

## Iowa Testing Programs

### Bar Code Label Ordering Procedures, updated for 2009-10

#### Please read carefully.

Following these bar code procedures will simplify your districts AYP reporting and maximize accuracy for the state of Iowa in meeting NCLB requirements. All information must be included in your bar code file. We will not be able to read any pencil coded fields (except test Form) from the answer documents when documents are returned to the Scoring Center. For new students and any students that have incorrect information on your bar code file, you must submit a new file containing only those students' records and we will process your follow-up label order.

The bar code validation service from Iowa Testing Programs (ITP) is used to obtain adhesive labels, which school personnel place on student answer documents. Using this service provides for more accurate student demographic information, can make it easier for schools to find student records, and allows schools and students to bypass most of the coding steps when getting ready to test.

All of Iowa's schools are required by the Iowa Department of Education to use the bar code label service. The Iowa DE will cover the cost of the bar coding service for public schools. Non-public districts/schools will be charged \$.15 per student plus shipping costs. Public and non-public districts must place a follow-up order should they discover errors in the data they originally submitted, or if they should receive new students between the time they submitted their original order and their test date. **A change in state policy has taken effect beginning with the 2009-10 school year. All students must have labels on their answer documents. Processing fees and scoring delays may result if this policy is not followed.**

Ordering bar code labels, which is independent of registering for testing, should be done approximately one month prior to testing. This allows enough time under normal circumstances so that the labels can be generated, delivered, and affixed on student answer documents before tests are administered. Some districts choose to place their label order after testing has completed, in which case students will have to write in some personally identifiable information to facilitate school staff affixing labels after testing. **TIP: We generally have no staff or minimal staff available during and immediately before and after major holidays (e.g. Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's, etc.), so you will want to take that into account when planning your file submission. Our printer will also suspend shipments during the weeks on and around Christmas and New Year's.**

Following are the major steps in the process, as well as some suggestions for avoiding potential problems:

## To Begin

1. Download the files listed under the “Information on Bar Coding for 2009-2010” section of the “Downloads” page of the ITP website [www.education.uiowa.edu/itp/downloads.aspx](http://www.education.uiowa.edu/itp/downloads.aspx) and read all materials. The Excel template that is available here may not be needed if you use your local student information system to create the bar code data file as recommended. The FAQ provides extra important information and should be read before you continue.
2. When creating your bar code data file, make use of your student information system application (e.g., JMC, MacSchool) to obtain an extract file for the grades you are testing. All information systems used by Iowa schools that have been approved by the Iowa DE have a special function to create bar code data files for ITP. Bar code data files generated using this approach should yield a delimited text file which can be submitted to ITP. If your information system does not have this function, a second method is to use the “Bar Code Template 2009-10.xls” file available from the ITP web site. You can then arrange your data to fit the template. Both methods should result in a file of records containing 32 fields, some of which may be left blank. (See the “Bar Code File Layout 2009-10” for file format specifications.) **If you need help coding any field, please consult the “Coding for Disaggregation of Scores” and “Enrollment (Entry) Type Codes” documents, available on the ITP web site referenced above. These documents have been updated for the 2009-10 school year. The “Bar Coding FAQ” has extra information regarding file preparation which is important for all users.**
3. A district should send in *one data file for all students* who will be testing at about the same time. Even if your student information systems are housed in separate buildings, we need to receive only *one file*. The various student information systems all generate simple text files that can be opened in a word processor or spreadsheet (e.g., Word or Excel) and manipulated readily. You can use your application of choice (e.g., Word or Excel) to cut, copy, paste, and save your student information or you can send us the text file itself if you don’t need to do any editing prior to submission. (We simply do not have the resources to process the many files that would come to us if districts send in separate files by building or grade.)
  - a. If your buildings are testing during different norm periods, (e.g., high school in the fall and all others in the spring), send your files in separately about a month before testing so that your student information is as current as possible.
  - b. If your buildings test only a week or two apart, please combine your files into one order.
  - c. If you submit multiple files in an order, only the most recently submitted file will be processed. If you submit single files spread over multiple orders for testing during the same testing period, you will be asked to combine the files before processing will commence.

