Georgia Department of Education’s UEB Implementation Plan

June 30, 2013
August 31, 2021, revised
Historical Perspective


BANA issued the following statement, November 2015: The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) recognizes and appreciates the genuine concerns from the braille community regarding the transition to Unified English Braille (UEB). 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.

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. The purpose of BANA is to promote and to facilitate the use, teaching, and production of braille. Pursuant to this purpose, BANA will promulgate rules, make interpretations, and render opinions pertaining to braille codes and guidelines for the provisions of literary and technical materials and related forms and formats of embossed materials now in existence or to be developed in the future for the use of blind persons in North America. When appropriate, BANA shall accomplish these activities in international collaboration with countries using English braille. In exercising its function and authority, BANA shall
consider the effects of its decisions on other existing braille codes and guidelines, forms and formats; ease of production by various methods; and acceptability to readers. (Braille Authority of North America (2014). ABOUT (BANA) MISSION AND PURPOSE. (Retrieved from http://www.brailleauthority.org/about-bana.html).

Georgia’s Implementation Plan

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), the Department of Special Education Services & Supports (DSESS) and with input from stakeholders statewide, will proceed as follows in response to the Braille Authority of North America’s (BANA’s) adoption of the Unified English Braille Code (UEB) and the updated guidance.

June 2014
• Offer a full-day lecture and hands-on training on UEB highlighting the differences between UEB and English Braille American Edition (EBAE) at the Institute Designed for Educating All Students (IDEAS) Conference.

July 2014
• Attend a train the trainer short course on UEB at the International AER Conference.

September 2014
• Present overview of UEB and attendant changes to Atlanta Braille Volunteers (ABV) and Georgia Braille Transcribers (GBT) and collect stakeholder information meetings to include in the implementation plan.

October 2014
• Present overview of UEB to GBT by Chairperson of BANA.
• Conduct a two-day workshop combining lecture and hands-on experience at Georgia Vision Educators’ Statewide Training (GVEST) and hold a stakeholder’s meeting with Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI) and other professionals working with students who have visual impairments.
• Attend a UEB task force meeting at the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) Annual Meeting.
November 2014
• Present an overview of UEB to Georgia Statewide Coalition for the Blind and conducted a stakeholders’ meeting with adult braille users.
• Commence the Canadian National Institute for the Blind UEB training course for transcribers (CNIB Transcribers’ UEB Course) by GBT.

December 2014
• Conduct an online statewide survey with TVIs regarding student and teacher usages and their individual training needs related to UEB.

January 2015
• Conduct a statewide training on UEB during the statewide vision consortia meeting.

School Year 2014-15
• Offer professional learning credit to TVIs for completing the UEB Online Course offered by Royal Institute for Deaf & Blind Children Renwick Centre.
• Produce all new transcription textbook using UEB and whenever possible new textbook purchases from external vendors will be in transcribed in UEB.
• Retain any previously transcribed textbooks in EBAE for their normal life of use.

February 2015
• Present a one-day transcription training for school-based TVI.
• Conduct a two-day training for GBT for UEB transcription.

January 2015
• Begin UEB instruction for current K-12 braille readers and new braille readers.

May 2015
• Provide stakeholders continuous updates on implementation through web-based communication.

School Year 2015-16
• Continue state-wide and regional trainings based on stakeholder need in this priority.
  1. UEB in general
  2. Producing UEB through braille translation programs
3. Back translation from braille to print
4. UEB Math/Science Code for math

- Offer two UEB braille teacher preparation courses in the TVI endorsement program through Middle Georgia RESA.
- Explore the need regarding UEB Math/Science Code math instruction and production.
- Review state tests produced in braille. NOTE: School year 2014-15 will be the final year for the use of English Braille American Edition in state evaluations. School year 2015-16 will be the first year in which all state required assessments will be produced in UEB.
- Update the vision impairments web page to include information on continued professional learning opportunities in UEB.
- Produce a UEB training module in the form of a webinar that will be available from the web page.
- Raise awareness on issues around UEB implementation including training for teachers and annual assessment through the GaDOE Special Education Director’s weekly E-blast.
- Engage additional stakeholders around opportunities to increase awareness of this transition from EABE to UEB with the retention of the Nemeth Code for math. Stakeholder meetings will include updates concerning the Georgia math standards.

June 2021
- *Publish Nemeth for Teachers, APH publication within UEB context in the GaDOE PLO.*

July – September 2021
- *Hold stakeholder meetings to discuss the inclusion of UEB Math/Science into consideration at the IEP team level and to address the components of out of state transfers who may be proficient in UEB Math/Science*
- Investigate and review the possibilities of producing all state required tests in both UEB Math/Science and UEB encapsulated Nemeth.
September 2021
- Introduce UEB Math/Science to Georgia Teams as a choice for IEP Teams
- Provide comparative coursework for certificates of completion and/or self-study.
- Post undated UEB and UEB Math/Science course information on websites.
- Begin plan with Middle Georgia RESA to offer Professional Learning Units (PLUs) for successful completion of the Australian Braille Authority’s (ABA) UEB Online Accessible Braille Training.

October 2021
- Conduct a follow-up survey to collect perceived continued training needs in the following:
  1. UEB in general
  2. Producing UEB through braille translation programs
  3. Back translation from braille to print
  4. UEB Math/Science Code for math
- Provide technical assistance though a braille certified transcriptionist in participation with the Smokey Powell Center to support TVI’s course development and field-oriented braille questions.

November 2021
- Develop a timeline for course completion starting in January 2022 for teachers to complete the available online training

January 2022
- Include an introduction to the UEB Math/Science code in Teacher of the Visually Impaired endorsement course braille through Middle Georgia RESA.
- Offer professional learning units to TVIs for completing the UEB Online Accessible Braille Training

August 2022
- Implement math course (UEB with encapsulated Nemeth and UEB Math/Science) through Middle Georgia RESA.

Fall 2022
- Investigate state-wide intensive trainings will be offered in the UEB Math/Science.
Spring 2023-
  - Plan will continue to develop with the input of additional stakeholder input and data-driven needs assessments.