

Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE Act) Update

Brett Williams Public Policy Analyst

Last December, President Barak Obama signed the ABLE Act into law. This act will allow qualified individuals to establish a "529" type account and accumulate up to \$100,000 in capital assets without jeopardizing their SSI/SSDI. The 529(a) account will have specific rules for use, distribution, deposits and withdraws. Exactly what are those requirements? We don't know because the final federal regulations have not been released as of the date of this draft. Through conversations with national partners, dates for the release of the proposed regulations range from early June to mid-December.



**Michigan Developmental
Disabilities Council**

What we do know is that many states, over 30, have already begun to either initiate or enact legislation that establishes the 529(a) accounts within their state. According to an article published in Disability Scoop, "In addition to Virginia, legislatures in West Virginia and Utah have sent ABLE bills to their governors. What's more, legislation is under consideration in 29 other states and draft bills are in the works in another seven, according to Heather Sachs, director of state government affairs for the National Down Syndrome Society."

This raises a great question, how can a state implement a 529(a) account without federal regulations being published? A state that proactively establishes a 529(a) account without federal regulations being in place, took the risk that those plans would not fall within the parameters of the federal guidance and may have to be either altered or disbanded altogether. Recognizing this, in early March, the Department of Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service released a document stating "The Treasury Department and the IRS do not want the lack of guidance to discourage states from enacting their enabling legislation and creating their ABLE programs, which could delay the ability of the families of disabled individuals or others to begin to fund ABLE accounts for those disabled individual. Therefore, the Treasury Department and the IRS are assuring states that enact legislation creating an ABLE program in accordance with section 529A, and those individuals establishing ABLE accounts in accordance with such legislation, that they will not fail to receive the benefits of section 529A merely because the legislation or the account documents do not fully comport with the guidance when it is issued. The Treasury Department and the IRS intend to provide transition relief with regard to necessary changes to ensure that the state programs and accounts meet the requirements in the guidance, including providing sufficient time after issuance of the guidance in order for changes to be implemented." Simply stating that states and account holders will have time to make any necessary changes to their accounts to meet federal regulations and not be penalized.

Currently, there has not been any legislation introduced in Michigan to allow the establishment of a 529(a) account. However, we are still very early into a new session with a lot of work still ahead of us. In my personal opinion, I would expect something to be introduced sometime in the near future.



Celena L. Barnes Family Leadership Inspiration Award

Celena L. Barnes was a devoted wife and mother, a tireless advocate for her daughter and all children in Michigan with special needs, a committed leader, teacher, mentor, inspiration to other families, and overall phenomenal woman.

Celena was a voice for families of children with special needs, not only in her community, but throughout the state of Michigan and the country. She served as a passionate member of the Wayne County Local Interagency Coordinating Council (LICC) for *Early On*[®], the Wayne County Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), a parent alternate for the Michigan Interagency Coordinating Council (MICC), a representative on the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC), the Michigan Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Michigan Family Voices and many other councils, committees, and workgroups.



Celena was a lifelong learner, attending and presenting at local, state, and national conferences. She was a graduate of the Parent Leadership in State Government, Parents Partnering for Change Program, and Leaders in Policy Advocacy Training. The knowledge she gained was always a resource for others that she shared with a smile.

She was active in her community through her special needs ministry at Power, Hope and Grace Church, and her work for the Michigan Alliance for Families in Detroit. She will forever be remembered as being the voice for families who didn't have a voice, mentoring and inspiring families to become partners in decision making, and cultivating parent and professional collaboration/partnerships at every level.

For her many contributions within her community, the state of Michigan, and the country we celebrate her legacy with an award that will be given to a parent family leader who embodies the characteristics that Celena possessed.

Criteria for the Celena L. Barnes Family Leadership Inspiration Award

Parent nominees can be biological/adoptive parents, foster parents or grandparents of children birth through age 12, and who have participated in the Part C program (*Early On*). Nominees can represent a variety of different leadership roles that contribute to the well-being of children including:

- Parent volunteers or parents not affiliated with any formal organization,
- Parents serving in appointed positions on State or Local Interagency Coordinating Councils,
- Parents in salaried positions or who are compensated for their time,
- Parents of young children with disabilities currently in *Early On*, as well as parents whose children were in *Early On* and are under the age of 12, but have remained actively involved in the Part C program as mentors, or advocates, and
- Parents associated with the Michigan Alliance for Families- Parent Training and Information Center, advocacy or other formal organizations.



