

# Nebraska: A Plan to Transition to Unified English Braille (UEB)

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION



**Braille Authority  
of North America**

### **Implementation of Unified English Braille (UEB)**

**The following statement was approved by the BANA Board on November 9, 2014.**

---

On November 2, 2012, the United States members of the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) voted to adopt Unified English Braille (UEB) to replace English Braille American Edition (EBAE) in the U.S. Based on extensive dialog and planning that involved more than 30 organizations as well as individual consumers, teachers, and transcribers, BANA established January 4, 2016, as the date by which the United States will implement UEB.

BANA is working toward implementation of UEB in four phases:

- 2013: Information year—BANA developed and disseminated information about UEB and gathered input from constituents.
- 2014: Infrastructure year—BANA and other organizations planned for procurement and production of braille materials in UEB and developed training materials.
- 2015: Instructional year—Readers, producers, and educators will become proficient in UEB.
- 2016: Implementation year—All new transcriptions will be produced in UEB; educators will teach the code. Devices and software will fully and accurately incorporate UEB.

As of the implementation date in 2016, UEB, Nemeth, Music, and the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) will be the official codes for use in the United States. BANA is providing guidance on how to incorporate the Nemeth Code into UEB context with the intent that the Nemeth Code will continue to be integral to braille in the United States.

BANA recognizes that in order to make an effective transition to UEB, states and organizations will need to develop customized implementation plans. To maximize efficiency and impact, BANA encourages widespread collaboration and sharing of expertise, resources, and training.

*The Board of BANA consists of appointed representatives from seventeen member organizations of braille producers, transcribers, teachers, and consumers. 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.*

*The purpose of BANA is to promote and to facilitate the uses, teaching, and production of braille. Pursuant to this purpose, BANA will promulgate rules, make interpretations, and render opinions pertaining to braille codes and guidelines for the provisions of literary and technical materials and related forms and formats of embossed materials now in existence or to be developed in the future for the use of blind persons in North America. When appropriate, BANA shall accomplish these activities in international collaboration with countries using English braille. In exercising its function and authority, BANA shall consider the effects of its decisions on other existing braille codes and guidelines, forms and formats; ease of production by various methods; and acceptability to readers.*

[www.brailleauthority.org](http://www.brailleauthority.org)

---

## NEBRASKA UEB IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A designated group of educators from the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired (NCECBVI), Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), has prepared this implementation plan in response to BANA’s official adoption of the UEB code on November 2, 2012.

This is a variable plan which may require changes as more information becomes available. Nebraska is planning to adopt the UEB code with full implementation targeted for the 2017-2018 school year.

### TIMELINE

School Year	Activities
2014-2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In October 2014, NCECBVI representation was present at national Instructional Resource Center meetings, Council of Schools for the Blind, and Principals of Schools for the Blind, where the transition to UEB was discussed.</li> <li>▪ Informational Survey was created by Sally Giittinger, NCECBVI Administrator, and sent to all TVIs on November 11, 2014.</li> <li>▪ Implementation Team meeting was held on December 17, 2014.</li> <li>▪ UNL 2015 Spring Semester course utilized the Ashcroft UEB Manual in VI endorsement program. The class referenced <i>The ABCs of UEB</i> manual by Constance Risjord. There were opportunities to demonstrate/practice contrasting EBAE and UEB.</li> <li>▪ Parent Workshop at Braille Challenge provided a session about UEB.</li> <li>▪ UNL 2015 Summer course focused on Nemeth.</li> <li>▪ A 2-day UEB introductory workshop, designed and led by Frances Mary D’Andrea, Past-Chair of BANA, was held March 19-20, 2015, in Nebraska City. This training was specifically designed for TVIs and Braillists; administrators and other interested educators were welcome to attend.</li> <li>▪ In the spring and summer months, TVIs and Braillists were encouraged to review self-study references (intended for those who already know EBAE) from the following options:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>The ABCs of UEB</i> by Constance Risjord. This is a brief reference manual for those who know EBAE and want to build on their skills to learn UEB. Available at: <a href="http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb/abcs/abcs-ueb.html">http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb/abcs/abcs-ueb.html</a></li> <li>○ <i>Hadley School for the Blind: UEB Transition Course</i>. Available at: <a href="http://www.hadley.edu/">http://www.hadley.edu/</a></li> <li>○ <i>UEB Online</i>. This is from the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children’s Renwick Centre (a brief reference training program designed for sighted individuals). Available at: <a href="http://uebonline.org/">http://uebonline.org/</a></li> <li>○ <i>CNIB Transcriber’s UEB Course</i> titled, “Update to UEB.” Available at: <a href="http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/braille/Pages/Transcribers-UEB-Course.aspx">http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/braille/Pages/Transcribers-UEB-Course.aspx</a></li> <li>○ <i>Library of Congress/National Federation of the Blind Joint Training</i>. Available at: <a href="http://nfb.org/braille.transcribing.com">http://nfb.org/braille.transcribing.com</a></li> <li>○ <i>UEBOT</i> from the University of Northern Illinois. Intensive, monthly courses for those who already know EBAE. Available at: <a href="http://uebot.niu.edu">http://uebot.niu.edu</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ A statewide support system was created for Braillists, including professional development opportunities, networking, and a listserv.</li> </ul>

