

Livingston County Special Services Unit (LCSSU), located in Flanagan, IL, was established in 1966. LCSSU currently provides services to their 11 member districts, including 4 programs. The SAILS (Strategies for Achieving Independent Lives for Students) program has 2 tiers SAILS I is a preschool environment program, while SAILS II is a continuation of the program for K-12 students. This program provides related services, including physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and more to each student as determined by their IEP team. Livingston County Academy, for students K-5, and Livingston County Crossroads, for students 6-12, are therapeutic day schools, designed to build positive social and emotional skills.

Due to LCSSU's goals and provided services, having a convenient record-keeping process that allows them to compare services prescribed on the student's IEP with services being delivered was very important. "The piece that brought us [to EmbraceDS®] was when we saw we could take the IEP side of it and the Medicaid side of it and they worked together. Initially we had 2 different systems and they didn't talk. It was more cumbersome." explained Tina Butterbrodt, Assistant Director of LCSSU.

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- Tina Butterbrodt, Assistant Director of LCSSU

If this student is not getting this number of minutes, are we not putting the right amount of minutes on the IEP? Do they not need that much service? Or are we over or under providing minutes? Did we not target the right amount for students?"

In addition to the communication between the 2 programs, the communication between LCSSU's team was just as crucial to the success of their students. "I really like the idea that it's a way to be able to spot check what our staff is doing.", Tina elaborated, "It's two-fold, because it opens that conversation to say



**Tina Butterbrodt**  
Assistant Director of LCSSU

### Key Facts About LCSSU:

- Supports 11 Member Districts
- 4 Specialized Programs
- Services Support Special Needs Students PreK-12

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After adding EmbraceDS® to their Embrace® suite, LCSSU's service documentation and processes quickly improved. "I feel like we are much more on top and spot on with our process. Our previous program, we couldn't go in and do any monitoring." acknowledged Tina. "We are able to use the program as our service logs and we can collect all the information that way. As we move into our next year, we are able to really see if we are meeting our required minutes, are we supporting the students, are we doing what we need to do?"

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Reviewing and monitoring services provided to students is another key feature that LCSSU benefits from with EmbraceDS®. "We had a Social Worker who spoke to her supervisor because her reports were coming up red (*red reports reflect incomplete service minutes*). I called into Embrace® and we realized we

needed to make some adjustments." Tina recalled. "We made the adjustments, ran a new report, and the students that were in red were no longer in red. As soon as we made the changes, it was fixed and we didn't have to wait to see those changes."

In addition to easy-to-use software, LCSSU receives top-notch customer support from Embrace®. "Coming in being extremely novice, the support has been amazing with [Embrace®]. I can call and the agent will be able to walk me through the process. The nice part is, I can say 'Here's the trend I'm seeing, where do we need to go?' and I get the help." Tina praised. "I sit on a committee that covers several counties, and 2 of the districts had originally not been with Embrace®, and we just kept talking about how positive our switch was. Next thing we know, districts are switching, even in the middle of the school year. It's so much more effective, proficient, and we can manage our data so much better. It's worth it." stated Tina.

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