In selecting the recipients, consideration will be given to a parent whose contributions include any of the following activities:

1. Communicating – Fostering positive communication that impacts the community locally or statewide
2. Volunteering - Recruiting or organizing volunteers, or supporting activities both locally and statewide
3. Promoting - Organizing, coordinating and engaging best practices in early intervention learning activities that reinforce the importance of parent involvement
4. Collaborating with Community - Coordinating resources and services for the community, which enhance services or environment, or coordinating resources or services from the local and/or state level
5. Decision Making - Participating on decision making committees, or in programs that advocate system or policy changes, or serving as a representative locally and/or statewide

Celena L. Barnes Family Leadership Inspiration Award Nomination Form

Requests for nominations will be distributed broadly to numerous organizations and entities. To nominate an individual for the Celena L. Barnes Family Leadership Inspiration Award, prepare a nomination packet that contains:

- Sections 1 and 2 of this nomination form.
- A short biography about the parent and the activities in which he/she is involved. The biography should include the nominee's major achievements, which address at a minimum:
 - What was outstanding about the nominee's contribution(s)? Include information that highlights the scope of the nominee's achievements.
 - What was accomplished? How are these accomplishments relevant to the Part C program? What was the impact of the activities on the Part C system?
 - Who benefited? Did the nominee's contributions make a difference for infants and toddlers, families, other parents, or professionals involved in the Part C system?
- Two letters of recommendation for the nominee:
 - One letter from a parent
 - One letter from a professional in the Part C system

Incomplete nomination packets will not be considered. If you have any questions about the nomination process or award, contact: Barb Schinderle at schinderleb@michigan.gov or (517) 241-2591.

Nomination Deadline

Completed nomination packets are due by June 5, 2015, and can be mailed or emailed to:

Barb Schinderle, MICC Staff Liaison
Michigan Department of Education
Oice of Great Start
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, MI 48909
schinderleb@michigan.gov

Nominators and awardees will be notified by **September 8, 2015**. The award will be presented at the *Early On* Conference, November 11, 2015, in Traverse City, Michigan. The parent recipient will be invited to attend the conference both days, free of charge and participate in workshops and conference activities. To view the conference brochure, please visit: <http://eotta.ccesa.org/News.php?ID=247>



*Celena L. Barnes Family Leadership
Inspiration Award*

SECTION 1: Nominee Contact Information

Name of Nominee: _____	
Mailing Address: _____	
City: _____	State: _____
Zip code: _____	ISD: _____
Phone: _____	
E-mail: _____	

SECTION 2: Nominator Contact Information

Name of Nominator: _____		
Position _____	of _____	Nominator: _____
Employer: _____		
Mailing Address: _____		
City: _____	State: _____	
Zip code: _____		
Phone: _____		
E-mail: _____		

We look forward to receiving your nomination package. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact **Barb Schinderle**, schinderleb@michigan.gov or (517) 241-2591.



ADVOCACY/ LEADERSHIP TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

Next Leaders Class Will be in Southeast Michigan

Leaders in Policy Advocacy (LIPA) is a leadership development program for adults with developmental disabilities and parents of minor children with developmental disabilities. The project trains and supports participants to become leaders in the disability rights movement. It is funded by the Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council and administered by The Arc Michigan.

Topics include:

- Disability History
- Inclusive Education
- Assistive Technology & Social Media
- Self-determination and Alternatives to Guardianship
- Person-centered Planning
- Access to Housing and Employment
- Benefits and Systems of Support
- Systems Change



Michigan Developmental
Disabilities Council



The Arc

Michigan

Participation in LIPA requires a significant time commitment. Six (6) weekend sessions begin on Fridays at 12:30 pm and end for the day at 9 p.m. The class resumes at 8:30 a.m. on Saturdays and concludes at 3:00 p.m. There is no cost to participate in the training. Participants will be asked to share a hotel room with another class member, if lodging is needed. Meals will be provided, including to caregivers, and participants will be reimbursed for mileage to and from the training sessions. No child care will be provided on site, and family members are not allowed to accompany participants, however, assistance with the cost of child care may be available.

The next Leaders class will be offered in southeast Michigan October 2015-March 2016. Dates and location to be announced this Summer.

To apply, go to <http://www.arcmi.org/new/lipa.htm>, where you can complete an application form online or download and print one to fill out and mail in. Please contact Project Coordinator Salli Christenson if you have questions or need help in applying. She can be reached at 1-800-292-7851, ext. 130, or salli.c@arcmi.org

May is Children's Mental Health Awareness Month and the Association for Children's Mental Health is pleased to announce that we will be kicking off recognition of this importance month by 'Going Back to the Future' with the return of the annual ACMH conference.



Join us at this exciting one-day event to learn from national and state leaders in children's mental health including one of the founders of the National Family Movement, Barbara Huff, and Bryan Scott Comstock from the Children's Mental Health Network! Take advantage of incredible learning and networking opportunities for parents and professionals and enjoy a high energy lunchtime performance by Kinetic Affect.

