Braille Promotions: Advocating for Braille

2022 – 10 – 22

**Tami Boccaccio**

All right. I think everyone's here so we can get started. We would like to welcome everyone to our workshop on Advocacy and Braille. My name is Tami Boccaccio, and I am a board member of BLC. And I am hosting this workshop. Well, I guess, along with Kim Kilpatrick and Daphne. Daphne is our president of BLC. And Kim is our vice president. We have a really exciting program for you today. We're going to talk about braille and advocacy. And I think it's a really important topic. Advocacy is very important. And it's something that we've been doing for many, many years now, and will probably have to continue to do in the years to come. But braille and advocacy is something that I don't think we talk about very much, or as much as advocacy in general. So, we thought that we put together a panel of speakers who can talk to us about advocacy. And then they can also put a spin on it from a braille perspective. Because we are all interested in braille here as members of BLC and also as Braille users and transcribers, vision teachers, etc.

So, I'm going to introduce the panel of speakers today. And then I'm going to turn it over to Kim, who's going to moderate the panel and she's going to facilitate the workshop. I'm going to start off with the one of the cohosts; Kim who's going to be moderating, as I said, is the vice president of BLC. I've known Kim for many, many years, we went to school together, we swam together, did all that fun stuff. And Kim currently works with the GTT program at the Canadian Council of the Blind. She's also a very accomplished and avid storyteller, and has done a lot of different events such as one person plays and other storytelling events in the Ottawa area, and even across the country, which is really cool.

Jen Goulden is also one of our panelists. Jen holds a master's degree in linguistics from the University of Ottawa. She was president of BLC from 2011 to 2018. And she currently works for Crawford Technologies, which is a software company. Jen is also a certified braille transcriber and proofreader along with her use of braille. She uses braille. She is an avid reader, and reads lots of books on her Braille display. And if you really want to get her a gift, for her lovely presentation here and participation today, feel free to buy her some dark chocolate or espresso. Just kidding. But she does love dark chocolate. So, you don't have to buy her a gift. But if you really want to, yeah, you know, those are the two things that she loves.

Rob Sleath is another panelist. I've known Rob for many years as well. I've worked with him on several advocacy projects. Rob has been passionate and determined to remove physical and service related barriers for people with sight loss since losing his own sight in 1992. He has countless, I would say, BC based advocacy projects that he has been successful on. And they have benefited Canadians with sight loss from coast to coast to coast. I'll give you a couple of examples of some of the things that Rob has done. So, we now have descriptive narration at, well Famous Players at one time, but now it's called Cineplex entertainment. And that has been a result of advocacy efforts that Rob has undertaken. Elections Canada now offers several accessibility tools for independent voting, including a braille list of candidates, and these accomplishments were modeled after his work with Elections BC. The final thing I want to mention is that transit users in Metro Vancouver can now independently and confidently identify any one of 8400 bus stop polls, which have been equipped with dual format signage, which includes braille.

Our final panelist, last but definitely not least, is Debbie Gillespie. Debbie is a member of the AOD, a review design of public spaces Standards Development Committee, why can you say that 10 times. And she is the vice chair of the TTC Advisory Committee on accessible transit. In her spare time, she works as a consultant in digital accessibility, and intuitive Wayfinding. She is an avid Braille user. And she's an all-around information hound. So, I would like to turn this now over to Kim, who is going to be facilitating our workshop today.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

Thank you so much, Tami. I'm glad Tami didn't tell you all the stories about us school together when she introduced me. Maybe I should have sent her some chocolate and espresso for that. Thanks, everybody. And welcome to this workshop, we're really excited about it; partly because, at the last two AGMs of BLC people asked for this workshop, they asked about how to better advocate for braille. And so, what we're going to do is we're going to have the three panelists, Rob is going to go first, and then walk us through general advocacy steps, especially with big institutions or getting bills, bank statements, and maybe a little bit about smaller, smaller groups as well. And then Jen is going to talk to us from the producer side of braille. What happens when you make a request for a braille bill statement. What happens on the company side, and different barriers that that that happened there and, and what the process is like, so we know what that is. And then Debbie is going to present to us about accessible signage. So, they're each going to present for about 15 minutes. And then we're going to open it up for questions. We're not going to take questions as people present, we're going to wait until the end. So hopefully, you have a braille device with you that you can write your questions down, if you think you're going to forget.

So, I'd like to bring Rob in first. Rob, I know you've had a lot of experience in this. So, I'd like it if you could walk us through the steps if an individual goes to a large financial institution or telecom company and is requesting say, statements or bills - what are the steps? How should they go about this? And what are the steps that they should take? And subsequently, if something is not working right? If your request is denied? What are you going to do in that instance?

**Rob Sleath**

Well, thank you very much, Kim. And good morning, everybody. Good afternoon, depending upon where you're located. I'm joining this conference this morning, through my office in Vancouver, specifically in Richmond, and I really appreciate this opportunity to join you. I thank your President, Daphne Hitchcock and a special thanks to Tami and Kim who I had an opportunity to speak with a few weeks back just in preparation for this morning. To start off with, when Tami was talking about advocating for braille, the task in terms of advocating for braille is becoming easier and easier now that we have an Accessible Canada Act. And many of the provinces, not all by any means, but many of the provinces have their own accessibility legislation. Many of you I'm sure are familiar with the AODA in Ontario. Manitoba has its own legislation, as does Nova Scotia, and BC is in the process of putting the regulations together on their Accessible BC Act.

The reason I mentioned these particular acts is because they play a large role in your ability to access braille from service providers. And just to maybe summarize, and we'll get into some of the details a little bit later on. But any of the telephone telecom companies such as Bell, Telus, Rogers, whether they're providing landline service, wireless service, internet, satellite services, etc, are all covered under the Accessible Canada Act. And they are required under that legislation to provide billing statements in alternate formats. So, whether that's in regular print, large print, or in this case, braille, they are required under the legislation to provide that to consumers. And so that may help you, as you speak to your service provider, to know what legislation governs their requirement to give you material and alternate format. When it comes to companies such as your hydro companies or gas providers. So, for example, in Ontario, I believe there's Hydro One, there's Enbridge Gas and Union Gas for the main providers, they are covered by provincial legislation. Here in BC, it’s BC Hydro and Fortis Gas, again, are covered by provincial legislation. So, it's really helpful to know what service provider is covered by what legislation so that as you're advocating for either access to braille, or improvements in the braille material they're providing, you have some ideas to what legislation is sort of backing your request.

Now, I noticed, and Kim and I and Tami talked about this, a while back, when you were ‘requesting’ braille, I prefer to use the term ‘require’. Because, yes, you can use all sorts of digital technology and so on and so forth, but the focus today is obviously on braille. And because of your sight loss, or whatever your eye condition is, you require the billing statements and invoices, and so on so forth, in braille.

