

Subject: Transitioning to ISBN-13 – What Everyone Should Know



Effective January 1, 2007 the length of the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) will officially change from 10 to 13 digits. Over the next few years, the publishing industry will begin using 13-digit ISBNs, while phasing out the use of 10-digit ISBNs.

Why is this change occurring? The change is needed to expand the numbering capacity of the ISBN system and prevent numbering shortages from occurring in certain areas of the world. This also allows the publishing industry to fully align the numbering system for books and instructional materials with the global European Article Numbering-Uniform Code Council (EAN-UCC) numbering system that is widely used to identify most other types of consumer goods.

What does this mean for school districts? This change will require school districts (and all other segments of the book industry) to begin using 13-digit product identifiers when transacting business with their suppliers for books and instructional materials. Each school district's textbook requisitioning/purchasing system will need to accommodate 13-digit identification numbers. Some school districts may need to implement a systems change.

During the transition, some publishers will be using dual 10 and 13-digit ISBNs to identify their instructional materials. This will allow school districts to use either number as they make the transition to ISBN-13.

Where can I get more information about the transition to ISBN-13?

www.publishers.org/isbn-13 – AAP site for Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about ISBN-13

www.bisg.org/isbn-13 – Book Industry Study Group for details on the migration to ISBN-13

www.isbn.org – International Standard Book Number (ISBN) site.

www.uc-council.org/ean_ucc_system/pdf/GTIN.pdf – for details on the EAN.UCC global trade item numbering system.