Learn more about the conference and the day's agenda <http://www.acmh-mi.org/events/online-registration-open/> Conference Registration is \$40.00 per person and includes registration, lunch and conference materials. Limited Family Registration Scholarships available - call 517-372-4016 or Toll Free at: (888) ACMH-KID (226-4543) for more information.

ADVOCACY/LEADERSHIP INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council wants to hear from **YOU!** Are you a person with a developmental disability, a family member of a person with a developmental disability, or an advocate for people with disabilities? The Michigan Developmental Disabilities Council is gathering information for its next 5-year state plan. This is your chance to tell us what's important to you and what you want the DD Council to do about it.



**Michigan Developmental
Disabilities Council**

Join us to share your story, explore the challenges that affect your life and talk about the issues that are important to you. Please visit the [DD Council Website](#) for registration information.

Michigan Alliance for Families is planning our future work in Saginaw County. This stakeholder meeting will bring together families with children receiving special education and/or early intervention services for networking, dialogue, and planning, and the members of the community that support them.



Wednesday, May 6th, 2015
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm
Hoyt Public Library
505 Janes Avenue
Saginaw, MI 48607

Register with Regina Hilburn by 4-29-15
(989) 596-0208 or regina@michiganallianceforfamilies.org or
online at www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/rsvp

Michigan Alliance for Families is planning our future work in Bay and Arenac Counties. This stakeholder meeting will bring together families with children receiving special education and/or early intervention services for networking, dialogue, and planning and the members of the community that support them.

Wednesday, May 20 th, 2015
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm
Alice & Jack Wirt Public Library
500 Center Avenue
Bay City, MI 48708

Register with Regina Hilburn by 5-13-15.
(989) 596-0208 or regina@michiganallianceforfamilies.org or
online at www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org/rsvp





The Michigan Division for Early Childhood (MiDEC)

Your Michigan source for information, resources, and guidance related to young children with special needs and their families.

Michigan DEC's 2015 Conference

Date: May 1, 2015

Location: Central Michigan University
Education and Human Services Bldg.
195 East Ojibway Court
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859

Cost:

Members:
Before April 11: \$50
After April 11: \$80

Non-Members:
Before April 11: \$70
After April 11: \$80

Parents: \$25
Students: \$25

Agenda:

8:30AM - 9:00AM	Registration
9:00AM - 9:15AM	Welcome
9:15AM - 10:30AM	Opening Keynote
10:30AM - 10:45AM	Break
10:45AM - 12:00PM	Session 1
12:00PM - 1:15PM	Lunch and Poster Session
12:15PM - 12:45PM	Membership Meeting
12:30PM - 1:15PM	Family Leadership Meeting
1:15PM - 2:30PM	Session 2
2:30PM - 2:45PM	Break
2:45PM - 4:00PM	Closing Keynote

Three-Step Registration Process

Step 1: Select your sessions.
See the following pages for workshop descriptions.

Step 2: Register online at www.MichiganDEC.org

Step 3: Mail checks or purchase orders payable to MCEC to:

Nancy Surbrook, *Treasurer*
c/o CCRESA OIP
Michigan DEC
240 S. Bridge St., Suite 250
DeWitt, MI 48820



Central Michigan University
Friday, May 1, 2015

SCECH credit and SW CE hours offered, pending approval.



President
Colleen O'Connor
OConnorC1@michigan.gov

President-Elect
Lisa Wasacz
wasaczl@michigan.gov

Parent Representative
Lisa Cook-Gordon
lisacookgordon@michiganfamilyvoices.org

Treasurer
Nancy Surbrook
surbrook_n@ccresa.org

Secretary
Noel Kelty
nkelly@sisd.cc

Opening Keynote

9:15AM - 10:30AM



Access, Participation, and Supports: Strategies for Including Young Children

Lydia Moore, *M.Ed., Oakland Schools*

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society (DEC / NAEYC, 2009). Join Lydia as she presents practical strategies and real-life examples of ensuring access to a wide variety of opportunities, participation in learning with peers and adults, and system-level supports for young children with special needs.

Workshop Session 1

10:45AM - 12:00PM

Hearing Infants and Toddlers and Their Families

Rebecca Calaman, *Michigan School for the Deaf*
Camille Jeter-Lorello, *Michigan School for the Deaf*

Newborn hearing screenings mean that infants who are deaf or hard of hearing are being identified earlier than ever before making comprehensive early intervention by six months a reality for families. Earlier opportunities for language development and family communication can result in high expectations for academic and social success. **(B-3)**

Is There a Hole in My Bucket? Understanding Authentic Parent Engagement and Key Drivers to Success!