One of the suggestions I would make is, when you speak to, for example, your bank, and you require a braille statement, you can make the request of the of the service provider, and usually you're going to get hold of somebody on the front line. In other words, that individual has no authority other than to take your request. And they will make some promise to you, that yes, we'll get it out to you. But if this becomes a situation where you haven't received your braille, or you were expecting it, or you're repeatedly going back and asking them for this, then it is time to escalate it up the executive ladder. And I would start by making a request to the frontline staff. But make sure you document the date, time, and try to get their name. It's always best if you start off by asking somebody their name.

And one of the tricks I use, which often works is, if I were speaking to my telephone service provider, and I needed a braille statement, when they first answer the phone, I always start off by saying, ‘I don't know whether you can help me or not’. The reason I use that, is because it kind of lays down the challenge, the gauntlet. And that individual is immediately sort of, in a mode where I'm going to prove to you that yes, I can help you. I found that approach, actually, it’s a small thing, but it works very, very well.

If you find that the individual has made a promise to you and you're not getting the braille statement like you were expecting, it's time to go on to Google, and Google the executive ladder for that particular service provider. And I would go as high up the ladder as you can possibly go. Don't be afraid to write to the President and CEO or the Vice President of Operations. In service operations, that kind of thing, they all have different titles. So, what you want to do, is get as far up the executive ladder as you can. And when you send a letter to them, obviously, you want to use a very professional approach, and document your requirements; state the fact that you need (require) braille because of your sight loss. And when you when you send that letter in, it doesn't hurt to add in down in the bottom - I would say probably on your second follow up letter, if that becomes required, to CC the copy to your ‘Human Rights File’.

Now, what I mean by that, is you just put CC: Human Rights File, that's all you have to put. You don't, and I'm not suggesting you do file human rights on your second request, but the point is, that it alerts the individual that's receiving your letter; it alerts them that, you know, if you don't get a positive response, you're already starting a file, and you've marked it Human Rights File. I do that very often in the correspondence that when I'm trying to get a service from a particular service provider.

The other thing that I should mention here, is it's really important to document all this material in a single file, so you can put your hands on it right away. Like I say, if you speak to somebody one day about requiring braille, get the individual’s name, devote time it and put a little note in there as to how the discussion went, and what the commitment was that they made to you. Because all of this information is going to be very important, when you start to do your follow up with the with the various companies.

The contract that you have with your service provider is between you and that service provider. It's not with the transcription company that the bank or telecom company chooses to use. So, if the braille format or the statements you're getting are not to your, I won't say to your liking, but to this standard that is required, you need to take that up with the service provider, not with the transcription company. Because the contract you have with that service providers, between you and them, the contract they have with the transcription company, obviously is between the service provider and the transcription company. And it's up to that service provider to deal with the transcription company. You should not get into the middle of that.

The other areas that you may want to look at, in terms of getting braille, I'm assuming in most cases, but correct me when we get into the question and answer period, that when you make a request to either a bank or telecom company, there shouldn't be any major question about receiving in braille, and timeliness may be another issue. And that's something obviously you want to talk to them about, because you should be receiving your braille statements, I would say within a reasonable time, as you would, as a sighted person will receive their print bill, but I'm going to let Jen Goulden talk about that, because I don't have a lot of knowledge in terms of how much time it takes to turn those statements around. Based on the information that the transcription company receives.

And then I should mention as well, because some of you will be dealing with credit unions. Credit unions do not fall into the same jurisdiction as the federal banks. And it's important to be aware of that. If you're dealing with a credit union, they fall under provincial jurisdiction. And if you're living in a province that has an accessibility legislation, such as Ontario, and the ones I mentioned earlier, it's that act and that legislation that governs the parameters of the braille delivery from a credit union. So that's one important thing to keep in mind as well. Definitely, I'm just going ask you for time here. Am I doing okay? Good. I'll keep going.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

You are still good, I think. Yeah, keep going. Three and a half minutes. Thanks.

**Rob Sleath**

I will acknowledge to all of you that I have been asked to join you this morning because of my advocacy, my experience. I will confess I am not a braille literate user. I do understand sort of grade one braille and I can manage with that. I always keep braille in mind or when I'm doing advocacy work, because as Tami mentioned a moment ago, the work I did with TransLink, which is our public transit provider here in the metro Vancouver area, when we were advocating for dual format signage to go on the bus stop ID polls, we did talk about raised print, but we also talked about braille and made sure that it was on there to accommodate individuals who prefer braille, as opposed to the alternate formats, such as raised print.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

Rob, when we were talking earlier to you mentioned something that I thought was really important, that when you do contact someone, say that you need a response by this time, or you are going to contact someone else, is that correct?

**Rob Sleath**

That is true. You want to you want to be careful with that approach, because you don't want to go in with, you know, a big hammer, you want to use a very reasonable approach. I mean, at least that's my style, you have a legal right to receive the statements and invoices and so forth in a braille format or in a format that accommodates your need. But on the other hand, too, when you go in and you ask for it, that's one of the questions you want to ask. For example, if you're speaking to the first line service provider, excuse me, if they say, well, we'll get you a braille statement. And I apologize and all that sort of stuff, and just say, okay, when can I expect it? Because there's a couple of things involved here. Number one, you need to pay that bill by a certain length of time, or it goes against your record. But more importantly, when it starts getting into, you know, more aggressive follow up, you need to be very clear in the closing of your letter that, you know, I will be expecting an answer back within 10 days or 14 days, you need to be reasonable, don't expect to back in two days, but it doesn't hurt to close your letter off by putting in there that, you know, I look forward to your answer in 10 business days or in 14 days. That's really important, too. Because it also states that on the 15th day or the 11th day, whatever you want to be your agreement is you follow up at that time as well. So, you can lay down the parameters when you're doing advocacy work, and be reasonable when you start off. But it doesn't hurt as Kim says to, to close it up and put a timeframe in there that you feel as reasonable as well.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

And that was a good point to have. That was a good point about saying, ‘When are you expecting to send it? When can I expect to get my statement? Because then, that's in your file. If you have to escalate it, and if someone has told you that you're going to get it next month, and you don't, then you've got that information.

**Rob Sleath**

Yes exactly.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

So really quickly. Do you want to tell us fairly quickly, just a story of something you advocated for that you're very proud of? And I know there's a lot of things for you. But is there something that sticks out something you advocated for successfully that you're very proud of?

