

THE
University of Vermont
MEDICAL CENTER



August 17, 2022

Dear Special Education Directors, School Administrators, and Principals,

We are writing to share news of a new partnership to provide services this year for Vermont students who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind. We recognize the impact caused by the changes last year and the importance of moving forward with a streamlined, collaborative, and seamless approach for students, families, and school districts. For that reason, we submitted a joint application to the Agency of Education (AOE) to provide statewide service delivery, technical assistance, and professional development. The application was awarded August 5 under the umbrella of the University of Vermont Medical Center.

The *Vermont Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind Partnership* represents a collaboration between our two programs:

- University of Vermont Medical Center, Deaf, Hard of Hearing and DeafBlind Educational Services Program (DHHDB ESP).
- University of Vermont, Center on Disability and Community Inclusion Consultation for Access, Resources, and Equipment Support to Students who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or Deaf Blind and their School team (CDCI CARES Team).

The AOE grant funding will be shared between both programs. Our goal over this year is to create an improved system of service delivery that is sustainable and fiscally responsible. We plan to do this by diversifying services to better meet the needs of children, families, and agencies. In addition, we are creating new ways for you to give us feedback about the quality and effectiveness of our services. This will include adopting an evaluation tool for assessing our services for students who are DHHDB.

Next Steps:

- Your students' service provider (either through the CDCI CARES Team or DHHDB ESP) will connect with case managers regarding service needs for this coming school year.
- We will follow up with more information soon regarding full range of services, the referral process, and communication.

Our leadership recognizes the impact caused by the transition last school year and we have a new one this year. We created this partnership to ensure better communication with districts and improved coordination of services for DHHDB students statewide. We are excited to kick off the partnership, and support you, teachers, students, and families.

Please reach out to the emails below with any questions.

Sincerely,

The Leadership Teams of DHHDB ESP and CDCI CARES Team

DHHDB ESP: Ileene.Therrien@uvmhealth.org

CDCI CARES TEAM: cdcicaresteam@uvm.edu