

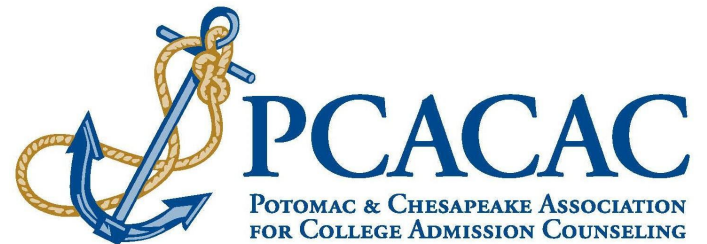
# Welcome to the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Summer Institute

College Counseling/Admissions for Differentiated Learners:

How to best support students

## Session Number C1

July 23, 2024



# The Presenters

## Jennifer Williams

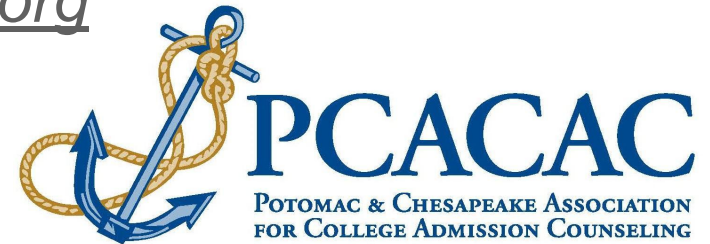
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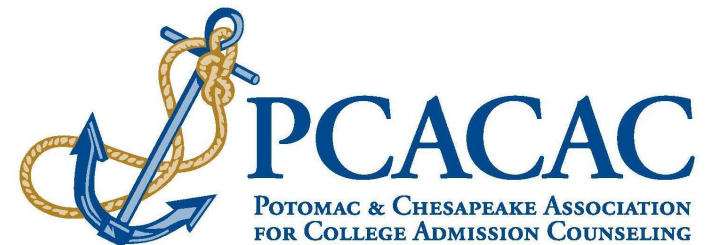
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# Learning Objectives

- Create a framework for how to help students with learning differences navigate the college process beginning in ninth grade
- Understand the levels of disability services in a post-secondary setting
- Develop specific strategies to support students with learning differences through the college process and beyond



# Accommodations

Differences between High School and College:

Colleges only have to provide equal access; accommodations, not special instruction.

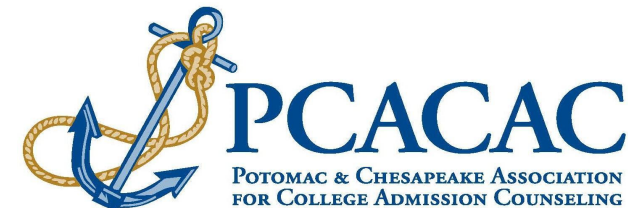
Law only requires “reasonable” accommodations. Accommodations are not reasonable if granting them would:

Create an undue financial or administrative burden.

Pose a direct threat to the safety of others.

Mean providing a personal service(e.g., one-on-one tutoring) or device(special software for use on a student’s personal computer).

Fundamentally alter the nature of a course or program(e.g., substitution of course required for completing a major or the college’s general requirements).



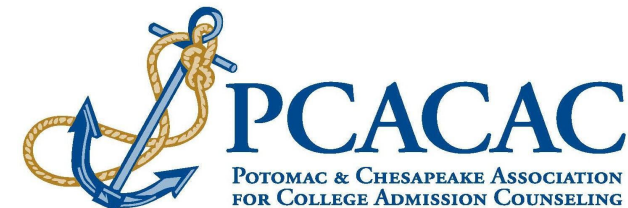
# High School Years

## Junior Year

- IEP/504 meeting should be held early in Junior year
- A follow up meeting should be scheduled with parent/student/counselor to discuss post-secondary plans
- Prior to family meeting, counselor should meet with case manager to discuss students needs and accommodations
- It may be helpful to observe student in a classroom setting
- Educational testing should be current, and recommendations should be made with college in mind
- Students (and parents) must understand the students learning differences and what that may mean for college
- Remind parents that the IEP does not follow the student to college
- The relationship the counselor has with families is the key to success in the process
- For students for whom testing is an issue, it is important to have the conversation about test-optional schools.