**Rob Sleath**

Well, the braille signage on the on the transit stops here in Vancouver, that was huge. And it's not the one I want to focus on. But I will tell you, just to give you an idea, that project took 22 and a half years from start to completion. So, like I say, you have to be patient. But you have to also be tenacious, and there was a number of reasons it took that length of time. But the one thing that I do want to mention is the work we did in the area of accessible prescription medication information. In most cases, it's provided in audio format, but I do want to mention that there are some pharmacy chains across the country that do provide it in braille as well. Obviously, braille takes a little bit longer to accommodate that particular format. But there are pharmacy chains across Canada that will provide prescription information braille format as well.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

Awesome. Thank you so much. We're going move over to Jen. Thank you, Rob. Rob will be back in the q&a.

So Jen, can you take us through the process of when one of these big institutions requests statement from the other side, from the transcriber side. Can you tell us a bit about that process?

**Jen**

Sure, can. Can you guys hear me?

**Kim Kilpatrick**

Yeah, your sound is good.

**Jen**

Okay, thank you. So, what I'm going to do, I'm going to give you a really, really, really brief background to this kind of set up so that it will make sense. I'm sure all of you know that there's all different kinds of documents that can be requested in braille. Of course, we're talking about statements.

And the reason I want to give a little bit of a background. If we're talking about ‘one off’ documents, like let's say, restaurant menus, or at anything that is public facing and that isn't personal information, that's a whole different story. And so, we're not going to talk about that story today, because there's not time. And that's not the focus of this presentation.

But for this panel discussion, I just wanted to clarify that the stuff I'm saying is going to be very specific to the kinds of documents that we are talking about. So as Rob pointed out, the relationship that, at least the companies that I work for, because one of the things it's not our entire business, but one of our business lines is document accessibility. And within that, one of the formats we offer is braille. So, I'm going keep it really focused. But the way that this works, as Rob said, is your contract is not with the producer, you won't even know who the producer is, and there's a number of reasons. From here I'm going to go back, I’m going to say we, and I'm talking about from the perspective of my employer, we, our relationship is with the service provider. And they more often than not, they don't want us to - As you know, normally when you transcribe a document on the title page of a book, let's say, you've got who transcribed it and all that kind of stuff - but this kind of production is different. The companies that we work with don't want us to put our information in the statement. And it's not to be secretive, or it's not, it isn't for any kind of nefarious reason. It's just, they want you to have sort of their branding. Just the way, the same way that sighted customers, people getting the conventional print statement, I don't know, who actually physically printed out their document, it's kind of a similar thing.

And then the second thing that's important to know is, that again, because we are talking specifically about statements, the way that they are often produced; it's called automation. Now, if I were to say, if I were to talk about manual transcription, you know, it's tempting to think about Perkins braillers and slates and styluses, but what we actually refer to is transcription where a human is involved. So even though they could be using Duxbury or Braille Blaster, it's still a human being who is taking that content, doing some formatting, making some changes, tweaking it importing the, you know, maybe a Word file being imported into Duxbury, or Braille Blaster.

And what happens in automation, is that there is there's an application that will process the information that we receive, from now when I say our customers, that's the banks and the communicate, and you know, the cell phone companies, etc. So those are who our customers are, because we're sort of business to business rather than business to consumer directly. So. we get these this information, these files, that have already been produced by, could be some other third party, actually, it isn't even necessarily the bank, you know, it isn't necessarily your bank, or your cell phone company. So, the files get produced, they are sent to us via secure, there's a few different you know, there's a few different ways that we have files transferred to us, it's all security is a huge, huge deal, because of course, this is this is personal, confidential information. So, there are legislative bodies and regulations and all sorts of stuff that govern how we protect this information. And that goes for whether you're getting print, braille, PDF, e-text, audio, whatever it is, so we get the content. And what we do is when we are first, you know, when we're first beginning to work with a customer, we get sample files that we can then build sort of a template, so that our, our application, our software can recognize certain things, it'll go okay. Here about on this part of the page, we're going to have a table and it is processed like this. Oh, and over here, we've got, you know, a heading it's say it's a heading level one or heading level two. And this system, the application knows what to look for, so that the output will look and will be the way it's supposed to. And so, we have this kind of procedure for every format. So, all the rules for a given format are built into the system. So that for example, when the application is running, it goes oh, hey look, a table because it's your saves your transactional like your statement details, your transaction details. It goes, oh, cool, okay, here's a table, it's got, this many rows and there's many columns. And so, it formats it according to braille rules. And whether it's grade one uncontracted braille or grade two, you know, contracted braille. Again, that's built into the application, depending on what our customers ask for. So, one of the things that I want to mention at this point, because I've had people come to me directly and say, ‘How come my bank statement is in grade one braille, and I want it in grade two’. And what happens there, is that when you request your stuff from your service provider, you need to tell them, whether you want it contracted or uncontracted.

And sometimes what happens is when customers, our customers say something happens, where they go, we need to comply with this legislation, oh, we got to get this in place. So, then they come to us, they don't always know what they should be asking for. So, we will guide them. And we'll, you know, we always tell people, okay, contracted braille does tend to be the default, it's what a majority of braille readers asked for, but you should offer both. And you can let us know whether a given statement is uncontracted, or contracted, and we can do it.

Now what happens is, let's say that somebody requests a document, and advocates for a document and the service provider has never gotten this set up for whatever reason, they've not been paying attention to the legislation, no one's ever asked for anything. So, that person says, I want uncontracted braille. So, and let's say that the service provider actually responds well to them, and gets it set up; but they contact us, and they say, ‘we need these things in uncontracted braille’. You know, we're probably going to ask them, ‘are you sure that you don't want contracted braille?’, because we really recommend that you make that available. People want it sometimes because they go by this first person that happened to ask, right, so. So, in a way, when we can tell them based on best practices, and all sorts of things, we could say, you know, this is what you really should do.

But at the end of the day, it's, you know, they're the customer and they can decide. So, I don't want to touch on the stuff that Rob did, because you know, he did a good job. And that's not my area of expertise. But I would say that if you get a statement, and it's uncontracted, and you wanted contracted, go back to your service provider, that's also something that they t should be able to address by going back to like us or whoever, whoever they have contracted with.

So, along those lines, I want to say a couple things about the way that the braille is produced. So, I've kind of explained that there's this application, that sort of process of processes everything. Now, because of the amount of time or lack thereof, that we actually have to produce these things. That's another advantage of the automated system, because it can be done, and applications can run sort of in seconds, and things can be produced. So, we have service level agreements with our customers, that means that from the time that we get the files from them, we may have one business day, or we may have three business days is typically the most common. So as soon as we get the file, we have 72 hours to produce it, and have it shipped to the end user, which would be the individual. So, there is definitely that, that tight timeline, because the legislation, kind of, requires it and also just for the reasons that Rob was talking about where like we, you know, we need to pay our bills on time, just like everybody else does.

