

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:

Welcome back and happy 2011-2012 school year!

Recently, the Berrien County Transition Council (BCTC) merged with the SEDAC workgroup for transition support to form the Berrien County Transition Task Force (BCTTF). The new group met in September and developed a mission statement. The BCTTF's mission statement is:

Berrien County's Transition Task Force is a collaboration of community members, businesses, educators and organizations whose purpose is to assist students with disabilities as they transition into adulthood focusing on the questions:

-Are the students ready to go into the community?

-Is the community ready for the students?

-How do we know?

This is a dynamic task force which consists of three subgroups: Students Earning Diplomas, Students Earning Certificates of Completion, and Students with Multiple Impairments. On the second Thursday of each month, either the subgroups or the BCTTF will meet from 3:15 to 4:15 p.m. at Berrien RESA. Please join us!

-Craig Blasko, Supervisor of Ancillary Services and Programs

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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 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.



Cruise Control: Using Assistive Technology

Submitted by Berrien RESA Assistive Technology Specialist, Rosanne Burden

I'm sure many of you own or use what we call flash drives/USB drives that can store our files, documents, pictures or whatever we might want to carry to another computer. However, there is a service called Dropbox that may help to make that flash drive a thing of the past. Dropbox is a free service (2GB) of storage with subscriptions up to 100GB available. When you save your files to your Dropbox folder it will save it to any device you have (i.e. iPad®, laptop computer, Blackberry® or Android™ phone, or iPhone®). The Dropbox software or app (for iPad® or iPhone®) must be downloaded to each device that you want to share files across. Your files are also available online at any time from the Dropbox website (www.dropbox.com).

Originally, I downloaded the Dropbox App to my iPad® and then set up Dropbox on my work laptop and home laptop. Whatever files I drag and drop into Dropbox show up on any of those devices. This is particularly helpful for PDF files that you may want to read at another time or a Word Document that you would like to finish at home. (If you want to edit a

Microsoft® Word Document or PowerPoint file on the iPad® you must have an app such as Quickoffice Pro in order to do that.) Any changes that you make to a file are automatically synced and updated to your Dropbox across devices. Photos and videos are also easily uploaded to share. You can download Dropbox on your computer or laptop by visiting www.dropbox.com.

Shared folders allow people to work together on the same projects and documents. Invite coworkers, family, or friends to a folder and it will be as if you saved the folder to their computers. You can also send a web link to any file in your Dropbox using your "Public folder".

Dropbox works hard to make sure all your files are the same no matter where you're working from. Never email yourself a file again! Those flash drives may end up in your desk drawer as you fill up your own Dropbox.

Compliance Corner

Compliance for Transition IEPs means a “yes” answer to all six questions on the SPP-B13 Checklist. Here are some ways to be 100% compliant on [SPP B13](#) using illuminate:

- Each transition age student (15 years) must receive a separate invitation for the IEP. If this is not done, the program will document the student as not being invited.

In the specific areas of transition, be sure to include the following information:

- **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, “Student will plan to ...” in this section, include the student’s anticipated graduation date and current number of credits.
- If a student is receiving (or is likely to receive) services from an outside agency, make sure to obtain prior written consent before inviting the agency representative. A new consent letter is required for each IEP.
- Identify the student’s current academic, functional performance, and their Transition related needs. Academic levels are in the PLAAFP statement, and functional performance can be found there also, or on the Transition Plan. Transitions related needs are written as Transition activities.
- Make sure that the Transition services (including the course of study) agree (align) with the post-secondary goals.
- Make sure at least one annual goal must align directly with the post-secondary goal statement on the Transition Plan. You can use the illuminate transition-related impact statements to accomplish this.

The SPP B13 Checklist may be found at www.berrienresa.org/specialeducation/transitionplanning.

Transitioning Through the Year

Berrien RESA’s Transition coordinators look forward to supporting you and your students as transition needs arise. The following are new initiatives for the 2011-2012 school year.

1. MRS counselors, Ben Ackerson or Sekenah Daye, will in your building for a half day each month. They will be available for consultation with staff and students, and for initiation of services.
2. Transition Coordinators will be offering SPP-B13 spot-checking so the file review at will go smoothly.
3. “Off to College” will be identifying students in the spring that have the potential to be successful in college with additional support. This is a collaborative project between Lake Michigan College and Southwestern Michigan College, Berrien RESA and local districts.
4. We will be publishing one-topic bulletins throughout the year to clarify important issues and provide training in an easy and compact format. We will also archive these bulletins on the Berrien RESA website under Transition Planning.
5. Transition Clubs will be piloted in three schools throughout the county. Transition Clubs will be a fun way to explore and experience the four areas of transition.

Contact us if you have questions or concerns.

Q&A: Why do we need to comply with SPP B13?

Michigan’s State Performance Plan (SPP) is a strategic framework of 20 indicators used for evaluating and improving education services for children with disabilities. The federal office of Special Education requires an annual report from the states on these 20 indicators, and has set the compliance standard for SPP B13 at 100 percent.

As the saying goes, “Failure is not an option”. When a Transition IEP is reviewed, a “yes” answer is required to each question. All six items on the SPPB13 checklist are taken from IDEA (Individuals With Disabilities Education Act). Any IEP found non-compliant with SPP B13 would trigger a CIMS (Continuous Improvement Monitoring System) RAP (Review Analysis Process) team response to write a formal improvement plan and report on its progress.

Caution: Information Ahead



“A Poem About Responsibility” by Charles Osgood

There was a most important job that needed to be done,
And no reason NOT to do it, there was absolutely none.

But in vital matters such as this the thing you have to ask,
is WHO exactly will it be who'll carry out this task.

ANYBODY could have told you that EVERYBODY knew,
that this was something SOMEBODY would surely have to do.

NOBODY was unwilling, ANYBODY had the ability,
but NOBODY thought he was supposed to be the one.

It seemed to be a job that ANYBODY could have done,
If ANYBODY thought he was supposed to be the one.

But since EVERYBODY recognized that ANYBODY could,
EVERYBODY took for granted that SOMEBODY would.

But NOBODY told ANYBODY that we are aware of,
That he would be in charge of seeing it was taken care of.

And NOBODY took it on himself to follow through and DO,
What EVERYBODY thought that SOMEBODY would do.

When what EVERYBODY needs so did not get done at all,
EVERYBODY was complaining that SOMEBODY dropped the ball.

ANYBODY then could see it was an awful crying shame,
And EVERYBODY looked around for SOMEBODY to blame.

SOMEBODY should have done the job and EVERYBODY would have,
But in the end NOBODY did what ANYBODY could have.

