

Local Early Childhood Interagency Collaboration Agreement Collaborative Team

I. Purpose, Guiding Principles and Goals of this Community Collaboration

The purpose of this agreement is to promote cooperation in the development of a coordinated, interagency system of services for all children receiving services and supports from early childhood participating parties from birth through five and their families.

Families often access services from multiple agencies for their young children. Coordination of these services will make these services more easily understood, accessible and flexible to meet the needs of all families. Service coordination and program continuity will also support children in achieving learner outcomes at high levels as competencies acquired in one service setting are reinforced and advanced in subsequent services.

All participating parties agree to these guiding principles for services that serve as a foundation for the development of a collaborative early childhood system at all levels:

- *Family-centered*
- *Individualized*
- *Culturally sensitive*
- *Community-based, occurring in inclusive environments*
- *Quality services promoting continuity from one service setting to another*
- *Maximization regarding the cost of services*

The goals of this collaborative agreement:

- *Foster communication and information sharing among agencies, personnel and families regarding the services and responsibilities of each agency participating in this agreement in order to better serve young children and families.*
- *Foster the clarification of family roles and responsibilities to ensure participation of families as full members of the early childhood community collaborative team.*
- *Foster collaboration among early childhood programs to facilitate smooth transition for children, families and staff.*
- *Promote resource sharing and define financial obligations and collaborative opportunities in the development, provision and evaluation of early childhood services.*
- *Provide a format for joint planning and sharing of training and service resources.*
- *Foster the coordination of collaborative child find efforts to identify young children eligible for services provided by participating agencies.*
- *Identify monitoring, self-assessment and/or evaluation procedures for participating agencies to ensure implementation and regulatory compliance with the goals of the agreement.*

Comment [ECICT1]: •Title –Add the name of the team and/or change the title of the agreement to meet local needs.

Comment [ECICT2]: •Section I. Purpose, Guiding Principles and Goals of This of Community Collaboration – Briefly describe the reason, philosophical basis and desired results for the collaboration addressed in this agreement, such as to achieve a shared vision, provide high quality services to children and families, maximize resources, meet community needs, and so on. Adopt or adapt the wording that appears in italics.

II. Participating Organizations with Contact Persons

Agency:

Mission:

Contact Person with Contact Information:

III. Applicable Legal Requirements

- 1997 WV State Interagency Agreement among the Department of Education, The Department of Health and Human Resources, the Governor's Cabinet on Children and Families, the Head Start Association, Region III Resource Access Project and ACF Region III Head Start.
- WV Board of Education Policy 2525 (Universal Pre-K), Policy 2419 (Special Education), Policy 2520.15 (Early Learning Standard Frameworks – Content Standards and Learning Criteria for WV Pre-Kindergarten); Policy 2510 (Quality Education including early childhood); Policy 4336 (WV School Transportation Regulations); Policy 2520.15 (Early Learning Content Standards and Frameworks); and Policy 5202 (Minimum Requirements for the Licensure of Professionals/Paraprofessional Personnel)
- Regulations under Part C and Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- WV Department of Health and Human Resources Regulations for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities. Policy 8500 Series
- WV Department of Health and Human Resources Regulations for Child Care
- Head Start Performance Standards
 - Early Childhood Development and Health
 - 1304.20 - Child Health and Development
 - 1304.21 - Education and Early Childhood
 - 1304.22 - Child Health and Safety
 - 1304.23 - Child Nutrition
 - 1304.24 - Child Mental Health
 - Family and Community Partnerships
 - 1304.40 - Family Partnerships
 - 1304.41 - Community Partnerships
 - Program Design and Management
 - 1304.50 - Program Governance
 - 1304.51 - Management Systems
 - 1304.52 - Human Resources Management
 - 1304.53 - Facilities, Materials, and Equipment
 - Other
 - 1305 - ERSEA (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance)
 - 1308 - Services for Children with Disabilities
 - 1310 - Head Start Transportation
- American with Disabilities Act
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)

Comment [ECICT3]: •Section II. Participating Organizations with Contact Persons – List agencies signing the agreement and briefly summarize each agency's mission. For each participating agency, indicate by position title, the contact person responsible for decision-making and problem solving related to the collaboration agreement or their designee. Provide contact information for these people, current as of the date of the agreement signing. Because of the scope of this agreement, it is recommended that a broad range of agencies be involved in this overall agreement such as the following as may be applicable to the community developing the agreement: the county school preschool and kindergarten programs (for children with and without disabilities); public, private and faith-based community child care and/or early childhood programs; Early Head Start and/or Head Start; WV Birth to Three; local Department of Health and Human Resources; Parent Educator Resource Center (PERC); Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (R&R); Family Resource Networks; Local Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist Council; Starting Points; Community Action; Child Abuse Prevention Agencies; Higher Education; Community Organizations that provide support and education to families of young children. These are agencies that may be involved and signers of the agreement. In addition, family input is also recommended. This may be accomplished via:
○Including agencies that are representative of families
○Soliciting family input by way of having family members as collaborative team members, having an input session for families, doing a family survey, etc.
Teams can develop their own format or use the recommended format provided in italics, cutting and pasting as needed for each of the participating organizations.