So, the automated process helps with that. Because if you had, if we had a customer, let's say, and we had to produce 100 statements, you know, and we got them and we had three days to produce 100 statements manually. It's very time consuming. I mean, I am, you know, like everyone else on this call a, you know, huge advocate for braille. But, of course, it does take a while to do it, when you're transcribing it manually; it can, you know, it can take time. But the thing that you need to understand about the automated process is that we build the software so that the braille rules are incorporated, right. So as an example, let's say, and my BLC colleagues, you are going to laugh at the example that just popped into my head, but let's say you bought something at Starbucks. And you know, I never do that. But you would expect if you had contracted braille to see the ‘st’, ‘ar’, and then b-u-c-k-s, which is what you would get, that's the rule, and that would work well. But what happens is, that sometimes you'll have words, because when, when your original bank statement, let's say as being created, then there's a whole big process as to how the information gets into the right place and how you know, I get my information and Kim gets hers and not vice versa. But what happens is, a lot of times there is a data field; there's the date, there's the transaction and then there's like the description of what the transaction is and that that space for that description is often not big enough to cover what the purchase actually was. So things will be abbreviated, things will be sort of mushed, together without spaces. And as you know, in Braille, if you have, if you're writing different words, if you, if you don't do it correctly, you leave out spaces, you leave out a couple of letters, you would not the Braille would not contract the same way. So let's say you, you, I don't know you were writing the whatever, whatever word it was, I'm trying to, I never have a good example off the top of my head, but like, you know, wherever it could be where you would say normally have, have like, I don't, I can't think of a good like the word characters, it was something characters, but they didn't put a space between that and the next word, the contraction wouldn't, wouldn't actually work because the system knows, hey, these contractions can only be used on their own these contractions can only be used in such in such a context. And so because of the way the input is, the system's going to go, oh, well, I can't actually use this contraction here, because it's not following the rule. So you'll get things that look messy. And there's another thing that I never realized until at one point, I was having a discussion with my husband about his, his cell phones, this was like years and years ago. And I made some comment, because I got a bank statement. And it actually wasn't produced by us, because I just, I just know that it wasn't. And I'm like, What's all this nonsense? Like, what's all this stuff on here doesn't make any sense. And, and I kind of was complaining a little bit, and he's like, you know, that's exactly what my statement looks like. And so I point this out, because I think as Braille readers, we have always had, not always but often growing up, especially for our schoolwork, we've had beautiful, wonderful Braille transcribed by transcribers who are super skilled, and they know their roles, and they do a fantastic job. And I never want to take away from the value of that work. But in this world of statements, where the time isn't there, and the system is different, we don't get all that sort of cleanup, right. So basically, what we get is what everybody else gets. And so if there's typos, if there's weird spacing, or weird, you know, the layout isn't maybe what you would choose it to be. That's what we're going to get.

And so it's important for people to know that because most of us are not used to, most of us are not used to seeing that. And so I point that out, because we were having the conversation about what do you do? If you know, you, the quality of the statement isn't what you're expecting? And Rob is totally right, that you should, you know, address that. But one of the things to remember is that, and I say this only because we've had this happen, where we've a complaint has come to one of our customers. And they said, okay, are, you know, our client complained, and they come to us. And it turns out that the person also their, their Braille reader, and you know, but they just don't necessarily know all the rules. So they thought we had done something wrong when we actually did not. And I will be honest, like, if we get a complaint, and it's valid, I will, you know, acknowledge that I'm not going to be like, no, no, no, it's their fault. They don't know the rules. But they really does happen where the person's like, how come you didn't like this? Well, it's because the conventional print statement was like that, and we're not actually allowed to change it. Sometimes there can be typos, there can be weird things. And we, again, because it's automated, yes, there's quality assurance that goes on. But we're actually not allowed to go into somebody's statement to go, you know, what, I think if we spaced this out, the Braille would look better. This would look better, that would look better, right? So we have to, we have to factor that in when we're producing the statements the way that we produce them. So I always want to make sure

**Daphne Hitchcock**

I'm jumping in there. It’s looking like you have a minute left.

**Jen**

Okay, perfect. Well, that's pretty much that's pretty much all I wanted to say. I think I pretty much got through everything.

**Kim Kilpatrick**  Thank you. Now, can you give us a story of when you advocate something that stands out in the front of your mind as successful advocacy experience that you've had?

**Jen**

I was trying to think about this. And this isn't maybe exactly what you were going for, for a scenario but I thought it was kind of a good one to mention. Given that we're talking about advocacy; at one point I went to a cell phone company that will remain nameless. I'm not going to mention any names, but I knew that they It provided statements in braille, because they were one of our customers. So I knew they did it. And I went to them and I said that I wanted my statement in braille. And the frontline agent that I dealt with it, said oh, I don't think we do that. And I said, ‘Oh, actually, you do’. They responded, we don’t, I'm not seeing anything here. But I basically I said, No, I, I'm sorry, I don't mean to disagree with you. But I actually know for a fact that you do this. And so you know, eventually it got it got addressed. But I raised that because if I hadn't been persistent, and just went okay, I guess they don't provide it, I might have given up but because I knew that they did it, and I was persistent, that made the difference. And it just highlights the need. Whenever we consult with organizations, we tell them, you know, it's great if you offer this stuff, but you have to make sure that your frontline staff knows that you offer it, because you can end up losing customers that way if they if they're not, if they're not persistent. So just kind of encouragement to that. Don't give up too easily, because something could very well be offered and the person just maybe is new. Maybe they haven't been trained and they don't know.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

Yeah, that's great. Great advice, for sure. And great to hear the other side and why, you know, sometimes we get weird, weird formatting or you know, something that seems a bit strange in our braille. That's awesome to know. And it's good. It gives us good ammunition for for future times. Great. Thank you, Jen.

So we're going to move on to Debbie. And then, for there's a couple of people that joined us, I think, since we started, so just so you know, we're all muted for now. And we will have a q&a. So Rob has talked us through the steps of general advocacy, and Jen talked about it from the braille production side, as well as her individual experience as well, too. And at now, we're going to go I'm flipping my Braille display, I'm sorry, I'm going from looking at the Zoom call to now looking at my looking at my notes, which are in a different place So, Debbie, so here you are, I think you're unmuted too? Okay, good. So you're going to talk to us about braille signage requirements. And so this is a really interesting topic. So why don't you just sort of plunge in and tell us a bit about braille signage, and where you might find it? And that those kinds of things and we'll get, get talking about, we'll find it and advocating for that.

**Debbie Gillespie**

Okay, the first thing I'm going to go over for everybody, this, this part has the potential to be very dry. If you look up the rules and regulations and standards about signage, you are inundated with measurements and statistics. I'm not going to give you those. I have them and I know them. But you know, for the end user, they just want to go and is their signage, what do they let's talk about people's expectations of signage, and what is required and what is not. Because if you expect to find signage, and you do not, there might be a reason or it may not be covered under legislation.