## File and Field Information

4. Only send in a file that contains records for students/grades being tested, not all students in the district.

5. Names should not contain special foreign characters (e.g., ñ).
6. No fields should contain commas (e.g., Last Name such as ‘Smith, Jr.’ or Teacher Name such as ‘Jones, Tad’). However, student names may have dashes (e.g. Jane Smith-Jones) or apostrophes (e.g. John O’Brien).
7. The first row of the file should contain a record header with the name of each of the 32 fields. **All 32 fields must be in your file, even if there is no coding in a particular field.** Please note that beginning with the 2009-2010 school year an additional race/ethnicity field was added, “Hawaiian/Pacific Islander.” Previously these students were coded under “Asian” in the bar code file but now have their own separate code instead. Last year the data columns “Program – Other 1” and “Program – Other 2” were changed to Foster Care and Homeless respectively; if you have a DE-approved student information system, these changes should be reflected in your system. Lastly, make sure your file does not contain any empty records or rows, i.e., breaks in the list of students.
8. The “Bar Code File Layout 2009-10” document specifies the maximum length of each of the 32 fields. The number of characters in a field, such as Last Name, can be less than the maximum. Do not add additional spaces to make the field the maximum length. The alpha fields are *not* fixed length; they are variable length with a given maximum number of characters.
9. Your student information system should produce Full Academic Year (FAY) coding (column/field 18, which is labeled “Test Admin: Column P”). This coding can be added to the file using a word processor or spreadsheet. You’ll want to be sure that this is updated annually. Note that a blank entry is an accepted code for this field and indicates that the student was continuous in district and building since the previous year. **If the total number of students in your order is equal to the number of students coded continuous in district and building, this indicates that your district received no new students from the previous year and is likely incorrectly coded. Incorrect FAY coding is the most common source of post-scoring reporting problems encountered by districts, and can result in additional fees and/or substantial delays for rescoring or making file corrections before the data can be provided to the Iowa DE.**
10. Several of the student information systems produce default information when a field in the information system is blank for a student. For example, a student without a Date of Birth entered might be assigned the value 00/00/2000. Be sure to check birthdates in the bar code file carefully and correct them when needed. Likewise, a student missing a state-assigned ID might be coded a “0” by default. Again, these zeroes need to be corrected or deleted. Additionally, if a school does not have data for the program fields 504, GT, T1 L, and T1 M, some of the information systems generate zeroes for all students in these fields when the bar code file is extracted. You should be aware of how your particular information system handles fields in which student information is missing and what appears in the extract file in these cases. The default information (e.g., zeroes) may or may not be legitimate in certain fields. **Checking all coding in your file to verify accuracy prior to submission will speed the validation process for your file and result in quicker order fulfillment.**

11. Due to a specific setting (called “1904 date system”), Excel can distort dates imported from your information system. If you use Excel, be sure to check your students’ birth dates for accuracy before sending us your file. When this error occurs, all birth dates in a group will each be off by 4 years and a day.
12. Some of the information systems insert spaces into a bar code field although the field is empty in the information system. These extra spaces should be removed. A blank or unused field in the bar code file should be empty of any and all characters.
13. **In the bar code file, Class/Teacher Name and Grade are used only to sort labels, not for grouping students to create score reports.** For scoring, the Class/Teacher Name and grade both are taken from the Grade/Class ID sheets. By default, the bar code labels are sorted by building name, grade, and teacher in order to be distributed more easily. If a middle/high school does not want labels sorted by teacher, the Class/Teacher Name can be left blank in the bar code file. Building Name and Grade cannot be left blank.

#### Sending Your File to ITP

14. Our bar code validation service is now integrated with ITP Online Tools. Someone in your district will need to create an account for you that will enable you to sign in to the Online Tools web site, <https://www.education.uiowa.edu/itp/tools/>. **If you ordered last year, your login and password still exists on our site and can be used to access Online Tools; you do not need to create a new user account.** District superintendents received a letter in July 2008 informing them of this change and they, or people they designate, are responsible for creating your account for you to give you access to the web site. Once created, the account remains; you will not need additional user accounts to process orders in the future.
15. Once you are logged in to the Online Tools web site, click on the “Bar Code” link available from the menu. If this is your first time submitting an order, you will be taken to a list page which says there are no orders in the system; from here you can click the “Begin new order” link.
  - a. **TIP: If you do not see the “Bar Code” link on your menu, your account may not have been assigned the correct permissions by the person in your district who created it. Please contact that person for assistance.**
16. At this point you will be taken step-by-step through a list of menus that will provide information about your order. **Please assign the “Primary Contact” to the person who is actually working on the file; choosing a person/address to receive the shipment of labels is a separate category. The “Primary Contact” will be the first person we call if we have questions or problems with the file submission.** You can click on the tabs and then enter information in each section. Once this information is entered, click the “Save” tab to review what you entered. If you omitted any required information, you will be asked to go back and enter it. Once this is done, you can click the “Save” button. You will be given a green “Successful” box and a link will be provided to the file management portion of the site (from here, the site works roughly the same as it did last year).

