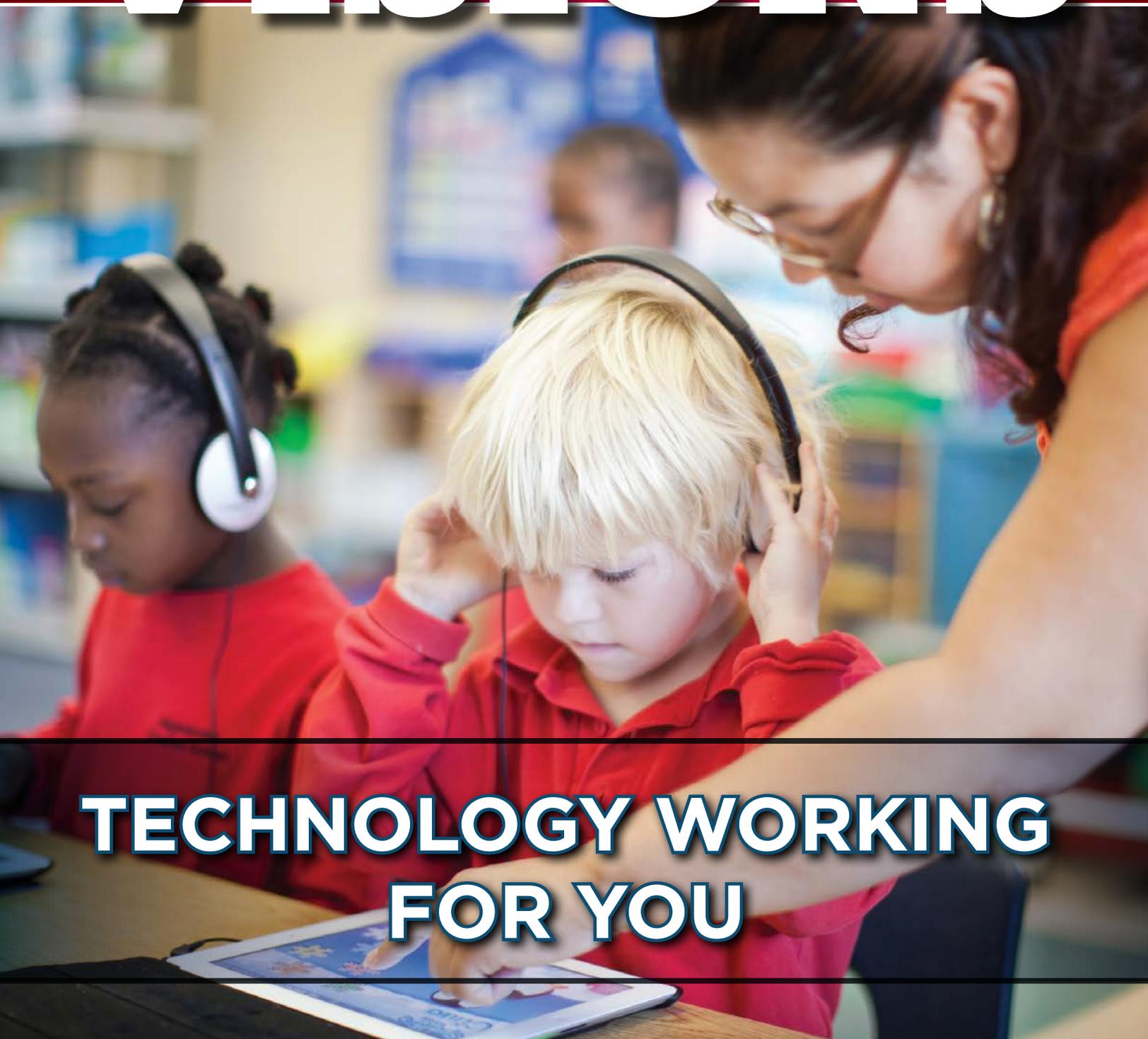




VISIONS



**TECHNOLOGY WORKING
FOR YOU**

Fall 2014

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VISIONS

A publication of Clinton County Regional Educational Service Agency published three times yearly.

The newsletter is a vehicle to communicate to our educational partners current information and activities as they relate to the support of our Mission Statement.

CCRESA constituents include: Bath, DeWitt, Fowler, Ovid-Elsie, Pewamo-Westphalia, St. Johns, charter and non-public schools.

