Unified English Braille (UEB)

What Does This Mean for TVI’s and Their Students?
Why Change Standard English Braille?

Standard English Braille has only been around for a little more than 100 years. It has undergone many changes during its lifespan. All changes made over the years have been for the following purposes:

• to allow text to be communicated more effectively
• to allow for more efficient production of braille.
Why Change Standard English Braille?

On November 2, 2012, for these same reasons, UEB was adopted by The Braille Authority of North American (BANA) for the United States. The U.S. was the last of the 6 major English Speaking Countries to adopt UEB. The code will now be uniform across the major English Speaking countries.
Why Change Standard English Braille?

• Supported by leaders in the blindness field
• Effort to unify the various braille codes used in North America
Why Change Standard English Braille?

It will help TVI’s, braille readers, transcribers and producers.

• More Consistency and fewer exceptions to the rules
• Easier to transcribe
• Remove some barriers to learning braille
• Create the ability to show more symbols in braille resulting in better access to print.
Why Change Standard English Braille?

Computer translation and back translation (Duxbury and Megadots) will happen more quickly and with less human intervention.

• Reduce errors on refreshable braille displays and screen readers
• Improve back translation of braille to improve written communication accuracy with non-braille users.
Why Change Standard English Braille?

• Increase the timeliness of braille transcription by focusing on transcription rather than routine matters
• Reduce the labor required to transcribe braille
• Improve the difficulties experienced by braille readers who must read braille produced by non-transcribers.
What are the Changes?

Current braille readers should be able to read UEB braille with very little difficulty.

• Dot formations of letters and numbers will remain the same.
Under UEB nine contractions will be eliminated in order to create more consistency and to eliminate confusion with other contractions:

- ally
- ation
- ble
- by
- com

dd
into
o’clock
to
What are the Changes?

• Some rules will change as to when contractions can and can’t be used. Some contractions will be used more often.

• Words that are currently written together like “and the” would be spaced apart as in print.
What are the Changes?

• Most punctuation will remain the same, but some will change.
  • Opening parenthesis ( Dots 5, 1-2-6 "<
  • Closing parenthesis ) Dots 5, 3-4-5 ">
This provides a separate and unique symbol to differentiate opening and closing parentheses.
• Period Dots 2-5-6
Just like in print, the same symbol is used for full stop, decimal point, or dot. No longer to be confused with “dd” “dis” or $.  

What are the Changes?

Braille Symbol Changes

• Asterisk * Dots 5, 3-5 " 9
• Percent sign % Dots 4-6, 3-5-6 . 0
• Dollar sign $ Dots 4, 2-3-4 ` S
• Degree Sign ° Dots 4-5, 2-4-5 ~ j
What are the Changes?

Newer symbols will remain the same

• Copyright © Dots 4-5, 1-4
  ~c

• Registered Trademark® Dots 4-5, 1-2-3-5
  ~r

• Crosshatch # Dots 4-5-6,1-4-5-6
  _?
What are the Changes?

Methods of indicating emphasis

• The braille reader will be able to distinguish if a word is italics, boldfaced, or underlined. (See UEB Symbols handout).
What are the Changes?

Math Symbols in the Literary Code

• Symbols added
  Plus + 5, 2-3-5 "6
  Equals = 5, 2-3-5-6 "7

Currently must spell out the words
What are the Changes?

Formatting

Rule for formatting for heading, paragraphs, contents and pages and other items involving spacing or placement on the page will not be effected.
What are the Changes?

E-mail addresses and Websites

- Will no longer have to change to computer braille code to braille e-mail and website addresses.
Will the other Braille Codes be Eliminated?

NO!

The following codes will still be in use and not affected by UEB

• Nemeth
• Music
• International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)
What about books we are Currently using in Standard English Braille

• We will continue to use them. There are no immediate plans to get rid of currently transcribed braille books that are not done in UEB. These books will remain in libraries for check out and will continue to be used along with UEB for quite a while.
What about the Technology we are currently using with our Students

- Duxbury already has UEB built into it and has for a while.
- Popular refreshable braille devices already have UEB built into them from Freedom Scientific, HumanWare, and HIMS. The Mountbatten Brailler also has UEB built in.
What about IOS Products?

• Ipads and iphones using the VoiceOver Screen reader that comes with every Apple Product already has UEB built in.
• Ipad and iphone users that connect to refreshable braille displays will have automatic access to UEB because it is already built into the VoiceOver.
How Long will it take to Make the Change to UEB?

• It will not be an immediate process. In fact, The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) has not yet released an implementation plan, but it will happen over a period of years as a gradual phase in process.

• More information is forthcoming from BANA. Keep a frequent watch on their website for more details. [http://www.brailleauthority.org](http://www.brailleauthority.org)
UEB Web Resources

- www.uebonline.org
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