

Unified English Braille (UEB) Implementation Plan

Historical Perspective:

On November 2, 2012, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) voted to adopt the Unified English Braille (UEB) as the official braille code for North America. The formal motion is as follows "Therefore it is moved that the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) adopts the Unified English Braille to replace the current English Braille American Edition in the United States while maintaining the Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation, 1972 Revision; the Music Braille Code 1997; and the IPA Braille Code, 2008. The official braille codes for the United States will be Unified English Braille, Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation, 1972 Revision and published updates; Music Braille Code, 1997; and The IPA Braille Code, 2008."

The mission of the Braille Authority of North America is to assure literacy for tactile readers through the standardization of braille and/or tactile graphics.

In response to the Braille Authority of North America's (BANA) adoption of the Unified English Braille Code the Michigan Department of Education-Low Incidence Outreach (MDELIO), with input from stakeholders statewide, will proceed as follows:

Fall of 2014:

- MDE-LIO Braille Team offered regionally based Braille workshops to prepare for the transition to the UEB. Workshops gave teachers practical ideas for creating braille rich environments. MDE-LIO stakeholders believed that this was a valuable area for additional training and instruction.
- Completed State Workshops:
 - February 11, 2015: Wayne County RESA-35 participants
 - March 27, 2015 Kalamazoo County RESA-25 participants

Spring 2015:

- Frances Mary D'Andrea, Chair of Braille Authority of North America presented a full day workshop focusing on the UEB. This workshop was available to all VI professionals including but not limited to: Teachers for the Visually Impaired (TVIs), paraprofessionals, transcribers and consumers.
- Completed Workshops:
 - May 13, 2015: Clinton County RESA-64 participants
 - May 14, 2015: Oakland Schools-89 participants

Summer 2015:

MDE-LIO Instructional Materials Center adopted the American Printing production. APH's implementation plan as it relates to MDE-LIO's braille production services are as follows:

- Orders for textbooks in subjects using literary braille (i.e., social studies and language arts), not previously transcribed, produced in UEB for the 2015-16 school year.

- Textbooks previously transcribed will be available in their original codes, following APH's policy of not duplicating previously transcribed textbooks and supplementary materials.
- In addition, LIO will maintain encapsulated Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation.

Fall 2015:

- Statewide regional trainings offered using Ashcroft's Programmed Instruction: Unified English Braille, a sixteen week course.
- Michigan TVIs began teaching the UEB to new braille users. This included the preschool to second grade students as well as newly diagnosed individuals.
- Michigan TVIs with older students offered instruction in the UEB with materials in both codes.
- All new literary materials produced by MDE-LIO are in UEB format.

January 2016:

- Full implementation of the UEB for literary materials across Michigan.
- Continued offerings of regional workshops centered on both the UEB and instructional strategies for implementation statewide.
- Creation of the Michigan UEB Resources Listserv, a forum for individuals working with students who read braille to post ideas, questions and comments: 101 subscribers
- "Let's Celebrate Braille Event" State wide celebration of the newly adopted UEB Code. Students across the state participated in local braille reading and writing activities with their teacher consultant for the visually impaired. 238 Participants

Spring 2016:

- Ongoing work with the Michigan Department of Education Office of Standards and Assessment (OSA) we collaboratively developed a five year transition plan to move towards UEB implementation across all grade levels and content areas.
- Total Number of UEB braille classes offered between Spring of 2015-Fall of 2016: 9
- Promoted summer reading program for students who read braille across Michigan to encourage leisure reading.

Fall 2016:

- Continued collaboration with stakeholders across Michigan to offer support and professional development to meet the immediate needs of our students.

Please contact MDE-LIO with any further questions:



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