

# TRANSITION AHEAD

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

Dear Friends in Education:

Berrien RESA recently launched a web-based electronic Individual Education Program (IEP) system called "illuminate." This system allows for the electronic completion of an IEP that simultaneously updates the students special education data. The data is compliant with current state and federal expectations through utilization of a dynamic flow process or the answering of questions to complete the final IEP product. The web-based nature of the product allows the users flexibility in how and when the IEP is completed, as well as the ability to store the IEP for future reference.

To learn more about illuminate, please visit the Berrien RESA website at [www.berrienresa.org](http://www.berrienresa.org).

**-Eric Hopstock, Director of Learning and Leadership**

## Contact Information:

Berrien Regional Education  
Service Agency  
711 St. Joseph Ave.  
Berrien Springs, MI  
49103-1583  
(269) 471-7725  
[www.berrienresa.org](http://www.berrienresa.org)

Special Education Director,  
**Stephanie Mack**  
[stephanie.mack@berrienresa.org](mailto:stephanie.mack@berrienresa.org)

Supervisor of Ancillary Services,  
**Craig Blasko**  
[craig.blasko@berrienresa.org](mailto:craig.blasko@berrienresa.org)

Transition Coordinators:  
**Sandy Asmus**  
[sandra.asmus@berrienresa.org](mailto:sandra.asmus@berrienresa.org)  
**Amy Hume**  
[amy.hume@berrienresa.org](mailto:amy.hume@berrienresa.org)  
**Cathy Klaer**  
[cathy.klaer@berrienresa.org](mailto:cathy.klaer@berrienresa.org)

Transition Secretary  
**Ashley Rodriguez**  
[ashley.rodriguez@berrienresa.org](mailto:ashley.rodriguez@berrienresa.org)

The views and perspectives shared in "Transition Ahead" do not necessarily reflect those of the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency, affiliated schools, staff or board members.

To receive "Transition Ahead" electronically, please visit [www.berrienresa.org](http://www.berrienresa.org) and visit the Communication page. Additional newsletters are also available.

*Berrien RESA complies with all federal and state laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination, and with all requirements and regulations of the United States Department of Education and the Michigan State Department of Education.*

## Caution: Information Ahead



### *Transitioning through the School Year*

Illuminate went live on December 1, 2010. Since that time, a number of trainings have taken place. Berrien RESA will continue to offer illuminate training through the end of the school year. Transition coordinators have been working with high school staff to show them how to include the State Performance Plan (SPP) B13 checklist items in illuminate. This will be an on-going process. Please feel free to contact your transition coordinator with any questions.



## Transition Q&A:

**"Illuminate does not include a present level area on the Transition page. Do we still need to address this?"**

Answer: Yes, you should still indicate the present level for Transition areas on the Transition Plan. One way to do this is to cite the Transition assessment used first in your long-range goal statement. Then, state the long-range goal, and follow that with a statement of the student's present level. The activity should then tie in with both of the above statements. Here are examples:

- **Adult Living:** Initial ESTR-J given 2-12-10 and updated ESTR-J 1-25-11 with Tony. He plans to live independently after he graduates. Tony is able to plan balanced meals and perform basic household tasks.
- **Career/Employment:** Tony is interested in the computer science field and welding per updated ESTR-J. Tony will plan to work competitively. His career Pathway is Engineering and Technology. He has successfully completed computer classes and is enrolled in the two-hour block of welding class.

## A Look Down the Road

Submitted by *Melissa Essig*,  
Supervisor for Developmentally Delayed  
at Riverwood Center

Riverwood Center is committed to providing quality services and supporting individuals with mental health and developmental disabilities in achieving the best quality of life. Through Michigan Medicaid funding, Riverwood Center offers a wide range of services to individuals with developmental disabilities of all ages, including students transitioning from school to adulthood.

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) along with the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS) determine the types of services we offer and who is eligible to receive such services. Individuals with developmental disabilities, mental illness or children with serious emotional disturbances, who are enrolled in Medicaid are eligible for a wide range of services through Riverwood Center.

The majority of services are delivered by contracted provider agencies. Individuals, along with their families, partner agency staff and other natural supports, are involved in Person Centered Planning. This is the process to identify life goals and discuss ways services from Riverwood Center (and other agency resources) can be used to support achieving the goals included in the Person Centered Plan. Families often request for this planning to occur in conjunction with school Individual Education Program (IEP) meetings to assure continuity and communication between agencies.

