



# Partners in Transition

June 2008

## Resources

It's here! The [Diplomas Count 2008: School to College](#) has arrived. This third annual report, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, is now available online at [edweek.org](#). The report explores the rapid growth of state-level P-16 councils and how they seek to create a more seamless schooling continuum that prepares students from preschool through college and beyond for life, work, and further education. While you're at it, be sure to check out other benchmark reports, [Quality Counts](#) and [Technology Counts](#).

### **Game helps people with disabilities develop independent-living skills**

A new student-designed video game helps young adults with special needs practice shopping in a virtual environment modeled after a local grocery store. Players select a meal they'd like and must find all the ingredients on the virtual shelves. "The most difficult -- and most rewarding -- part of the game development process was creating something that was accessible to a large group of people who had varying abilities," said co-designer Zach Barth. "We achieved something educational that was still really fun to play." [ScienceDaily](#)

## State/Local Policy Changes

### FEDERAL COMMENTS EXTENSION

#### **Designation of Medically Underserved Populations and Health Professional Shortage Areas**

Department of Health and Human Services

<http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/shortage/hpsafrn022908.pdf>

HHS has extended comment period on the notice of proposed rulemaking, "Designation of Medically Underserved Populations and Health Professional Shortage Areas" (73 FR 21300), with a new closing date of June 30, 2008. For further information, contact: Andy Jordan, 301-594-0197.

### **Editorial: Encourage parents to save for children with disabilities**

Parents who save for their children with severe disabilities should receive tax breaks much like parents who save for college education, writes the Washington Post editorial board. Several bills in Congress would create tax-free savings accounts for people with

disabilities that could be used for qualified expenses without endangering eligibility for Medicaid or Social Security. [The Washington Post](#) (6/13)

### **Regulations aim to protect U.S. airline passengers with disabilities**

After a woman was initially denied medical oxygen on an American Airlines flight, U.S. Department of Transportation officials said Wednesday they would require airlines to allow oxygen containers approved for use aboard aircraft. The new regulations will also require closed-captioning on airline safety videos. [The New York Times/Associated Press](#) (5/7)

## **Training Update**

There two more trainings coming up, Healthcare with John Reiss and Curtis Richards, and Transportation with Beverly Ward and John Irvine. Details may be found at [www.partnersintransition.org](http://www.partnersintransition.org).

## **Training Summaries**

*NOTE: Information from all trainings will be posted at [www.partnersintransition.org](http://www.partnersintransition.org)*

The Implementing Discovery Training was a day-long training led by Michael Callahan of Marc Gold & Associates. It includes information on Discovery, why it is used, and specific steps on how to implement the process.

The Workforce & Transition Training was a day-long training with Lewis Persons and Michael Roush of USF. Topics included the Guideposts for Success (developed by the Institute for Educational Leadership upon which the Florida Strategic Plan for Transition is based), and information on how regional workforce boards work and what resources may be found there. If you would like a copy of the Florida Strategic Plan please email Tara Thompson at [tthompson@fmhi.usf.edu](mailto:tthompson@fmhi.usf.edu).

## **Upcoming Events**

Currently there are no upcoming events other than the Trainings noted above.

## **Team Highlights**

### **Focus on the Web**

More often than not these days people are accessing the internet for information. It provides an almost instant answer to a wide variety of questions, such as 'where's the nearest car repair shop?' or 'what's the phone number to that great pizza place?'. But did you know that school districts are now posting information online? Many of the

transition teams have their own sites too, and they are usually connected to the district's site. Take, for example, Citrus County START. They created a link to their ESE staff development page (<http://www.citrus.k12.fl.us/ease/default.htm>). The page contains information on the ESE staff, the curriculum, gifted programs, resources for parents, and links to other resources. They also have a page dedicated to START (Student Transition and Resource Team -

<http://www.citrus.k12.fl.us/ease/Family%20Information%20and%20Resources.htm>). The page lists their vision and mission statements as well as the meeting schedule, minutes, and other pertinent information. The pages are easy to navigate and contain very useful information.

As we move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century the internet has already become a widely utilized tool for sharing information. This can present an obstacle though because not everyone has a computer in the home. Fortunately however, most libraries offer free access.

Take a look at the Citrus County START webpage--you'll be impressed!

## **Miscellaneous**

### **New degree aims to make students with disabilities self-sufficient**

Four Washington state community college students will graduate today with what is said to be a first-in-the-nation Associate of Occupational and Life Skills degree, designed specifically for students with developmental disabilities. Students complete 90 credits over four years, learning life skills and academics. [Seattle Post-Intelligencer](#) (6/13)