So I'm going to start with that. Because you know, the average person who goes out there, all of us go out there and there are places that we know, if we go to a conference or we go to hotels, we're going to find signage on our room numbers. We expect that now, we expect to find braille elevator signage now, but these are things like you know, we think it's ordinary and we take it for granted a lot now. But 20 years ago, it was just started coming into being; this field constantly changes and it really dovetails with what I've nicknamed intuitive wayfinding because elevators are now having what they call destination elevators. If anyone attended the Connecting the Dots conference in Toronto in person this week, you would have encountered one of those. It doesn't isn't really relevant to today, but signage and wayfinding kind of go hand in hand. And it helps if you know what to expect when you should expect signage and when you shouldn't.

So let's first start out with braille signage. It is not the same, just because you have braille on an elevator that is covered under a different bylaw in the CSA standard. So then signage for a room number is, even though it's braille, and even though it's available to you, it's not covered under the same legislation subsection. I won't. As I said, I won't give you chapter and verse…

CSA is consumer Standards Association. And I will, I will give you there are federal rules, there are provincial rules. And I'm going to go over those in once I do this quick overview.

So the Canadian Standards Association is not a legislation, it is a guideline. And many organizations do follow it. It is a federal guideline, I think that's the right word Rob will correct me if it's not, because he does that sort of thing to me all the time. But it is a good guide. The same under the Canadian Standards Association, we have sections for elevators, we have sections for signage, room signage, and the like. And I'll come back to that. Service kiosks are a different section where you'll find braille, but they're not just because you find braille on a service kiosk, or a bank machine. Or, you know, a printer, some of the printers now, like Lexmark has accessibility features into their printers, I don't think it's braille, but they do have them. So remember, because you find braille and you think there should be more of it, you need it, you may not know where to go and where it applies.

So that's important to know about braille information, in general, it's all not covered under the same place, it may be under the same standard, but it's not the same subsections. So you may not find what you're looking for.

So we're dealing with the signage today, not elevators, and not service kiosks. Then the signage area in Ontario, we have, first of all, we have the ODA, which is Ontarians with Disabilities Act, that was a government regulation that dealt specifically with government bodies, public service institutions that came out in 2001. And it did not cover the not, it did not cover the private organizations, employees with less than 50, more than 50, all that kind of stuff. That regulation, that information came out under the AODA, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act in 2005. And that was a phased in approach all most of the insurance with the AO da has been phased in, it's all in in place now. You know, it started out, as customer service, standard communications, employment education. And part four of this actually is covered under the design of public spaces. Now, what brought that was the legislation. What integrated all of this was the integration of Accessibility Standards Regulation, commonly known as I ASR. and in there are all of the AODA standards summarized so that people can get what they need. The signage section is in part four, design of public spaces standard, and in there, for the built environment.

Now, in there is the built environment, which covers for the simplest sake, internally, buildings, indoor spaces and so on. But there are also regulations for outdoor spaces; design of public spaces, they could be trails, they could be beach access, they could be for parking, for example. So there are there's a lot of pieces that admit seem to the end user to all of us that they're all the same. And to be honest, they're not so it's a bit of a hodgepodge as to where the laws are and what who governs who.

I'd like to move now unless Kim has a question for me. I'd like to go to when is signage required? Then go ahead. When is signage required? While you might think there should be signage when it isn't a requirement, but signage is required for, first of all, where is it located? And when is it required?

So I'll talk about when it's required, and then I'll go to where you'll find it. So you will find signage in Canada. And I'm going to speak primarily about general terms here; room numbers, names of rooms, what is prohibited, like a warning sign, a danger signage, emergency exits, like fire exits, you'll see signage in braille on those. And that is primarily what you'll see. The other thing to note here, that you will always find or should find your signage, if it's numbers, it will be Arabic numbers. And it will be done in you know, with the upper numbers. We're going to get a little bit more into that up from the braille geeky side, but we'll go there in a bit. The signage guidelines don't only cover the Braille signage, but let me fill in your words not required before I go there. It's not required on overhead directional signage, for example. You can't reach it right anyways, but you'll see arrows that point this way, that way, and so on, you won't see braille signage on areas like that. Okay, because there's no text for one thing, it often is just an arrow with, you know, you're walking along, and then you'll see another screen.

The other thing that we're not going to talk about today is what about display screens, they are covered again, under a different subsection. Okay. So, if you're creating signage guidelines, you have to decide how much coverage you're going to give it. Are you going to cover just the signage guidelines? Are you going to talk about elevators, display screens, kiosks, my recommendation would be if you're going to do signage, then stay with signage. But you know, if we can always branch out from that, we'll talk some more.

What will you see on the signs, some signs will be bilingual, depending on the organization. So you will have French and English in general. And in those cases, you will see that signage, the language text is, is kept together. So you'll find for each sign you'll find all of the English or all of the French, followed by all of the English, for example. So the interlining process, you know, there are I've seen signage that has been done that way and I refer them back, that they can't do that.

Is signage contracted or uncontracted? Well, in Canada, in for the most part, it is uncontracted. There are rules because the signs aren't very long, there is a there is a standard there. If it's 10 words or less, it's uncontracted. If it's more than that it would be contracted. And then you get into is it done and you will be very little signage is longer than 10 words, at least on the room signage you'll meet you will find it perhaps on directories or tactile maps, but for the most part signage is 10 words or less in the information.

The guidelines cover not only tactile signage raised print and braille, but they also cover print signage, so things like 70% contrast; clearance on the wall of 75 millimeters that's three inches. (it's 25 millimeters to the inch in case somebody wants to know – a friend of mine gave me that lovely bit of information way back when, and I think her every day I use it.) So there are placement of signage we'll talk about now about location. Kim, am I good? Okay, two and a half minutes or so.

Location for the signage, I always say to people, there are rules about where it should be located. So for example, pictograms can also be brailled. And the braille needs to go underneath the pictogram. What is a pictogram? It may be the women's washroom or the men's washroom, or it could be the international symbol of access. There's are examples of pictograms there are rules about you know, where the braille needs to be underneath the pictogram.

And again, the placement of the signage. The excuse me, again, the tactile sign should be placed on the latch side of the door, there is a height measurement where it should be how high it should be. And I won't bother with the measurements. But the it's important that you'll find it on the latch side of the door. If the door is a double door or leaf door, you will find it on the nearest adjacent wall. And there needs to be three inches of clear space on that wall around the signs so it's easily detectable.