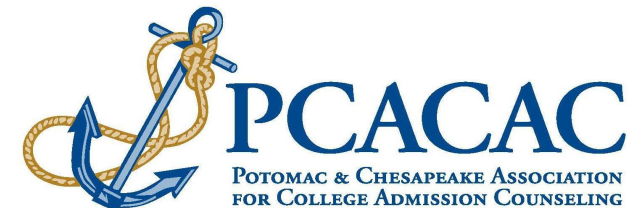
## Senior Year

- Model the process for asking for accommodations
  - Give them a sample letter
  - Make sure they understand
- Have them present it to teachers and ask teachers for feedback
  - Share feedback with student and parent



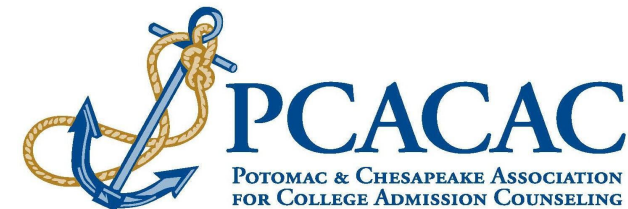
# The Process Itself

- Most students need smaller deadlines before the final deadline
- Help them by chunking out tasks
- Case Manager/Outside Counselor could be helpful in helping student to create spreadsheet of tasks and deadlines (share through google with Parents, counselor, and case manager)
- One of the greatest challenges is navigating the intricacies of the process



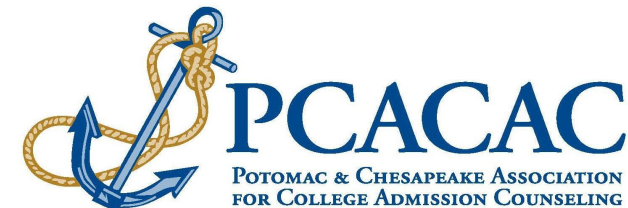
# Advocating for Students

- - Counselor needs to build relationships with college admission professionals
- - Become familiar with students learning profiles so you can appropriately assess fit
- - Gain Knowledge about the different learning differences and their impact on students in a college setting
- - Understand that there is a wide range of students with diverse learning differences and many are also gifted (twice exceptional)
- - For some students, earning a degree can be a two or three step process
- Make sure all students have an appropriate high school curriculum



# Admissions Approach to Neurodiverse Students

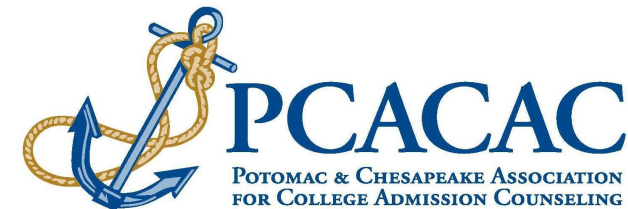
- Medical Model: leads admissions counselors to weigh their words to avoid discrimination in the admissions process
- Do the admission team/others at the college project an attitude that neurodiversity brings a valuable perspective to the college?
- Value of meeting with someone in disability services to discuss accommodations and supports
- Consider asking to meet with a current student and/or parent ambassador served by the disability services office
- To disclose or not to disclose? Understand your policy
- Student Central – true communication between faculty, advisors, academic support, and student affairs
- ~~Helicopter Parents~~... nope! Treating parents as valued partners





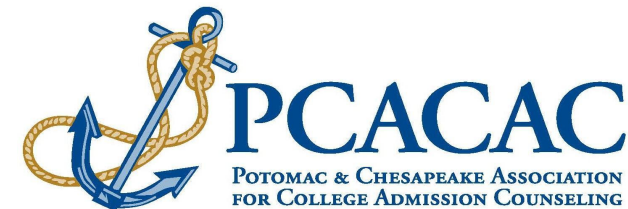
# Thoughts/Notions to keep in mind for all of us