Comment [ECICT4]: Section III. Applicable Legal Requirements – Indicate if this agreement is pursuant to any state or federal legal requirements. If so, identify policy, regulation, statute, etc. Use, adapt or replace the italicized wording to make applicable to the local community.
[Search for more Information](#)

IV. **Areas of Agreement**

1. **Collaboration Area: Public Awareness, Child Find and Screening Activities**

Collaborative Policy: The team will collaborate on activities to promote public awareness about the availability and benefit of services for ALL young children regardless of ability and socioeconomic level and their families. The team will develop collaborative strategies for screening young children related to immunizations and problems or delays in hearing, vision, speech, language, development and dental health. Assist families and other community partners in gaining greater understanding of the referral process for various community services for children regardless of ability and socioeconomic level and other special needs.

Collaborative Procedures and/or Activities: The organizations that are party to this agreement hereby incorporate by reference collaborative procedures and activities addressing topics including, but not limited to:

- *Informing families and the public regarding available developmental screening opportunities.*
- *Public awareness about the benefit of early childhood services and how to access these services.*
- *Appropriate identification, location, referral and, if needed, evaluation of children who need early intervention services, specially designed instruction, Early Head Start/Head Start, Universal Pre-K or other services for which eligibility criteria are established in federal or state law. The team acknowledges that the alignment of eligibility requirements can minimize possibilities for children needing services to fall through "cracks" in the service delivery system. Such alignment provides staff and families across agencies with a common understanding of these requirements and an opportunity to minimize duplication of efforts related to the collection and sharing of information used for eligibility determination.*
- *Joint strategies for conducting evaluation and assessment.*
- *Enhancement of primary referral sources including Health Care providers' knowledge of the referral process and evaluation services offered.*
- *Promoting the early identification of children with social/emotional/behavioral and/or mental health needs.*
- *Provide information as requested by the WV Birth to Three Regional Administrative Authority (RAU) for inclusion in its Community Resource Directory of local, regional and state resources for services, supports, family leadership, model programs, etc.*
- *Providing information, if appropriate, to assist in the identification of preschool programs in the country as required by WV Board of Education Policy 2525.*

2. **Collaboration Area: Quality Services for ALL Children**

Collaborative Policy: This team commits to inclusive services for ALL young children ages birth through five years that use curricula and assessment reflecting high quality standards and a developmental array for preparing young children to achieve developmental and performance outcomes at high levels. This team commits to meeting the individual needs of ALL young children. Where appropriate, this includes development of Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and/or Individual Education Programs (IEPs).

Collaborative Procedures and/or Activities: The organizations that are party to this agreement hereby incorporate by reference collaborative procedures and activities addressing topics including, but not limited to:

- *Supporting the implementation of the WV Pre-K system and early childhood services to address school readiness.*
- *Supporting state initiatives such as early literacy, parent involvement and positive behavioral supports initiatives through the community's early childhood service providers.*

Comment [ECICT5]: •Section IV. Areas of Agreement – Teams must address, at a minimum, the areas of agreement identified in this template and may add other areas as desired. Required Collaboration Areas are:
○Public Awareness, Child Find and Screening Activities
○Quality Services for ALL Children
○Transition and Continuity
○Family Involvement and Support
○Confidentiality
○Resource Sharing
○Personnel Standards and Professional Development
○Data Collection and Sharing
○Other
For each Collaboration Area, teams must have:
○**Collaborative Policy** - Teams must adopt the policy statement(s) in the template and may add others.
○**Collaborative Procedures and/or Activities** – Teams must have Collaborative Procedures and/or activities to address the topics that appear in the template in italicized wording depending on who the participating organizations to the agreement are. Teams are free to change the actual wording to better reflect local circumstances. Teams are welcome to add other topics – beyond those included in this template. Rather than including specific Collaborative Procedures within the overall agreement, this template specifies that the team is incorporating these by reference. This lets teams adopt collaborative procedures that they have already established on an interagency basis or develop new ones where needed. Incorporation by reference makes it easier for the team to revise specific procedures as needed due to changing legal requirements, resources, context, etc. rather than having to renegotiate an entire agreement in which procedures are embedded. **Note:** It is not appropriate to incorporate by reference individual agency procedures on these topics as the intent of the agreement is to facilitate the development of interagency collaborative procedures. Tools for Collaborative Procedures Development appear later on this toolbar.
To add other areas to the agreement, follow the format above.

