# Superintendent’s Memo #026-19


**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education**

DATE: January 25, 2019

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Ed.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction

## SUBJECT: Use of Braille Standards of Learning Tests in Nemeth Code for Certain Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

This is to advise you that for the spring 2019 test administration, the Virginia Department of Education will make available mathematics tests based on the 2016 Mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL) produced in braille using English Braille American Edition (EBAE) and Nemeth Code, in addition to tests produced using the Unified English Braille (UEB) technical code. Please note that this is a change. School divisions were previously notified via [Superintendent’s Memo #198-16](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2016/198-16.shtml), dated August 12, 2016, that the Nemeth Code would not be utilized for the new SOL tests based on the 2016 Mathematics SOL, and that new mathematics braille tests would only be produced with UEB technical code.

While progress has been made in helping students who are blind or visually impaired transition from learning mathematics via the Nemeth Code to the UEB technical code, we have been cautioned by parents and school officials that there remains some students who have not yet attained sufficient proficiency with the UEB technical code so that such tests would constitute a fair assessment of mathematics achievement. Therefore, braille mathematics SOL tests based on the 2016 SOL produced in EBAE and Nemeth Code will be made available for those students whose Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) so specify.

Please be further advised that the provisions described herein do not apply to subject matter SOL tests other than mathematics and that SOL tests for other subjects will be produced in UEB according to the schedule included with [Superintendent’s Memo #198-16](http://www.doe.virginia.gov/administrators/superintendents_memos/2016/198-16.shtml).

Additional information about ordering the Nemeth Code mathematics SOL tests and other procedural issues will be provided to your division director of testing. Should you have questions regarding the memo, please contact Wanda Council, Education Specialist at Wanda.Council@doe.virginia.gov or (804) 371-4059.

JFL/HDC/cw