early to get to next class, or;
- Student will be allotted extra time to get to classes, or;
- Student will be given extra time for traveling around campus

Homework

- Student will be allowed to makeup homework missed due to excused absences
- Extended time shall be allocated for homework makeup missed as a result of an excused absence;
- Teacher shall email parent or guardian regarding assignments missed due to absence
- Homework assignments shall be posted on school's website
 - Note: Many schools now use some type of *content management software (CMS)*, sometimes described as a student/parent portal, such as Edlio, Educational Networks or School Loop Plus. These programs run websites containing many features designed to enhance teacher/parent/student interaction. In regards to homework, teachers typically have a webpage for each of the classes they teach. The class webpage usually has an assignment calendar and a teacher can upload assignments to the webpage, where they can be viewed and downloaded by students; or a teacher can send an assignment to a single student. Depending on the software, a teacher may also be able to upload an audio or video recording of the day's lesson. (Some programs, such as the free version of School Loop, have limited functionality.) For schools that do use CMS, use of the system is sometimes optional for teachers. If your child's school uses CMS, request in an accommodation that your child's teacher use the system, at least to post assignments.
- Teacher's notes shall be emailed to student during absences

Miscellaneous Accommodations

- Tutoring will be provided for extended absences
- Student shall be issued pass/key for elevator when mobility is impaired
- Seating assignment in classroom to allow my child easier access in and out of class
- Extra time on tests, quizzes and homework, as needed and agreed upon by teacher and student
- Student will be given immediate access to the nurse's office upon request
- Student shall be given immediate access to the bathroom upon request
- Modified P.E. class
- My child will not be excluded from any school activity without prior written consent from me

- Extra set of books to keep at home or in class
 - CA Education Code Section 60119(c) requires that schools must ensure “each pupil, including English learners, has a standards-aligned textbook or instructional materials, or both, to use in class and to take home.” This paragraph does *not* require two sets of textbooks or instructional materials (home and class) for each pupil.” This specifically applies to four subject areas: reading/language arts, mathematics, science, and history-social science.
 - If students are required to carry books, ask for a digital version of the textbooks which can be read on an e-reader, netbook, iPad or laptop computer (the school may also loan you one of these if you do not have one). All textbooks are available in a free PDF version and most publishers also have web-based interactive versions of their textbooks (get access code from teacher). Some schools also use programs such as “Intelligent Papers” or “Digital Backpack” which can download texts to a reader which can then be accessed at home without internet access.
- Assistance provided to carry books and/or lunch tray when necessary
- Locker placement will be accessible for my child (lower or upper locker)
- Classrooms shall have a desk designed to accommodate a wheelchair
- Practice with emergency exits
- My child may access their cell phone to call parent/guardian about health issues

Accommodations to include in your child’s Individualized Healthcare Plan

- Student’s medical diagnosis is confidential: medical issues are not to be discussed in class
- Clotting factor/medication/supplies/needles/ shall be kept at the nurse’s office
 - For additional reading on regulations regarding keeping and using medications at school, see California Department of Education document at: <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/hn/documents/medadvisory.pdf>
- Tampons/sanitary pads shall be kept at the nurse’s office
- Private location shall be provided for my child to administer factor;
 - In order for your child to self-administer factor at school: schools require the parent or guardian obtain and provide the school with a signed authorized health care provider’s written statement for medication administration in school. The authorization must also include the following agreements: (1) that the parent or guardian will provide the necessary medication, supplies, and equipment; (2) that the parent or guardian will notify the school nurse, other duly qualified supervisor of health, or site administrator, if there is a change in the student’s medication, health status, or authorized health care provider; and (3) that the parent or guardian will notify the school nurse, other duly qualified supervisor of health, or site administrator immediately and provide new consent for any changes in authorized health care provider’s authorizations. (See CDE link above for further info.)
- Parent or guardian or school nurse, shall accompany student on field trips
 - Note: be aware that many schools no longer have a full-time school nurse—the district may have one or two school nurses that rotate between schools. Also, in many cases, the school nurse cannot administer IV medications, such as clotting factor. LVNs (Licensed Vocational Nurses) and other staff cannot, under any conditions, administer IV meds, nor can they be delegated this responsibility. In addition, emergency medical personnel (paramedics) *cannot* administer a patient’s IV medication, such as clotting factor. Finally, many hospitals have policies prohibiting the administration of patient meds. Prior to the start of school, work with the school or district nurse to develop a *field trip plan* to address how your child’s health care needs will be addressed while on a field trip, and include this plan with the IHP.
- Another student must accompany my child to the nurse’s office if a bleed is suspected