For more information, contact:

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website: www.ccresa.org

CCRESA is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

CCRESA Vision

It is the vision of CCRESA to create an environment where everyone is continually learning.

In pursuit of this vision, CCRESA will:

- Deliver high quality educational programming and support
- Lead the pursuit of educational opportunities for learners of all ages
- Model and encourage lifelong learning
- Continually challenge the status quo

Mission Statement

It is the mission of CCRESA to lead and support learning.

In pursuit of this mission, CCRESA will:

- Prepare learners to be successful in a competitive, global economy
- Continually enhance student achievement
- Employ a competent, enthusiastic staff that provides exemplary customer service
- Collaborate with schools and other agencies
- Continually assess the effectiveness and efficiency of CCRESA programs and services

It is the policy of the Clinton County Regional Educational Service Agency (CCRESA) that no discriminatory practices based on gender, race, religion, color, age, national origin, disability, height, weight, marital status, sexual orientation, political affiliations and beliefs, or any other status covered by federal, state or local law be allowed in providing instructional opportunities, programs, services, job placement assistance, employment or in policies governing student conduct and attendance. Any person suspecting a discriminatory practice should contact the Director of Special Education, 1013 South US-27, St. Johns, MI 48879, or call 989.224.6831.



SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER

TECHNOLOGY RETROSPECTIVE



Wayne Petroelje

I can't help but look back over my career in education and reflect upon on all of the technological changes. I remember when my family thought the little Apple II computer I was learning how to use was the epitome of cutting edge technology. Now when I can't figure out an application on my cell phone, don't understand an X-Box game, or don't get how to use my touch screen tablet, I can skype one of my grandchildren for help. Come to think of it I never really had formal technology training at all and yet now I use technology each day. This is why life-long learning is so important. Sometimes I still wonder what happened to the world between the Pony Express to the

chalkboard scratching noise, punctuated by "You got mail", to my minicomputer smart phone. I keep thinking about how using the internet has changed information gathering, how text messaging is the communication norm with my kids and if I want a response, don't call, just text. We look at our cell phones to check email, get directions, ask questions, listen to music, gather information, get Honeywell Alerts, check the weather and play games, just to name a few uses, and yes once in a while to actually make a call. I did my doctoral thesis on a typewriter that now I can't even find anymore and took graduate school classes on-line, while my grandkids have access to a huge array of classes through distance learning. It is hard to keep up, keep current and stay relevant.

What areas of technology do you feel weakest in? Do you need more training in Illuminate, do you understand the cloud, what do you know about data warehousing? Have you checked the CCRESA Website for professional development opportunities to help you integrate technology into the classroom? How can we expect to connect with today's students if we give up on life-long learning? Now it isn't just about using technology, it is about integrating technology into the daily curriculum. It is about using assistive technology, speech recognition technology and lots of other applications with students with special needs. It is about using applications to challenge higher order thinking skills with our gifted and talented students and encouraging abstract and out-of-the box thinking. Are you updating your profile on LinkedIn for job hunting? Technology is a tool – a means to an end of educating our youth and ourselves. I've gone from chalkboards, film, records, typewriters, cassette tapes and VCR tapes to Whiteboards, digital photography, iPods, iPads, CDs, Blue ray, DVRs and who knows what is next? I guess we are all okay if we don't lose our will and ability to communicate in some context, even though we may need some updated coursework in socializing with others face-to-face and a dictionary for emoji's (images like smiley faces). So whether you have concerns about privacy issues or not, certainly thinking about putting on your Google Glass smart eyewear and looking above for a GoPro camera and drone flying above your head will certainly keep those brain cells working while waiting for the new Phablet (phone and tablet) to come out and making a Halloween pumpkin on a 3-D printer© I hope you enjoy this issue of *Visions* and learn more about *CCRESA Technology Working for You!*

INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

Illuminate DnA Impact

Illuminate DnA is a data warehouse where districts can house all local, state and national assessment data. Illuminate DnA allows Clinton County School Districts to handle the needs of ALL students in their district through one system. Several teachers within our local districts have been trained to use the system.

Teachers can create assessments and use the data provided to differentiate instruction and to measure student growth. Instant feedback regarding student performance allows teachers to judge whether students have mastered a topic.

They can tie their standards to each assessment that is administered through Illuminate DnA enabling them to make decisions regarding individualized instruction. DnA reports allow teachers to easily view student progress, which in turn will improve student success.

