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Rule Citation: NMAC 6.29.18, Braille Standards

Overview of Adopted Rule

Agency: Public Education Department

Rulemaking Action: New

Date Adopted: June 13, 2024

Effective Date: June 25, 2024

Rule's Purpose: The rule intends to provide equal access to literacy instruction and materials for students who are blind or visually impaired.

Summary of New Rule, NMAC 6.19.7, Braille Standards

The adoption of new rule, NMAC 6.29.18, adds specificity to both federal and state laws requiring the provision of Braille instruction and materials for students who are blind or visually impaired.

Section 22-15-30 NMSA 1978, known as the Braille Access Act, is intended to enhance literacy, increase Braille proficiency, improve employability for blind and visually impaired students, and reduce the cost of acquiring Braille and other alternate accessible format materials.

Instructional Requirements. The department's new rule defines accessible formats and accessible tools, as well as instructional methods used to support blind and visually impaired students. It requires collaboration between teachers of students with visual impairments (TSVIs) and students' education teams and other teachers. It also outlines requirements for teachers in the primary education setting, such as classroom organization and instructional strategies for students who are blind or visually impaired.

Instructional Materials and Braille Standards. The newly adopted rule outlines requirements so blind and visually impaired students have the same instructional material content as sighted peers, including a requirement to order content-area instructional materials in Braille or for TSVIs to transcribe content-area instructional materials into Braille. The rule also includes a number of areas where Braille or other accessible formats shall be substituted throughout other New Mexico Content Standards.

Impact

Section 22-15-30 NMSA 1978 was enacted in 2003 and federal regulations already provide for instruction in Braille, so public schools are likely already complying with provisions of the rule.