

Regional Centers of Excellence: Expanded Centers of Excellence

Communication Protocol

The purpose for this document is to provide guidance that will ensure thorough communication loops within and between the groups and organizations associated with the Centers of Excellence. The two guiding questions to consider when detailing the plan for communication are:

- What are the implications of the Centers of Excellence (SSOS) and the Centers of Excellence (Three New Centers) for our stakeholders?
 - How can we strengthen the partnership?
1. The names of groups to be linked to the Centers of Excellence staff (directors and specialists) for purpose of communication include the following:
 - a. Assistant Commissioner (Steve Dibb)
 - b. Centers Coordinator (Anne Lundquist)
 - c. Center Directors Implementation Team (CDIT)
 - d. MDE Centers Oversight Group (COG)
 - e. Fiscal Agent and Grantee Executive Directors (six)
 - f. Centers Partnership Network (CPN)
 - g. Division Directors for Project or Service/Support
 - h. MDE Coordinator for Project or Service/Support
 - i. Cross-Agency Implementation Team (CAIT)

1. The overall purpose for linking the communication of the Center staff with the groups listed above is to provide effective communication within and between the Department and the Centers of Excellence staff. Updates will be provided to all groups listed above on a regular basis.
2. Communication relative to the expansion of the Centers will be guided by the following:
 - a. All forms of communication will be screened by the receiver and sender using the guiding questions, “What are the implications for our team(s) and stakeholders? How can we strengthen the partnership?”
 - b. If there are implications or potential implications the message or information should be shared with the appropriate individual.
 - c. If the implications are not directly related to the individuals’ role or responsibility, they will be included as a “cc”.
3. The following opportunities to exchange information and collectively problem solve will ensure all stakeholders are engaged in regular communication the:
 - a. Assistant Commissioner will meet weekly with the Centers Coordinator
 - b. CDIT will meet once each month with the Centers Coordinator
 - c. Three new Center Directors will meet weekly with the Centers Coordinator
 - d. COG will meet as needed (at least once every other month)
 - e. Fiscal agent / grantee executive directors will meet face-to-face on a quarterly basis, and each month via conference call
 - f. CPN will meet each month face-to-face or via virtual means
 - g. CAIT, if established for the project, will meet at least twice each month
4. Following the meeting, notes will be shared with the appropriate audiences.
5. A Cross-Agency Implementation Team will be established for those projects where such is warranted. If training materials and resources already exist and are suitable for use without the guidance of a CAIT, may not be necessary.
6. Requests for information and responses to communication will be provided within 24 hours if possible; or as deemed appropriate based upon urgency.
7. Email is the standard method for the exchange of information, however if the issue or topic is deemed to be sensitive or require the ongoing exchange of information to resolve, a telephone conversation or meeting should take place.
8. The flow of communication and subsequent feedback loops will be guided by the graphic in figure 1, below.

- 9. To ensure thorough communication planning the use of the communication action plan in figure 2 below, be used whenever appropriate.
- 10. The extent to which the processes detailed in this communication protocol are effective and efficient will be determined through a review, which will take place at least annually with the Centers Coordinator.

Figure 1. Communication Flow, Expanded Centers of Excellence

Below is the communication flow chart that illustrates the flow of communication for the Expanded Centers of Excellence.