Technological support is available to teachers and administrators who have questions regarding Illuminate DnA. Login errors and problems with class rostering can be sent to the DnA helpdesk at dnahelpdesk@ccresa.org.



BUSINESS OFFICE

How Technology is Changing the Business Office: Electronic Document Management

The CCRESA Business Office introduced the CEO Imaging System for electronic document management of accounts payable and other financial records in 2007. CEO Imaging System is a secure system that allows authorized users to view, print and email stored documents from their workstation. St. Johns Public Schools, DeWitt Public Schools and Pewamo-Westphalia Community Schools have been filing their accounts payable documents on CEO since 2008. Fowler Public Schools added their account payable records starting in 2013.

Because the system is accessible through a web browser, users can retrieve information from any location that has internet access. Scanning and filing documents into CEO makes it possible for account payable checks to be issued and physically stored at one location with other locations having full access to the documentation.

During the accounts payable process, vendor invoices are generated and processed in paper form. Once the payment to the vendor is issued, the supporting documents are scanned and stored in electronic format. Using bar code technology, the documents are indexed so that users can search and retrieve the electronic images based on attributes such as the vendor name, check date, or account coding.

Ease in retrieving records is not the only advantage of using an electronic document management system. Because the electronic images stored in CEO are accepted as official financial records, the physical account payable documents no longer have to be stored for the eight years required by the State of Michigan record retention requirements. The amount of space used to store records has significantly decreased.

READER FEEDBACK FORM

We would love your feedback on how to make this publication valuable to you. Please email Julie Banfield at banfield_j@ccresa.org, call 989.224.6831 ext. 2503, or fax 989.224.9574 with your comments.

Article Suggestions: _____

Web Suggestions: _____

Important Dates: _____

Other Information: _____

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

CAREER EDUCATION

Technology Working in Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs

The Career Connections Technology Training Team was created to help CTE instructors place technology at the forefront of learning, information and accountability. Today, students may have a fully functional mobile computer in their pockets so they can access information at any time and any place. Applying technology to education should be flexible and the team hopes to find the best ways to use technology with students.

The mission of the Technology Training Team is to incorporate current and emerging technologies into the educational process. Instructors, support staff and administrators are committed to guiding students toward the goal of academic excellence. The team will lead Career Education in preparing students for successful careers in a global society through expanding the current curriculum to integrate technology applications in all fields.



Students in the CCRESA Career Connections Education-Future Teachers Program Teach their Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Peers Tips and Tricks for Successful Use of their Mobile Classroom.

access to the Emergency Response Guide for HazMat training and experience live chat with HazMat technicians in training. Students also use the interactive pump simulator application to learn about pumping operations. They have recently started using the International Fire Safety Training Association flash card application for quiz bowl training.

Effective technology integration must happen across the curriculum in order to deepen and enhance the learning process. Career Connections has focused their efforts on increasing technology in all of the classes offered. The following are some examples.....

-Students in Emergency Services/Fire Science, through the use of an iPad mini, utilize interactive mapping scenarios, gain

-The Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR) class is piloting the first mobile/outdoor classroom in Clinton County. Fourteen iPads and two mobile Wi-Fi devices are making it possible for students to travel into the field and transform any environment into a classroom. The students use the devices



Brian Phillips of Phillips Orchards leads Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Students in a Discussion about Orchard Management Practices.



Victoria Lawless Documents the Process of Apple Washing at Phillips Orchard in St. Johns, MI.

on a daily basis to document fieldwork, perform research, build and maintain their professional network, identify flora and fauna in the field and create interactive presentations to teach others. The pilot is allowing the students to travel to places such as Sleepy Hollow

State Park, local timber logging sites, Agro-Culture Liquid Fertilizers, Potter Park Zoo, MSU Dairy and Beef Farms and many other sites around the county. This mobile classroom is making it possible for AFNR students to learn through hands on experiences and technology.

Instructors have also had the opportunity to incorporate technology as a management tool. Learning to use Google Drive, Calendar and even Hangouts, to help them save time, instructors are better equipped to help keep classes organized and improve communication with students. The Tech Team offers monthly Tech Talks as well as one-on-one teacher professional development. As instructors begin to feel comfortable with integrating technology and the use of classroom management systems such as Moodle and Desire to Learn, they are beginning to explore blended learning with their classes.



