



U.S. and Canada Adopt New Braille Terminology

Approved 2002

NOTE, July 2016: The following position, first adopted in 2002, was reaffirmed by the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) at its spring 2016 board meeting. The use of the terms "uncontracted braille" and "contracted braille" is supported and explained in §2.5.2-2.5.4 of the Rules of Unified English Braille Second Edition 2013).

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) announces a change in terminology to what has been traditionally known as "grade 1" and "grade 2" braille. These categories will now be referred to as "uncontracted" and "contracted" braille respectively.

The change is being made at the request of many in the blindness field. People often confuse grades of braille with first and second grades in elementary school. BANA believes that the change to more accurately descriptive language will increase awareness and improve the overall understanding of how braille is learned, read, written and transcribed.

BANA urges all organizations, agencies, teacher training programs, braille production facilities, software developers, professionals in the field of blindness, and braille readers to incorporate this terminology into writing, publications, presentations and general practice. The ultimate goal is to enhance understanding and more accurately reflect what braille truly is: a versatile and effective reading and writing system for people of all ages who are blind and visually impaired.