



A Network for Educational Change
in the Great Lakes Region:
A View Through the Lens of
Educational Service Agencies

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Randal E. Peters
Educational Consultant

Asta Svedkauskaite
Learning Point Associates



Great Lakes East & Great Lakes West

Comprehensive Centers at



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Great Lakes East & Great Lakes West
Comprehensive Centers at  **LEARNING POINT**
Associates®

1120 East Diehl Road, Suite 200
Naperville, IL 60563-1486
800-356-2735 • 630-649-6500
www.learningpt.org/greatlakeseast/
www.learningpt.org/greatlakeswest/

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Contents

	Page
Executive Summary	1
Introduction.....	3
Report Goal and Purpose Statement	3
Survey Methodology.....	3
A New Educational Landscape.....	4
Definition of ESAs.....	6
Profiles of Educational Service Agency Networks by State.....	9
Trends of ESA Staffing.....	9
Illinois	10
Indiana.....	14
Michigan	18
Ohio.....	23
Wisconsin.....	29
Capacity of Educational Service Agencies	33
Overview.....	33
Trends	35
Findings.....	51
Literature Supports the Potential of ESAs to Make a Difference in the Statewide Systems of Support	51
ESAs Continue Building a Network of Support Through Exemplary Programs and Services (But Not Always With Universal Access).....	52
There Is a Lack of Formalized Agreements Between SEAs, LEAs, and Legislatures Regarding the Roles and Responsibilities of the ESAs	52
Resources Available to ESAs in Their Educational Improvement Work Are Not Adequate	53
ESAs' Standardized Evaluation and Accountability Processes Are Emerging But Remain Sporadic.....	55
Concluding Remarks.....	56
References.....	57

Appendixes

Appendix A. Great Lakes ESA Questionnaire61
Appendix B. State Data by Individual ESA.....75
Appendix C. ESA Contact Information83
Appendix D. Acronym List.....93

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Executive Summary

The main purpose of this descriptive report—based exclusively on self-reported data collected from responses to a survey administered to state educational service agency (ESA) leaders in five Great Lakes states—is to provide an overview of the structure, capacity, and roles of ESAs in the region, within the context of the broader statewide systems of support for educational improvement and progress. This is accomplished by providing a “snapshot” profile of the general structure and current capacity of the ESA networks in their respective states by describing ESA programs and services, funding sources, policy relationships to state and local educational agencies, and available resources as reported by the questionnaire respondents. A discussion then follows about the exemplars, trends, and findings observed across the Great Lakes region.

The overall survey question is as follows: What is the capacity of ESAs in the Great Lakes states to play a more prominent role in their respective statewide systems of support to assist districts and schools in the work of educational improvement that will positively impact student performance? The report provides a brief discussion of the current educational landscape in which expectations for American education have changed faster than the system has been able to respond. In turn, state education agencies (SEAs) have increasingly developed relationships with other entities such as higher education institutions and ESAs to facilitate the transition from oversight to capacity building. Despite this increase in collaboration, the anticipated rise in student performance/competitiveness with global peers has seen only limited success. Contributing factors include inequities in per-pupil spending, increased commitments to serve special student populations, SEA trends, and a limited ability of districts to train and support staff.

The first part of the report, “Profiles of Educational Service Agency Networks by State,” encapsulates the ESA capacity profiles of individual states and is based solely on information reported through the questionnaire. The second part of the report, “Capacity of Educational Service Agencies,” is devoted to a more regional exploration of trends and exemplary programs, beginning with a literature-based, survey-supported rationale for the inclusion of ESAs in statewide systems of support for school improvement activities and partnerships. This is in recognition of ESAs’ demonstrated ability to leverage resources to create innovative solutions, to improve student learning and teacher development, and “to provide a network of success” (Talbot, 2007, p. 1). To support this ability, exemplary programs and services across the region are highlighted—with an emphasis on collaborative, multiregion, technology-driven initiatives. A general examination of collaborations within statewide systems of support follows, which focuses on the critical nature of the relationship between ESAs and their respective SEAs. The report’s findings are as follows:

- Literature supports the potential of ESAs to make a difference in the statewide systems of support.
- ESAs continue building a network of support through exemplary programs and services (but not always with universal access).
- There is a lack of formalized agreements between SEAs, LEAs, and legislatures regarding the roles and responsibilities of the ESAs.
- Resources available to ESAs in their educational improvement work are not adequate.
- ESAs’ standardized evaluation and accountability processes are emerging but remain sporadic.

These findings are followed by concluding remarks, which support previous assertions that ESAs are well positioned to provide much-needed support because they are “the least expensive, most readily available infrastructure available” and a systemic component that “would have to be invented” if they did not already exist (Hunter, 1996, p. 6). Ultimately, it was concluded that district and school improvement may continue to grow very slowly unless ESAs can be better utilized and mobilized.

Introduction

America's educational service agencies [are] the least understood and worst-documented component of public education (Stephens & Keane, 2005, p. xv). [ESAs are] major players in the education delivery system [and their relative] 'invisibility' needs to end if policy makers are to have adequate information to assess [whether the potential exists to increase their role in impacting student achievement and school improvement]. (Stephens & Keane, 2005, p. xviii)

Report Goal and Purpose Statement

The major purpose of this descriptive report is to provide an overview of the structure, capacity, and roles of educational service agencies (ESAs) across five states—Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin—in the Great Lakes region, within the context of the broader statewide systems of support for educational improvement and progress. The report provides a “snapshot” profile of the general structure and current capacity of ESA networks in their respective states by describing ESA programs and services, funding sources, policy relationships to state and local educational agencies, and available resources as reported by the questionnaire respondents. A discussion, embedded in literature-based context, then follows about the exemplars, trends, and findings observed across the region.

The report aspires to contribute to the ongoing and important conversations about examining current policies and building capacities at the local, district, and state levels regarding the statewide systems of support for district and school improvement. Building state capacity often means tapping into the readily available statewide networks to leverage the appropriate support and resources. Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West, in their state consulting work, frequently help state education agencies (SEAs) identify potential partners within their statewide systems of support. Led by this common interest, they decided to take a closer look at the statewide systems of support and build a broader regional understanding of their components. Great Lakes East and Great Lakes West worked closely with the Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESA)—the national professional organization of ESAs—to conduct a survey of ESAs in the five-state region. The overall survey question is as follows: What is the capacity of ESAs in the Great Lakes states to play a more prominent role in their respective statewide systems of support to assist districts and schools in the work of educational improvement that will positively impact student performance?

Survey Methodology

State- and regional-level data were collected from responses to an in-depth questionnaire (see Appendix A), with sections corresponding to several major capacity areas, including structure, services, policy, funding, and status. The six-page questionnaire was administered electronically and consisted of 35 questions—29 were open-ended questions and six were forced-choice items.

The survey's primary respondents were Great Lakes region state ESA leaders (a mix of executive directors and agency administrators) who were identified with support from the AESA executive staff. To secure a high response rate, the state leaders were collectively involved in the

collaborative revision for clarity and relevance of the questionnaire template well in advance of data collection. The content development of the questionnaire template was grounded in previous research done on a national level by E. Robert Stephens and William G. Keane and published in their book *The Educational Service Agency: American Education's Invisible Partner* in 2005. Upon completion of a finalized version of the template, five state-level representatives responded to the questionnaire, drawing upon the knowledge and experience of regional leadership and, in some cases, the assistance of a consultant. In each state, the data represented was statewide. The data in this report is *not* intended to provide information regarding the effectiveness of the work of ESAs.

