

Iowa Testing Programs 2001-2002

Dear Iowa Educator:

This shipment contains the CD-ROM data file that you ordered this year along with your other ITBS or ITED score reports. This CD is being sent separately from your score reports. In some cases, schools might receive their CD before the score reports are shipped, or in other cases, the CD will come after the shipment of score reports has been received.

The CD-ROM contains two files on it. One file is the set of student records, much like the records you may have used from the diskette service in previous years. The other file contains a description of the student record—which variables are included and their location. The description will show that the record is field delimited, which means there is something separating each of the variables in the student record. For this file, the delimiter is a vertical line (|).

Some general instructions for using the CD-ROM data are provided here using EXCEL as an example. To begin, first open the application, e.g., EXCEL, into which you will read, save, and manipulate the student data records. **Always open the data file from within the application, not by clicking on the file name/icon itself.**

Once you have EXCEL open, go to “File” menu option and select “Open,” or click on the “Open Folder” icon. When the 'Select a Document' window appears, you must go to your CD drive and highlight the file name you want to open. If the data file does not appear in the window, use the pull-down menu under “List Files of Type” at the bottom of the window and choose “All Files.” Open the data file, which will bring up the “Text Import Wizard-Step 1 of 3.” Step 1 is to click on “Delimited” under “Original Data Type.” Then click “Next” below. In Step 2 you will specify how the file is delimited. Under “Delimiters,” the “Tab” box is likely checked. Uncheck the “Tab” box and check the “Other” box. In the space to right of “Other,” type in the symbol, “|” (without quotes). This pipe key is directly above the “Return” or “Enter” key on your keyboard. After entering the pipe symbol, click “Next” again. Step 3 allows you to skip any of the 217 columns of data when you perform the import. Keep in mind that, if you choose to skip columns, the record layout description (which is also a file on your CD) will no longer apply. It is recommended, therefore, that you import all columns. So at Step 3, simply click “Finish” and EXCEL will pull in your data. Save this file as an EXCEL spreadsheet or worksheet so that you don't need to repeat this import process with the original file.

Once you have your data in your application of choice, such as EXCEL, you should save the file on your hard drive so that you need not access it from the CD every time you wish to use it. At this point you can use the application (EXCEL) to manipulate your data according to both your needs and the capabilities of the application.

Please call us if you have questions about using the CD-ROM or determining what is on it.

Iowa Testing Programs
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