TECHNOLOGY

Continuous Improvement in Data Reporting



CCRESA's Data Support team has recently begun automating the transfer of data between our Special Education system (Illuminate) and our Student Information System (Infinite Campus). This is being done to replicate reporting data that has been input into a source (SpEd) system that is also needed in a related (SIS) system. When the fields contained in records in the first system match fields of the same records in the database of a second system, scripts are programmed to: copy; move; formulate; insert; update; etc. this data (as needed) between programs without having to manually rekey each item. This scripting not only eliminates the

duplicated work of multiple users having to rekey multiple records into multiple systems, but it performs these same functions without errors that humans are prone to. While this automation is currently limited to two specific applications, it is already improving the reliability of the data we are required to submit to State and Federal agencies in order to fund the education of our students. As this capability is applied to additional systems in the future, we will increase both the efficiency and accuracy of the systems and processes that our dedicated Clinton County staff depend on to fulfill our mission to lead and support learning in our communities.

Hardware Procurement and Maintenance

Districts across the state of Michigan have been adjusting their hardware procurement and maintenance procedures to take advantage of significant savings and rebates made possible by the Technology Readiness Infrastructure Grant (TRIG). TRIG's goal is to develop or improve a district's technology infrastructure, including, but not limited to, hardware and software, in preparation for the planned implementation in 2014-2015 of online growth assessments. The initiative uses a tool referred to as the Statewide Purchasing Online Tool (SPOT) to forecast and aggregate the devices districts are interested in

purchasing. Request for Proposals (RFP's) are issued for vendors to respond to with their best offer. With the collective purchasing power of most of the school districts across the state of Michigan, we collectively benefit by the stronger purchasing power. Rebates offered by the grant give further incentive to participate and makes the purchase of devices possible for districts that may otherwise not be able to purchase the devices they need to be ready for online growth assessments. For more information, visit www.22itrig.org.

Supporting our Technology Systems

Please stop punching your keys in frustration with your computer, the HelpDesk is here to assist!

Over the past year or two the HelpDesk has evolved into a fully functioning service accommodating our employees with any technology concerns they may have. Two accessible forms of communication have been set-up via email or contacting by phone. The goal of the HelpDesk is to answer and document your concern as quick as possible so that we may respond in an efficient manner. Employees are encouraged to check the status of their concern by using their HelpDesk account or the frequent email response that goes back and forth during the progression of the issue from the technician to the client. A ticket comes in, or is called in and a technician is automatically assigned to begin working for you!

Our technical department's knowledge includes setting

up technical equipment for events, software application, email, networking, phone system, annual maintenance, hardware and purchasing support.

With the new addition of our very own, Pete Klein, supervising and monitoring the numerous requests that come in daily and our wonderful technical staff ready to troubleshoot, we are confident we can work towards steady and powerful working technology.

Please contact the Helpdesk at helpdesk@ccresa.org or 2300 internally.

Also, if you are on the go, and outside the building, give us a ring at 989-224-5623 (external line).

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

Assistive Technology

CCRESA's Assistive Technology (AT) services have partnered with the local districts to make the curriculum accessible to all students. Even though the AT tools have changed over the last eighteen years, the commitment of CCRESA staff to support the local districts and our students has not. There is a continuum of AT tools to consider, from highly specialized AT software and equipment, to mainstream technology utilizing specific features, to low tech tools such as adapted paper and pencils, all of which are put in place to support student achievement.

Not only do schools throughout Clinton County offer a wide variety of technology options, but our students are also often carrying with them – in the form of iPads, smart phones, eReaders, etc. – a number of useful and productive technologies as well. All of these devices contain features that can support students with specific needs. For example, simply pressing the “Ctrl” key with the “+” key on a computer can enlarge the text size of a webpage for a student with a visual impairment.

In addition to working with our students' personal devices and local districts' technology, CCRESA offers an extensive AT lending library with hundreds of items that districts can sign out for an eight week loan. CCRESA support is provided at local team meetings to help consider if AT tools would be beneficial for a particular student.