- *Meeting state requirements in the design and delivery of collaborative services for children with and without special needs and their families.*
- *As appropriate, using the document, IFSP and IEP: A Comparison of Program Components, developed by the WV Early Childhood Transition Steering Committee as a tool for educating families and staff.*

3. **Collaboration Area: Transition and Continuity**

Collaborative Policy: The team commits to establishing a plan for the transition of young children and their families into and out of the various early childhood services available in the county. Collaborative team procedures and activities will integrate, as appropriate, relevant requirements and effective practice of participating agencies to ensure one coherent community system.

Collaborative Procedures and/or Activities: The organizations that are party to this agreement hereby incorporate by reference collaborative procedures and activities addressing topics including, but not limited to:

- *Establishing one transition contact person in each agency.*
- *Providing parents with written information on programs and/or services including enrollment requirements and registration.*
- *Communicating with agency staff to facilitate continuity of curricula, programming and/or services.*
- *Providing transition related training to prepare staff to follow appropriate procedures and to support children and families in the transition process.*
- *Providing an opportunity for staff in sending and receiving programs to meet at least annually to discuss how to facilitate successful transitions and curricula continuity.*
- *Providing training for parents regarding the transition process and future options in a way that includes interagency partners in the training.*
- *Involving parents in transition planning to advocate for children and communicate with personnel in next environment.*
- *Planning activities to prepare child for next environment.*
- *Providing options for visits to the next environment(s) by children, families, and staff.*
- *Coordinating with other agencies to transfer relevant records to the next placement.*
- *Releasing demographic information, screening evaluation and assessment data to the receiving agency/program with parental permission as necessary in order to assist that agency/program in meeting the individuals needs of each child.*
- *To the maximum extent possible, designing programs that minimize the number of settings in which a child receives education and care services. This will include giving parents/guardians options to enroll their child in a program that meets the needs of the family and supports consistency and continuity for the child.*
- *Ensuring transition planning for all children exiting the WV Birth to Three system including those eligible and ineligible for preschool special education services under IDEA, Part B. Such planning will include the use of forms required by WV Birth to Three and adopting policies and procedures consistent with the templates related to transition developed by WV Birth to Three: (1) Transition Procedures From Part C To Part B Under The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and (2) Transition Procedures From Part C To Head Start/Early Head Start. It will also include participating, as requested, in WV Birth to Three transition surveys for families to identify whether children and families received appropriate services on exit from WV Birth to Three.*
- *Ensuring that all children eligible for services under IDEA, Part B are receiving special education and related services by their third birthday.*
- *Ensuring appropriate transition planning for children entering and exiting Early Head Start and/or Head Start.*
- *Ensuring appropriate transition planning for children entering and exiting child care, private schools or other community settings.*
- *Ensuring appropriate transition planning for children entering and exiting the WV Pre-K System including procedures that follow the WV Early Childhood Transition Checklist developed by the WV Early Childhood Transition Steering Committee and required by WV Board of Education Policy 2525.*
- *Providing, as requested, transition data to the WV Early Childhood Transition Steering Committee to guide technical assistant and continuous improvement.*

4. **Collaboration Area: Family Involvement and Support**

Collaborative Policy: Family involvement and support is a critical component of effective services for young children and will be integrated into activities, policies and procedures related to each of the collaboration areas addressed in this agreement.

Collaborative Procedures and/or Activities: In addition to family involvement strategies that are inherent in other areas of this agreement, the organizations that are party to this agreement hereby incorporate by reference collaborative procedures and activities addressing topics including, but not limited to:

- *Linking families to appropriate education and related agencies and services in the community, advocacy groups and family leadership opportunities.*
- *Providing and documenting the giving of information to families in various communication modes as needed to ensure full understanding, e.g., written, spoken, video, electronic, various languages including both English and the family's native language, nontraditional formats and venues for training to reach more parents, etc.*
- *Working with families as partners in the design, delivery and decision-making related to services needed to support their child's development.*
- *Promoting family involvement in all levels of decision-making (individual, system, policy).*
- *Providing parent training regarding positive behavior supports and interventions, discipline procedures and positive parent involvement.*
- *Ensuring the protection of parent rights in collaborative services as established by law through the participating organizations.*
- *Ensuring that disputes with parents are resolved in a timely manner.*

5. **Collaboration Area: Confidentiality**

Collaborative Policy: The team acknowledges that compatible confidentiality policies, procedures and forms among agencies (a) makes it easier for families to understand “the paperwork” of the various agencies/providers with which the family is working which, in turn, helps promote informed consent and (b) helps ensure that families and staff across agencies have a common knowledge base related to confidentiality. Compatible transfer of records policies and procedures among agencies helps collaborative teams (a) facilitate the transition of children and families from one agency/provider to another; (b) offer collaborative or braided services such as through the WV Pre-K System or some other similar service arrangement and (c) have available comprehensive information about the child to support planning appropriate services for the child and his or her family.

