Unified English Braille through a Powerful and Responsive eLearning Platform (UEB PREP)

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Purpose: Portland State University, in collaboration with individuals who are blind, community partners, and leaders in the field of visual impairment, propose a 5-year project to design and develop an evidence-based Unified English Braille (UEB) eLearning platform to serve a population of adult braille users, parents of children who are visually impaired, and professionals (trained and pre-service) who work with individuals who are blind and visually impaired.

Objectives: The UEB-PREP Project will:
1) Explore and evaluate the braille learning needs of the community through high quality surveys and focus groups.
2) Develop an evidenced based braille eLearning desktop and mobile platform that will incorporate
   a) eLearning experiences designed to be interactive,
   b) educational gaming designed to be engaging, and
   c) social networking meant to be connective and motivating; and
3) Evaluate the UEB PREP learning platform and its impact on learner performance and on the community of braille learners. By leveraging the expertise of the braille community through collaborative partnerships and utilizing new and available technologies and resources at PSU, we aim to have 500 UEB PREP active monthly users by the end of Year 1 and 10,000 by the end of Year 5. Of the active users, we plan for 2,000 individuals to receive a certificate of completion.

Expected outcomes: Parents will feel more confident in supporting UEB instruction at home and professionals will be better equipped to teach UEB to students and clients. The ultimate impact of the proposed UEB PREP project is the increased usage of UEB, which will foster employment skills among adults who are braille users and improve overall quality of life.