



MDA's Educational Recommendations: Plan Ahead

The following is a quick guide to help you get started and thinking about what you may need to plan ahead for as it relates to your student(s) with neuromuscular disease.

Areas to consider:

- Field trips
- Evacuation plans in case of an emergency (How will a student get to an off-site placement? Where will the student hide in case of a run-hide-fight situation?)
- Assistance with lunch
- Course materials (electronic versions instead of textbooks)
- Classroom activities (Can the student move around the room without tripping? Are the aisles wide enough for a student who uses a wheelchair?)
- Advanced placement testing
- Locker placement (including specialized locks)
- Technology and equipment

Build relationships and connect with other school employees:

- Transportation director and bus driver
- Janitorial staff (they usually make sure the lifts, doors and elevators are working and that doorways are clear)
- School counselors
- Paraprofessional educators
- Transition Alliance Program (TAP) and or vocational rehabilitation

Educate yourself regarding extracurricular activities and community services:

- State waiver programs are available in many states to assist with community-based programs and support to promote optimal health, independence, safety and integration of an individual in the community
- State vocational rehabilitation office
- Sanctioned sporting events (track is one of the sports that allows students who have physical disabilities or visual disabilities to participate with their school team)
- MDA's Young Adults Program (mda.org/young-adults) offers education, employment and independent living resources

“Everyone has challenges that they have to overcome. Sometimes those challenges resemble mountains that we have to climb. In order for us to get to the top of the mountain, we have to use different techniques or methods. It doesn't matter how we climb the mountain as long as we get to the top. All goals are attainable — the way we reach them may be different, but the outcome is the same. As educators, don't focus on the can't but instead work enthusiastically to identify the HOW.”

— Tammy, mom of a child with neuromuscular disease