

UPDATES

Office of Special Education – Mandated Activities Project Michigan Department of Education December 2013

WHAT'S NEW?

Center for Educational Networking (CEN)

- Forward Focus brings together information from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Office of Special Education (OSE) with tools for improving the future of special education. Visit www.ocus.cenmi.org to learn more about IDEA State Complaints and to read *FOCUS on Results*.
- *FOCUS on Results* is designed to guide education stakeholders with information and technical assistance about topics relevant to improving educational outcomes for students with disabilities. Two new *FOCUS* articles were recently released. Visit www.focus.cenmi.org to subscribe to receive updates about new articles. Newly released articles cover the following information:
 - Four Ways to Improve Learning Environments for Students With Disabilities
 - National Dissemination Center for Children With Disabilities Closes, Offers Resources Through 2014
- If you are a Facebook user, visit and LIKE the CEN fan page to receive regular updates about OSE Guidance, the Mandated Activities Projects (MAPs) System of Support, and valuable resources about special education in Michigan.

Michigan Alliance for Families

- Parents are encouraged to contact the Michigan Alliance for Families at 1-800-552-4821 or info@michiganallianceforfamilies.org if they have questions regarding:
 - Their child's special education program.
 - Information about their child's disability.
 - Want to talk to another parent.
 - Are interested in finding a workshop near them.

Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi)

- MiBLSi is an official partner with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) National Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

Michigan's Integrated Mathematics Initiative (Mi²)

- Kate Fanelli joined the (Mi)² staff as the Math Accessibility Specialist. (Mi)² is focusing on providing professional development (continuing the middle school course and researching early elementary offerings for potential roll out next school year) and technical assistance to math programs around the state.
- Over the past two years, (Mi)² has trained facilitators for the professional learning course Enhancing Mathematics Instruction for Students with Learning Difficulties, a middle school offering focusing on algebraic expressions and equations. Kate is meeting with trained facilitators to discuss course implementation, including specific challenges related to sustaining effective practices in mathematics instruction to improve outcomes for students with disabilities. She has also had the opportunity to speak with educators regarding any resulting shifts in classroom practice. (Mi)² will use information gained on these visits to align supports which help facilitators implement the course, sustain effective instructional practices, and build capacity in their districts.

Michigan's Integrated Technology Support (MITS)

- Accessible Educational Environments usability testing: Three-day PD around Accessible Educational Environments is implemented and studied in two districts. Both districts have completed the first day of the PD focusing on providing universal supports for students in their districts. Day 2 will focus around targeted supports (more personalized for students who are still experiencing difficulty with universal supports in place) and will take place in January. Day 3 will focus on intensive supports, individually determined through a process for consideration of assistive technology (AT), and the implementation and effectiveness of those supports. MITS is engaged in ongoing communication efforts between training with these sites to provide technical assistance. These efforts will inform the ongoing creation of facilitator training to increase district capacity.
- Collaborative efforts are being sought with Michigan Alliance for Families around AT following joint attendance at Closing the Gap in Minneapolis.

Michigan Special Education Mediation Program (MSEMP)

- The OSE has approved an MSEMP project to pilot the use of restorative practices as an alternative to the suspension and expulsion of students with disabilities for violating their school codes of conduct. Participating schools will use restorative practices to keep Tier III students with disabilities in class in the wake of misconduct. These practices include restorative circles, restorative conferences, and mediation. Services will be provided by participating conflict resolution centers in the MSEMP system.

- The MSEMP is developing a short video for its website <http://msemp.cenmi.org> to provide information about its workshops in collaborative communication and conflict resolution skills for Individualized Education Program (IEP) team meetings. School districts interested in the workshops can contact the MSEMP at 517-485-2274 or msemp@drer.org.
- Brochures that explain the MSEMP's mediation, IEP facilitation and training services are now available in Spanish and Arabic. They are posted on the website.
- In upcoming months, the MSEMP will be conducting workshops in collaborative skills for parents in Port Huron and Flint and for school districts in Grandville and Oakland County.