<p>2014-2015 (cont.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ NCECBVI gathered additional information from school districts and ESUs about individuals who braille for students and clarify their backgrounds, i.e. Library of Congress certification, self-taught, University program, other.</li> <li>▪ The Braille Challenge, a national program of the Braille Institute, offered UEB at the Apprentice level only.</li> <li>▪ Implementation Team meeting was held on May 12, 2015.</li> <li>▪ Statewide assessments were offered in EBAE and Nemeth.</li> </ul>
<p>2015-2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Beginning in the fall, TVIs will start teaching UEB to elementary and middle school age students. High school students who are already proficient EBAE readers may be exposed to the UEB for awareness of changes in the Braille code to benefit them during their transition years. In all situations, learning UEB should be determined on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>▪ Expectation that all <i>new</i> materials transcribed during this school year will be in UEB; some existing braille material will be in EBAE.</li> <li>▪ Explore professional development opportunities focusing on UEB. NCECBVI will provide information based on needs/recommendations of all involved, i.e. TVIs, Braillists, and others.</li> <li>▪ Parent Training</li> <li>▪ The Braille Challenge will provide contests materials in UEB only for the Apprentice level. Freshmen have the option to take contest in UEB <i>or</i> EBAE. Sophomore, Junior Varsity, and Varsity levels will be offered in EBAE only.</li> <li>▪ APH: “Orders for textbooks in subjects using literary braille (i.e. social studies and language arts), not previously transcribed, will be produced in UEB for the 2015-2016 school year” (<a href="http://www.aph.org">www.aph.org</a>).</li> <li>▪ APH: “Orders for textbooks in technical subjects (i.e. science and mathematics), not previously transcribed, will be produced in UEB and/or UEB with Nemeth Code for the 2015-2016 school year” (<a href="http://www.aph.org">www.aph.org</a>).</li> <li>▪ Statewide assessments will be offered as the following: 1) EBAE and Nemeth, or 2) UEB and Nemeth</li> </ul>
<p>2016-2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ TVIs will continue teaching UEB to students with the expectation that all new material transcribed during this school year will be in UEB; some existing braille material will be in EBAE.</li> <li>▪ Parent Training</li> <li>▪ Ongoing Professional Development</li> <li>▪ Statewide assessments will be offered as the following: 1) EBAE and Nemeth, or 2) UEB and Nemeth</li> </ul>
<p>2017-2018</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All students who read braille will be expected to utilize materials produced in UEB.</li> <li>▪ Parent Training</li> <li>▪ Ongoing Professional Development</li> <li>▪ Statewide assessments will be offered in UEB and Nemeth.</li> </ul>

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

**Ashcroft Programmed Instruction—Unified English Braille (API-UEB):**

<http://www.scalarspublishing.com/>

**Braille Authority of North America--Find Out about UEB:**

<http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb.html>

**Duxbury Braille Translator:**

<http://www.duxburysystems.com/dbt.asp>

**New Zealand UEB Manual:**

<http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb/NZ%20UEB%20Manual%202011.pdf>

**The Rules of Unified English Braille**

<http://www.iceb.org/Rules%20of%20Unified%20English%20Braille%202013.pdf>

**The UEB Reader (introduces Braille readers to UEB; designed for adult readers)**

<http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb/reader/>

**UEB Implementation Guide**

[http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/Supporting\\_Students\\_with\\_Disabilities.html](http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/Supporting_Students_with_Disabilities.html)

**Unified English Braille: Australian Training Manual 2013:**

<http://brailleaustralia.org/unified-english-braille/unified-english-braille-australian-training-manual-2013/>