Collaborative Procedures and/or Activities: The organizations that are party to this agreement hereby incorporate by reference collaborative procedures and activities addressing topics including, but not limited to:

- *Establishing compatible confidentiality procedures across participating organizations.*
- *Assuring that families and staff from participating agencies are knowledgeable about confidentiality and records transfer procedures.*

6. **Collaboration Area: Resource Sharing**

Collaborative Policy: The team acknowledges that resource sharing enables communities to pool resources to provide more comprehensive, high quality services in a more coherent fashion. Resource sharing includes, but is not limited to, facilities, materials, and equipment, collaborative services, screening, transportation, etc. In some instances such as WV Board of Education Policy 2525, resource sharing/braided services are expressly required. Sometimes, it may not be expressly required but may be necessary in order to meet a particular mandate such as for services in the natural environment or least restrictive environment under IDEA. In other instances, resource sharing is an option that is both programmatically sound and cost effective.

Collaborative Procedures and/or Activities: The organizations that are party to this agreement hereby incorporate by reference collaborative procedures and activities addressing topics including, but not limited to:

- *Establishing procedures for the use of funds that are generated when one agency is permitted to count children from another agency as is allowed by some funding sources.*
- *Establishing plans for the sharing of resources.*
- *Completing a document entitled, TADPOLE Team Profile, as requested by WV Early Childhood Training and update this profile as needed. (Profiles describe how county teams are collaborating and provides contact information to facilitate networking among teams. A compilation of profiles of WV teams appears at www.wvearlychildhood.org.)*
- *Using this overall agreement template as a resource for meeting the requirements of WV Board of Education Policy 2525 for developing the county plan and, in particular, this section for planning resource sharing to be addressed in contracts.*

7. **Collaboration Area: Personnel Standards and Professional Development**

Collaborative Policy: The team commits to ensuring that personnel have the knowledge and skills needed to provide high

quality providing services to young children and their families. The team acknowledges that collaborative training is an effective tool for maximizing professional development resources. It also helps to foster building relationships and a common knowledge and skill base among staff across agencies which, in turn, increases the likelihood of service continuity and quality and, thus, the achievement of developmental and performance outcomes for children.

Collaborative Procedures and/or Activities: The organizations that are party to this agreement hereby incorporate by reference collaborative procedures and activities addressing topics including, but not limited to:

- *Ensuring that personnel providing collaborative services to young children meet personnel standards.*
- *Providing or arranging for ongoing professional development that follows the WV State Training and Registry System (S.T.A.R.S.).*
- *Using a variety of high quality professional development strategies, e.g., joint workshops/events, cross program visitation, cross agency study/networking groups, sharing professional development resources, collaborative training calendar that permits staff from one agency to attend training in another, using staff from one agency as a trainer in another, etc.*

8. Collaboration Area: Data Collection and Sharing

Collaborative Policy: The team acknowledges that sharing aggregate information among agencies can assist those agencies in individually or collectively planning service systems. Effective local systems for information management enable agencies to collect, report and analyze reliable data that informs decision-making and ensures system accountability. In some instances, agencies can generate funding based on services offered through collaborative arrangements. In such cases, it is critical to have policies, procedures and timelines for the prompt and appropriate sharing of such data.

Collaborative Procedures and/or Activities: The organizations that are party to this agreement hereby incorporate by reference collaborative procedures and activities addressing topics including, but not limited to:

- *Developing compatible systems for collecting and reporting information on collaborative services provided and children served.*
- *Maintaining data on service delivery, transitions and related compliance issues and reporting as requested to state/federal sources. This includes data collection on entry route and services in inclusive placements for young children, with particular emphasis on 3-year olds.*
- *Providing representation/input as appropriate for local/regional advisory boards that review data and provide advice and assistance related to services for young children and their families.*

9. Other Collaboration Areas

Collaborative Policy:

Collaborative Procedures and/or Activities: The organizations that are party to this agreement hereby incorporate by reference collaborative procedures and activities addressing topics including, but not limited to:

V. Mechanisms for Coordinating Agreement Implementation, Decision-Making and Dispute Resolution

The collaborative team will meet every four to six weeks to coordinate agreement implementation according to an annual schedule developed by the team. Team decisions will be made using modified consensus. Modified consensus key questions: Can we live with the proposal and publicly support it? If not, what needs to be added to, deleted from or changed in the proposal so that we can live with it and publicly support it?

