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**Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind  
Office of Interim Superintendent Marv Lamer**

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**For Immediate Release**

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**SUPERINTENDENT ANNOUNCES ARIZONA REGIONAL BRAILLE CHALLENGE**

**Phoenix, AZ, March 6, 2015** – Today, Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) Interim Superintendent Marv Lamer announced that blind and visually impaired students from across the state will be participating in the annual Arizona Regional Braille Challenge on ASDB’s Tucson campus on Monday, March 9, 2015. Students in grades 1-12 will participate in a series of 5 skills contests demonstrating braille reading and comprehension, speed and accuracy, spelling, proofreading, and tactile graphics.

“For the past four years, the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind has been honored to host this exciting competitive event for students from across the state,” said superintendent Lamer. “The Braille Challenge sheds light on the importance of how Braille literacy empowers students who are blind or visually impaired to successfully engage and thrive in the world around them.”

The Arizona Regional Braille Challenge is one of 46 participating affiliates in the Braille Institute’s North American braille literacy program. The event is sponsored by the [Braille Institute Auxiliary](#).

The preliminary round, hosted by each affiliate, is open to students of all skills levels, but the top-scoring 60 contestants in the United States and Canada will be invited to Los Angeles in June for the national championships.

Last year, Arizona sent two students to nationals, and both came home with top awards. Ciara Peterson (8-years-old at the time) of Tucson, a recipient of services from ASDB’s Southeast Regional Cooperative, took first place in the Apprentice Category, and Joey Parra (10-years-old at the time), both a Tucson resident and ASDB Tucson campus student, took second place in the nation in the Freshman Category. The Arizona students competed against 60 of the best braille students in the United States and Canada.

While students are competing in braille events, parents and teachers will participate in campus tours and other activities, including a presentation by Dr. Sunggye Hong, Associate Professor and coordinator of the programs in visual impairment at the University of Arizona.

Advances in technology have not replaced the need for blind individuals to learn to read braille, a code created by Louis Braille in 1824. Numerous studies in the field of visual impairment show a strong correlation between braille literacy and successful employment for adults who are blind.

*The [Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind \(ASDB\)](#) was founded in 1912 – the year of Arizona’s statehood. ASDB serves over 1,800 children who are blind/visually impaired or deaf/hearing impaired from birth to grade 12. ASDB operates two schools for the deaf, one school for the blind and five regional cooperatives. ASDB is dedicated to empowering students with the educational opportunities necessary to succeed in college, career and life.*

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