Besides the information collected through the survey—the primary data source—the report was further informed through numerous conversations with the AESA executive staff, reviews of relevant literature and ESA and SEA documents, and information gathered during the Center for Innovation & Improvement Second Annual Institute for School Improvement and Education Options in September 2007.

Emergent data were then gathered, aggregated, analyzed, and assigned as components of state capacity maps, regional capacity trends and practices, widespread challenges, conclusions, and issues and questions for further consideration. In addition to continuous participant review of data interpretation and follow-up inquiry throughout the report process, the final results were also subject to internal and external review.

A New Educational Landscape

In a single generation, the expectations for American education have changed much more rapidly than the system has been able to respond. Alan Greenspan, the 18-year chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, says the United States has two choices if it is to preserve its economic future. The first is to dramatically change education policy and productivity to significantly increase the number of Americans educated to respond to growing needs in science and technology. Failing that first choice, Greenspan says the country will have to dramatically change its immigration policy to allow those with stronger education backgrounds into the country and allow them to meet this need—at least until their native countries can accelerate their own demand (Greenspan, 2007). To date, much of the response to these demands from policymakers at both the state and federal levels has been to increase accountability and establish sanctions to raise performance. Several states began initiatives in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and the federal government passed the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994, which set the foundation for the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001.

The negative sanctions increased with NCLB, even though the support for improving instruction and assistance to districts and states has not kept pace. Schools failing to meet adequate yearly progress requirements in this endeavor to engage, empower, and assist learners are entitled to assistance from their local education agencies (LEAs) and SEAs in developing and implementing comprehensive school improvement plans. The theory of action upon which these plans are founded emphasizes the importance of research-based teaching and learning practices, corresponding professional development for teaching faculty, and the utilization of specific, measurable learning goals to improve, monitor, and sustain growth in student achievement.

Local districts found that they had few resources committed to large-scale change, and SEAs had virtually none. The bureaucracies at the state level had grown around the processing of transactions—the granting of licenses, oversight for funding streams, approval of plans that were a precondition of funding, and so on. SEAs had few, if any, staff members with expertise or credibility to send to districts to assist with improving instruction or district leadership. In this current climate of radically increasing expectations for states to follow up on accountability with support, some states have begun to reach out and attempt to establish relationships with other entities—such as institutions of higher education, ESAs, and private organizations—within the broader statewide systems of support in order to more effectively transition from oversight to capacity building. The statewide systems of support are charged with analyzing gaps in school performance, aligning needs with appropriate services, monitoring results, and planning for sustainability (Redding, 2007).

Nevertheless, despite this unprecedented level of scrutiny, collaboration, and support, it can be argued that the anticipated rise in student performance and increased competitiveness with global peers has been only a limited success according to recent National Assessment of Educational Progress (Schneider, 2007a) and Programme for International Student Assessment results (Schneider, 2007b). Although the disenfranchised students for whom these initiatives were designed to provide assistance—those from minority populations, as well as from poor, small, rural districts and large, urban districts—have made some progress at the elementary level, progress is unacceptably slow given the intensity of effort. Even more disturbing is the fact that virtually no progress has occurred at the high school level, according to the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress results (Schneider, 2007a).

Examples of contributing factors to this apparent inability to bring about widespread, positive, sustained change in the American system of public education, include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Inequities in per-pupil spending.** Many states' tax codes and funding allocation processes for school districts virtually institutionalize incongruities in per-pupil spending among their various districts. For example, according to The Education Trust, school districts across the country spent, on average, \$938 less per pupil at high-poverty school districts than at low-poverty districts in 2005 (with the funding gap widening since 1999), and high-minority school districts were funded at \$877 less per pupil than districts with few or no minorities (Arroyo, 2008). According to Carmen Arroyo (2008), research director of The Education Trust, "Many of the school districts with the greatest needs often receive the least funding, begging the question of whether we're setting some students up for failure" (p. 1).
- **Increased commitments to serve special student populations.** Growth in special student populations has been explosive as more children qualify; consequently, costs have risen rapidly for personnel and resources. The growth in demand for services has not matched the rate of growth in resources for special student populations. As a result, difficulty in meeting commitments to these populations has had a residual effect on other school improvement initiatives.
- **SEA trends.** Particularly within the context of their increased management responsibilities under NCLB, "the downsizing [by legislative action] of a number of state education

agencies over the past decade has brought to the forefront limitations in the infrastructure of the state system of elementary-secondary education” (Stephens & Keane, 2005, p. 86).

- **Limited ability of districts to train and support staff.** School districts are increasingly hard-pressed to train existing staff at a high level partly because of the demands of regular daily duties but also because of the rate of new research, innovations in technology, the need for more differentiated instruction, and other related challenges, which can all require large blocks of time to address. Difficulties in meeting such needs may contribute to the troubling retention crisis in the teaching profession, in which 15 percent of educators leave the profession after the first year and nearly half do so by the fifth year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005). This exodus, which contrasts with mounting research indicating that “nothing will go as far toward improving the educational attainment of all students—and especially those in the most troubled schools—as assuring that there is a [highly qualified teacher] in every classroom in every state” (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, 2007, p. 6), contributes to the detriment of quality instruction by causing a dearth of experienced and skilled individuals, a lessening of institutional knowledge and available mentors, and difficulty in establishing continuity in school improvement processes.

It is the intent of this report to examine the capacity of the ESAs in the five states of the Great Lakes region. Nationwide, the number of states with ESAs has nearly doubled, from 23 to 45, within the last two decades. According to AESA (2006), “There are 553 service agencies in the U.S. with over 100,000 employees in 45 states.” ESAs appear to be emerging as a critical factor within the larger fabric of statewide systems of support to positively impact school improvement and educational change, and perhaps in doing so, verify Stephens and Keane’s (2005) assertion that state ESA networks are particularly “well positioned to provide needed support” (p. 86).

Definition of ESAs

NCLB (2002) defines ESAs in relation to an LEA definition as follows:

The term “local educational agency” means a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or of or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary schools or secondary schools. [...] The term includes educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies. (pp. 1961–1962)

As one ESA association in one of the Great Lakes states noted in the questionnaire, the use of this definition is supported “in all federal laws pertaining to ESAs for clarification and consistency between federal laws and regulations.” State recognition of such designation by the federal government is strongly supported by the association.

Furthermore, the law specifically defines the term *educational service agency* as follows:

The term “educational service agency” means a regional public multiservice agency authorized by State statute to develop, manage, and provide services or programs to local educational agencies. (NCLB, 2002, p. 1958)

ESAs are known by different names in each state. For example, the Great Lakes region has regional offices of education in Illinois, educational service centers in both Indiana and Ohio, intermediate school districts in Michigan, and cooperative educational service agencies in Wisconsin. A quick look at the beginnings of a national ESA database (Stephens & Christiansen, 1995) yields a historical perspective as to when ESAs in the Great Lakes region were first established and how their numbers shifted at three different points in time: Year of the establishment, 1994–95, and 2008 (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number and Titles of ESAs in the Great Lakes Region^a

State	Year Established	Total Number of Agencies			Common ESA Titles in the Great Lakes Region
		Original Units	1994–1995	2008	
Illinois ^b	1865	102	45	45	Regional offices of education (ROEs)
Indiana	1976	4	9	9	Educational service centers (ESCs)
Michigan	1962	60	57	57	Intermediate school districts (ISDs)
Ohio	1914	87 ^c	72	58 ^d	Educational service centers (ESCs)
Wisconsin	1963	19	12	12	Cooperative educational service agencies (CESAs)

^aData sources: Association of Educational Service Agencies; Stephens & Christiansen (1995); Ohio Educational Service Center Association; Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools; Wisconsin Association of CESA Administrators

^bIllinois’ 102 county superintendents had their numbers reduced to 78 and became regional superintendents. Due to further consolidation, the number was reduced to 57 in 1977 and 45 in 1994.