Our sites: [Primary Website](#) | [Online Tools](#) | [Bar Coding](#) | [eITP](#)

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## Iowa Testing Programs

Home > Bar Coding (Your session will expire in B [Logout](#) [?](#))

- Home
- Bar Coding

**Upload a file** A

Click "Browse..." or "Choose File" to choose the file you wish to upload, then click the "Upload" button.

**View a file** C

View	Date/Time	Size	File Type
	9/10/2009 8:15:12 AM	118.5 kb	Adobe PDF
	9/10/2009 8:13:54 AM	36.5 kb	Excel

**TOOLS** B

- [Edit this order \(contact info, test dates, etc.\)](#)
- [Contact ITP](#)
- [Mark summary file as OK](#)
- [Document Center](#)
- [Coding for disaggregation of scores \(FAY coding, etc.\)](#)

**ASSESSMENT**  
ITBS/ITED

**SHIP TO**  
Albert Einstein  
123 Sample St.  
Anytown, IA 50932  
Phone: 444-111-9393 x33

**ORDER INFO**  
District: 0000  
Name: Mill Creek Community School District  
Test Date: 9/25/2009  
Grades to Test: 5-8

**PRIMARY CONTACT**  
Name: Albert Einstein  
Phone: 444-111-9393 x33  
Email: [einstein@sample.edu](mailto:einstein@sample.edu)

**ALTERNATE CONTACT**  
Name:  
Phone:  
Email:

**AEA CONTACT**  
Name:  
Phone:  
Email:

**Iowa Bar Code Validation**  
Iowa Testing Programs  
The University of Iowa College of Education  
340 Lindquist Center S, Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1529  
[Campus Map](#)  
[Contact Information](#)

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17. To submit a bar code file for verification, you will first need to locate the file on your computer's hard drive. In the "Upload a file" section of the page [indicated by the red arrow **A** in the figure], click "Browse..." (this may appear as "Choose File" on some browsers), then locate your bar code data file. Files must be in the form of an Excel spreadsheet (.xls or .xlsx), a comma-separated values file (.csv format), or a tab-delimited text (.txt) file. When you have found your file on your computer, click on the file name and click "Open" to select it. The file name will appear in the "Upload a file" text box. To submit this bar code file for validation, click "Upload." **Large files may take a few minutes to upload successfully using a slow connection; please only press the "Upload" button once.** If you have trouble with this process, you can contact ITP for assistance via the "Contact ITP" button located under "Tools" [**B** in the figure] near the top of the sidebar on the right-hand side of the screen.

