



**Press Release
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For Immediate Release**

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BANA Adopts Unified English Braille (UEB) for United States

On November 2, 2012, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) set a new course for the future of braille in the United States (U.S.) when it adopted Unified English Braille (UEB). The motion, which passed decisively, specifies that UEB will eventually replace the current English Braille American Edition and that the U.S. will retain the Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation.

The transition to UEB will not be immediate and will follow a carefully crafted timeline. Implementation plans will be formulated with the input and participation of stakeholders from the consumer, education, rehabilitation, transcription, and production communities. Plans will take into consideration the various aspects of creating, teaching, learning, and using braille in a wide variety of settings. The plans will be designed to provide workable transitions for all involved in braille use and production and to minimize disruption for current braille readers.

UEB is based on the current literary braille code and was developed with input from many people, primarily braille readers, who worked to achieve an optimal balance among many key factors. Those factors include keeping the general-purpose literary code as its base, allowing the addition of new symbols, providing flexibility for change as print changes, reducing the complexity of rules, and allowing greater accuracy in back translation.

Letters and numbers will stay the same as they are in the current literary code. There will be some changes to punctuation, but most will remain the same. Some rules for the use of contractions will change. Nine contractions will be eliminated, and some contractions will be used more often. A FAQ providing more detail about changes is available on the BANA website.

After implementation, the official braille codes for the United States will be *Unified English Braille*; *Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation*, 1972 *Revision* and published updates; *Music Braille Code*, 1997; and *The IPA Braille Code*, 2008.

More detailed information about UEB and the motion that BANA passed can be found on the BANA website at www.brailleauthority.org.

The Board of BANA consists of appointed representatives from fifteen member organizations of braille producers, transcribers, teachers, and consumers.

The mission and purpose of the Braille Authority of North America are to assure literacy for tactile readers through the standardization of braille and/or tactile graphics. BANA promotes and facilitates the use, teaching, and production of braille. It publishes rules, interprets, and renders opinions pertaining to braille in all existing codes. It deals with codes now in existence or to be developed in the future, in collaboration with other countries using English braille. In exercising its function and authority, BANA considers the effects of its decisions on other existing braille codes and formats; the ease of production by various methods; and acceptability to readers.