^cEstablished through an act of the Ohio General Assembly and formerly called County School Districts

^dThe Sandusky County ESC is closed as of June 30, 2008, making the total ESC number 58.

Profiles of Educational Service Agency Networks by State

Individual profiles of educational service agency (ESA) networks by state are provided in this section as an overview of the ESA structures, missions and definitions, governance, programming, staffing, accountability practices, and funding sources, which define current capacity of ESAs in each state. This format is offered as a broad introduction to each state ESA system's current imprint and as a precursor to a more regional emphasis—with a focus on potential for broadening capacity—to follow in the second part of this report, "Capacity of Educational Service Agencies."

It should be noted that the following five state lists are organized as a means of creating an element of consistency and structure; however, there is a limitation in any attempt to project commonality among state ESA systems given the broad variance and limitations (due to data unavailability and inconsistency in self-reported data) in data, historical constructs, legislative and school improvement definitions, service and programming matrices, utilization of staff, and accessibility to funding sources. The information presented within the five state lists was extracted and summarized from the answers on the questionnaire and cited as participant responses.

Trends of ESA Staffing

ESAs have increasingly attempted to fill staffing and development gaps by hiring and training their own personnel to keep pace with new learning in the field of education and by providing the appropriate training to key district personnel. According to Stephens and Keane (2005), services directly related to improving student achievement have, not surprisingly, made the most significant changes in the breadth and depth of their programming areas.

The Great Lakes ESA questionnaire supports these trends, as participant responses interspersed throughout this report indicate. The responses reveal a number of similarities in staffing practices such as sharing resources across the region, wherein "staff with expertise in specific areas work with teachers, administrators, and district/school staff" (in Illinois). Also, to varying degrees, "staffing is regionally defined" to the extent that "individual needs within each region provide the direction" for staff hiring and training (in Indiana) and are "based upon service contract requests from school districts, [as well as] federal and state grants, local projects, workshops, and product sales" (in Wisconsin). Like many of the states, Michigan identifies an emphasis on services related to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements and related new, highly rigorous high school graduation requirements, noting, however, that "there is a wide range of fiscal capacity to provide such services." Certified staff positions tend to include administrative, consultant, director, and teaching positions, and many—if not most—staff members hold an advanced degree in curriculum or administration with appropriate certification from the state professional standards board.

The specific information regarding ESA structure, services, policy, and funding is presented in the following lists for each state individually. Although the raw number is provided, staffing numbers in the lists are presented primarily in ratios to districts, schools, and teachers. The reason for such averages across the states is to provide a general snapshot of ESA certified personnel distribution in order to have a better picture of ESA capacity. The authors of the report acknowledge, however, that variance and discrepancies do exist among ESAs.

Illinois¹

1. State-Specific Name for Educational Service Agency (ESA)

Regional offices of education (ROEs)

2. Number of ESAs and Structure

45 ROEs, structured by region—represented by single or multiple counties. In addition, services are provided by three intermediate service centers in Suburban Cook County ROE 14 and by one City of Chicago Illinois State Board of Education office. Intermediate service centers primarily provide staff development and school improvement activities. In addition, 10 state-funded regional service providers—known as RESPROs—operate in designated geographical areas to provide technical assistance to districts in need of improvement. In most instances, ROEs carry out RESPRO duties as well.

3. Overall Mission and/or Legislative Definition

Mission of the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS, 2002b):

- To support ROEs “in their efforts to promote quality education for the school children and citizens of Illinois, to provide educational leadership, to impact public policy, and to deliver educational services effectively for the benefit of Illinois school districts, other educational entities and educational system clients of all ages.”

As indicated on the questionnaire, “State law defines minimum services. ROEs go far beyond the minimum as they try to meet the needs of educators and districts.”

The IARSS (2002a) states the following:

The Regional Superintendent of Schools is the chief administrative officer of a Regional Office of Education, and the only elected education professional office in Illinois. As an intermediate agency between the Illinois State Board of Education and local school districts, the office of the Regional Superintendent performs regulatory functions as directed by the Illinois School Code. The Code states that

the Regional Superintendent of Schools...shall exercise supervision and control over all school districts in the region...and shall act as the official advisor and assistant of the school officers and teachers in his region. In the performance of this duty he shall carry out the advice of the State Superintendent of Education.

In addition to coordinating and delivering state and local services, the Regional Superintendent acts as an advocate for education by providing positive leadership and disseminating information for educators, school districts, and the public. Specific duties of the Regional Superintendent are stated in the School Code and can be summarized in two major areas, service and assurance to the public. Service components include the dissemination of information on education legislation, legal issues, cooperative management, research, and administration. The Regional Superintendent also provides

¹Illinois ESA data were collected by IARSS, with the assistance of a consultant, requesting all ESAs to fill out the questionnaire. The reported response rate was approximately 100 percent.

information to citizens about state and local programs that will help meet the needs of their children. Each service component requires specific skills placing the Regional Superintendent as an intermediate agent who brings together people, concepts, and resources to provide educational services. Assurances to the public cover areas such as fiscal responsibilities, local school performances, life safety, certification, supervision and curriculum. In these areas legislation places enforcement responsibilities on the Regional Superintendent to guarantee that certain minimums are met and legal parameters followed. During the course of the school year, the Regional Superintendent and his staff receive numerous telephone calls, letters and visits from parents, school personnel, and citizens concerning a multitude of educational concerns. It is the policy of the Regional Superintendent to give prompt service and accurate information to any individual or group seeking assistance.

4. Governance

The Regional Superintendent of each ROE is elected and given much authority by law (see earlier). ROEs outside of Cook County have an advisory board; suburban Cook County has a governing board for each of the three subregions.

5. Number of Districts, Schools, Teachers, and K–12 Students

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>K–12 Students</i>
865	4,679	141,456	1,772,190

6. Ratio of Certified Staff (N = 850) to Districts, Schools, and Teachers

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Teachers</i>
1:1	1:6	1:166

7. Percentage of ESA Services Provided to Districts, Schools, and State Education Agency

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>SEA</i>
54%	37%	9%

8. Services

- Special education
- Vocational/technical
- Alternative education (e.g., “safe schools”)
- Professional development
- Curriculum development and alignment²
- Instruction²
- Content areas²
- School improvement/planning
- Technology
- Assessment and accountability²
- Talented and gifted

²As indicated by the respondent on the questionnaire, “Due to NCLB, most effort is given to reading, science, and math. All content areas are covered to some extent.”

9. Evaluation and Accountability Practices: Services and Policy

Service evaluation and accountability practices/links to school improvement (as indicated in the questionnaire responses):

- Financial/programmatic audits are conducted yearly by Auditor General’s office and every three to four years by ISBE. The Auditor General reviews financial data and compliance with the mandated services and responsibilities of the Regional Superintendent. ISBE monitors compliance with the professional development requirements.
- ROEs are held accountable for grants by the issuing agency.
- Services, including professional development, are evaluated by participants.
- Evaluation focuses on participant learning and satisfaction with training. ROEs/presenters use information to tailor future trainings.
- The services are not linked to student achievement at this time.