Bryn Fortune, *Early Childhood Investment Corporation*

This workshop will provide participants with the opportunity to learn about research informed mindsets that drive meaningful parent engagement. Keys to success include: "It's do-able, I will get something out of it, and I have something to contribute." Workshop participants will leave with a set of materials that will deepen their work in understanding the importance of creating opportunities for parents to: connect the program mission to family mission, create social connections, and develop leadership skills. **(ALL)**

The Use of Tiered Behavioral Supports and Curricular Domains in Early Childhood

Christi Owens, *Midland County ESA*
Jennifer Woods, *Midland County ESA*
Gabe Hatfield, *Midland County ESA*

Currently a large research to practice gap remains in the field of education when it comes to implementation of evidenced-based practices for children with autism. The Midland County ESA CAST – Team (Comprehensive Autism Support Training – Team) utilizes an integrated and comprehensive programming tool referred to as a Child Assessment Tool (CAT). The CAT provides a structural framework for continuity of evidenced-based decision making across all levels of programming. **(3-8)**

Understanding the New DEC Recommended Practices

Nancy Surbrook, *CCRESA Early On Training & Technical Assistance*

DEC, a subdivision of CEC, collaborated with the national Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) on these updated and revised DEC Recommended Practices which provide guidance about effective ways to improve learning outcomes and promote development of young children, birth - 5, who have or are at-risk for developmental delays or disabilities. Nancy will provide an overview of these recommended practices and strategies for incorporating them into practice. **(B-5)**

ECSE Updates

Lisa Wasacz, *MI Dept. of Education Office of Great Start*

These Early Childhood Special Education updates will focus on providing up-to-date information on Indicators: Preschool Educational Environments ages 3-5 (B-6), Early Childhood (Preschool) Child Outcomes (B-7), and Transition from *Early On* to Preschool Special Education with IEP by age 3 (B-12). **(3-5)**

Inclusion: Access, Participation, Differentiated Instruction and Materials and Supports

Brandon School District Representatives: Diane R. Zedan, Bridget Billmeyer-Mayer, Karleigh Sleeper, Elizabeth Napier

This session will share a variety of classroom/program designs used to include 2 ½ to 5 year old students with IEPs into a tuition based preschool, GSRP and Head Start preschool programs. Presenters will share examples of accommodations and specialized materials used to support students within the HighScope curriculum. **(3-5)**

Introduction to Participation-Based Outcomes – Part 1

Jean Wassenaar, *CCRESA Early On Training & TA*
Criss Hickey, *CCRESA Early On Training & TA*

The key to supporting the development of high quality, participation-based outcomes is creating a clear and deliberate link between every step of the IFSP process, beginning with interactions with the family during initial contacts and referral through the development of the IFSP, and beyond. Critical is the fundamental belief that children learn best through their participation in everyday activities and routines with familiar people. **(B-3)**

Participants interested in this two-part session must register for both workshops.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN 2015

Essential Communication Skills for IEP Team Meetings

May 1, 2015

9:00 am - 3:00 pm

COORISD

11051 North Cut Road

Roscommon, MI 48653

(989) 275-9555

<http://svy.mk/1DsoSGL>

How to Better Understand Your Medicaid and Mental Health Rights

May 21, 2015

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Power Hope and Grace Bible Church

6495 West Warren

Detroit, MI 48210

(313) 895-7464

<http://svy.mk/1zMYDqI>

Who Should Attend Michigan Family Voices Collaborative Learning Opportunities:

Individuals and family members of young children, teen and young adults with special needs/disabilities (including: youth guardians: adoptive, biological, foster and step-parents, domestic partners who co-parent, grandparents, siblings, aunts/uncles, nieces/nephews, cousins, neighbors, communities, religious leaders and any other person the individual defines as a family member), organizations and service providers who work with families of young children, teen, young adults, and individuals with disabilities.

We encourage individuals and families to invite people who provide support and services to you and your family. Providers are encouraged to invite individuals and families you support and serve. Forming partnerships between people served and those providing services is crucial in building collaboration and partnering in decision-making at all levels with individuals and families of children and youth with special needs/disabilities.

For More Information about Collaborative Learning Opportunities contact Michigan Family Voices at (800) 292-7851 or info@michiganfamilyvoices.org. Visit the Michigan Family Voices Website for most updated advocacy, leadership, and learning opportunities at: <http://michiganfamilyvoices.org/>



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Michigan-Family-Voices/517493244973999?ref=hl>



<https://twitter.com/MIFamilyVoices1>

