CDE BRAILLE COMPETENCY TEST INFORMATION

Colorado Department of Education

Updated July 2026

This document will be sent to each test candidate for the CDE Braille Competency Test at the time the testing session has been confirmed. It is the responsibility of the test candidate to read the following information prior to the testing session.

CDE Braille Competency Test Purpose and Description

The CDE Braille Competency Test is designed to measure accuracy and efficiency in reading and writing the Unified English Braille Code specific to literary skills.

There is no cost to take the CDE Braille Competency Test.

The test consists of 100 multiple-choice questions and transcription of a 3.5 page braille passage with a Perkins brailler.

If a test candidate has a need for testing accommodation(s), it is their responsibility to submit a written request with the appropriate documents to Dr. Tanni Anthony at least one month prior to the requested test date. Details of the accommodation request can be found in the document entitled "Accommodations for Braille Competency Testing," which is posted at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Vision_GuideDocs

It is the test candidate's responsibility to bring the following writing materials to the testing session:(a) pens or pencils for answering multiple choice questions; (b) Perkins brailler for the braille sample (If the test candidate would like to use a slate and stylus in lieu of a braille writer, this is allowed.): (c) 8.5 by 11 inch braille paper; and (d) braille eraser.

Personal reference materials are not allowed during the testing session. Standard reference materials for use during testing will be provided by the test proctor. These references include:

- Aroga Unified English Braille Chart
- Ashcroft's Programmed Instruction: UEB
- Burns Braille Guide: A Quick Reference to UEB (2nd Edition)
- Instructional Manual UEB Edition **https://nfb.org/braille-transcribing**
- The Braille Enthusiast's Dictionary: Unified English Braille Edition
- The Rules of Unified English Braille (2024, 3rd edition) **https://iceb.org/publications/ueb/**

Pass / Fail Criteria and Next Steps

Criteria for passing the Colorado Braille Competency Test includes:

- Both sections of the test must be completed by the test candidate before either section can count as a successful completion of the test.
- The test candidate must have an 80% or higher accuracy rate on the multiple-choice section of the test.
- The test candidate must complete the transcription of the braille passage with no more than 7 total errors. Errors that will be counted with each occurrence include:
    - omitted, misused, or incorrectly brailled contractions
    - malformed characters (dot errors)
    - incorrect division of words if hyphenation is used
    - inserted or omitted letters
    - omitted or repeated words or punctuation from text
    - errors in spacing (omitted or extra spaces)
    - irregularities in format
    - omitted or inserted punctuation or composition signs
    - erasures of more than one cell (one simple erasure is forgiven)
    - fewer or more than 25 lines per full braille page
    - failure to adhere to the maximum use of a 28-cell line

The multiple-choice section of the test will be graded by the Colorado Department of Education. A certified braille proofreader will review and grade the braille passage. The results from the proofreader will be emailed / mailed to the CDE within 2-3 weeks.

The results of the multiple-choice section and the braille passage will be reported to the test candidate upon receipt of the proofreader's report. Information will also be sent to the candidate's Director of Special Education about the results of the candidates' braille test.

If the candidate has passed the full CDE Braille Competency Test, an initial CDE Certificate of Braille Competency will be mailed to the candidate, along with a copy of the certificate for the test candidate to provide to their Human Resource Director with a request that it be housed in the candidate's personnel file. Information will also be shared about renewal expectations.

If the test has not been passed, the candidate will be notified of their next step options. The special education director will also receive this information.

A candidate's test will not be returned to the candidate for the review of specific errors. The CDE will retain digital copies of certificates of braille competency and test scores.

The initial CDE Certificate of Braille Competency will expire five years after the issue date.

The full CDE Braille Competency Test will be administered within a four-hour period of time. The four-hour testing period provides adequate time to complete both sections of the test**.** If both sections of the test are not completed in their entirety and in earnest within the allotted time, then neither section of the test will be graded**,** and the candidate will fail the full test. For example, if the multiple-choice section is completed and only one-half of the passage is completed in braille, neither section can be graded. Even if the multiple-choice section is completed at the passing level, no credit will be given for either section. The test candidate will have to retake both sections of the test at a future date as described in the scenarios below.

If both sections are fully completed and one part of the test is not successfully passed, that section may be repeated within a two-month period. For example, if the braille passage is completed successfully but there are too many errors for a passing score on the multiple-choice section of the test, the test candidate may retake the multiple-choice section of the test within a two-month

period. Two hours would be allowed for the retake portion of the test. If the multiple-choice section is passed on the second time, the candidate will earn an initial CDE Certificate of Braille Competency.

If this repeat part of the test is not passed successfully on the second attempt, the test candidate will not earn an initial CDE Certificate of Braille Competency and must start over in the process – taking both sections of the test again using Multiple Choice Form B and a new braille sample. If the second round of the whole test is not successfully completed, the test candidate cannot retake the full Colorado Braille Competency Test for two calendar months. The candidate will be advised to pursue further study and/or a CDE-approved braille mentor. CDE will work with the candidate to provide a braille mentor.

If the second retake of the full Colorado Braille Competency Test is not passed, the test candidate will be required to pursue a course of study in Unified English Braille (e.g., a braille refresher course) and/or an assigned braille mentor before they can retake the braille test on a third occasion. A braille mentor is likely to be an administrative unit or near-by administrative unit colleague who has demonstrated braille competency. It is suggested that the course of study be supported by such a mentor to achieve full benefit. A mentor can work with the candidate to call specific attention to areas of need in the Unified English Braille Code.

A third full retake of the Colorado Braille Competency Test will be allowed after a three-calendar month period of study/mentoring.

One-Time Renewal Requirement

The CDE Certificate of Braille Competency must be renewed one time following its initial issuance. The process for renewal involves the completion of CDE pre-approved braille production modules. Fifteen clock hours are required for the CDE Renewal Braille Certificate. These clock hours must be earned within the first five years following the date of the initial certificate. It is recommended that the test candidate take three braille modules per year over the course of the five-year renewal period. A minimum of two braille renewal module must be reserved for the fifth year,

A separate document, *Renewal Certificate for CDE Braille Competency Information on Braille Modul*es, is located on the CDE webpage on Blindness/Low Vision and provides details on the renewal procedures. This website link to this document can be found at: http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Vision_GuideDocs

Any questions about initial testing or renewal procedures should be directed to Dr. Anthony at (303) 503 4647 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us.