

Oklahoma Unified English Braille (UEB) Transition Plan

Introduction

At the request of the Oklahoma State Department of Education, a UEB Committee prepared the following plan for completing the steps necessary for public school students to transition from the use of English Braille American Edition (EBAE) to Unified English Braille (UEB). UEB is a revision and extension of the current literary braille code, 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.

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) officially adopted UEB code in 2012, with an implementation goal of January 2016. The mission of BANA is to assure literacy for tactile readers through the standardization of braille and/or tactile graphics, and promote and facilitate the uses, teaching, and production of braille. BANA makes interpretations and renders opinions pertaining to braille codes and guidelines in North America. BANA and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) have provided guidance to states in determining an implementation schedule.

The Oklahoma UEB Committee includes representatives from the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), the Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Oklahoma School for the Blind (OSB), Liberty Braille, select Oklahoma teachers of the blind and visually impaired (TVI), the AIM Center at the Oklahoma Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and Oklahoma ABLE Tech, the state Assistive Technology Act program.

Oklahoma will be transitioning to UEB in a strategic manner. This will involve collaboration and support from multiple state and national partners. Multiple components are involved in the transition, including awareness, opportunities for learning new skills, and implementation. Oklahoma will begin implementing UEB immediately upon adoption of the plan, with full implementation targeted for the fall of the 2019–2020 school year.

Prior to the development of this plan, TVIs have been offered educational workshops through statewide professional development meetings provided by the Oklahoma School for the Blind Outreach Department to learn the differences between EBAE and UEB. TVIs are also encouraged to learn UEB through online courses available from a variety of sources.

Implementation Timeline

February 2016

- **OSDE finalizes plan and submits to the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) on behalf of Oklahoma.**

- Special Education Coordinator Tracey Falardeau is designated as OSDE representative to be the main contact on UEB Transition/TVI information for the state.
- **OSDE will continue to provide state assessments for all grades in EBAE for literary materials or EBAE + Nemeth for math, science, and other appropriate technical material through the end of the 2018-19 school year.***
- Agencies responsible for procurement of curricular materials (i.e. Liberty Braille, AIM Center) update procedures/forms for requesting materials to include UEB in format choices.
- AIM Center and OSB analyze data on students eligible to participate in APH Federal Quota System and compiles contact list for sending targeted information to districts regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in January hereafter.)
- UEB Committee determines list of current TVIs by combining lists held by AIM Center, Liberty Braille, Oklahoma School for the Blind, and OSDE (pending certification department approval.)
- ABLE Tech creates informational materials (i.e. flyer or digital memo) about the plan including:
 1. Background information defining braille codes and reason for transition
 2. Training resources for educators, parents and students to learn UEB
 3. Links to instructions for acquiring or updating devices and software such as braille translation software, embossing equipment, and braille note takers to be compatible with UEB
 4. Information regarding the need to ensure braille equipment is available and configured to produce materials in UEB at schools and centers prior to implementing instruction in UEB.
- ABLE Tech will share UEB Plan and above informational materials with TVIs attending PD/Training hosted by Oklahoma School for the Blind on 2/26/16.

March 2016

- **LEAs/TVIs begin requesting any new educational materials for all grades/subjects in UEB for literary materials and UEB + Nemeth for math, science, and other appropriate technical materials or Music Code – when created at a quality standard and when available to be used in the 2016 - 2017 school year and later.**
- OSDE requests updates to OK EdPlan™ IEP system to add a space/drop-down menu for information regarding the braille code(s) in which a student will receive instruction, i.e. EBAE, UEB, UEB + Nemeth, Music Code.

- OSDE begins process of developing standards and specifications for production of assessments in UEB, and identifies vendor(s) to produce assessment materials beginning with the 2019-20 school year.*
- OSDE works with committee to develop a code guide for help in identifying UEB punctuation, special symbols, type forms, etc., to be included in student instructions to accommodate students who have limited experience in using UEB.
- OSDE analyzes Child Count Data to determine locations of students with visual impairments, and compiles contact list for sending targeted information to districts regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in December hereafter.)
- OSDE distributes informational materials created by ABLE Tech to LEAs through its email message systems (including the Superintendent group), and by other agencies on UEB Committee to their respective contacts, so as to reach LEAs, TVIs, rehab counselors, transcribers, and parents.

April 2016

- **TVIs and transcribers begin/continue learning UEB (Online UEB transition courses are available.)**
- **LEAs/TVIs and transcribers begin providing locally-created materials (i.e. handouts, teacher-produced materials) in UEB and sharing information about UEB with students of all grades as soon as possible after completion of UEB course. Student instruction is also provided in EBAE until such time as materials are provided to student in UEB.**
- **LEAs/TVIs provide students instruction in translating from EBAE to UEB and vice-versa depending on code of instructional materials provided.**
- OSDE uses information obtained during pre-coding for assessments to identify LEAs with braille users, and then sends targeted information to such LEAs regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in April.)
- OSDE initiates process through data governance form to begin collecting information regarding staffing of TVIs and transcribers.