18. When your file has successfully uploaded, it will be listed with a red background under “View a file” [C in the figure] and a pop-up box with “File upload complete” will appear (you can click OK to remove the box and go back to the web site). Check to make sure your file is now listed under “View a file” (it should list a red-shaded row with the date and time you submitted your file to us).
19. ITP will run validation software on your file, usually within 1-2 business days (possibly longer during peak ordering periods) and post an order summary for you on the web site. If any errors were found during validation, an Excel file containing identifiers for those records will be made available on the web site for retrieval. When ITP makes files available, you will receive an email at the address(es) provided when you prepared the order. If there is a recurring error that affects most or all of your records, you might receive an email from ITP in lieu of a posting of files, asking you to correct the error and resubmit the entire bar code file. If no errors were found during ITP’s validation process, you can skip ahead to step 22.
20. If you receive an email stating that an error file is available for your inspection, it is time to revisit your order. Log in to the Online Tools web site and click on the Bar Coding link. Click on the folder icon in the row of the order you wish to address (the order status column might say “Waiting for District” or “Waiting for ITP”) and you will be taken to the file management screen. The file(s) that are ready for you to retrieve will appear in the “View a file” section [C], with a green background. Click the icon in the “View” column to retrieve a copy of any files ITP makes available; these should be saved to your computer’s hard drive for printing or making corrections. (Please note: Safari’s settings do not allow files to retain their names when downloaded so users will have to rename viewed files and the file name extensions.) The Excel error file will indicate which students’ records were found to contain errors and what the errors are. After saving this file to your computer, you can update the Excel error file with corrected information in the “Correction\_For\_Field” column (or mark an X in the blank provided to indicate the current record is acceptable).
  - a. **TIP:** For more in-depth instructions and tips on correcting your bar code file, please see the document, “09-10 Bar Code procedures – making corrections” available on the web site.
21. When you have finished making corrections to the Excel file, submit it to ITP, using the same “Upload a file” function [A] you used to submit your original bar code file. ITP will then apply the corrections you provided to your order. Your corrected bar code order file will be re-validated by ITP and a new order summary (and possibly a list of errors that still need resolution) will be generated for your inspection, usually within 1-2 business days. If your error corrections file contains only Xs marked for corrections, we still need to receive this file, so we know that you have looked over the errors and approved them. Alternately, you can use the “Contact ITP” button in the “Tools” section [B] to send us a message and let us know. **Your order will not be processed further until we receive error corrections or a message via the “Contact ITP” form indicating the errors are acceptable.**
22. The order summary ITP will post on the web site will be presented in PDF format with an overview provided on page 1 and a breakdown by grade of selected data fields on page 2. The PDF summary is available in the “View a file” section [C] (rows containing files ITP has

provided will have a green background). You can retrieve this PDF by clicking on the icon in the “View” column and then saving the file to your computer. Please verify that the counts by grade and the various demographic categories listed match with your counts of how many records you expected in your bar code file. **Please pay particular attention to your Full Academic Year (FAY) coding; if no students are listed as “Not Continuous in District” that indicates you have received no new students during the previous year. It is very important for reporting purposes that these counts are accurate prior to the printing of labels. Post-scoring corrections may result in additional fees or delays in getting your data to the DE.** Once you are satisfied the counts listed in the order summary are correct, click on “Mark Summary File as OK” in the “Tools” section of the yellow sidebar [B] to let ITP know that you have accepted the summary as accurate. If the counts in the summary do not match with what you expected, please contact ITP using the “Contact ITP” button in the “Tools” section [B]. **Again, your order will not be processed until we receive verification that the counts provided in the order summary are accurate.**

23. If you find that you need to make changes to the information you filled out during order set-up (e.g. contact information, shipping information, test date, etc.), you do not need to start a new order. You can click the “Edit this order” [B] link in the top of the sidebar located on the right hand side of the screen.
24. When your file validates cleanly and you have verified and accepted the order summary presented by ITP (and your verification has been received by ITP), you will receive an email indicating that your file will be sent to the printing company for processing. At this point you should expect to receive your order in eight business days or less. If ten business days pass after completion of validation and you have not yet received your order, please contact ITP.

#### After You Have Received Your Labels

25. The set of printed labels will be shipped to the person you listed when you filled out the “Shipping” tab during the first part of the ordering process. The labels will not be shipped to separate attendance centers. This person is responsible for distributing the labels to each school building.
26. If you decide to affix the students’ bar code labels after testing has begun or is finished, be sure to match each label to the correct student’s answer documents.
27. **For new students who were not included in your bar code file, or for students whose demographics change after the bar code file is sent to ITP, you will need to place a follow-up order for labels.** This is a change in state policy, beginning with the 2008-09 school year. To place a follow-up order, follow the procedures outlined above for starting a new order and submitting a file. **Only send a file containing students for whom you need a label; do not re-send your entire file.**
28. After score reports are received, if you think any scoring and/or reporting errors have occurred because of incomplete or incorrect coding in your bar code file, use the data on the CD-ROM to check student information. The student data on the CD-ROM should match the data provided in the bar code data file.

- a. **TIP:** You can save time and money by making sure that your bar code file is correctly coded during the initial file validation process.

August 2009