The most commonly used services at Riverwood Center for transition students include:

- **Community Living Supports** are used to increase or maintain personal self-sufficiency, facilitating an individual's achievement of his goals of community inclusion and participation, independence or productivity. The supports may be provided in the participant's residence or in community settings.
- **Supported Employment Services** include job development and ongoing job coaching to help obtain and maintain paid employment. Supported Employment must be provided in integrated work settings where the individual works alongside people who do not have disabilities.
- **Respite Services** are available to assist in maintaining a goal of living in a natural community home by temporarily relieving the family or natural caretakers.
- **Supports Coordination Services** include assessment of needs, facilitating person centered planning, requesting authorization of Medicaid covered services, linking and monitoring of those services and assistance with maintaining benefits.
- Other services include: Psychiatric services, individual and family counseling, behavioral services, specialized residential services and many more.

If you are interested in learning more about services available through Riverwood Center or to learn if you are eligible for services, please contact our Intake Department at (269) 925-0585 or toll free at (888) 273-3995.

## Cruise Control: Using Assistive Technology

Submitted by *Berrien RESA Assistive Technology Specialist, Rosanne Burden*

The iPad! I am almost sure that through the recent holiday season you have seen this versatile piece of technology advertised on television, in a magazine and on the shelves in your favorite store. The Apple iPad is a wonderful piece of technology that will allow you to surf the Web, create documents, email your friends, listen to music, watch your favorite movie or run any number of "apps" (applications) from iTunes. The iPad, along with the right apps, can be a fantastic tool for educational purposes. There are thousands of educational apps out there, but do your research and look for apps that have good reviews. You can find many apps that are free in the iTunes App Store but often times, they are the "lite" version and give you an idea of what the paid application can offer. Most apps are less than \$10 and many good ones are \$5 or less. Here is a brief list of some that I have found that could be just the right tool for your educational need.

**Pages**—This app is the preferred word processor for the iPad. Keyboarding can be done with the onscreen keyboard or with a wireless Bluetooth keyboard that can be purchased for the iPad. You can email your documents from your iPad and work can be saved in Word or PDF formats. Pages is very powerful and work can be printed out directly from the iPad if you have an "AirPrint" wireless printer. Price- \$9.99.

**Notability**—This is a great note taking app that allows you to create outlines, draw figures in free-hand, handwrite on the screen, make audio recordings of lectures, and insert photos from other apps or the web. Price-\$4.99

**inClass**—This app is free and is featured in the College Survival Guide by Apple. Track your deadlines, plan homework and arrange your academic life with this app. This planner lets you add the details that you need to keep yourself organized. Also has a notes sharing feature with other inClass users.

**Speak It! Text to Speech**—If you struggle with reading or if you just want to have text read aloud to you then this may be the app for you! Copy emails, documents, web pages, and PDF files, to name a few of this app's features. Highlight, copy and then paste into Speak It and the text will be spoken back to you with a high quality speech engine. It also highlights words as they are read and gives you the ability to create audio files from your documents. Price-\$1.99.

**WordBook XL-English Dictionary and Thesaurus**—This is a quick and intuitive dictionary and thesaurus. Words are pro-

nounced aloud and the word of the day feature will help expand your vocabulary. Price-\$2.99

**Career Quiz**—A free app that helps students to explore which career path may be best for them. It is general in nature and can be used by anyone interested in learning about different career options.

**College Search App**—This app has details on nearly 3,000 colleges and universities in the United States. You can search for schools by region, state, or type and it provides links to numerous internet resources on each school. Price-\$1.00.



## Compliance Corner

To avoid any speed bumps with SPP B13 (State Performance Plan) follow the suggested guidelines when completing transition plans in Illuminate.

- **Adult Living:** Reference the transition assessment that was used to create the transition plan. Initial ESTR: 2-12-10; Updated ESTR: 1-25-11: use compliant language, such as, "Student will plan to live independently ..."
- **Career/Employment:** Use compliant language, such as, "Student will plan to work competitively ..." In this section mention current EDP/Career Pathway ...
- **Community Participation:** Use compliant language, such as, "Student will plan to ...." and list areas the student will want to participate in the community.
- **Post Secondary Education/ Training:** Use compliant language, such as, "After graduation, student will plan to ..." in this section, include the student's anticipated graduation date and current number of credits (to date).

