

**OCR GUIDANCE ON REPORT CARDS AND TRANSCRIPTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES  
ATTENDING PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**Report Cards**

- **A report card for a student with a disability may identify special education or other related services or resources being provided for that student or otherwise indicate that the student has a disability.**
- Report cards are provided to parents *to indicate their child's progress or level of achievement in specific classes, course content, or curriculum*. Consistent with this purpose, it would be permissible under Section 504 and Title II for a report card to indicate that a student is receiving special education or related services, as long as the report card informs parents about their child's progress or level of achievement in specific classes, course content, or curriculum.
- However, the mere designation that a student has an IEP or is receiving a related service, without any meaningful explanation of the student's progress, such as a grade or other evaluative standard established by an LEA and/or SEA, would be inconsistent with IDEA's periodic reporting requirements.
  
- **A report card for a student with a disability may distinguish between special education programs and services and general education curriculum classes through specific notations or the use of asterisks or other symbols.**
- LEAs frequently distinguish between general education curriculum classes and other types of programs and classes, such as advanced placement, honors, or remedial classes. Making similar distinctions on report cards would be consistent with the general requirements of Section 504 and Title II that individuals with disabilities may not unnecessarily be treated differently than individuals without disabilities.
- An LEA may distinguish between special education programs and services provided under a **modified or alternate education curriculum** and regular education classes under the general education curriculum on the student's report card. It is appropriate for the report card to indicate that the student's progress was measured based on the modified education curriculum.
- This distinction may be achieved by using an asterisk or other symbol meant to reference the modified or alternate education curriculum as long as the statements on the report card, including the asterisks, symbols or other coding, provide an explanation of the student's progress that is as informative and effective as the explanation provided for students without disabilities.
  
- **Special notations, including asterisks or other symbols, may appear on a report card for a student with a disability who received accommodations in general education curriculum classes.**
- To the extent that the use of notations, asterisks, symbols, or other coding on a report card to indicate that a student with a disability received accommodations is part of the information given to parents about their child's progress or level of achievement in specific classes, course content, curriculum, the IEP, or the plan under Section 504 [the purpose of a report card], it is permissible under Section 504 and Title II.
  
- **Report card grades for a student with a disability may be based on grade level standards.**
- If an LEA assigns grades to nondisabled students participating in regular education classes using grade level standards to reflect progress in the general education curriculum, then the LEA would also use those standards to assign grades to students with disabilities in those same classes.
- Nothing in Section 504 or Title II prohibits SEAs and LEAs from deciding how to establish standards to reflect the progress or level of achievement of students with disabilities who are taught using different course content or a modified or alternate education curriculum.

## Transcripts

- **A transcript for a student with a disability may *not* indicate that the student has a disability, has been enrolled in a special education program, or has received special education or related services.**
- A student's transcript generally is *intended to inform postsecondary institutions or prospective employers of a student's academic credentials and achievements*. Information that a student has a disability, or has received special education or related services due to having a disability, does not constitute information about the student's academic credentials and achievements.
- Notations that are used exclusively to identify a student as having a disability or identify education programs for students with disabilities unnecessarily provide these students with different educational benefits or services. Identifying programs as being only for students with disabilities also would be viewed as disclosure of disability status of enrollees and constitutes different treatment on the basis of disability.
- Postsecondary institutions may not make preadmission inquiries as to whether an applicant for admission has a disability prior to admission. Nor may employers make preemployment inquiries as to whether an applicant for employment has a disability prior to an offer of employment.
  
- **A transcript for a student with a disability *may* indicate, either through specific notations or the use of asterisks or other symbols, that the student took classes with a modified or alternate education curriculum.**
- This is consistent with the transcript's purpose of *informing postsecondary institutions and prospective employers of a student's academic credentials and achievements*.
- Transcript notations concerning enrollment in different classes, course content, or curriculum by students with disabilities would be consistent with similar transcript designations for classes such as advanced placement, honors, and basic and remedial instruction, which are provided for both students with and without disabilities, and thus would not violate Section 504 or Title II.
- The notations, asterisks, or other symbols indicating a modified or alternate education curriculum are permissible when they do not specifically disclose that a student has a disability, are not used for the purpose of identifying programs for students with disabilities, and are consistent with the purpose of a student transcript.
  
- **Special notations, including asterisks or other symbols, may not appear on a transcript for a student with a disability who received accommodations in general education curriculum classes.**
- Because the use of accommodations generally does not reflect a student's academic credentials and achievement, but does identify the student as having a disability, it would be a violation of Section 504 and Title II for a student's transcript to indicate that the student received accommodations in any classes.
- Because accommodations are generally understood to include aids and adjustments to enable a student with a disability to learn and demonstrate knowledge, this notation could identify the student as having a disability and therefore constitute different treatment on the basis of disability.
  
- **A transcript for a student with a disability may indicate receipt of a certificate of attendance or a similar document, rather than a regular diploma, under certain circumstances.**
- These circumstances are where this does not disclose that a student has received special education or related services, does not otherwise specifically disclose that a student has a disability (for example, because certificates of attendance are available to both students with disabilities and students without disabilities), is not used for the purpose of identifying programs for students with disabilities, and is consistent with the purpose of a student transcript -- to inform postsecondary institutions and prospective employers of a student's academic credentials and achievements.