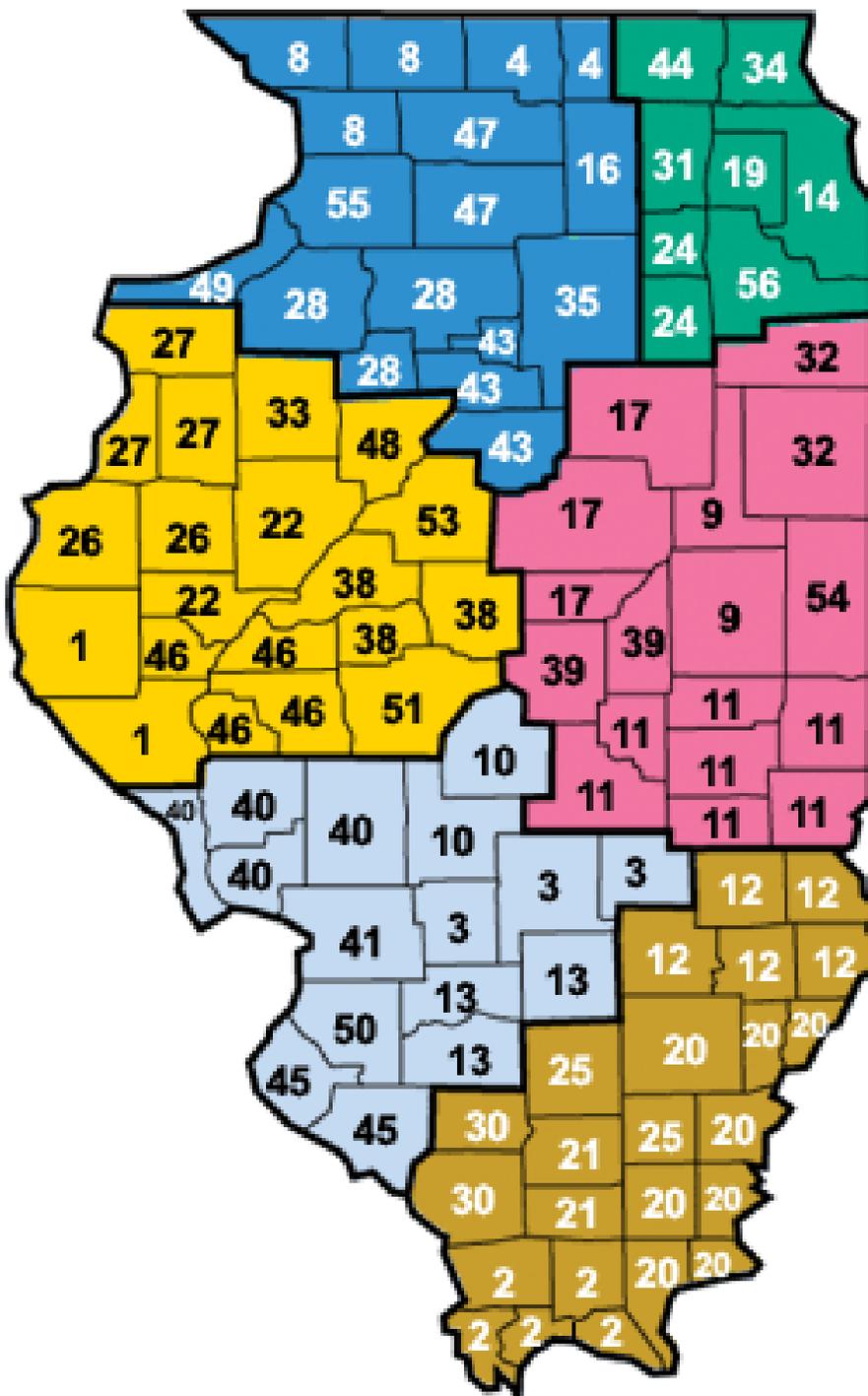
Policy evaluation and accountability practices (as indicated in the questionnaire responses):

- School district, ROE personnel, and the public may review rules and policy and make suggestions for changes.
- ROEs monitor district policy through technical assistance visits (three-year rotation). The Regional Superintendent and staff review educator certification, district policy, and curriculum, as well as safety and special education requirements.
- School boards also monitor district policy (many use the Illinois Association of School Boards’ policy service and/or district attorneys to keep policies current).

10. Percentage of Funding Received: Local, State, Federal, and Other

- Local: 16%
- State: 45%
- Federal: 31%
- Other: 8%

Map of Illinois Regional Offices of Education



- 1 **Area I** (Northeast, Professional Development Alliance as contact. Also see note below.)
- 2 **Area II** (Northwest, ROE 4 as contact)
- 3 **Area III** (West Central, ROE 48 as contact)
- 4 **Area IV** (East Central, ROE 32 as contact)
- 5 **Area V** (Southwest, ROE 50 as contact)
- 6 **Area VI** (Southeast, ROE 2 as contact)

The map is divided by counties; most regions are formed by a single county. ROEs are broken into six major geographical areas or divisions for leveraging resources; refer to Appendix B for a complete list of agencies. (*Note:* Numerical listings in Appendix B for Illinois reflect the alphabetical agency listing and not the actual number of an agency.)

Areas I through VI on the map indicate geographical areas of RESPROs. Not shown on the map are the Chicago Public Schools and the three intermediate service centers (North Cook County, South Cook County, and West Cook County). The Illinois Association of School Boards, Illinois Principals Association, Illinois Association of School Administrators, and Illinois State Board of Education also combine their statewide efforts to provide RESPRO activities. For more information about RESPROs, read the Illinois State Board of Education document “A Regional Service Provider System of Support” at www.isbe.state.il.us/sos/pdf/respro.pdf

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Indiana³

1. State-Specific Name for Educational Service Agency (ESA)

Educational service centers (ESCs)

2. Number of ESAs and Structure

9 ESCs, defined by county organization

3. Overall Mission and/or Legislative Definition

According to the Indiana Department of Education’s Office of Learning Resources (1998), ESCs seek “to support the learning and teaching environments of educators in school corporations” and to provide vision and planning assistance, regional leadership resources, support services, and research and development.

According to Indiana Administrative Code, Article 4 (2007), “The primary purpose for the establishment and operation of an educational service center shall be to perform educational planning on a cooperative basis and to assist in meeting specific educational needs in participating school districts which could be better provided by an educational service center than by the districts themselves” (p. 7).

4. Governance

- Governing board (made up of superintendents of member public school districts)
- Executive board (selected by the governing board) meets each month with senior staff
- Advisory groups (e.g., teachers, principals, parents, and students), as needed

5. Number of Districts, Schools, Teachers, and K–12 Students

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>K–12 Students</i>
304	1,638	52,941	776,434

6. Ratio of Certified Staff ($N = 29$) and Cadre of Local Staff Members ($N = 217$) Available to Districts, Schools, and Teachers

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Teachers</i>
1:1	1:7	1:215

7. Percentage of ESA Services Provided to Districts, Schools, and State Education Agency

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>SEA</i>
65%	20%	15%

³Indiana ESA data were collected by Region 8 Education Service Center, with additional information requested from the directors of the other ESAs. The data were reviewed by the Indiana Association of Educational Service Centers.

