



TRANSITION AHEAD

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*A newsletter
for teachers and administrators involved
in the special education transition process.*

Dear Friends in Education:

While activities of compliance are designed to ensure students receive what they need as they transition from the educational world into adulthood, we sometimes lose focus and make decisions for the sole purpose of satisfying legal requirements.

What I challenge you to consider, is to focus our efforts toward creating a system for the purpose of increasing student outcomes and opportunities. While this student-focused mission requires initiative, long term commitment, collaborative efforts, and purposeful action, I believe all of us can shape a culture that embraces and supports student success first; thus leading to compliance as the natural consequence of our efforts.

"Men can't escape from being governed. They either must govern themselves or they must submit to being governed by others. If from lawlessness or fickleness, from folly or self-indulgence, they refuse to govern themselves, then most assuredly in the end they will have to be governed by the outside" ~Teddy Roosevelt

-Shari Lidgard-Pullins
Supervisor of Ancillary Services and Compliance

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Compliance Corner: Summary of Performance (SOP)

As winter finally gives way to spring, we have some compliance tasks to remember.

1) SPP B13 file reviews will again be conducted in April and May. The state of Michigan will send the names of the students with IEPs to be checked. Your Transition Coordinator will set a time to meet with local teams to conduct the review. In the meantime, check your Transition IEPs to make sure they have all the items called for in the [Checklist](#).

2) SPP B14. This indicator is an outcome-based survey. The state conducts this survey of students who have graduated the year before. The school's job is to submit the students' contact data to the state as they graduate or permanently leave school. Your Transition Coordinator can help with this task, or provide directions for your school's designated reporter.

3) SOP - Summary of Performance. As you know, if you have seniors on your caseload, a Summary of Performance (SOP) Statement is required for each student as they graduate or leave public education with a Certificate of Completion. Every SOP must contain:

- 1) The student's current level of functioning
- 2) The student's future goals
- 3) What accommodations might help the student achieve the goals

Berrien RESA has an electronic format for the SOP. You can find it on the RESA website under Special Education, Transition Planning. The SOP form and directions for the form are on the left-hand bar.

There is also a new tool called "Annual Transition Summary, Student Perspective". This form is for use with students starting in the 7th grade and revisited annually. Students can use this framework to think about future goals, and as a platform for speaking up in IEPs about their strengths, interests and aspirations. It can also serve as framework and history of the student's transition planning. If utilized over the years, it becomes an extremely helpful tool in writing the SOP when the student graduates.

Cruise Control: Succeeding in the Community

While students are busy succeeding in classrooms around the county, we wanted to also acknowledge students who are succeeding within the community at various school-to-work sites. Many classrooms have had successful programs for years, and over the last few years we have been adding school-to-work opportunities around the county.

The following schools have had ongoing school-to-work sites in the community: Blossomland Learning Center, Lighthouse, Southside’s SOAR program, Lakeshore, and Berrien Springs. Within the last year, St. Joseph and Dream Academy have also added school-to-work programs. Some of the local businesses who have made this successful are: Broad St. Café, Hob Nob, Lakeland, Martin’s, Meijer, Pizza Hut, the YMCA, and Walgreens. If you would like to see a complete list of the many other school-to-work business partners, please contact your school’s transition coordinator.

Many of our sites were created because of personal connections. If you believe you know a local business who would be interested in working with enhancing students job skills, again, please contact your Transition Coordinator. Students are excited about the future opportunities these experiences will give them!

Discover What Our Youth Have to Offer- Part Three

Previously in Transition Ahead we introduced you to the V3 Discovery process as part of the Building Your Future (BYF) project. In January, we looked closely at steps one through four (Establish Student and Team, Conduct Records Review, Train Team and Establish Outcomes, and Plan and Conduct Interviews and Surveys). This time, we’ll tackle steps 5, 6 and 7.

Steps 5 & 6 – Plan and Conduct Intentional Community Integrated Experience (ICIE)

Observations:

After gathering information via the indirect methods (i.e., interviews, records reviews, etc.) used in steps one through four, we shift our focus to direct observation of the young adult in natural settings. During **Step 5** observers watch the student perform familiar daily routines and activities in locations the student frequents. For example, observers may watch the student perform academic tasks at school and chores at home.

