



ARIZONA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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First Regular Session

Senate: ED DP 7-0-0-0 | 3rd Read 29-0-1-0

House: ED DP 12-0-0-0 | 3rd Read 55-0-5-0

Chapter: 109

SB 1505: certified teachers; braille literacy; requirements

Sponsor: Senator Farnsworth, LD 10

Signed by Governor

Overview

Alters how a teacher may demonstrate competency in braille to be certified in educating blind and visually impaired pupils.

History

State Board of Education (SBE) rules to promote braille literacy must ensure teachers who are certified in educating blind and visually impaired pupils demonstrate competency in braille by successfully completing: 1) an available nationally validated test; or 2) a braille test developed in the visual impairment program at the University of Arizona (U of A). As such, SBE rules require, in order to obtain a standard professional visually impaired teaching certificate, a person to demonstrate braille competency through: 1) a passing score on the original version of the National Library of Congress certification exam; 2) a valid certificate for a literary braille transcriber issued by the Library of Congress; 3) a passing score on a braille exam administered by another state; or 4) a passing score on the braille exam administered by the U of A ([A.R.S. § 15-214](#)) ([A.A.C. R7-2-611](#)).

In 2016, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) voted to adopt Unified English Braille Code (UEB) to replace English Braille American Edition in the United States. The National Library Service for Blind and Print Disabled (a part of the Library of Congress) offers certifications in transcribing and proofreading literary braille through the National Federation for the Blind (NFB). The National Blindness Professional Certification Board also administers the National Certification in UEB (NCUEB) ([BANA](#), [NFB](#), [NCUEB](#)).

Provisions

1. Instructs SBE to adopt rules to ensure teachers who are certified in educating blind or visually impaired pupils demonstrate braille competency by successfully completing:
 - a) an NCUEB exam, rather than an available nationally validated test; or
 - b) a comparable braille test developed in a university-level teacher preparation program, rather than a braille test developed in the U of A visual impairment program. (Sec. 1)
2. Restricts SBE from requiring certified teachers who completed a university-level preparation program or bachelor's degree program before July 2016 to demonstrate braille competency as prescribed until January 1, 2028. (Sec. 2)
3. Directs SBE to adopt rules to ensure the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) requires textbook publishers to furnish ADE with electronic versions, rather than computer diskettes, for literary and nonliterary subjects. (Sec. 1)

☐ Prop 105 (45 votes)

☐ Prop 108 (40 votes)

☐ Emergency (40 votes)

☐ Fiscal Note

4. Defines *braille* as UEB. (Sec. 1)
5. Makes technical and conforming changes. (Sec. 1)