



**New Hampshire  
Unified English Braille (UEB)  
State Implementation Plan**

New Hampshire Department of Education

In collaboration with Mary Nelle McLennan, M.A, from Braille Authority of North America ; The New Hampshire Association for the Blind , and New Hampshire Teachers of Students with Vision Impairments

The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) has prepared this response to the Braille Authority of North America's (BANA) official adoption of the Unified English Braille (UEB) code on November 2, 2012. The mission of BANA 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. BANA makes interpretations and renders opinions pertaining to braille codes and guidelines in North America. BANA recently voted January 4, 2016 as the targeted implementation date of UEB in the United States.

UEB is a revision and extension of the current literary braille code, English Braille, American Edition (EBAE). UEB includes new symbols, eliminates some current contractions, and is designed to better incorporate future changes to the code with the ability to add new symbols, as needed. UEB implementation will be determined at the state level. New Hampshire will be transitioning to UEB in a strategic manner. This will involve collaboration and support from multiple state and national partners. Multiple phases are involved in the transition, including awareness, opportunities for learning new skills, and implementation. New Hampshire will be adopting the UEB code with full implementation targeted for the fall of the 2016–2017 school year.

The following plan was developed with input from NHDOE representatives, the New Hampshire Association for the Blind, New Hampshire Teachers of Students with Vision Impairments, with input from stakeholders statewide. This is a fluid proposal which may require changes as more information and supports become available.

**Background**

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. 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. At the BANA Fall Meeting in November 2015, the following statement was released:

*BANA stands by our original motion to adopt UEB as a complete code as well as the implementation statement issued in 2014 in which we expressed that the Nemeth Code remains integral to braille in the United States. The Board of BANA could not reach consensus regarding the establishment of a single standard code for technical materials for braille in the United States. The decision to use UEB or the Nemeth Code within UEB context for technical materials should be made based on braille readers' individual needs.*

In response to BANA's adoption of UEB and its current guidelines regarding technical materials, the New Hampshire Department of Education and the NH UEB Transition Committee (comprised of NHDOE representatives and Teachers of Students with Vision Impairments), with input from stakeholders statewide, provide guidance, training, and support during the implementation of UEB in New Hampshire.

### **Implementation Progress to Date**

**April 2015:** The New Hampshire Department of Education (NHDOE) provided a workshop: Making the Move to UEB, facilitated by Mary Nelle McLennan, M.A. At this workshop the NH UEB Transition Committee was formed.

**June 2015:** The NHDOE contracted with the University Mass Boston's Northeast Regional Center for Vision Education to provide training on UEB with Sandy Smith, M.A. This training was attended by Teachers of Students with Vision Impairments and paraprofessionals working with students who use braille.

**Fall 2015:** NH UEB Transition Committee met to finalize the timeline for implementation and to discuss further trainings for those professionals who were not able to attend the June training.

**January 2016** The New Hampshire Department of Education works on the state approval process and the official public release of the New Hampshire Unified English Braille Implementation Plan.

### **Implementation Plan and Timeline**

#### **2015-2016 School Year**

- **UEB information and resources** disseminated to Teachers of Students with Vision Impairments, Directors of Special Education, families of braille learners, and other stakeholders throughout the state.
- **NHDOE** continues to seek out or provide professional development for those NH TVIs needing training in UEB.
- **Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments (TVIs)** begin to provide braille learners with exposure to and instruction in non-technical UEB on an individual basis. TVIs with students who are just beginning braille instruction may teach exclusively in the UEB code for non-technical subjects.
- **Supervising Practitioners** of student teachers from TVI certification programs support student teachers receiving braille instruction in UEB when it is necessary to use current materials and textbooks in EBAE format.
- **Statewide Assessments** are provided in EBAE and UEB formats for language arts (based on student need and availability of UEB assessment materials) and in Nemeth for technical subjects.

- **Access to available UEB materials** is provided through the NH Accessible Educational Materials (NHAEM) center through the federal quota system with American Printing House for the Blind (APH).

