



CENTER FOR DISABILITIES AND DEVELOPMENT
Iowa's University Center for Excellence on Disabilities

Physician's Role In Obtaining Accessible Instructional Materials In Specialized Formats For Students with Reading Disabilities

You have been asked by your patient or his/her family to act as a **certifying authority** by the Iowa Department for the Blind's Library Service or by another agency serving students with disabilities. These agencies provide textbooks and other instructional materials in **specialized formats** to qualified students to help them meet their educational goals.

The following frequently asked questions will help you understand your role in helping your patient through the application process.

What are **specialized formats**?

Specialized formats include Braille, large print, audio, or digital text that can be used with electronic text readers or displayed on monitors.

How can **specialized formats** benefit my patient?

These formats help to accommodate students whose disabilities make it difficult for them to learn from traditional print materials. For example, students with dyslexia may benefit from audio or digital books.

Why does my patient need my signature on this application?

- Federal Law requires that a doctor of medicine or osteopathy certify that a reading disability is of an organic nature.
- The student will get the necessary specialized formats whether the reading disability is of an organic nature or not.
- The certification only determines which system the school uses to obtain the specialized formats for the student.

How do I know if my patient's reading disability has an **organic** cause?

- **Organic** causes of reading problems include those related to dysfunction of the neural pathways required for fluent reading. These pathways involve brain structures. An example of **organic** cause might include dyslexia and related learning disorders.
- **Nonorganic** causes of reading problems include those unrelated to the neural pathway problems described above. Examples of **nonorganic** causes would include limited English proficiency, lack of instruction, poor attendance, oppositional-defiant disorder, and behavioral disorders.
- The following group of students are not automatically included **or** excluded as having reading disabilities of organic causes: learning disabilities, dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, chronic-fatigue syndrome, and autism.



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Certification for Textbooks in Specialized Formats

Please Print or Type:

Student Last Name _____ First _____ Initial _____

Birthdate _____

District _____

School _____

School Address _____

School Phone _____

School Contact Person _____

Reading Disability Organic dysfunction of sufficient severity to prevent reading printed materials in a normal manner. *In the case of a **READING DISABILITY** from an organic dysfunction, the certifying authority must be a **doctor of medicine or osteopathy**, who may consult with colleagues in associated disciplines*

Yes, I certify reading disability is of an organic nature.

No, this is not a reading disability of an organic nature.

Certifying Authority

Signature/title _____ Date ____/____/____

Name (print) _____ Phone _____

E-mail _____

Address _____