



Virginia M. Barry, Ph.D.
Commissioner of Education
Tel. 603-271-3144

Paul K. Leather
Deputy Commissioner of Education
Tel. 603-271-3801

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
101 Pleasant Street
Concord, N.H. 03301
FAX 603-271-1953
Citizens Services Line 1-800-339-9900**

Bureau of Special Education FY'14 Memo #6

Date: September 6, 2013

TO: Superintendents of Schools
Directors of Special Education
Business Administrators

FROM: Office of the Commissioner

Division of Instruction
Bureau of Special Education

RE: U.S. Department of Education ~ Braille Instruction for Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired

On Wednesday, June 19, 2013, The U.S. Department of Education issued a Dear Colleague Letter regarding Braille for Children who are blind or visually impaired. This information is helpful in clarifying the application of the IDEA requirements regarding Braille instruction for children who are blind or visually impaired.

"The U.S. Department of Education is committed to ensuring that children who are blind and visually impaired have access to Braille instruction and Braille materials," said Michael Yudin, Acting Assistant Secretary for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services at the Department of Education. "The ability to read and write Braille competently and efficiently is critical to ensuring students who are blind and visually impaired graduate from high school to college and career ready."

The Bureau of Special Education is sharing this letter to provide guidance to reaffirm the importance of Braille instruction as a literacy tool for blind and visually impaired students, to clarify the circumstances in which Braille instruction should be provided, and to reiterate the scope of an evaluation required to guide decisions of IEP Teams in this area. This letter also identifies resources that are designed to help strengthen the capacity of State and local personnel to meet the needs of students who are blind or visually impaired.

BSE:BJR
Attachment ~ USDOE Letter