8. Services

- Media library services
- Distribution/delivery services
- Cooperative purchasing
- Online procurement
- Technology services
- Professional development
- Insurance trust support
- Curriculum development
- Other services, such as networking and relationship building, IDOE partnerships, career guidance information, textbook adoption, substitute training, classroom instruction kits, STARLAB Portable Planetariums, program evaluation, Title III, mentor training, drug-free and safe schools, paraprofessional training, information clearinghouse, legislative information, food services, domain name system services
- Grant writing information and assistance
- Strategic planning
- Bus transportation
- Gifted/high ability
- Equipment/technology repair and support

9. Evaluation and Accountability Practices: Services and Policy

Service evaluation and accountability practices/links to school improvement (as indicated in the questionnaire responses):

- Yearly operational report/program plan and annual report to State Board of Education.
- Accountability of local education agencies/ESCs for driving dollars from acquisition of products and services to instruction and learning, especially expanding cooperative services.
- Office of Management and Budget scrutinizes reports and works with state and local agencies to affect greater efficiency/effectiveness.
- The governor's office has become a major player in directing efficiency efforts for schools, ESCs, and other agencies.
- All ESCs have workshop evaluation response sheets, which are tabulated and evaluated on an ongoing basis.
- Services evaluated at two levels: awareness (end-of-event survey) and skills-building (survey administered after time has elapsed).
- Occasionally, a consultant is hired to fully evaluate a long-term program.
- Advisory groups may give feedback on the status of a particular program.
- Presenters' performances are informally evaluated and shared.
- Professional development is measured in terms of teacher satisfaction versus student achievement.
- Staff development program evaluation training is provided.

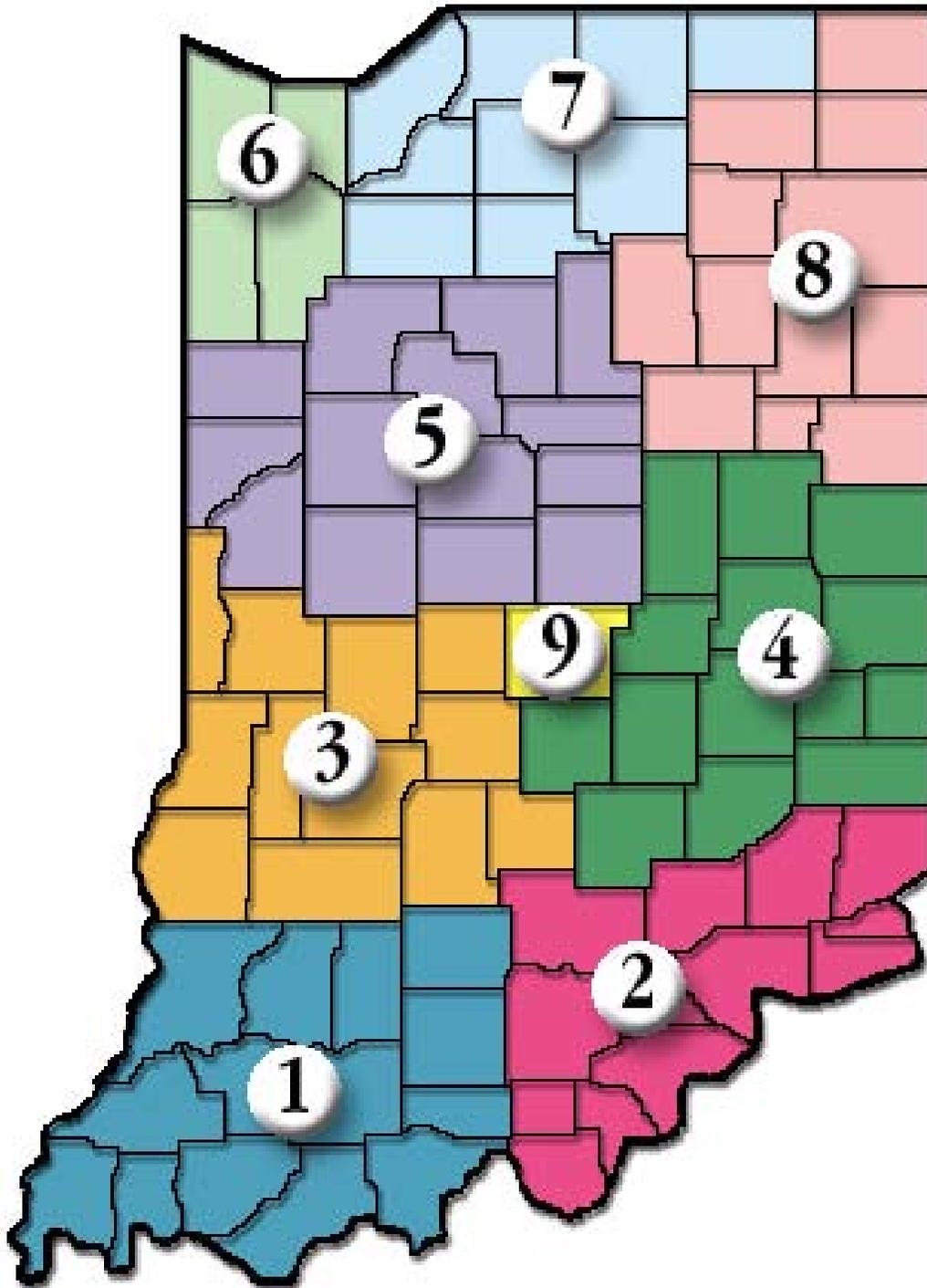
Policy evaluation and accountability practices (as indicated in the questionnaire responses):

- Little formal structure exists for policy evaluation and development.
- With shared services, representatives from each district meet on a regular basis to determine/evaluate procedural and policy changes.
- Each ESC is represented and advised by legal counsel regarding policy issues and has memberships in professional organizations that provide helpful services in evaluating and developing policy.
- Executive director of each ESC is responsible to governing board for monitoring and evaluating policy implementation and maintenance.
- All ESCs are subject to an audit of financial transactions and policy implementation by the Indiana State Board of Accounts every two years.

10. Percentage of Funding Received: Local, State, Federal, and Other

- Local: 21%–48% (flow-through/fee for service)
- State: 20%–40% (appropriated budget, grants)
- Federal: 0%
- Other: 8%–57%

Map of Indiana Educational Service Centers



See the Indiana section of Appendix B for an alphabetical listing of ESCs. *Note:* Numerical listings in Appendix B for Indiana reflect the alphabetical agency listing and not the actual number of an agency.

Reprinted with permission from the Indiana Association of Educational Service Centers.

Michigan⁴

1. State-Specific Name for Educational Service Agency (ESA)

Intermediate school districts (ISDs), which also include regional educational service agencies, regional educational service districts, and ESAs

2. Number of ESAs and Structure

57 ISDs, structured by region

3. Overall Mission and/or Legislative Definition

According to the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA, 2007), the mission of Michigan's ESAs is to serve regional education agencies by:

- Building the capacity of its member organizations
- Helping its members become visionary leaders
- Serving as an advocate for learning
- Standing in the forefront of educational thinking

The overall mission of ISDs is “to provide visionary leadership and quality services to strengthen teaching and learning for all citizens” (MAISA, 2001, p. 1).

Legislative definition (The Revised School Code, Act 451 of 1976 [1996]):

An ISD is a corporate body that has the rights, powers, and duties to do the following:

- Educate students from preschool to adulthood
- Provide for the safety and welfare of pupils
- Administer property, facilities, equipment, and technology
- Hire, contract for, schedule, supervise, or terminate employees
- Manage ISD money from local, regional, state, or federal sources
- Enter into cooperative arrangements with other entities
- Serve as a fiscal agent or administrative entity

4. Governance

Elected intermediate school boards (most are elected by representative constituent district electors, though several are elected by popular vote)

⁴Michigan ESA data were collected by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators.

5. Number of Districts, Schools, Teachers, and K–12 Students

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>K–12 Students</i>
554	5,450	99,662	1,823,433

6. Ratio of Certified Staff ($N = 3,274^5$) to Districts, Schools, and Teachers

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Teachers</i>
6:1	1:2	1:30

7. Percentage of ESA Services Provided to Districts, Schools, and State Education Agency

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>SEA</i>
70%	25%	5%

8. Services

Teaching for learning:

- School improvement
- Professional learning
- Research and development
(best practices/continuous improvement)

Specialized student services:

- Special education (student services and administration)
- Career technical education
- Tech preparation
- K–12 career preparation
- Talent development
- Comprehensive health and physical education
- Data-driven decision making
(violence and substance abuse prevention programming)
- Mathematics and science centers
- Extended-day programs
- Alternative education programs

⁵The number of certified staff includes those providing direct instruction.