July 2016

- OSDE, along with the UEB committee, creates a VI Handbook for use as a statewide resource.
- TVIs and transcribers begin/continue learning UEB. (Online UEB transition courses are available.)

August 2016

- **Deadline for all certified TVIs to have completed training on transition from EBAE to UEB.** New TVIs and transcribers may learn UEB through certification program/online resources as needed.

- **LEAs/TVIs begin providing student instruction for all grades in UEB for literary materials and UEB + Nemeth for math, science, and other appropriate technical materials to some degree as students also continue to learn EBAE as needed due to format of instructional materials.**
- LEAs/TVIs and transcribers provide locally-created materials (i.e. handouts, teacher-produced materials) in UEB.
- LEAs/TVIs provide students instruction in translating from EBAE to UEB and vice-versa depending on code of instructional materials provided.
- OSDE continues to provide state assessments for all grades in EBAE for literary materials or EBAE + Nemeth for math, science, and other appropriate technical material through the end of the 2018-19 school year.*

December 2016

- OSDE updates list of Certified TVIs. (This task to be completed annually in December.)
- OSDE analyses Child Count Data to determine locations of students with visual impairments, and sends targeted information to districts regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in December.)

January 2017

- AIM Center and OSB analyze data on students eligible to participate in APH Federal Quota System and compile contact list for sending targeted information to districts regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in January.)

April 2017

- OSDE uses information obtained during pre-coding for assessments to identify LEAs with braille users, and sends targeted information to identified LEAs regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in April.)

August 2017

- LEAs/TVIs continue to provide student instruction for all grades in UEB for literary materials and UEB + Nemeth for math, science, and other appropriate technical materials as students also continue to learn EBAE as needed due to format of instructional materials.
- LEAs/TVIs and transcribers continue to provide locally-created materials (i.e. handouts, teacher-produced materials) in UEB.
- LEAs/TVIs continue to provide students instruction in translating from EBAE to UEB and vice-versa depending on code of instructional materials provided.
- OSDE continues to provide state assessments for all grades in EBAE for literary materials or EBAE + Nemeth for math, science, and other appropriate technical material through the end of the 2018-19 school year.*

December 2017

- OSDE updates list of Certified TVIs. (This task to be completed annually in December.)
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January 2018

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April 2018

- OSDE uses information obtained during pre-coding for assessments to identify LEAs with braille users, and sends targeted information to identified LEAs regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in April.)

August 2018

- LEAs/TVIs continue to provide student instruction for all grades in UEB for literary materials and UEB + Nemeth for math, science, and other appropriate technical materials as students also continue to learn EBAE as needed due to format of instructional materials.
- LEAs/TVIs and transcribers continue to provide locally-created materials (i.e. handouts, teacher-produced materials) in UEB.
- LEAs/TVIs continue to provide students instruction in translating from EBAE to UEB and vice-versa depending on code of instructional materials provided.
- OSDE continues to provide state assessments for all grades in EBAE for literary materials or EBAE + Nemeth for math, science, and other appropriate technical material through the end of the 2018-19 school year.*

December 2018

- OSDE updates list of Certified TVIs. (This task to be completed annually in December.)
- OSDE analyses Child Count Data to determine locations of students with visual impairments, and sends targeted information to districts regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in December.)

January 2019 and annually thereafter

- AIM Center and OSB analyze data on students eligible to participate in APH Federal Quota System and compile contact list for sending targeted information to districts regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in January.)

April 2019 and annually thereafter

- OSDE uses information obtained during pre-coding for assessments to identify LEAs with braille users, and sends targeted information to identified LEAs regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in April.)

August 2019 and annually thereafter

- **OSDE will begin providing state assessments for all grades in UEB for literary materials and UEB + Nemeth for math, science, and other appropriate technical material for the 2019-20 school year and thereafter.***
- **State assessment student instructions will include a code guide** for help in identifying UEB punctuation, special symbols, type forms, etc., **to accommodate students who have limited experience in using UEB. ****
- LEAs/TVIs continue to provide student instruction for all grades in UEB for literary materials and UEB + Nemeth for math, science, and other appropriate technical materials as students also continue to learn EBAE as needed due to format of instructional materials.
- LEAs/TVIs and transcribers continue to provide locally-created materials (i.e. handouts, teacher-produced materials) in UEB.
- LEAs/TVIs continue to provide students instruction in translating from EBAE to UEB and vice-versa depending on code of instructional materials provided.

December 2019 and annually thereafter

- OSDE updates list of Certified TVIs. (This task to be completed annually in December.)
- OSDE analyses Child Count Data to determine locations of students with visual impairments, and sends targeted information to districts regarding available resources. (This task to be completed annually in December.)

*Based on state legislation in effect as of January 2016.

** Code guide/translation instructions will be necessary indefinitely or until such time as all materials are provided in UEB