Substantive policy and fiscal decisions will require the approval of the heads and/or governing boards of the participating agencies. The team itself can make basic coordination and implementation decisions.

If disputes arise, the team will attempt to resolve these at the local level through forthright communication emphasizing the development of locally relevant solutions that are responsive to individual agency and community needs. If necessary, the team will consult with applicable state or regional agencies related to such disputes.

VI. Monitoring, Evaluation and Program Improvement

Each agency is responsible for the general administration and supervision of their respective programs and monitoring programs and activities used to carry out early intervention and early care and education programs for children with and without disabilities or other special needs.

At each meeting, the team will monitor the agreement and related activities to ensure they are being implemented as planned and evaluate activities related to effectiveness, adjusting plans/activities as needed.

Comment [ECICT6]: •Section V. Mechanisms for Coordinating Agreement Implementation, Decision-Making and Dispute Resolution - Describe how participating agencies will coordinate agreement implementation including provision for how:
oDecisions will be made and by whom and
oRepresentatives from the participating agencies will meet to coordinate activities and resolve issues as they arise.
oResolve disputes
Use, adapt or replace the statements in italics to make applicable to the local community.

Comment [ECICT7]: •Section VI. Monitoring, Evaluation and Program Improvement – Delineate the schedule and process for evaluating the outcomes and impact of the collaboration, including how this information will be used for program improvement. This should be done preferably by a team of representatives from participating agencies. It should include formal and informal feedback on progress and needs for change from administrators, staff and families directly involved in the collaboration as well as data on child impact, as appropriate. Include an agreed-upon process for annual assessment of the partnership itself. Use, adapt or replace the statements in italics to make applicable to the local community.

At least annually, the team will formally evaluate both the outcomes and impact of the collaboration and use this information for program improvement. The team will use input from its members as well as available formal and/or informal feedback on progress and needs from administrators, staff and families directly involved in the collaboration as well as data on child impact, as appropriate.

At least annually, the team will also formally evaluate how its operation as a team related to

- *The degree to which current team priorities and activities are responsive to individual agency and overall community needs (worth their time),*
- *Active participation of members,*
- *Team cohesiveness,*
- *Team meeting location(s) and meeting schedule*
- *Team membership (Does team membership include key agencies that have a direct relationship to team priorities? Do team members need to be added or dropped to align with current team priorities?)*

VII. Agreement Effective Date, Renewal, Amendment and Termination

This agreement will take effect as of the date of signing by all parties. It will be reviewed annually to determine if extensions or modifications are needed. If no changes are needed, the agreement will be automatically renewed.

Amendments to this agreement will be made based on decisions of the collaborative team arrived at through modified consensus as outlined above. Amendments will be adopted based on approval of the heads and/or governing boards of the participating agencies as evidenced by signatures of the authorized representatives of those agencies. Amendments will be maintained as an attachment to the original agreement by each of the participating agencies.

Copies of this agreement, agreement implementation procedures, resource sharing agreements and other relevant documents including amendments will be maintained by each of the participating agencies.

This agreement can be terminated as a result of action taken by one or more participating agencies. Such action will be documented through written notification sent to all participating agencies by the authorized representatives of those agencies seeking termination.

Comment [ECICT8]: •Section VII. Agreement Effective Date, Renewal, Amendment and Termination

oIdentify when the agreement will take effect and when re-consideration of the agreement will take place (unless reconsideration is requested sooner by any of the participating agencies).
oIndicate what process will be necessary and who will need to sign-off on amendments.
oIndicate process by which the agreement can be terminated. Include notifications, and authorization required.
Use, adapt or replace the statements in italics to make applicable to the local community.

VIII. Signatures

Each agency, by the signature below of its authorized representative, hereby acknowledges understanding of this agreement and agrees to be bound by its terms.

Participating Agencies: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Name (typed):

Title:

Agency:

Comment [ECICT9]: •Section VIII. Signatures

– For each participating agency, provide that agency head's or his/her designee's signature, name (typed), title, agency, and date. Teams can develop their own format or use the format provided on the template by copying it as needed for each of the participating agencies. Use, adapt or replace the format provided in italics to make applicable to the local community.