Early childhood/Great Start:

- Parenting education
- Infant, toddler, and preschool assessment, identification, and programming
- Early Childhood Investment Corporation
- School preparation services (Ready to Learn)

Administrative services:

- Pupil accounting (audits, consultation on student attendance)
- Business and financial services
- Transportation
- Truancy
- Staffing
- Fund procurement and grant development
- State Board of Education continuing education unit (CEU) coordination
- Government relations
- Consolidations, annexations, and property transfers
- Public school academies

Partnership development:

- Interagency collaboration
- Community development

Technology services:

- Technology
- Regional educational media center
- Distance learning
- Technology literacy

Cooperative (customized) services

9. Evaluation and Accountability Practices: Services and Policy

Service evaluation and accountability practices/links to school improvement (as indicated in the questionnaire responses):

- No current statewide accreditation system exists, but there are seven ESAs involved in a pilot voluntary accreditation process (a collaborative among the Michigan Department of Education, MAISA, and AdvancED—the parent organization of Michigan North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement).
- ESAs often implement “their own systems to check customer satisfaction and alignment with needs/services identified by their [local education agencies] LEAs” (questionnaire response).
- Individual ESAs with their LEAs determine linkages to student success.
- No formal, statewide evaluation system, but most professional development programs qualify for State Board of Education CEU that require formal, written evaluation of qualified activities.

Policy evaluation and accountability practices (as indicated in the questionnaire responses):

- Michigan Legislature makes statewide laws based on perceived priorities.
- Intermediate school boards determine the effectiveness of ESA policies and the need for modified, additional, or reduced policy.

10. Percentage of Funding Received⁶: Local, State⁷, Federal, and Other

- Local: 52%
- State: 22%
- Federal: 19%
- Other: 7%

⁶Complete data could not be collected because of system variety and regional funding differences; therefore, the percentages are based on a representative sample.

⁷ISDs in Michigan are “statutorily authorized to seek public approval to levy taxes for special education, career-technical education, general operations and other specific uses, and they may also charge fees for certain services” (MAISA, 2001, p. 4)

Map of Michigan Intermediate School Districts



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Ohio⁸

1. State-Specific Name for Educational Service Agency (ESA)

Educational service centers (ESCs)

2. Number of ESAs and Structure

58 ESCs, organized in 16 regions across the state as part of the newly established educational regional service system (ERSS) (based on former Special Education Regional Resource Center regions and adjusted to include whole ESCs)

3. Overall Mission and/or Legislative Definition

Mission of the Ohio Educational Service Center Association (2007):

- To “provide leadership and services that enable school districts to increase student achievement and improve Ohio’s educational system.”

Legislative definition, as specified in Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 3311 (2003):

- “The territory within the territorial limits of a county, or the territory included in a district formed under either section 3311.053 or 3311.059 of the Revised Code, exclusive of the territory embraced in any city school district or exempted village school district, and excluding the territory detached therefrom for school purposes and including the territory attached thereto for school purposes constitutes an educational service center.
- A county school financing district created under section 3311.50 of the Revised Code is not the school district described in division (A) of this section or any other school district but is a taxing district.”

4. Governance

- Locally elected governing boards (comprised of five to nine members)
- Advisory councils and subcommittees (the superintendents of each regional ESA, among other identified council members, must serve on the council)
- Specialized subcommittees make recommendations regarding the implementation of state and regional education initiatives and school improvement efforts

⁸Ohio ESA data were collected by the Ohio Educational Service Center Association requesting that all ESCs fill out the questionnaire, which was distributed at a statewide meeting of ESCs in September 2007. The reported response rate was approximately 68 percent. In addition, the Ohio Department of Education has been involved by the association to assist with the state-level data and information related to the ESCs.

5. Number of Districts, Schools, Teachers, and K–12 Students

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>K–12 Students</i>
957 ⁹	1,758 ¹⁰	89,557 ¹¹	1,807,979 ¹²

6. Ratio of Certified Staff ($N = 8,142^{13}$) to Districts, Schools, and Teachers

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Teachers</i>
9:1	5:1	1:11

7. Percentage of ESA Services¹⁴ Provided to Districts, Schools, and State Education Agency

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>SEA</i>
54.44%	40.02%	5.54%

8. Services

As required by the Revised State Code, ESCs provide specific services and may also enter into agreements pursuant to several sections of the Revised Code for the provision of other services, “which may include any of the following:

- Assistance in improving student performance
- Services to enable a school district or school to operate more efficiently or economically
- Professional development for teachers or administrators
- Assistance in the recruitment and retention of teachers and administrators
- Any other educational, administrative, or operational services

In addition to implementing state and regional education initiatives and school improvement efforts under the ERSS, ESCs must, under the new law, also implement state or federally

⁹Based on responses from 41 ESAs. For the remaining ESAs, information was extracted from the Ohio Education Management Information System.

¹⁰Based on responses from 41 ESAs.

¹¹Based on responses from 41 ESAs. For the remaining ESAs, information was extracted from the Ohio Education Management Information System.

¹²Based on responses from 41 ESAs. For the remaining ESAs, information was extracted from the Ohio Education Management Information System.

¹³An approximate total number of ESA staff (includes both certified and classified staff)—10 percent of staff are central office personnel, and 90 percent of staff work in districts providing services on an ongoing, daily basis. Certified staff includes those providing consulting and direct instruction (e.g., special education; at-risk youth; afterschool programs; educational services in regional and county-based youth detention centers or state youth correctional facilities).

¹⁴Based on responses from 41 ESAs.

funded initiatives assigned to the service centers by the General Assembly or the [Ohio] Department of Education” (Burford, 2007, p. 39).

9. Evaluation and Accountability Practices: Services and Policy

Service evaluation and accountability practices/links to school improvement (as indicated in the questionnaire responses):

- Currently, there is no formal, state-required accountability system.
- The association has launched an initiative with two objectives: To develop a quality initiative for ESCs that includes a technical assistance component aimed at raising the level of quality of all ESCs across the state, and to establish a formal accountability system that could be adopted by the state of Ohio.
- Services are evaluated by customers: Districts can choose services they purchase from ESCs; if they are dissatisfied, they may purchase services from another ESC (or other provider).
- Districts also have the ability to choose the ESC from which they receive state-funded services; if they are dissatisfied, they may pass a resolution to transfer, along with funding, to a new ESC.
- For state service contracts, services are evaluated against terms that may include “impact on student performance” as a deliverable.
- Individual ESCs collect information based on the professional development provided, the number of personnel attending, and the impact that training has—either directly or indirectly—on student development and achievement.

Policy evaluation and accountability practices (as indicated in the questionnaire responses):

- No formal state agency is charged with evaluating education policy.
- Policy evaluation and development falls to collective efforts of the governor’s office, legislature, and the State Board.
- Ohio Department of Education (ODE) collects feedback from stakeholders through various means: regional meetings, State Superintendent’s Kitchen Cabinet and Education Coalition, and education lobbyist meetings.
- State Regional Alliance Advisory Board promotes communication and coordination among the Board of Education, ODE, fiscal agents, advisory councils, and users of ERSS; it is charged with the development of quality regional delivery standards.
- Regional Advisory Councils identify regional needs and priorities for educational services to inform ODE, develop policies to coordinate delivery of services, and make recommendations regarding expenditure of funds to fiscal agent for the region. “This represents a significant policy shift in which school district and education stakeholder feedback is required in the development of state-funded school improvement and related services” (Burford, 2007, p. 37).

