

Special education

Business



Students with learning disabilities learn differently, and therefore get taught differently, than other students. “ Students with learning disabilities often need information presented to them in different ways to understand the material. Teachers may use visuals (pictures), graphic organizers, to help organize the information, using different vocabulary and chunking or breaking down information as strategies to help students in their classrooms,” said Cari Wallace, a special education teacher at the New York City iSchool. She also said that a common misunderstanding is that these students “ different” from others, but this isn’t the case. She explained that everyone has different learning styles, including adults.

Wallace added, “ The special education program has changed dramatically since it was first established in the 1970’s. Unfortunately, there is still a lot of work to do in the area of public perception or beliefs surrounding it.” In addition to using some of the teaching strategies Wallace said, in some subjects in school there may be co-teachers to accommodate students with different learning needs. Devekanand Singh, another special education teacher at the iSchool, explained that this is because of a new move toward “ inclusive education, meaning students with learning differences are educated alongside their peers and not separated, whenever appropriate.” He added that “ special education students have the same graduation requirements as all other students.” The two subjects that usually have more than one teacher present are English language arts and math; in science and social studies, there isn’t much need for two teachers.

When two teachers are present, students can receive extra support and help as needed. Usually, in classes with co-teachers, there are some students

with learning disabilities. Kids with learning disabilities may also get more time to take tests than others: on major tests, some students get time and a half or double time. Daniela, who receives time and a half on major tests, said that, because of this, people sometimes think she or others who receive special education services are “ not as smart as other students.” She explained, “ Maybe just in my case it just takes me longer to do it, but I can do just as much as them. We’re not stupid.

They shouldn’t stereotype these kids because they’ll be surprised who gets extra time, even the kids they think are the smartest.” Jenny, a senior who doesn’t receive any special accommodations, said “ You shouldn’t be mean to [students with special needs], even if they have problems. Manners are very important.” Another senior who doesn’t receive any special accommodations either said, “ even people you know can have special needs. It’s a common thing and they shouldn’t be treated differently.”

Special Education kids are not different than others.

Sometimes general education students also need special help like special education students. Both special education teachers and students agree that they shouldn’t be treated different than others. Everyone learns at their own pace.