



APPENDIX M: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

THREE BRANCHES MUTUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

WORKING AGREEMENT FINAL DRAFT

September 26, 2013

The purpose of the agreement is to articulate the collective and individual commitments of the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches of Tennessee government to achieve the stated mission to foster partnerships to protect children, develop youth, strengthen families and build safe communities.

Part 1. Collectively, the Three Branches will commit to

- A. Participate in a working collaboration to achieve the mission, expected to endure for two years beginning summer 2012 and ending summer 2014 unless a decision is made to alter the timeframe; and
- B. Adopt and support a common agenda in which:
 - i. The Three Branches share mutual accountability for individual and collective responsibilities through
 - a. Assumption of good faith efforts to advance Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice systems
 - b. Maintaining open lines of communication
 - c. Engaging in proactive problem-solving with an expectation for mutually beneficial solutions
 - d. Recognizing interdependence of efforts and effects of policy decisions.
 - ii. The state uses Safety Systems science to manage risk and support a culture of safety, reducing child fatalities and serious injuries through systematic analysis of deaths and near deaths to better understand and balance individual and system accountability; and
 - iii. Juvenile Justice resources are aligned for maximum habilitation through a continuum of community-based solutions for at-risk and delinquent youth in which communities are accountable for youth outcomes and communities decide how to invest savings from most restrictive settings to evidence based community alternatives to incarceration.

Part 2. Uniquely, each of the Three Branches agree to the following:

- A. Executive Branch 3BI members will
 - i. Integrate the principles and intentions of 3BI into other children-, youth-, and family-focused agendas of state and local agencies, planning groups, contract providers, advocacy organizations, institutions of higher education and segments of community infrastructure
 - ii. Contribute information and staff resources to assure high priority for evidence-based services and supports in all levels of service provision and programming
 - iii. Leverage existing services and supports that contribute to safe communities through alternatives to incarceration
 - iv. Inform the other branches about efforts to achieve the mission through reports, data that can be used at the local and regional level and in the courts
 - v. Help to educate the other branches about the 3BI Common Agenda by participating in relevant conferences, meetings and trainings
 - vi. Communicate to the Legislature information that is most important to its interests; and
 - vii. Staff the Institute and Workgroups for their duration

- B. Legislative Branch 3BI members will work to:
 - i. Amend Tenn. Code Ann. §§ 37-5-105(4) and 37-2-411, which define requirements of the DCS Annual Report, to require information that will be most informative and useful to Legislators
 - ii. Identify, propose and develop any needed legislation to advance the collective work of 3BI and the state to support activities related to Safety Systems
 - iii. Educate fellow legislators about the principles and intentions of the Institute to improve the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice systems by seeking opportunities for presentations, meetings and other trainings in legislative committee meetings and other processes
 - iv. Raise the visibility of Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice issues by reports to respective districts and caucuses
 - v. Give special consideration to financial support for evidence-based practices and resource management generally in the legislative budget process.
- C. Judicial Branch 3BI members will work to:
 - i. Promote problem-solving at the local level
 - ii. Identify local services needs and gaps that address alternatives to incarceration or commitment
 - iii. Share with fellow judges the principles and intentions of the Institute to improve Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice systems
 - iv. Establish uniform approaches to risk assessments, data collection and use, and other lines of communication, which will increase the likelihood that children, youth and families will receive the same responses from the court regardless of where one lives, given the same conditions and circumstances
 - v. Support local initiatives to develop or sustain community-based alternatives to commitment through communication with stakeholders, city officials and other agencies that are a part of the local infrastructure
 - vi. Champion best practices among peers to implement community alternatives.

Part 3. Three Branches Institute Communications

- A. Internal Communications
 - i. [Support 3BI approach, plan and benchmarks in children’s]
 - ii. [Use common communications tools about 3BI]
 - iii. [Position 3BI as one solution for addressing complex inter-governmental problems]
- B. External Communications
 - i. [Develop informational materials about 3BI in Tennessee]
 - ii. [Make public 3BI benchmarks and results]