- As part of the accountability system, “regional councils are directed under law to monitor implementation of state and regional education initiatives and school improvement efforts by ESCs, ITCs [Information Technology Centers], and other service providers to ensure the terms of the performance contracts entered into by the fiscal agent for region are being met. This provides an important accountability mechanism for customers of regional initiatives that has been absent until now” (Burford, 2007, p. 38).

10. Percentage of Funding Received¹⁵: Local, State, Federal, and Other

- Local: 64.61%
- State: 23.51%
- Federal: 8.75%
- Other: 3.13%

¹⁵The percentages are based on 45 ESA responses. ESAs in Ohio do not generate funds through taxation.

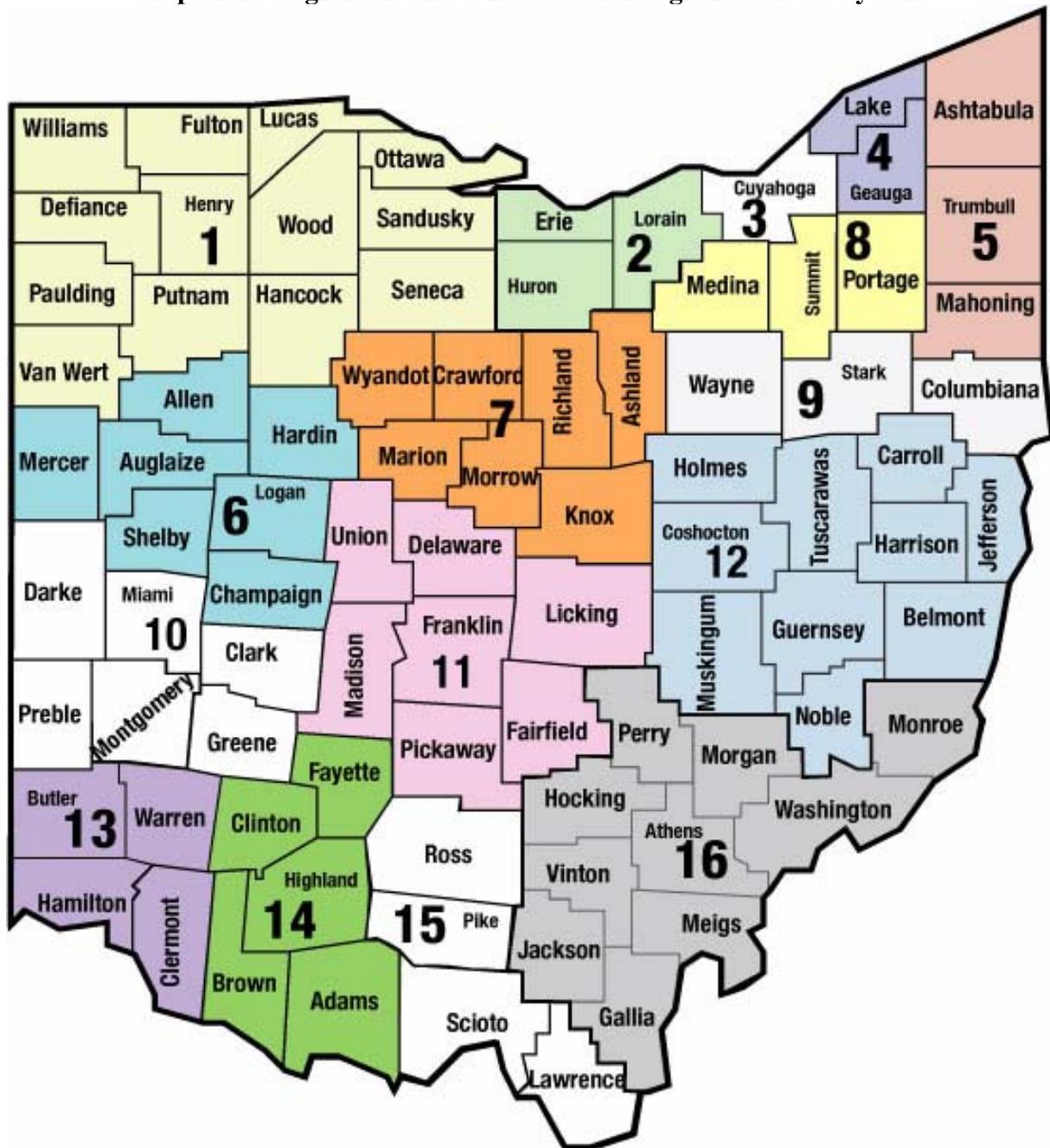
Map of Ohio Educational Service Centers



The areas in color are multicounty ESC regions. In those multicounty regions, the name of the ESC is provided, along with the counties that encompass the region in parentheses.

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Map of the Regions of Ohio's Educational Regional Service System



This map is divided into counties.

Reprinted with permission from the Ohio Department of Education.

Wisconsin¹⁶

1. State-Specific Name for Educational Service Agency (ESA)

Cooperative educational service agencies (CESAs)

2. Number of ESAs and Structure

12 CESAs, structured by region (based on geography, size, and number of districts)

3. Overall Mission and/or Legislative Definition

Wisconsin Act 242, Chapter 116 (2007) states that CESAs:

are designed to serve educational needs in all areas of Wisconsin by serving as a link both between school districts and between school districts and the state. [CESAs] may provide leadership, coordination and education services to school districts, University of Wisconsin System institutions and technical colleges. [CESAs] may facilitate communication and cooperation among all public and private schools, agencies and organizations that provide services to pupils.

4. Governance

- Boards of control (composed of elected local school board members)
- Professional Advisory Committees (composed of administrators from each district in the agency) and additional advisory committees, as needed

5. Number of Districts, Schools, Teachers, and K–12 Students

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Teachers</i>	<i>K–12 Students</i>
427	3,188	74,319	951,962

6. Ratio of Certified Staff ($N = 1,232$) to Districts, Schools, and Teachers

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>Teachers</i>
3:1	1:3	1:60

7. Percentage of ESA Services Provided to Districts, Schools, and State Education Agency

<i>Districts</i>	<i>Schools</i>	<i>SEA</i>
45%	45%	10%

¹⁶Wisconsin ESA data were collected by CESA 6 and CESA 12, in collaboration with the Wisconsin Association of CESA Administrators.

8. Services

Examples of statewide projects:

- Cooperative purchasing programs
- Early childhood
- Transition services
- Assistive technology
- Parent education
- Teacher licensing

Instructional services:

- Networks
- Centers
- Consortiums
- Support services
- Student programs
- Title services
- Consulting services
- Lending libraries
- Licensure/assessment services

Special education/student services:

- Alternative schools
- Consulting services
- Student services
- Support services

Information systems:

- Technology and support
- Distance education/e-learning
- Instructional television support

Examples of business services:

- Insurance
- Benefits
- Payroll
- Grant writing
- Accounting software and support

9. Evaluation and Accountability Practices: Services and Policy

Service evaluation and accountability practices/links to school improvement (as indicated in the questionnaire responses):

- Complete an accountability plan every three years (overseen by state education agency [SEA], it addresses the efficiency/effectiveness of agency programs and services).
- Submit an annual report to SEA detailing agency finances for prior year.
- Complete an annual report regarding agency services and programs.
- Complete a local evaluation of services with input from member schools.
- CESAs have no taxing authority, so revenue is tied to selling of services (demands being responsive to customers).
- All CESAs collect feedback/evaluation forms at the end of each professional development offering (survey how participants plan to use knowledge, skills, and attitudes achieved to impact student learning).
- As indicated in the questionnaire responses, “At this time, there is no direct proof that professional development directly led to improved student achievement other than anecdotal information.”
- The 12 CESAs have discussed accreditation options but have not formalized a process or model to adopt.

