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Bureau of Special Education FY'08 Memo #32

Date: April 2, 2008

To: Superintendents
Special Education Directors
Business Administrators

From: Lyonel B. Tracy
Commissioner of Education

Santina Thibedeau
State Director of Special Education
Administrator, Bureau of Special Education

Re: Family-Centered Early Supports & Services (ESS)
Notification to Local Districts for Child Find

This memo is to inform school districts about the IDEA 2004 requirement for Family-Centered Early Supports & Services (ESS) Child Find Notification process. ESS will be notifying school districts that a child living in the district is receiving early supports and services and will shortly reach the age three. NH is requiring that this notification occur no later than when the child turns 24 months of age. Notification information will include the child's name, date of birth, the parent's name(s) and parent contact information. Parents may choose to opt-out of the notification process by informing ESS that they do not want their child's information given to the school district. This requirement is effective in New Hampshire on April 1, 2008.

The intent of notification is for Child Find purposes only and does not constitute a referral to special education. District Child Find policies and procedures should include how the district will handle the notification information from Part C; who will receive the information, how will it be stored, what, if any, follow up with parents will occur, and so on. The Area Agency will send the notification information to the district's Special Education Administrator or the Special Education Administrator's designee. If a designee is assigned, the Special Education Administrator should give the Area Agency the contact information for the district designee. Districts and Area Agencies/ESS providers are encouraged to work together to ensure communication and other systems are in place for effective Child Find, referral and transitions processes.

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The enclosed brochure provides basic information about the notification process. ESS will share the brochure with the parent's when notification is being discussed. It may also be used as a resource for explaining the notification process to ESS and district personnel. The "Guidance from NH DHHS/BDS and DOE/Special Education: New Hampshire Child Find Notification" is also provided for your information. This document provides definitions and responsibilities for the Child Find Notification process.

The NHDOE and NHDHHS funded project, Supporting Successful Early Childhood Transitions (SSECT), is available to provide technical assistance and professional development to districts regarding the notification process. Michelle Lewis, the SSECT project coordinator, can be reached at the Parent Information Center at 224-7005. Through funding from the NHDOE, the Preschool Technical Assistance Network (PTAN) will also disseminate information about the notification process and support local districts with understanding this new requirement.

If you have questions or concerns about the notification process, please contact your local Area Agency/ESS provider (<http://stats.library.state.nh.us/dbtw-wpd/FRC/earlyinterv.html>), Carolyn Stiles (NHDHHS Part C Coordinator) at 271-5122 or Ruth Littlefield (NHDOE Preschool Special Education Consultant) at 271-2178.

This document is available in alternative format upon request.

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Enclosures