

SECTION I

INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY OF INTERAGENCY INTERVENTION

Planning efforts to develop interagency coordination of early identification and service delivery to children with special needs who are at risk of handicapping conditions from birth through age five began in 1973. At this time, work centered around a Minnesota Child Development Planning Project. In 1980 the State Legislature, in an effort to look systematically at the needs and related issues of providing intervention services to these children, directed the Commissioners of Education, Health, and Public Welfare (now Human Services) to conduct a statewide needs assessment.

No legislation resulted from the needs assessment. In 1982, the State Interagency Early Childhood Intervention Steering Committee was established to provide an interagency focus to identify agency responsibilities for provision of services and the coordination necessary to provide services most effectively.

In 1984, the three state departments signed an Interagency agreement which recognized the need for comprehensive planning for early intervention for children with special needs or who are at risk for handicapping conditions and their families. Planning and training meetings were scheduled for the fall of 1985 to assist local interagency early learning committees meet the requirements mandated in Statute MS 120.17. (See Appendix 1)

Regional meetings were held in November of 1985. Those administrators present, representing agencies from Cass, Crow Wing, and Aitkin Counties, concurred on using pre-existing boundaries already established by the Paul Bunyan Special Education Cooperative. The first of seven monthly meetings was scheduled for November 25, 1985. During the next months interagency agreements were signed and issues discussed in order to meet the goals and objectives set forth in the statute. By mid-May the first "test case" was completed and results were reported to the Steering Committee. At this time, it was felt that the function of the committee was completed and that the interagency process would continue at the local level through the school districts and the agencies associated therewith on a monthly or weekly basis, as referrals dictate. The procedures used in the interagency process have remained relatively unchanged since that time. In Fiscal Year 2000, Brainerd Interagency became Crow Wing County Interagency including the Districts of Brainerd, Pequot Lakes, and Crosby - Ironton Schools. Aitkin, Pillager, McGregor, (McGregor is no longer a member) and Pine River/Backus schools continued under the name of Paul Bunyan Interagency, sometimes noted as PBIAT.

SECTION II

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of this committee is to develop coordination between agencies to encourage a system of early identification, referral and service delivery for children with special needs*, birth through five, who are at risk of developmental or handicapping conditions and their families within the Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative catchment area (see Appendix 2). Such coordination will lead to services which are appropriate, comprehensive, and transagency in nature, providing the opportunity for all children in local communities to reach their maximum potential.

*** Special needs may mean any physical, psychosocial, educational or emotional condition; or any combination thereof, which requires extensive and sequential medical, psychosocial or educational intervention or rehabilitation. This is determined by the Paul Bunyan Interagency Early Intervention Committee and related legislative statutes as determined by the state agencies that represent health, education and human services.**

SECTION III

Paul Bunyan Interagency Early Intervention Committee Overview

A) GOVERNANCE

The Paul Bunyan Interagency team consists of members from Aitkin and Cass County Health and Human Services; Public School representatives in Pine River/Backus and Pillager, and Aitkin; Paul Bunyan Education Cooperative; School and County Boards; Bi-Cap and Lakes and Pines Head Starts; Minnesota Children with Special Health Needs; Aitkin Family Services Collaborative; Cass County/Leech Lake Children's Initiative; and parents. Separate and joint meetings are held for Aitkin and Cass County representatives. All agencies and participants have equal voice in decision making at meetings. A chair is elected annually at the November meeting for Cass County. The chair works closely with the education co-chair. In Aitkin county, the chair person is elected quarterly with the co-chair being a person from education. Recording the minutes of meetings is rotated among all agencies in each county. Each IEIC designates a Local Primary Agency (LPA) to facilitate funding and fiscal issues, oversee data collection, ensure committee duty completion, and receive written requests for mediation from parents for due process hearings. The Paul Bunyan Interagency Team has designated education as the LPA. See Appendix I for specific state statutes.