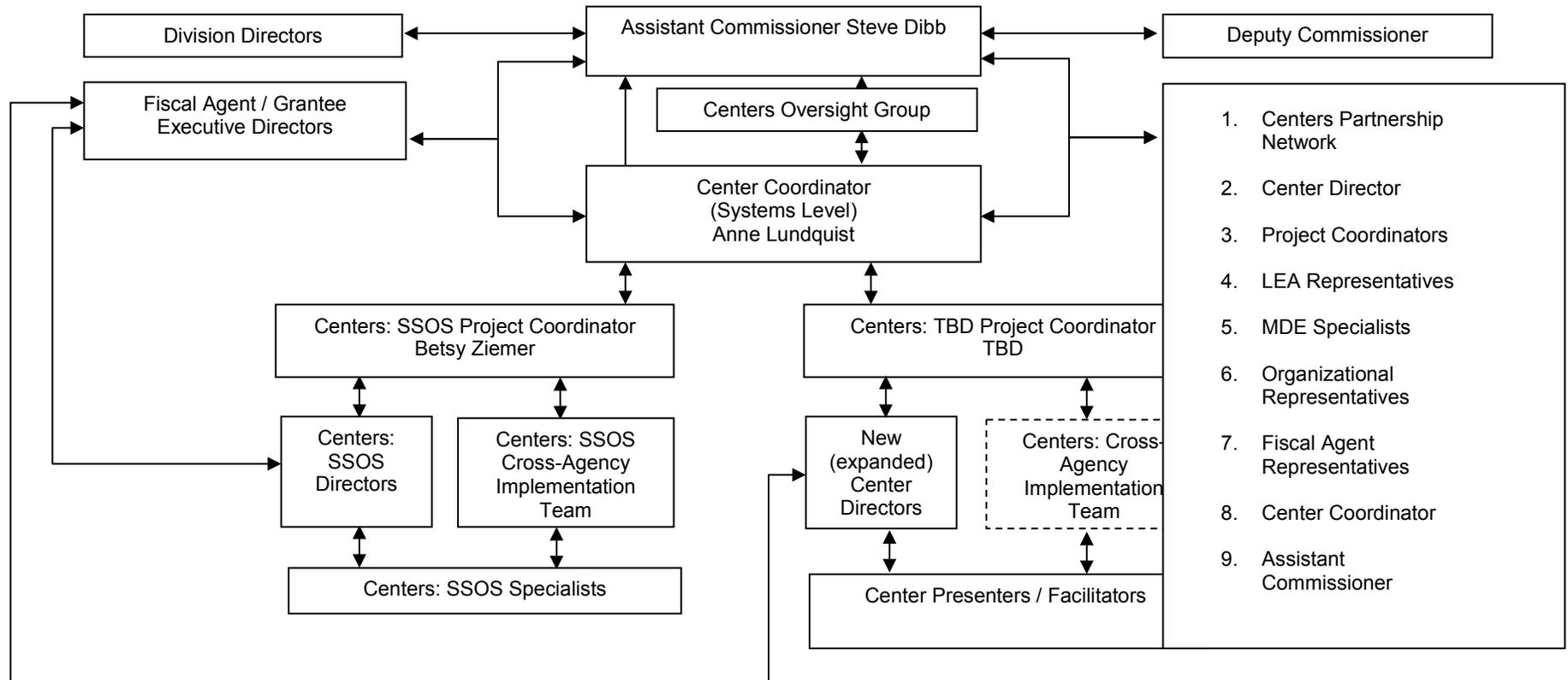


Figure 2. Communication Action Planning Template

This template may be used to ensure all relevant stakeholder groups have access to communication relative to the Centers of Excellence. When using this tool begin by “targeting”, or identifying each of the audiences, and then “frame” the message to be meaningful to the respective group based upon their needs.

Recall the two guiding questions:

- What are the implications of the Centers of Excellence (SSOS) and the Centers of Excellence (Three New Centers) for our stakeholders (Target, or identify groups such as superintendents, coop directors, legislators, etc.)?
- How can we strengthen the partnership? (Consider how to frame, or present, the message based upon the needs of the group or audience.)

Below is a copy of the template that may be used to ensure all relevant stakeholder groups have access to communication relative to the Centers of Excellence. To enter information into this template, please reference the table in the version posted as a WORD document.

Group or Audience: <i>With whom ...?</i>	Message: <i>What ...?</i>	Person(s) Responsible: <i>Who ...?</i>	Vehicle: <i>How ...?</i>	Completed by: <i>When ...?</i>	Resources: <i>Available / Needed ...?</i>	Outcome & Evidence of Success: <i>Why are we sharing the message... and what will indicate success?</i>