The other thing to note about this, is that if you are at the knees, you need to have a clearance to the door of at least I'm going to say 100 millimeters. So that's four inches 250 millimeters, sorry, so that people can walk to the door. And as they're reading the sign, they won't get clobbered by the door and it's called protruding objects. So nothing needs should be protruding between the door and the sign from 150 meter millimeters. I think I've covered most of what I wanted to mention, I just want to do a quick check on my notes page. Now, I guess I'm done. Okay.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

Why don't we ask you the same question. We asked the others and think of a time when you successfully advocated for braille and just maybe give us a little hopeful, hopeful case.

**Debbie Gillespie**

I'm going to give you one story I'm involved in right now. And one that I did many years ago, the thing I'm involved with right now is the elections Toronto Braille ballot. Now, I worked on this project. For those who don't know, Toronto did a wonderful job. They were committed to allowing and I really take some pride in this because when we were at I worked at CNIB, we were always asked, Can you Braille the voters list for the country and it was just back then it was just awkward. We didn't have enough of the technology that we do today to correlate the lists every ward, every you know, there was 1000s of lists, and we were doing it by hand. Toronto has done it this year. So I live in Ward 21. And I got my voters list. in Braille. I got my Braille overlay ballot, I got my voting instructions. I got my candidates, they knew that I am a public school. So they gave me my board trustees. And the overlay ballot was beautifully done. The print and Braille are on the same page because my concern with them and I said how are you going to match the braille to the print? Well, they were able to Braille the printer did, who did the job and did the Braille and print together. So a print reader knew exactly that to send me what I required. The only problem and it's not a problem. And I talked to other people, and they didn't even notice it. But the instructions everything was done in the previous code. And now I don't even know what you call it. It wasn't done in UEB. Okay. You know, I like to call it English Braille American edition, but I don't, I haven't gone back to the elections people. Yeah, I'm going to wait till after the elections over. So if somebody gives me the right term of that, I would greatly appreciate it. It's important to note that if you're going to give that information that like I did tell them to make sure they use the right code, but I didn't get into the real geekiness of it. So I will do that. On Tuesday morning when I go back. Is that is the right name, but they won't know what I'm talking about regardless, and so I'm going to have to write thank you English Braille. American edition. Is that what I'm going to call it? Okay, yes, it's EBAE. That's okay. They will not like me very much, but that's okay. But I've been so agreeable to them in the past that they can give me this one. I'll tell you a funny story. So I'll let you guys know how that goes.

The funny story I'm going to tell you is I was on a cruise once and they had braille in the elevators. But the braille was upside down, but it was it was metal panels that you could take out. So what I did is every time I was in an elevator, I would turn the braille around in that elevator and I hope I can before I got to the floor I was going to so you know people say what are you doing and so I'm just fixing the elevator I'm just fixing the braille in the elevator and I did go to the people in charge. Because not elevator and not every floor had it backwards, but most of them did. So I was madly trying to get it all done before the elevator opened again. Not so funny. It's a true story.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

And you know that you bring up a great point, Debbie. And that's when we advocate for braille, a lot of people are very grateful, because sometimes when I've done it when I've said, you know, this isn't correct, you know, the words aren't spelled correctly, or the braille is mushy or, you know, whatever something, or the elevator was reversed like that. They're very grateful, because they don't always know they put it in, they think it's right, you know, until a braille user tells them, it's not right. I get a lot of gratefulness in people. When I point these things out. Most of the time, I do too.

**Debbie Gillespie**

I think it's really how you go about it. I just want to mention that in the United States, signage is usually contracted braille first, they don't have this under 10 words contracted, or uncontracted, we do in Canada, but the US because of the consumer organizations have insisted on contracted braille, quite honestly, printers would rather not do it. And because they can't go letter for letter, they can't see if they've got enough letters that correspond with the braille. Now one of the things that's coming up that people are going to like in the new CSA standard is we there will be honoring the capital. So if the first letter is capitalized, you will find a capital sign indicator, it takes up the lot of the printers aren't sure what we're talking about. But that is going to be the rule, when the new CSA standard comes out, you will see the capitol signs in signage.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

And that is  great. And I want to thank all of you for your wonderful presentations, but also for your advocacy because all of you have been, you know, I feel really honored to know you and feel that you do an amazing job in advocating for braille. So thank you for that, from my heart. And also. So we're going to open the floor to questions. So you can ask about these type of ad we see but other braille advocacy questions if you have them. And we'll put the them to the panel and see what they have to say about them. So remember, you can raise your hand with an alt y, if you're on your PC, it's option y on the Mac. And it is in your more button in your zoom on the iPhone and star nine if you're on a landline and mute unmute is your Alt A, your Command Shift A on the Mac, and on the bottom left hand corner of your iPhone screen. So Daphne's going to watch for hand

**Tami Boccaccio**

I just wanted to start, I just, you've raised some really good points Jen about some of the things around, you know, requesting contracted or uncontracted braille, sort of the whole idea around just because I'm, thinking that a lot, there's a lot of things that people don't know. And I just wonder how we might be able to get the word out there to people, because that may change the nature of some people's requests like or complaints or whatever you want to call them. I think some people's concerns maybe based on what they don't know about the process, or what they don't know about what you can actually request on contracted or contracted Braille or, you know that so I'm just any thoughts from any of the panelists on how can maybe that's something that BLC maybe needs to do a little bit of is sort of education, I guess, but what are some thoughts around getting the word out so that, yeah, so that people will know some of this stuff. It's very stuff that it's very important to know.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

So yeah, go ahead.

**Jen**

Sorry. Yeah, I was just going to say, could I answer quickly, and I suspect Debbie, and Rob probably will maybe say the same thing and more, but I feel like this this panel, if you're talking about educating consumers, right, yeah. Yeah. I think this panel is part of the answer to that, trying to give people an opportunity to hear this side of the story. And maybe there's, you know, maybe there's other things that that we can do, but I think this is the kind of thing where people can come and hear about it. Oh, and you know, of course we're all we you know, if I'm talking to somebody, like the person I talked about when I was speaking, who said to me, like how can my statement is uncontracted when, you know, I was able to just tell her, Hey, this is what you can do. And so now, we've got people on the line who have heard some more information that they can sort of share by word of mouth as well.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

Yeah, yeah. And I think we could do an article for the newsletter, too. And,

**Jen**

you know, that's a good idea.