- Talk to Students/Families from a Strengths Based Perspective
- Create connections of their goals with their potential programs
- Normalizing Presenting College Admission Programs
- Discuss the potential of future options (GAP/Vocational/Specialized school settings)
- If Student is interested in designing their own GAP year, discuss in detail what that means for them
  - and for Admissions professionals, make sure you understand the policies/procedures related to GAP year and reentry into your school



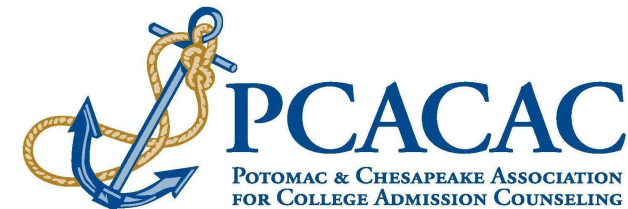
# Understanding the College Alternatives (and how they apply to Neurodivergent Learners)

- When meeting with student to discuss college options, be aware that they might be open to other alternatives
  - Do they have concerns about the process?
  - Do they indicate the openness to other things?
  - How do they see their future options?
  - How do the other stakes holders ( parents/guardians) see these alternatives
- Inviting the College Alternative Programs to your campus (or Zoom meeting)
- Keep up to date on certain programs
  - GAP Year Association ([www.gapyearassociation.org](http://www.gapyearassociation.org))
  - Living/Learning Opportunities (College Living Experience – [www.experiencecle.com](http://www.experiencecle.com))
  - Internship Opportunities for NL (ex: BroadFutures – [www.broadfutures.org](http://www.broadfutures.org))



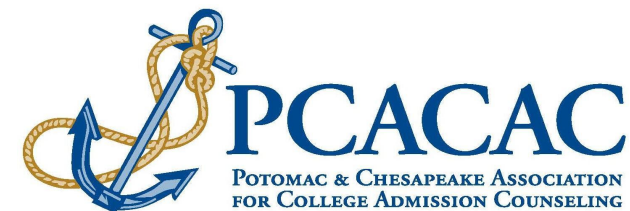
# Developing Solid Connections with Alternative Programs

- Engage with them via their own programming events
- Invite them into campus (either with students or just yourself)
- Gather information and perspective on how they can fit your students and their needs (by presenting specific scenarios and needs)
- Find out what limitations are within each program
- With certification programs, look online/discuss with your contact what can be accomplished for students
- Make sure you do your research on each program you are going to recommend



# General Tips Regarding GAP/Certification/Alternative Programs

- What opportunities are offered to students within the program not are not popularly known?
- What have been some end results of students engaging with the program?
- What are the requirements that students will need to complete to be fully considered? Interview?
- Are there scholarships or other ways to pay for the program is cost is prohibitive?
- How do they build a community with their program?
- Can you talk to students that have “graduated” from their program?
- Look online and see if there are any reviews, etc.



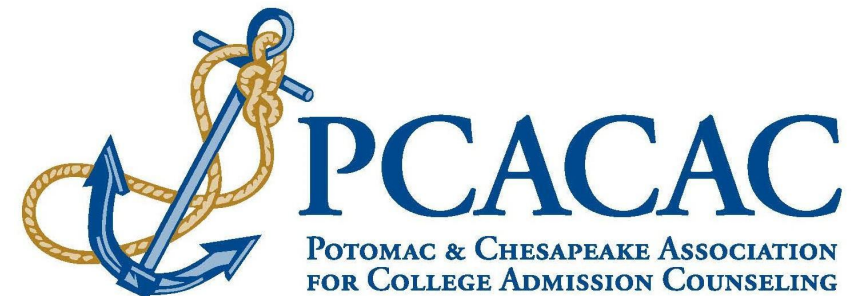
# Audience feedback time (aka QUESTIONS)

Comments?

Insights?

Input?

Information gaps?



# Please. . .

Take a minute or two to complete the session evaluation before leaving the room today.

Thank you!

