CDE-FUNDED BRAILLE COMPETENCY MENTORS FOR ELIGIBLE TEST CANDIDATES

Who is Eligible?

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) will fund Unified English Braille (UEB) Code Mentoring for a maximum total of 10 hours per eligible candidate. To qualify, a mentee must be a Colorado licensed and endorsed teacher in the area of visual impairment who (a) is working in a Colorado administrative unit as a teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI), (b) has passed a university-level Unified English Braille course, and (c) who has been unsuccessful in passing the CDE Braille Competency Test on one or more occasion(s). The mentor is available only for eligible candidates who are preparing to retake the CDE Braille Competency Test. This technical assistance is not available for preparing for other state or national braille competency evaluations.

What are the Qualifications and Role of the Mentor?

The mentor must be approved by the CDE and provide mentoring at times when other employment does not occur. For example, a CDE-funded mentor also employed by a Colorado administrative unit cannot be paid for mentoring time during school hours. To be an approved CDE mentor, the individual must be National Library Services for the Blind and Print Disabled, Library of Congress certified and/or have a current CDE Certificate of Braille Competency.

The role of the CDE-funded mentor is to:

- Provide proofreading and feedback on mentee-produced braille samples with recommendations for further self-study.
- Recommend materials or other resources to assist the mentee to proceed with self-study.
- Offer clarification on the Unified English Braille Code rules.
- Make a recommendation to the mentee and the CDE about the knowledge and skill status of the mentee to retake the CO Braille Competency Test.

The role of the CDE-funded mentor is not to:

- Assist the mentee to prepare for a first-time attempt to take the CDE Braille Competency Test.
- Review any section of the prior failed CDE Braille Competency Test with the mentee.
- Teach an initial or a braille refresher course or to provide extensive instruction on the Unified English Braille Code.

A TVI or any other individual who would like assistance with refining knowledge of and skills with the Unified English Braille code is encouraged to work within their administrative unit to secure further braille instruction and guidance without CDE's involvement or funding assistance. If a CDE-funded mentor is requested, arrangements should be made by contacting Tanni Anthony, who will work with the mentee to secure a mentor. The mentee's Special Education Director will be notified of the arrangement as a means of CDE sponsored technical assistance.

For more information or to request a CDE-funded mentor, please contact Dr. Anthony at (303) 503-4647 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us.