Below are three common academic barriers for students and an abbreviated list of AT strategies to help them overcome those barriers:

Students who struggle with organizational/memory skills:

- Electronic reminders using alarms (device, watch, kitchen timer)
- Cloud-based storage tools to access materials from any device, any time (i.e., Google Drive, Dropbox, Evernote, etc.)
- Electronic calendars or paper planners
- Camera features on mobile device to take a picture of:
 - the board for daily assignments
 - teachers' notes on the board
 - visual supports such as the sequence of a locker combination or a picture schedule
 - using an annotation tool to complete a photographed worksheet (such as the application Skitch)

Students who struggle with reading and/or visual impairments:

- Low tech tools:
 - Highlighting tape
 - Colored overlays

- Reading guides
- Electronic dictionary with voice output
- Print material in an electronic format:
 - Text to speech programs/applications to have the text read to the student. (Note: On some devices this is an option that is built into the operating system but needs to be turned on. Other programs can highlight words/sentences as they are being read aloud.)
 - Increase print size and font type
 - Change background and font color
 - Increase margin size so that the student has less to visually track
- A worksheet can be emailed to a student and then, through the use of specific software or application, the device can read the document.
- A program called Bookshare (www.bookshare.org) provides access to books and audio and visual support for students who have a print disability. See their website if your child is eligible.

Students who struggle with writing:

- Low tech tools:
 - Specific types of pencils and/or pencils that meet a particular need
 - Pencil grips
- Keyboarding – standard keyboard, on-screen keyboard, different sized keyboards
- Voice recognition – allows students to talk information into the device and the device will type the information.
- Word prediction/completion – as the student begins to type a word, a list of possible words are generated, and the student can select the appropriate word. This is a great tool for those with physical access barriers by saving keystrokes and for those who struggle with spelling.
- A worksheet can be scanned and the student can use annotation tools (voice or typed) to complete the worksheet and email back to the teacher.

Matching students to appropriate technologies is an ongoing process, since there are always several factors to consider. By providing accessible instructional materials to students, we help leverage their strengths in hopes of turning them into life-long learners and increasing their independence in everyday life. Contact Amy Baad, OTR/L, MA, Assistive Technology Coordinator at 989.224.6831, ext. 2374 for more information.

CCRESA Special Education Welcomes Illuminate



During August and early September, CCRESA provided eight days of training to CCRESA and Local District staff for the new Illuminate Special Education (ISE) software that we rolled out to all Clinton County Districts on September 2nd.

Special Education staff will now be able to complete Medicaid logs and billing, REED/Evaluations, Temporary Placements, and Individualized Education Program (IEP) Plans and Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP) in one place. This will increase the efficiency of doing so for all of our staff, thereby providing less time away from students.

From our Michigan Department of Education (MDE) partners, we hear cheers as well, because this new product makes it extremely easy to follow time lines and create required documents demonstrating our compliance with necessary attention to detail and due

process while being more thoughtful about high quality in obtaining the most important end product - improved Student Outcomes.

The CCRESA Educational Center teachers and itinerant staff began using Illuminate in March. They found that it is easy to navigate, makes good sequential sense and provides them helpful reminders when information is missed while moving through the document.

Our Illuminate Core Implementation Team has developed a subcommittee for ISE Implementation. Those team members receive input from "the field", discuss it, develop procedural approaches that standardize solutions to problems and carry information to the monthly Illuminate User Group meetings. We look forward to a great transitional year as we move Special Education paperwork and key meeting activities on behalf of students to Illuminate.

INNOVATIVE PROJECTS

Connecting Families to Preschool throughout Michigan!

CCRESA Office of Innovative Projects is pleased to offer intake services for intermediate school districts and Head Start programs that offer free preschool for families that qualify. Through our website at www.MichiganPreschool.org and (for some districts) toll-free phone service, we connect families in Clinton, Ingham, Washtenaw, Lenawee, Clare and Gladwin counties to local preschool programs; we anticipate services expanding to include at least four additional counties by the end of 2014. This service assists not only families, but also county administrators who are required to conduct centralized intake systems for their Great Start Readiness Programs (GSRP) and Head Start programs. The web-based system streamlines the process by allowing families who are interested in free preschool to complete an online form, which is then routed to a central administrator who can determine appropriate placement in either GSRP or Head Start based on eligibility criteria. Check it out at www.MichiganPreschool.org!



MichiganPreschool.org

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

www.edutopia.org. Education tips and strategies that work.

<http://www.boxoftricks.net>. Good, free internet resources for classrooms.

<http://edudemic.com>. 50 education technology tools every teacher should know about.

<http://www.educatorstechnology.com>. The best teaching and learning websites for 2014.

<http://www.educationworld.com>. Connects educators to what works.