Michigan Transition Projects (MI-TOP and RTSL)

- The Michigan Transition Projects welcome four new team members.
 - **Maria Peak** is the new Coordinator for the Michigan Transition Outcomes Project (MI-TOP). Maria has a rich history of transition leadership for our state including her most recent roles as the Transition Coordinator for Eaton Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) and the Region 2 Representative for the Michigan Transition Services Association.
 - **Kriya Gaillard** is the Implementation Specialist for Reaching and Teaching Struggling Learners (RTSL). Kriya has a Master's Degree in Social Work: Policy, Planning, and Administration from Western Michigan University where she interned with the MiBLSi project.
 - **Miranda Owsley** is a Financial Analyst. Miranda has a Masters in Accounting and Financial Management with a CPA concentration and Educational Management K-12 from the Keller Graduate School of Management. She came to us from the Skokie School District in Illinois where she was the Coordinator of Finance and Operations.
 - **Jennie Brandenburg** is an Administrative Assistant. Jennie has a Bachelor of Science in Community Development from Central Michigan University. Many of you know Jennie Brandenburg from the Center for Educational Networking (CEN) where she served as Administrative Assistant for the past five years. We look forward to the rich resources each of our new staff will bring to the Michigan Transition Projects.
- We finished October with a very successful Transition Leadership Conference that combined efforts from MI-TOP and RTSL. The pre-then-post test showed attendees gained knowledge in the areas of best practices for dropout prevention, secondary redesign, cross agency practices, and data-based decision making. The participants created plans to improve transition and dropout prevention in the coming year. Especially appreciated was the presentation from Teri Johnson, OSE, on the department's direction and a question and answer session.

- Upcoming, we are hosting regional workshops for Intermediate School District (ISD) transition coordinators and their central office teams in January with Dr. Mindee O-Cummings and Amy Szymanski, from the American Institutes for Research. The topic to be presented is the Early Warning Signs for Dropout Prevention, and teams will interact with their local data to guide decision making. Also in January, we will begin the pilot for the BackStory Transition Data Portal and Student Engagement app with four ISDs.

Statewide Autism Resources and Training (START)

Upcoming START Trainings in 2014

Jan. 16, 2014

CET

Training Site:

Genesee ISD
2413 W. Maple Ave
Flint, MI 48507

Jan. 23 & 24, 2014

PBIS

Training Site:

Winding Brook Conf. Center
8240 S. Genuine Road
Shepherd, MI 48883

Jan. 28, 2014

Coaching

Training Site:

Ionia ISD
2191 Harwood Rd.
Ionia, MI 48883

Feb. 4 & 5, 2014

Ed Supports & Services

Training Site:

Gratiot-Isabella RESD
1131 E. Center St.
Ithaca, MI 48847

Apr. 28, 2014

START Conference

Training Site:

Crowne Plaza Lansing West

Apr. 29, 2014

RCN Spring Leadership Day

Training Site:

Crowne Plaza Lansing West

Complete details and registration information for the above events can be found on the START website www.gvsu.edu/autismcenter under START events.

UPCOMING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi)

- MiBLSi is facilitating a community of practice on Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) and math. The first webinar will be on December 18, 2013 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The first webinar will focus on problem solving. Tentative dates and topics are for additional webinars include:
 - January 16, 2014 (1-3 p.m.) Assessment: Daily Formative Assessment
 - April 17, 2014 (9-11 a.m.) Curriculum: Supporting Curricula across the Tiers
 - May 13, 2014 (1-3 p.m.) Instruction: Tier II instruction and intervention

Michigan's Integrated Technology Support (MITS)

- Pragmatic Organization Dynamic Display (PODD): Low tech communication tool for students with complex communication needs; overview on December 12 in Grand Rapids for Region 3 members and on January 24 for region 2 members and others invited statewide.