



Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

— Making a positive difference through education and service —

M E M O R A N D U M

May 4, 2005

TO: System Point of Entry (SPOE) Directors and Regional Center Directors

FROM: Debby Parsons, Coordinator Special Education Services, Division of Special Education, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

Julia Kaufmann, Director of Children's Services, Division of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Department of Mental Health (DMH)

RE: Interagency Agreement between DESE and DMH

Enclosed is a copy of the interagency agreement between DESE and DMH. This agreement was signed by both agencies in March 2005 and outlines the roles and responsibilities of these two state agencies in the implementation of Part C First Steps, as well as, the roles and responsibilities for directors and service coordinators of Regional Centers and SPOEs. You need to become familiar with this agreement and disseminate it to all appropriate staff.

Please note that some responsibilities in the attached agreement differ in Phase I and Phase II areas. These responsibilities will be equivalent after the Phase II areas are re-bid later in 2005. The following provisions are currently not available in the Phase II SPOE regions:

- The peer reviewer process.
- SPOE approval and collection of assistive technology devices.
- Regional Interagency Coordinating Councils (RICCs)
- SPOE-employed service coordinators.

Phase I SPOEs and Regional Centers (St. Louis, Kansas City and Albany):

In order to facilitate the implementation of this agreement, we are asking SPOE directors to contact the Regional Center directors and begin the planning process by May 31, 2005. This initial meeting should cover the following:

1. Establish the primary contact(s) for each SPOE and Regional Center.
2. Exchange a list of staff and contact information for First Steps staff.

3. Review and discussion of the interagency agreement.
4. Review of the current caseload report to determine the distribution of the caseload based on the 60% SPOE- 40% DMH target.
5. Establish a timeline for the development of the joint plan to include:
 - Communication procedures.
 - Resolution of disputes.
 - Service coordinator training needs including release time for joint training.
 - Assignment of service coordinators to reach the 60/40 target.
 - Coordination of assistive technology purchases through the SPOE.
 - On-going review of data reports.
6. Establish a time for an initial work session between the Regional Center and SPOE director to review the following data:
 - Existing financial, service, and other SPOE data.
 - Recent monitoring and corrective action plans.
 - Barriers and/or concerns regarding the implementation of First Steps and an action plan to address the correction of these items.

Phase II SPOEs and Regional Centers:

In order to facilitate the implementation of this agreement, we are asking SPOE directors to contact the Regional Center directors and begin the planning process by May 31, 2005. This initial meeting should cover the following:

1. Establish the primary contact(s) for each SPOE and Regional Center.
2. Exchange a list of staff and contact information for First Steps staff.
3. Review and discussion of the interagency agreement, to include assignment of service coordinators to ensure timely access to First Steps services.

Information for all SPOEs and Regional Centers:

The First Steps system employs four Regional First Steps Consultants that can meet with you as you begin this planning process. The consultants have been asked to work with SPOE directors to set up the initial meetings in the regions to facilitate the joint planning. Contact information for the consultants is located at the following link <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/FirstSteps/consultmap.html>. As you meet to discuss plan implementation, you may find a need for a statewide session with SPOE and Regional Center staff to problem solve with the assistance of central office DESE and DMH personnel. If you feel this will be helpful, please share your request with the First Steps consultants and we will proceed with the scheduling of that meeting.

The intent of the interagency agreement is to encourage regional planning and problem solving to address regional issues. The key to successful implementation of the agreement is to have a strong communication network. We feel the agreement provides the structure and flexibility to facilitate regional collaboration.

slv
Enclosure

c: Melodie Friedebach
Tony Casey
Linda Roebuck
Mary Beth Luna