

## **Michigan Projects Recognized Nationally**

Three grant-funded projects overseen by the Michigan Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Early Intervention Services (MDE, OSE-EIS) are being nationally recognized for their work in improving special education services and school culture for all students. The grants, referred to as *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Mandated Activities Projects (MAPs)* are being rewarded with federal funding and requests for collaborative work with projects from other states. These honors represent the high regard the projects are earning nationwide.

### **Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative**

Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi) received two grants to assist in its expansion across the state. MiBLSi began implementing school-based programs in 2003 to provide support for improving behavior and reading among students within 22 elementary and middle schools. The project has since grown to more than 250 schools.

The federal State Implementation of Scaling-up Evidence-based Practices (SISEP) grant cited the current success of MiBLSi as a factor in its decision to select Michigan for its first cohort of six states. SISEP's work with Michigan will focus on MiBLSi. The SISEP directors intend to build upon the initial achievements of MiBLSi.

MiBLSi is also the recipient of the State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG), awarded by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) to Michigan. The OSE-EIS received the funding for the purpose of continuing MiBLSi's growth in the state.

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### **Michigan's Integrated Technology Supports**

With the support of an OSEP-funded grant, Michigan's Integrated Technology Supports (MITS) is actively working within the state and in collaboration with other states to improve the process of providing accessible instructional materials (AIM) to students with print and reading disabilities. Accessible instructional materials are alternatives for students who are unable or struggle to gain meaning from printed text. Federal mandates entitle eligible students to be provided with AIM in a timely manner.

MITS represents Michigan in the OSEP-funded AIM Consortium Grant, consisting of 15 states. The work and success of the consortium is to ultimately be used for guidance and technical assistance for all 50 states to ensure compliance with federal law nationwide.

Additionally, for the second consecutive year, MITS director Jeff Diedrich will serve as a panelist for the annual National Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Summit in Alexandria, VA, sponsored by the Project Forum at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE). The event is by invitation only, bringing together people from around the country to focus on policy and implementation of UDL.

Universal Design for Learning is defined as the proactive design of curricula that are accessible and useable by all students with little or no need for additional accommodations and are compatible with available assistive technology.

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### **Statewide Autism Resources and Training (START)**

Michigan was one of three states chosen by the OSEP-funded National Professional Development Center (NPDC) on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) to participate in a training and technical assistance program. The

OSE-EIS grant STatewide Autism Resources and Training (START) represented Michigan in its bid to be selected.

The START project will begin working with NPDC in January 2009. The NPDC faculty from the Medical Investigation of Neurodevelopmental Disorders (MIND) Institute at the University of California-Davis will provide guidance on state level strategic planning and the implementation of evidence-based practices for identifying and helping students with ASD. The START project will, in turn, share its knowledge with other stakeholder organizations across Michigan to benefit students with ASD.

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