

COLORADO BRAILLE COMPETENCY TEST INFORMATION

Colorado Department of Education

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

- The Colorado 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 Colorado Braille Competency Test. The test consists of 100 multiple-choice questions and the completion of a three to three and a half page braille passage.
- If a test candidate has a need for testing accommodation(s), it is his or her 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 individual’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.
- 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 (2014, Printing 3 or later)
 - Burns Braille Guide: A Quick Reference to UEB
 - Instructional Manual UEB Edition 2015 - <https://nfb.org/braille-transcribing>
 - The Braille Enthusiast’s Dictionary: Unified English Braille Edition
 - The Rules of Unified English Braille (2nd Edition, 2013)
<http://www.iceb.org/Rules%20of%20Unified%20English%20Braille%202013.pdf>
 - A standard English dictionary
- Personal reference materials are not allowed during the testing session.

- Criteria for passing the Colorado Braille Competency Test includes the following components:
 - (a) The test candidate must have an 80% or higher accuracy rate on the multiple-choice section of the test.
 - (b) The test candidate must complete the transcription of the braille passage an average of no more than two errors per full or over half page of braille or one error per half or less page of braille. **Repeated errors are counted each time they occur.**

Errors that will be counted with each occurrence include:

- omitted or misused contractions
 - malformed characters (dot errors)
 - incorrect division of words, if hyphenation is used
 - inserted or omitted letters
 - omitted or repeated words in text (every omitted or repeated word counts once)
 - errors in spacing (omitted or extra spaces)
 - irregularities in format
 - omitted or inserted punctuation or composition signs
 - erasures of more than one cell and/or which are detectable by the certified braille proofreader
 - fewer or more than **25 lines per braille page** (when full pages of braille are needed for the text)
 - lack of the maximum use of a 28-cell line (without the requirement of hyphenation)
- (c) The passage must be completed with a maximum use of a 28-cell line. Hyphenation may be used at the end of the line, but is not required.
- The multiple-choice section of the test will be graded at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The braille passage will read by a certified braille proof reader. The results from the proof reader will be mailed back 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. If the candidate has passed the test, a *CDE Certificate of Braille Competency* will accompany the notification letter. If the test has not been passed, the candidate will be notified of his or her next step options.

- The site proctor, if the testing session occurs outside of the CDE, does not receive the results of the candidate's test performance.
- Information will be sent to the candidate's Director of Special Education about the results of the candidates' braille test. Upon successful completion of the full Colorado Braille Competency Test, a CDE *Certificate of Braille Competency* will be mailed to the candidate. A copy of the certificate will be mailed to the appropriate administrative unit's Human Resource Director with a request that it be housed in the candidate's personnel file.
- A candidate's test will not be returned to the candidate for the review of specific errors.
- The Colorado Department of Education will retain copies of certificates of braille competency and test scores.

Testing Procedures

The full Colorado 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 only 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 just the multiple-choice section of the test within a two month period. Two hours would be allowed for the repeat portion of the test. If the multiple-choice section is passed on the second time, the person will earn a 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 a CDE Certificate of Braille Competency and must start over in the process – taking both sections of the test again using 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 testing candidate will be advised to pursue further study and/or a 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 he or she 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.

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. Up to four modules can be taken each subsequent year from the initial certificate, but a minimum of two modules must be reserved for the fifth year.

A separate document, *Renewal Certificate for CDE Braille Competency Information on Braille Modules*, 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) 866-6681 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us