#### 2016-2017, 2017-2018 School Years

- **UEB information and resources** will continue be disseminated to Teachers of Students with Vision Impairments, Directors of Special Education, families of braille learners, and other stakeholders throughout the state.
- **NHDOE** will continue to seek out or provide professional development for those NH TVIs needing training in UEB.
- **TVIs** will provide instruction in UEB according to students' individual needs and the proximity to the students' graduation or transition dates.
  - **Students new to learning braille** will receive braille instruction in UEB for non-technical subjects. The decision to use either Nemeth or UEB math for technical subjects is the responsibility of the IEP team.
  - **Students already reading and writing EBAE who have not yet reached high school** will transition to UEB for non-technical subjects. The IEP team should take into account a reasonable pace for each student for the transition to UEB, with the intent of having the student fully transitioned to UEB by the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Students who have developed substantial skills in Nemeth code may continue to receive instruction in Nemeth for technical subjects. The decision to use either Nemeth or UEB math for technical subjects for students not yet in high school is the responsibility of the IEP team.
  - **Students with graduation/transition year of 2020 or sooner** will receive instruction in the UEB format. The decision to transition fully to UEB for non-technical subjects is the responsibility of the IEP team; however, it is highly recommended that all braille learners capable of understanding and using the UEB code leave high school able to read, and communicate using, UEB. High school students with established skills in Nemeth code may use Nemeth for technical subjects. The decision to use Nemeth or UEB math for technical subjects is the responsibility of the IEP team, and input from the student and the TVI should receive strong consideration.
- **Supervising Practitioners** of student teachers from TVI certification programs will support student teachers receiving braille instruction in UEB when it is necessary to use current materials and textbooks in EBAE format.
- **Statewide Assessments** will be provided in EBAE and UEB formats for language arts (based on student need and availability of UEB assessment materials) and in Nemeth or UEB formats for technical subjects, according to student need.
- **Access to available UEB materials** will be provided through the NH Accessible Educational Materials (NHAEM) center through the federal quota system with American Printing House for the Blind (APH).

#### 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 School Years

- **UEB information and resources** will continue be disseminated to Teachers of Students with Vision Impairments, Directors of Special Education, families of braille learners, and other stakeholders throughout the state.
- **NHDOE** will continue to seek out or provide professional development for those NH TVIs needing training in UEB.

- **TVIs** will provide instruction in UEB according to students' individual needs and the proximity to the students' graduation or transition dates.
  - **Students new to learning braille** will receive braille instruction in UEB for non-technical subjects. The decision to use either Nemeth or UEB math for technical subjects is the responsibility of the IEP team.
  - **Students already reading and writing EBAE who have not yet reached high school** will complete the transition to UEB for non-technical subjects by the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Students who have developed substantial skills in Nemeth code may continue to receive instruction in Nemeth for technical subjects. The decision to use either Nemeth or UEB math for technical subjects for students not yet in high school is the responsibility of the IEP team.
  - **Students with graduation/transition year of 2020 or earlier** will receive instruction in the UEB format. The decision to transition fully to UEB for non-technical subjects is the responsibility of the IEP team; however, it is highly recommended that all braille learners capable of understanding and using the UEB code leave high school able to read, and communicate using, UEB. High school students with established skills in Nemeth code may use Nemeth for technical subjects. The decision to use Nemeth or UEB math for technical subjects for students preparing to leave high school is the responsibility of the IEP team, and input from the student and the TVI should receive strong consideration.
- **Supervising Practitioners** of student teachers from TVI certification programs will support student teachers receiving braille instruction in UEB when it is necessary to use current materials and textbooks in EBAE format.
- **Statewide Assessments** will be provided in EBAE and UEB literary formats until the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Beginning in fall 2020, statewide assessments will only be available in UEB for literary subjects and in both Nemeth and UEB math for technical subjects.
- **Access to UEB materials** will be provided through the NH Accessible Educational Materials (NHAEM) center through the federal quota system with American Printing House for the Blind (APH). Beginning in the fall of 2020, all non-technical materials requested will be delivered in UEB format, unless unavailable.

## Fall 2020

NH statewide transition to UEB is complete.