

Deerfield Academy Accommodations Policy

I. Introduction:

Under the law, individuals with documented disabilities have certain protections, including the right to reasonable accommodations and equal access to programs and services. To access these rights, an individual is required to furnish documentation that the disability substantially limits a major life activity, such as learning.

According to testing service procedures, students must apply for on-campus accommodations and use granted accommodations for a recommended minimum of four (4) months prior to applying for accommodations with the standardized testing boards (College Board and ACT). **Accommodations granted by College Board cover the PSAT, SAT reasoning, SAT Subject tests, and AP exams. Accommodations for the ACT are vetted separately.**

We strongly advise parents who are investigating the possibility of accommodations to pursue documentation that complies with the guidelines found on the College Board and ACT websites (see below). Accommodations granted at a previous institution do not constitute grounds for continued accommodation without current and adequate documentation.

II. Process for receiving accommodations at Deerfield

Documentation includes a formal evaluation prepared by a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist. The documentation should be current (within the last three years for learning disabilities and ADD/ADHD and within the last year for psychiatric disabilities). Some diagnoses may need to be confirmed annually. The documentation should state the specific disability and the limitation it poses on the student's ability to handle assignments and assessments. It should also include recommendations for addressing those limitations on campus. The Assistant Academic Dean/Disabilities Coordinator, (in consultation with the school physician, where appropriate), will be responsible for reviewing the documentation to confirm compliance with appropriate standards, and determining if accommodations are warranted in the context of Deerfield Academy. If accommodations are approved, the Assistant Academic Dean will communicate an explanation of the granted accommodations to the student, the student's teachers, and advisor. Information may be released to other adults in the community on a "need-to-know" basis.

In certain circumstances, we may have the student's report evaluated independently (i.e., by our own, neutral evaluator) to determine whether the testing and conclusions are valid; or we may require that the student be re-tested (by an evaluator of our choosing). Deerfield reserves the right to reject evaluations and testing, or parts, thereof, upon an adequate basis.

Families may appeal the decision reached by Deerfield Academy by writing a letter to the Head of School and Academic Dean.

Deerfield is committed to providing access to all students, regardless of financial circumstances. Families finding it difficult to cover the cost of the evaluation should contact the Financial Aid Office for assistance.

III. Applying for Accommodations with standardized testing boards

Once accommodations have been granted on campus, a four-month waiting period is recommended before applying to the standardized testing boards, a process initiated by the Testing Coordinator. Further, both the College Board and ACT require 7-8 weeks processing time. Mindful of this 6-month process, we highly recommend beginning the application process in September of a student's 9th grade or 10th grade year, in order to have accommodations in place before their first required standardized test. If possible, initiate the process over the summer by contacting a licensed psychologist or psychiatrist for an evaluation. The student's first potential standardized test is the PSAT, in October of 10th grade year.

Applications to the standardized testing boards are processed from September to May of the academic year. NO initial applications will be processed from May to September. If a student is denied accommodations by the standardized testing boards, parents must initiate the appeal process by contacting the Testing Coordinator at Deerfield Academy, who will assist with ONE appeal process. Parents may pursue additional appeals independently.

It should be noted that once accommodations are granted by the standardized testing boards, they remain in effect until up to one year after high school.

For more information, please contact the Testing Coordinator or refer to the College Board and ACT websites for specific information under Testing Accommodations or Services for Students with Disabilities at www.collegeboard.org or www.act.org.

IV. On Campus Accommodations

Deerfield Academy provides reasonable accommodations that would not modify the nature of the school's program. Academy related accommodations are for in-class, written assessments. The extended time accommodation is an additional 50%. Students are expected to complete their assessments on the day they are assigned.

ACT accommodations over multiple days are given on the Saturday of the national exam and on the following day.