**Peg Mercer**

That was great presentations. And my question, I guess this would probably be to Jen mostly or anyone but with the bank statements, and other Braille providers of like, the CRA produces braille to I guess my basic question that and I think it's an overriding consideration. Is the producers that the statements are not being produced in UEB? at least the ones I receive are not. And, yes, I could go to my provider and say, I would like this and Unified English Braille. But how come there's no given standard that the producers are following in the first place to produce these in UEB

**Jen**

I will answer that. It's kind of a hard one to answer because there actually is a given standard. It's just the producers. It's that because we can't by like, by law, they have to provide Braille, but it's not built into the law that it has to be UEB. I mean, you could read it in because you could say, well, you have to provide it according to the accepted Braille code in your country, which, for us, as UEB. So I would say indirectly, you can do that. But there's no like, Okay, you're going to be fined because you're not providing UEB. And so this is I find this incredibly frustrating. We do provide UEB We don't provide anything other than UEB. But I know, because I get statements for things, and they're not in UEB. And I. So I kind of feel that frustration. I think, BLC and I don't really want to speak. I don't feel like I can really do that anymore. But we had talked about some things that we can do to contact Braille producers and sort of raise this issue and make sure because they relate, you're absolutely right, Peg, they should be using UEB and I think you could that would be grounds to go to your bank and say, Look, you know, I appreciate that you're providing Braille, that's great, but the producer actually isn't using the right code.

**Peg Mercer**

Okay, that's a good way to put it. So that they can

**Jen**

Okay, so they're not using the current the code that is in effect in Canada, and was adopted in 2010. So it's been 12 years.

**Peg Mercer**

Yeah. Because it's made me wonder if whatever software like these automatic production, can I speak to this as well? Yeah, thank you, because it's a signage problem, too.

**Debbie Gillespie**

It is a signage problem. It's a problem in general. But we all need to we all need to do this guy's it's this group of people, the current braille readers need to insist on it. And I'll say, I'll tell you why. People are now being educated in Canada, in UEB, at some point, there's going to be a time when they're not going to know how to read what they're being given. And if we don't get people on to change it now, I suspect it is the law. So that has to change and needs to be more specific. Yeah. And I'm not sure where to go. Now. This is a ROB part. He can take this part and tell us where to go to. But that really is the part that's the problem. Because many printers and producers, not Braille producers, but sign makers, and you know, we are getting more signage, but the problem is, it's open at one time, our signage options were very limited, and they were always excellent, right. But now that more off the shelf companies or printing signage, you're going to get more variability, you're going to get things because it's automated. And not necessarily done by a Braille producer. Like it could be just a regular printer that does it. You the variability is there, but we need to remember, if you're not getting UEB sign it you really be in general, we need to fix it because 10 years from now, don't forget people live as adopted in Canada in 2010. That's the end education system. There are people now gone through the system. This is 2022. They're in grade 10. Now, there are people that won't be able to read the production that they get. That's what I'm worried about. That's why we need to advocate that they go to the right code. That's my place. Thank you.

**Peg Mercer**

And is it because the production, the automatic production, whatever software they use is not set up to do you? UEB default. I mean, I don't know they

**Jen**

have to they have to make adjustments to but it's totally possible. It's doable.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

But I know you have quite a few hands. We do. We have a lot of hands. But I do agree with you, Jen that something BLC could talk to producers too, because maybe they just don't know what to set it at. Like some of them.

**Shelley Ann Morris**

Hi, there. Thank you very much. This is a really interesting workshop. I think some of my questions have already been answered. And before I finish, I would like to thank all the Braille pioneers here on the call, who've already been out there, blazing the trail for somebody like me, who is very, very new to Braille and only came to it during the pandemic. So thank you so much for all you doing and done. I guess I fall into the category of, I guess what was talked about was public facing Braille as a newcomer to Braille. My use of Braille is probably going to be things like elevators, room signs, maybe Braille on cards, you know, the cards that you get with different stores and things, basic Braille.

It's really interesting, because what I'd like to know, and I think a lot of this got answered and probably would make great subject for a newsletter article is, if we ask or sorry, if we require I love that Braille. One of the things you might get some pushback on is, well, don't you have all that in audio? Or can't you do that on your phone, or it's going to be expensive, we're going to have to do all this and that, and it's going to cost us a fortune. And I think that sometimes when we get pushback, sometimes that comes out of the fear of Oh, my goodness, we don't know how to do it, or it's going to cost a lot. What if we get it wrong? And you know, people who don't know broke about Braille won't know if the Braille is correct. So I'm wondering, would it be best if I, you know, point out that it would be good to have Braille in different places, especially in public. And it's interesting to know that there were so many different laws and legislations that govern different things. But if I asked for it, I can I direct them to BLC.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

How do you advocate? I think your main question right now is, how do you advocate for Braille? When they say, Oh, we have audio? And you could do it online? Right? Is that the big part of it?

**Shelley Ann Morris**

Yeah. And  if they if they say, now, we can't do that. Can then say or we don't know, how can I point them in the direction of BLC and say, here's a somebody or here's an organization we

**Kim Kilpatrick**

have? We have a two pronged question here. The first bit of it, what do you say? What do you say panelists? When someone says, Yeah, but we have audio we have online? What do you say?

**Jen**

We don't go to we don't tell print readers that they have to take audio? Because print is, you know, we don't? That's a double standard and right. I don't know, I just don't even really entertain that option. No, I'm asking for Braille? I don't know.

**Debbie Gillespie**

The problem is we need to, I'm not the most forceful soul. But we need to speak up about it. Because, you know, we've all we can't be grateful to get what we got. Now, years ago, that was the accepted way of doing it. And it worked, because there was so little of it. But, you know, with the legislation, legislation is only good if people request stuff to be up to comply with it. If nobody uses it, then the government is going to say why should we bother? Nobody wants it, or they're too timid to ask. Right? So I'd like to see Rob answer this too. But yes, really. It's required. You require it. I mean, I'm with Rob. Don't be impolite about it. But you say I require Braille. Just like you read print. I wouldn't say well, do I ask you I would be really polite about it.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

I like that word require to I like that word require because it's polite, but it's saying no, I'm not asking you for large print.

**Debbie Gillespie**

And you say, I'm not able to read print. But in order for me to read, I want to be able to read my statement. I don't want to listen to my statement. Right? I can't keep track of it that way. Or don't forget, you could be deaf blind. You could be you know, it's just something you got to deal with. Let's not rob half a shot at this one for assumption.

**Rob Sleath**

Because in Shelley's actually touched on something I wanted to bring up here. But let's go back on a couple of things here. First of all, Peg, brought up the question about how do we ask for or promote UEB? And where do we go to make sure that the service providers are providing that? My question would be who? What body adopted UEB back in 2010? Who was it that brought it forward and said, you know, UEB is now the standard in Canada? Because Oh, sorry. Go ahead. Yeah, sorry.

**Jen**

It's, it was Braille literacy, Canada, which at the time was called the Canadian Braille Authority.

**Rob Sleath**

Okay. I would have to do some research in this area, and perhaps Kim and Daphne and yourself, Jen, you need to find out who sort of set those regulations or those standards. And, you know, it may require a change in federal legislation. I know. Yeah, I think it does seem immunity, for example. Yeah, I think it does know, to make ASL Canada's third official language. So maybe that's something where literacy Canada wants to take on is Braille needs. It's not really a language. It's not more than that.

