



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Grades, Diplomas and Transcripts for Students with Disabilities (1999)

Interim Supplication and Updates

February 2017

The Iowa Department of Education is making final revisions to its [guidance document on grades, diplomas, and transcripts](#). While those revisions are pending, please use this chart to determine whether the practices in the 1999 version of the guidance document are still current.

The left column sets out the questions in the original document. The center column gives the 1999 document's short answer. The right column states whether the answer in the center column is still current.

Question	Short Answer in 1999 Document	Is the 1999 Answer Still Current? [Additional notes]
1. Should a student's grade be altered or modified to reflect "reasonable" accommodations that may have been made for the student?	No	Yes
2. If modifications that lower or fundamentally or substantially alter the curriculum content of a class for a student, may a student receive an alternate grade for that course?	Yes	Yes
3. May asterisks or other symbols or codes be used on a student's report card to indicate that the student has had accommodations in a general education classroom or received a modified curriculum in the general education classroom?	Yes	Yes
4. May a student with disabilities who receives course content modifications that substantially alter or lower the district's standards be denied admission to the general education honor roll?	Yes	Revisions pending. Honor roll admissions criteria must be disability-neutral and based on the content of the courses, not the attributes of the learners. Examples include weighted grades for courses with greater or lesser academic rigor or a requirement to complete a list of core courses. Children with disabilities shall not be categorically excluded from the honor roll

5. May a teacher grade a student with disabilities on a pass/fail grading system rather than a point grading system?	Yes	Yes, with additional cautions: it is impermissible to categorically assign all children with disabilities to pass-fail grading.
6. Is it acceptable for a school to use a course weighted grading system?	Yes	Yes
7. May courses for special education students arbitrarily be given a lower course weighting than regular education courses?	No	Yes
8. May a student receive a grade reduction based on attendance?	Yes	Yes, but please pay close attention to the cautions and conditions in the original document.
9. May a student with a disability, enrolled in a general education class for reasons other than mastery of content (e.g., learning social skills) be excluded from the class's grading and be evaluated based on specific goals, objectives, or benchmarks on the IEP?	Yes	Yes
10. Can a student with disabilities be excluded from an extracurricular activity based on certain grade criteria?	Yes	Yes. Please note Iowa's rule for interscholastic athletic eligibility for children with IEPs: Iowa Admin. Code r. 281-36.15(2)"e".
11. May a special education student who does not meet the graduation requirements adopted for the general education program receive a diploma?	Yes	Review and revision pending. Any revision will have no effect on classes of 2017 and 2018.
12. May a student with disabilities receive a different diploma from the diploma that students without disabilities receive?	"The diplomas must be similar in all significant respects."	Yes
13. Is it ever appropriate to award a student with disabilities a certificate of achievement in place of a diploma?	Yes	Yes
14. If a student with disabilities has been awarded a certificate of achievement in place of a diploma, may that student continue to receive FAPE?	Yes	Yes

15. Must a district continue to provide FAPE to an individual with disabilities who has received a regular high school diploma?	No	Yes. Note that the rule cited in the 1999 guidance document has been rescinded. Please consult rule 41.320(2) for similar content.
16. Must a district end a student's educational program when he or she has met all of the district's graduation requirements, but has not achieved all of his or her IEP goals?	No	Yes. A child with a disability graduates with a regular high school diploma based on two outcomes: (1) the child meets graduation requirements applicable to all children or (2) the child meets graduation requirements applicable to all children plus additional requirements determined necessary for the child to receive a FAPE.
17. If modifications to curriculum content have been made for a student, may that be reflected on the student's transcript?	Yes	Yes
18. May classes be identified as special education classes on a high school student's transcript to indicate that the student has had a modified curriculum in a general education class?	No	Yes
19. May asterisks or other symbols or codes be written on a high school student's transcript to indicate that the student has had a modified curriculum in a general education class?	Yes	Yes. Please note that the asterisks must not identify the student as being a student with disability.