Step 6 calls for observations of the student engaged in his/her favorite activities. Two or three observations should take place in locations in which the student routinely engages in the identified activities. At least one should allow the student to engage in a favorite activity but to do so in a novel setting. For example, if a student likes to bowl and routinely does so at the bowling alley nearest his home, observers would watch him bowl at the usual alley and again at the bowling alley across town.

Step 7- Plan and Complete Visit With Student at Home and Neighborhood Tour:

A home visit and neighborhood tour come next. Members of the young adult’s team set up a visit with the student and his/her family in their home. Team members conduct interviews regarding daily routines and the student’s participation in them. Ideally the student shows observers some of what he/she does while at home. If so, pictures are taken to include in the visual resume to be created in Step 10 of the V3 Discovery process.

The primary purpose of steps 5 through 7 is to encapsulate the young adult’s interests, preferences, strengths, contributions, support needs, conditions under which he/she is highly motivated and able to sustain attention and a host of other attributes he/she may bring to a future employer. Next issue, we’ll wrap up V3 by addressing its permanent products; the Vocational Profile and the Visual Resume.

Highlights from February’s Off To College Seminar: Practice Compass Assessment – SELF STUDY (home)

The OTC Seminar was packed full with information. The students began the evening listening to Ben Ackerson, Michigan Rehabilitation Services Counselor, who shared eligibility requirements and services offered to students. The students left Brown Lecture Hall and went to the Assessment Center to take the Reading portion of the Compass Test. While the students were in the center Ben Ackerson shared additional information with their parents/guardians about Michigan Rehabilitation Services. Pam Harper, Student Outreach & Support Services also shared with the parents/guardians how to decipher the Compass Test scores and how that determines placement into college classes. The evening gave the OTC students a “taste” of what a college assessment is all about. It’s just the beginning ...



Cruise Control: Using Assistive Technology Submitted by Berrien RESA Assistive Technology Specialist, Rosanne Burden

I am always on the lookout for new resources that can be of assistance to teachers and students. During one of my recent web surfing expeditions, I discovered a website called “Shmoop” and it can be found at no place other than www.shmoop.com. Shmoop has a dedicated group of educators who are out to make learning fun in the digital age. The writers employ the use pop culture and current events to make their learning videos fun and relevant for today’s student. The website is targeted for middle schoolers on up through college level. It has over 2,000 learning guides in the areas of history, literature, biology, and math to name a few. They also specialize in test preparation for a variety of exams such as SAT and ACT. Some services are considered “premium” and therefore have a fee; but a vast majority of the site is free, fun, and educational. Take a look and do some “shmooping” today! TIP---If you are using Google’s Chrome browser, be sure to use the Chrome Speak or SpeakIt! app to have your learning guides read aloud.

Teachers, if you haven’t looked at www.remind101.com you should! If you want an easy, private way to text your class a reminder about homework, upcoming tests, or just a motivational message; this is a great way to do it. After all, we know how attached the students are to their phones and checking their text messages! Remind 101 provides a safe way for teachers to text message students and stay in touch with parents all for FREE. You can sign up on the web site and then download the iOS or Android app to get started. Teachers and students never see each others phone numbers, and teachers cannot send individual messages. Go to the website and click on “Learn more” to watch a video that gives you the information you need to get started.



Opportunity Ahead: Off to College

Off to College is an opportunity for high school students to engage in a three-year experience focused on strategies for college success. College success is defined as completing a certificate, associate, or bachelors’ degree.

Berrien County 9th grade students, who have a desire for a college education, will be identified in the spring of their freshman year. Teachers, counselors, or building staff nominate students. Ideal candidates for Off to College are students who will graduate with a high school diploma, need strategies for success and have the attitude and persistence for college completion.

Monthly seminars, hosted at Lake Michigan College, for Off to College participants are designed to improve college readiness and overcome common barriers to college success. The structure of the course will simulate a college class. Student nomination, applications and reflection paper are due to the high school counselor by March 14, 2014. Selected students will be notified by letter sent to the home on April 11, 2014.

