Unified English Braille

Timeline for Implementation in Indiana

November 2014

The Unified English Braille Code

In November 2012, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) voted to adopt the Unified English Braille (UEB) as an official code for the United States. UEB is a revision and extension of the English Braille American Edition (EBAE). In November 2013, BANA, following the UEB Transition Forum consisting of delegates from 31 national organizations, affirmed that January 4, 2016 would be the implementation of the general use of UEB in the United States, replacing the current EBAE code.

The transition plan to implement the UEB in Indiana is as follows.

Indiana Statewide UEB Transition

Preparation for UEB

The Indiana Educational Resource Center (IERC) has been working on the transition from the current EBAE to UEB since BANA adopted the UEB in 2012. Training has been ongoing for our state transcribers since that time, utilizing training materials from Australia, New Zealand and Canada. The Miami Accessible Media Program (MAMP), the statewide prison program, and the IERC onsite braille production project, added the UEB compliant Duxbury Braille Translation software to their transcription software platform. A three-day training in the use of Duxbury was conducted in September 2014 for all transcription staff. In addition, the transcription staff is currently working through the CNIB Self-Directed UEB Course, "The ABC's of UEB" by Constance Risjord, and the Ashcroft Programmed Instruction: Unified English Braille (API-UEB) by M. Cay Holbrook and Frances Mary D'Andrea. It is anticipated that a UEB certification program will be available for braille transcribers in the United States by early 2015. The IERC transcription staff will enroll in this program once available to complete their UEB certification.

UEB Implementation Committee

On August 21, 2014, the statewide UEB Implementation Committee met for its first meeting. The committee consisted of representatives from the Statewide Resource Center, State AT Project, University Training Programs, Adult Services, Residential School and Outreach Staff, TBLV's from around the state, Prison Braille Program, and Braille Transcribers.

Goals of the UEB Initial Implementation committee included:

1) Discussion and completion of a proposed timeline to present to the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) for approval that included: transcriber training and transcription rollout; teacher training; student instruction; and state assessments.
2) Discussion and identification of other potential issues pertaining to UEB implementation.

The IDOE reviewed and approved the proposed UEB timeline on September 29, 2014.

Timeline

The transition to UEB from EBAE in Indiana will be a six year plan, based on a school year calendar. It began with the 2013-2014 SY and will run through the 2018-2019 SY. Full implementation of the UEB is targeted for the Fall of 2018 and state assessments for the Spring of 2019.

Each local education agency (LEA), based on the approved state timeline, will be responsible for developing a plan for implementation of the UEB at the local level. The Indiana Educational Resource Center (IERC) will work closely with LEA's to best meet the educational braille needs of individual students.

Implementation of this timeline involves the collaboration of state and national partners and may change as state and national information changes or becomes available.

2013-2014 SY

- Transcriber training.

2014-2015 SY

- Transcriber training and certification.

- Statewide professional development for BLV Teachers and paraprofessional staff.

- January 2015
  IERC begins transcription of requests in UEB and/or UEB with Nemeth for the 2015-2016 school year for grades K-5.

- Spring 2015
  IDOE provides state assessments in EBAE/Nemeth.

2015-2016 SY

- September 2015
  Teachers begin UEB instruction for students in grades K-5.

- January 2016
  IERC begins transcription of requests in UEB and/or UEB with Nemeth for the 2016-2017 school year for grades 6 and up. IERC will continue providing EBAE/Nemeth for students in upper secondary grades not transitioning to UEB.

- Spring 2016
  IDOE provides state assessments in UEB and/or UEB with Nemeth as well as EBAE/Nemeth.

2016-2017 SY

- September 2016
  Teachers begin UEB instruction for students in grades 6 and up.

- January 2017
  IERC continues transcription of requests in UEB and/or UEB with Nemeth for all grades. IERC will continue providing EBAE/Nemeth for students in upper secondary grades not transitioning to UEB.

- Spring 2017
  IDOE provides state assessments in UEB and/or UEB with Nemeth and EBAE/Nemeth.

2017-2018 SY

- September 2017
  Continue UEB instruction as needed for remaining students, move in and transfer students.

- Spring 2018
  IDOE provides state assessments in UEB and/or UEB with Nemeth and EBAE/Nemeth.

2018-2019 SY

- September 2018
  Complete UEB transition.

- Spring 2019
  IDOE provides state assessments in UEB and/or UEB with Nemeth.

UEB Training

Training will be provided by the PASS (Promoting Achievement for Students With Sensory Loss) Project, Blumberg Center, Indiana State University in collaboration with the Indiana Educational Resource Center (IERC) through 2015. Additional trainings after 2015 will be provided as needed.

- ***UEB Ready? Introduction to Unified English Braille* (Fall 2014)**

UEB Ready? Introduction to Unified English Braille will provide a comparison of English Braille American Edition (EBAE) and UEB. Teachers and staff will participate in a variety of exercises specific to UEB. This introduction is intended to educate and prepare teachers and staff in order to facilitate a smooth transition.

These trainings will take place in November at each of the five PATINS regional sites and at the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ISBVI). Teachers will earn five Professional Growth Points (PGP) for license renewal reflected on a Certificate of Attendance. Other staff, including paraprofessionals, will also receive a Certificate of Attendance.

- ***UEB Ready? Introduction to Unified English Braille Webinar* (Fall 2014)**

A webinar will be developed as a resource and for those unable to attend the regional trainings. This webinar will provide a general overview of UEB and the time frame for implementation. Webinar participants will be given the opportunity to practice UEB exercises and will be provided information on additional training opportunities and resources.

- ***UEB Ready?* ListServ (Fall 2014)**

An e-mail discussion listserv has been created to provide a communication tool for teachers and staff to ask questions, share resources and strategies, and discuss important issues specific to the implementation of Unified English Braille (UEB). Transcribers, teachers, paraprofessionals, and other professionals working with students who utilize braille as their literacy mode are encouraged to participate.

- ***UEB Ready? A Supported Independent Study* (Spring 2015 - Summer 2015)**

The PASS Project in conjunction with Indiana State University is offering a 13-week training program via distance education utilizing Blackboard. Participants in the program will use Ashcroft's Programmed Instruction: Unified English Braille (API-UEB) as a guide to learning UEB. Participants who successfully complete the program will earn a Certificate of Proficiency reflecting 30 Professional Growth Points (PGP).

- ***UEB Ready? Teaching the Transition* (2015)**

This training is intended to provide strategies and resources to assist Indiana teachers and paraprofessionals working with students who are blind or have low vision, to teach the transition from EBAE to UEB. Certificate of Attendance reflecting PGPs will be awarded.

- ***UEB Ready? Teaching the Technology* (2015)**

Vendors will be invited to share information about technology that supports Unified English Braille (UEB). Participants will learn the capabilities of various devices and how to utilize these devices with students. Teachers will have the ability to make informed recommendations on the device(s) that will best meet the needs of students. This training is intended for Indiana teachers and paraprofessionals working with students who are blind or have low vision. Students and their parents will also be encouraged to attend.

- ***UEB Ready? Teaching the Software* (2015)**

In this training, participants will learn how to utilize the Duxbury Braille Translation software to become more efficient in their ability to transcribe and produce needed braille instructional materials in UEB. It is intended for Indiana teachers and paraprofessionals working with students who are blind or have low vision.