**Jen**

So the writing system?

**Rob Sleath**

Yeah, exactly. So I would have to do some research myself, but maybe BLC, you would know where to go. The one thing I wanted to mention to Shelley's point, if somebody said you we can provide it an audio, I would simply come back to them very quickly and say, I don't have the resources to play audio, I require Braille.

And the one thing that I did want to say, because I was looking through my notes after I finished up is, don't ever get pulled in to the expense argument. You know, when we were advocating for these Braille signs on bus stops, for example, or the tactile warning edges on SkyTrain, they often came back to us and said, It's too expensive. We can't afford to do that. Don't let them come back to you with that argument. Because number one, you have no idea how much it's going to cost. We know braille is not terribly expensive, but you have no idea what the service provider and the transcription company with their contract is to you have no control over their budget. So it's not a question of how much it costs. I'd be hard pressed to accept that answer from a telecom company, because they've got an awful lot more money than I do. And it's not going to present a hardship to them. But don't ever get caught into that argument going back and forth. This is too expensive.

It's a requirement, you're entitled to it, and the legislation allows you to ask for it. So that's just one point I wanted to bring up and to the point that Deb made. All too often, because of the nature of our disability. We've often been told, No, we can't do it. But you know, times are changing. And we have to, we have to stop accepting that as an answer or as an acceptable answer. And just walking away and saying, Well, I asked, and they told me no. I've been told that many times when I'm advocating on behalf of people with sight loss. And if we accepted that we would still be no pun intended in the dark ages. So I mean, it takes it takes some backbone sometimes and you have to stand up for your rights, but don't accept no for an answer. So I'll just kind of wrap it back, because I've covered a lot of ground there. But

**Kim Kilpatrick**

thank you. Thank you, Rob, for that. Shelly second part of her question. Where does she steer people who have they had questions? Is that the BLC Info Box do people think or were

**Jen**

Yes. Sorry. That was loud. Sorry. I would say I mean, if we can't answer the question, I know when I was monitoring the box, I guess I shouldn't speak for you, Daphne. I'm sorry. I don't monitor the box anymore. I did it for so long. I just like I said it to me. But if I couldn't answer I don't know how you do a Daphne but like, if I get questions, you know, I we answer a wide variety. And if I can't answer, I'm trying to talk fast because I know we're almost at 230 but if I can if I could didn't answer it or that we couldn't do anything. I would find someone who could and I would redirect the person.

**Ted**

Yes, sir. Good morning. And good morning, Jen, hope that braille display is still working great.

I just wanted to comment on the what about those of us? What about those of us that are, let's say still using the English Braille, and that are diehard, let's say English grade one and two Braille. And that have been hesitant to move to full time UEB. Is there? UEB training materials still available?

Yes.

And how hard is it to get him?

**Jen**

I can answer but there's, I've taught I've talked a lot. So if there's somebody else that wants to answer it, that's fine.

I would just say there's, there's an and again, I'm going to be really brief. And maybe you can write to us off list, and we'll give you the resources. But the Braille superstore has a couple of resources, one is UEB for every one or something. And it just because I think one thing I mean, we talked about the concern that there are people growing up who you know, won't have ever read EBAE. But I do also want to highlight that you may be, especially when it comes to your average everyday content, it's not so drastically different. They're going to read it Oh, my goodness, I totally can't read this. It's not a whole new code. It's basically an update to what we had to make sure that we're accommodating certain, because print changes all the time. So you can get books for very inexpensive prices, you can get free UEB symbols lists just to kind of go through on your own go. Okay, so that's what the parenthesis is now. So there are a number of resources, which I think I don't know, definitely, maybe you and I can coordinate. And yeah, he has a great one.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

There's another thing I did, Ted, this is how I learned UEB. I put it on my Braille display. And I had another table like the other table, also in my rotor in my language rotor and my Braille rotor, whatever you want to call that on my phone, and I just read UEB. I could flip back and figure out a word or I could change it to grade one Braille, like easily on a computer or on a phone, switch to uncontracted braille, and read the word.

**Debbie Gillespie**

Does BLC have these resources on their website in one place? UEB resource for trainers, because they should all be in one place.

**Jen**

Yeah, that's a good idea. When? Yeah,

**Debbie Gillespie**

every resource, there's online training. There's all kinds of resources that you guys should just put all together.

**Brianna**

All right. So maybe I missed this before because my audio kept going in and out. So I wasn't hearing everything when you're talking. How would we get these people to change their signage?

**Debbie Gillespie**

I guess it depends where you live, Brianna. Certain provinces are further ahead with this than others. And the Dark Ages. There you go. If it's a federal building, though, if it's a government establishment, they will have signage, they have to have signage. If it is not, though, then then you may have, you know, I would go back to your local provincial legislation. I know you have some regarding disability, it's the equivalent of the Ontarians with accessibility for Disabilities Act. So go there first, look into that. Talk to your consumer organizations there. They may have more information they can steer you with. But yes, it's not equitable across the country. The only one that is the federal what? The Federal mandated, you know, the federal state

accessible Canada Act. Nobody's grandfathered, if you require signage, you need to get it in the current code. You know, it's as simple as that. And, and that's how it is. It's, you know, what, and I know that not everybody produces signage in the current code. And they look at me. I mean, I'm used to people not knowing what I'm talking about. Anyway. So it's, you know, it wasn't the territory, but they need to, and, again, it's not for our benefit, guys. We're not the people we're benefiting. We are the people that come after us. And I know there's so many of you have heard this before.

**Kim Kilpatrick**

Being mindful of the time, just want to thank the panelists. So Tami is going to do that. But I just also want to remind you that we have another Braille promotions workshop on November the 19th. And that is going to be Rick chant from Cass Technical Services. So he repairs all things Brown, he's going to come and talk to us about how to keep our Braille things so that we don't need to send them to Amazon. And so I Perkins's and our braille displays and whatever else, maybe embossers, or whatever you happen to have that is Braille. Rick is going to come. So I'm going to pass it back to Tami to conclude this, we will have a recording and we will have note that at some point, too, so. So I'm going to pass it back to you

**Tami Boccaccio**

So, yeah, I just want to thank everyone for coming. I want to thank the panelists, Rob, Jen, and Debbie, for your very thought provoking presentations, and a lot of new information for me, for sure. And I think that we can all learn from these, how to advocate for Braille and how to keep pushing and keep marching forward. And as Kim said, yes, please watch for information on our upcoming workshop in November on repairing all of our lovely Braille devices, and keeping them nice so that we don't have to, as Kim says, Go to get them repaired all the time. Yeah, so stay tuned. And thank you so much for to everyone and thank you to Kim and to Daphne for facilitating and for keeping track of time and hands. And thank you to all of you for your participation and your interest in BLC and in the workshop