

Regional Centers of Excellence: Organizational Network

The purpose of this document is to provide background information on the RCE implantation and illustrate the organizational network between the various groups associated with this work.

Phase I: Statewide System of Support (SSOS)

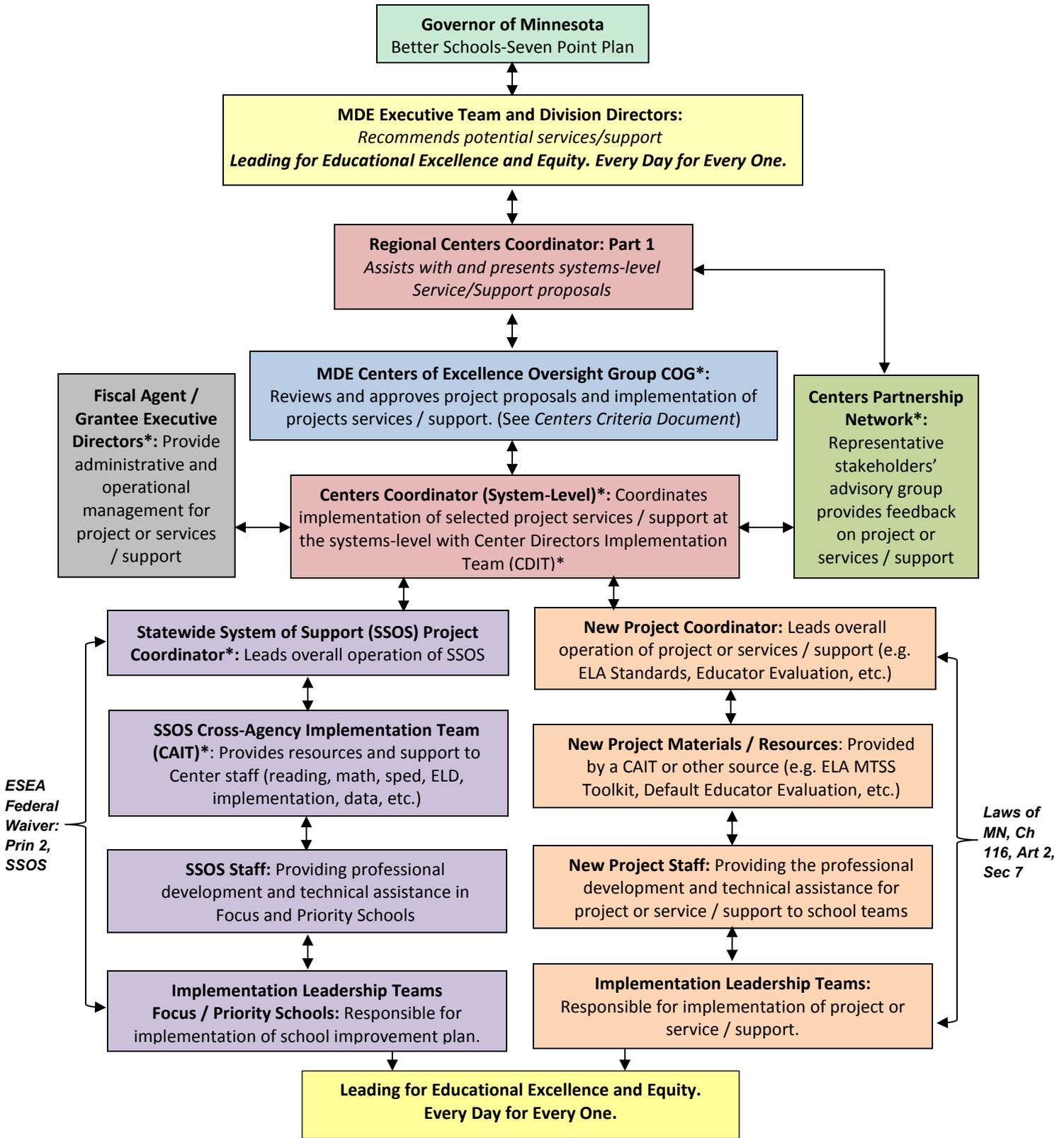
Phase I of the Regional Centers of Excellence initiative was the provision of the SSOS as described in Minnesota's approved waiver from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which stated the purpose of the RCEs was "on closing the persistent achievement gap between high- and low-performing children, especially the achievement gaps between minority and nonminority students and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers." Title I funds were awarded to three organizations, Southeast Service Cooperative, Resource Training and Solutions, and North West Service Cooperative, to serve as fiscal agents and providers of the SSOS. These agencies employed a Director and team of content specialists to provide support to Focus and Priority school leadership teams in building capacity to implement improvement initiatives as the school-level in collaboration with MDE. Following initial implementation, nearly one-third of the schools working with RCE staff improved student outcomes and are no longer designated as either Focus or Priority schools.

Phase II: The Design of the Expansion of the RCEs

As a result of the success of Phase I of the RCE, a team of MDE and RCE staff members designed guidance to expand this regional deliver system. "The purpose of the expansion of the Centers of Excellence is to increase the State's collective impact on student achievement through regional partnerships that provide equitable access and cohesive, coordinated support. The Centers of Excellence will respond to district and school needs and build capacity to improve student outcomes and close achievement gaps." With the Governor's support legislation was passed in May of 2013 to expand the RCEs to provide more efficient, effective and equitable support to schools as stated in Laws of Minnesota, Chapter 116, Article 2, Section 7.

Phase III: The Implementation of the Expansion of the RCEs

The Minnesota Legislature awarded MDE \$1 million for each of two years, to expand the network of RCEs. The Southwest West Central Service Cooperative, Lakes Country Service Cooperative, and Northeast Service Cooperative were selected as fiscal agent grantees were awarded funds to hire a Director. The three new RCEs will collaborate with MDE staff to provide efficient, effective and equitable service for the functions MDE has an obligation to support in alignment with the Governor and Commissioner's vision. The flow chart below illustrates the various groups and individuals involved with the RCEs, and it also details the relationship and roles of each of the groups.



*See the document titled, *Centers of Excellence Purpose and Outcomes* for detailed information on the roles and responsibilities of these groups.