

## State of Minnesota Unified English Braille (UEB) Implementation Plan

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) has prepared this response to the Braille Authority of North America's (BANA) official adoption of the 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. Minnesota 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. Minnesota 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 Minnesota Statewide Vision Network members, Minnesota teachers of the blind and visually impaired (TBVI), members of the Minnesota American Printing House (APH) Community of Practice, State Services for the Blind (SSB), BANA, National Federation of the Blind of Minnesota, Minnesota Regional Low-Incidence Facilitators and other APH Ex-Officio Trustees from around the country. This is a fluid proposal which may require changes as more information and supports become available.

### Fall 2014

- TBVI are encouraged to take a UEB self-study course from one of the following sources:
  - Hadley School for the Blind UEB Transition Course: (Available from Hadley for \$99.00 this fall. TBVI can request reimbursement from MDE for successful completion of the course). [Read more about the Hadley courses.](http://www.hadley.edu/) (<http://www.hadley.edu/>)
  - UEB Online: Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children's Renwick Centre (a training program for sighted people to learn UEB). [Learn more about UEB Online.](http://uebonline.org/) (<http://uebonline.org/>)
  - The ABCs of UEB: authored by Constance Risjord (a program for those who already know EBAE to quickly build on their knowledge of braille to understand UEB). [Learn more about The ABCs of UEB](http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb/abcs/abcs-ueb.html) (<http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb/abcs/abcs-ueb.html>)

06/2014

- District braillists will be invited to UEB transcriber workshops offered by the State Services for the Blind and are encouraged to take the on-line course below:
  - CNIB Transcriber's UEB Course: "Update to UEB" file types: Word, print .pdf, .brf, and .dxb. Learn about the [CNIB Transcriber's UEB Course](http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/braille/Pages/Transcribers-UEB-Course.aspx) (<http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/braille/Pages/Transcribers-UEB-Course.aspx>)
- Regional TBVI teams are encouraged to spend time learning and discussing provision of UEB during their regularly scheduled regional meetings.
- Formation of a UEB Community of Practice Group at the first Statewide Vision Network meeting scheduled for September 26, 2014.

### **Spring 2015**

- Statewide professional development opportunity will be offered from a Nationally Recognized Expert in UEB to share specific suggestions and teaching strategies on the transition.
- UEB Community of Practice Group will develop Minnesota guidelines for transition to UEB.
- TBVI begin teaching UEB to students.

### **Fall 2015**

- Fall Vision Conference will focus on statewide TBVI review, practice, and improvements to the Minnesota guidelines for transition to UEB.
- TBVI continue teaching UEB to students with the expectation that all new material that is transcribed for the 2016–2017 school year will be in UEB.

### **Spring 2016**

- After January 4, 2016, individual UEB braille requests from TBVI to SSB will be provided only if current EBAE requests have been met.
- TBVI continue teaching UEB to students with the expectation that some existing braille material will be in EBAE.

### **Fall 2016**

All material ordered for the 2016–2017 school year will be produced in UEB. All students who read braille will be expected to access material produced in UEB.