Chair and Co-Chair Responsibilities:

1. Facilitate meeting.
2. Set up quarterly meetings.
3. Develop agenda.
4. Send out notices.
5. Coordinate duties between chair and co-chair.
6. Arrange for meeting space.
7. Receive notices of community planning and needs assessment activities and gives IEIC input. (includes education technical plans and county health and human services plans.)

Referrals come from a variety of agencies in the state and communities, as well as from parents and family members. These referrals are received by the Central Point of Intake which is an education representative. Referrals are then discussed at Child Study Team meeting.

Central Point of Intake Responsibilities:

1. Receives and/or coordinates all referrals.
2. Contacts parents and sets up home visit within two weeks as needed.

3. Schedules and sends out agenda for Child Study Team meetings.
4. Chairs Child Study Team meeting.
5. Links with State Department.
6. Distributes minutes of Quarterly meetings to members.

B) MEMBERSHIP

Committees must include by statute, representatives of local and regional health, education, county human service agencies, county boards, school boards, early childhood education programs, and parents of young children with disabilities under age 12. Current service providers, and representatives from other private or public agencies, as well as school nurses, are also included. Of the mandated agencies, education has been designated as the lead agency for the state.

C) IEIC STRUCTURE

- 1) Quarterly meetings are held. These meetings are held both for Aitkin County and Cass County participants. Meetings will be held the second Thursday of the month in November, January, March and May for Aitkin county, and the first Friday of the same months in Cass County. Annual elections for Chair will be held in November in Cass County. Quarterly elections for chair will be made for the following meeting in Aitkin County. The November Quarterly meeting is held with Crow Wing County IEIC to share information and ideas as well as conduct needed business for each individual team. That meeting is held the first Friday in November. Committee meetings are held as needed and may be at separate times or as a part of IEIC meetings.

Primary responsibilities of the IEIC follow:

- a. Develop Public Awareness Systems
- b. Implement Interagency Child Find System
- c. Establish:
 - Identification system
 - Referral system
 - Family assessment system
 - Procedural safe guard system
 - Community learning system
- d. Evaluate and recommend alteration and improvements in the:
 - Identification system
 - Referral system
 - Family assessment system
 - Procedural safeguard system
 - Community learning system

- e. **Assure development of Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), Individual Education Plan (IEP), Individual Interagency Intervention Plan (IIP) and Individual Service Plan (ISP) to appropriately serve children with disabilities.**
 - f. **Recommend assignment of financial responsibilities to the appropriate agencies.**
 - g. **Implement a process for assuring that services involve cooperating agencies.**
 - h. **Identify current services and funding being provided for children under age five.**
 - i. **Complete the annual plan.**
 - j. **Develop interagency access to data (i.e. the interagency release).**
 - k. **Participate in needs and assessments and program planning conducted by social services, public health, and education.**
 - l. **Review and comment on the early intervention sections of the:**
 - 1. **Technical Special Education System (TSES) for school district(s).**
 - 2. **The social service plan,**
 - 3. **Public health plan which address needs of and service activities for children with special health care needs, and**
 - 4. **The Maternal Child Health (MCH) Grant for children with chronic illness and disabilities.**
 - m. **Comply with the changes made to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act now known as the Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003 by receiving referrals and ensuring that children under age 3 who are involved in a substantiated abuse or neglect case, are screened or assessed for developmental delays.**
- 2) Interagency Child Study Team: This team is comprised of staff from community, county, school, and regional agencies who are involved in direct services to children and families. The Child Study Team members are in the catchment area of the Aitkin, Pine River/Backus, and Pillager School districts and meet in those buildings. The Child Study Team meets monthly or in alternate months depending on the referral rate and needs. The Child Study Team's responsibility is to assist in the referral process and identification of special needs. The team screens referrals, coordinates assessment and coordinates service delivery to children and families. This meeting is held separately from Quarterly IEIC meetings with permission obtained from parents prior to children being discussed. Needs of children and families are discussed from a multi-agency approach.**

Please refer to Interagency Process Flow Chart Flow Chart (Appendix III) which visually depicts the Chain of Command.