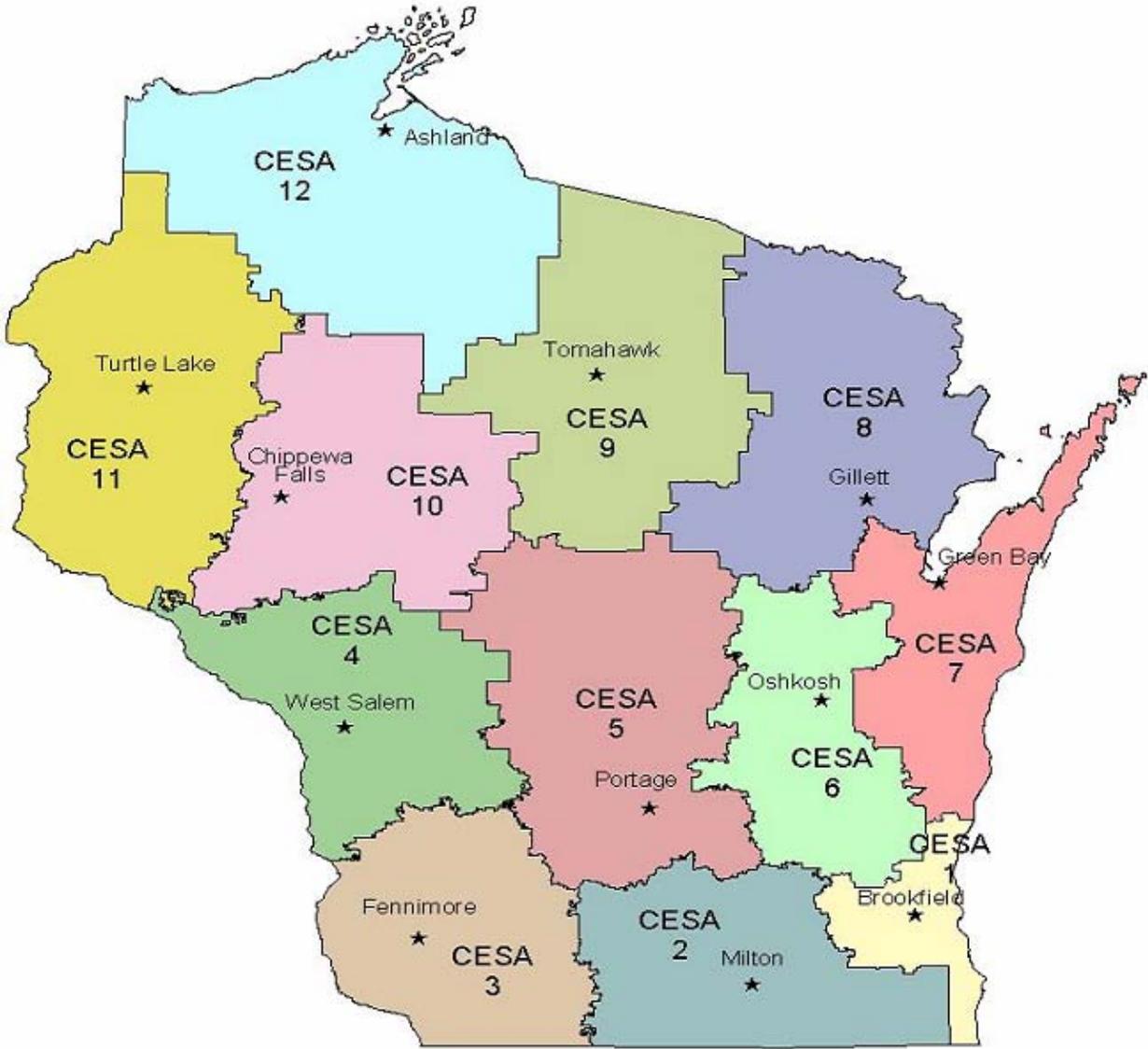
Policy evaluation and accountability practices (as indicated in the questionnaire responses):

- Written policy using formats similar to that of school districts. Some contract with vendors to assist in evaluation and development of policies.
- CESA policy manuals further define procedures for policy development and evaluation.

10. Percentage of Funding Received: Local, State, Federal, and Other

- Local: 40%–82% (fees for service)
- State: 5%–27% (state funding formula, grants)
- Federal: 1%–39% (grants)
- Other: 1%–4%

Map of Wisconsin Cooperative Educational Service Agencies



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Capacity of Educational Service Agencies

Stability for service agencies is best achieved under the following conditions, known as the “Five Pillars”: a clear mission statement and role responsibilities; a complete statewide network inclusive of all LEAs; a relatively definite source of funding aligned with the mission and the role; a close relationship with LEAs, non-public schools, and the SEA; a systemic state network. (Stephens & Keane, 2005, p. 100)

Overview

A Pivotal Role of SEAs

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is inclusive of educational service agencies (ESAs) in its mandate of authorizing state education agencies (SEAs) to utilize service agencies in the provision of professional development services, school improvement activities, programs designed to improve academic achievement of disadvantaged students, and development of partnerships to enhance education through technology (Stephens & Keane, 2005). This specifically is the case when schools are not meeting annual and long-term academic proficiency targets for all students. SEAs and local education agencies (LEAs) are required by law to provide such schools with comprehensive interventions: school improvement, corrective action, and restructuring processes (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 5).

In the case of a school, if it does not meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) requirements for two consecutive years, it must be identified for improvement, which “marks the beginning of the school improvement process, a set of structured interventions designed to help a school identify, analyze, and address issues that prevent student academic success” (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 5). According to the U.S. Department of Education (2006), a similar process applies to school districts as well: “If the state determines that the LEA is not making adequate progress [i.e., the schools served by the LEA are not making adequate progress in meeting the state’s student academic achievement standards], it must identify the LEA for improvement” (p. 41). Upon such identification and with each progressive year of the improvement status, measures must be added to provide a multilayered structure of support for both the schools and the district.

As Redding (2007) notes, “In many ways, NCLB is both an assertion of national direction in education and a consolidation of responsibility with the state” (p. 72). SEAs have long monitored districts and schools for compliance and funding, but their role—by definition and practice—has been greatly expanded since 2002. As Lane (2007) states, SEAs “now play a pivotal role in helping underperforming districts and schools to improve, a role that is different and in many ways more difficult than the role they have traditionally played” (p. 12). The need for an intricate and multilayered support requires an SEA to prepare itself to provide or arrange for the technical assistance support. For SEAs to successfully fulfill this critical role in addressing the needs of districts and schools—particularly the ever-increasing number identified as being in need of improvement under No Child Left Behind (NCLB)—it is essential that they partner with multiple entities and affiliates to build capacity.

Bringing all students to proficiency requires SEAs to redesign existing support systems or create new ways to provide resources that districts and schools need (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2006). According to the U.S. Department of Education (2006), SEAs should begin by doing the following:

- Establishing school support teams, composed of “skillful and experienced individuals charged with providing struggling schools with practical, applicable, and helpful assistance” (p. 17).
- Designating and utilizing the experience and expertise of distinguished teachers and principals from Title I schools with a track record of success in achieving school improvement/student achievement gains (given the abundance of literature supporting the clear benefits of relying on proven classroom, school, and district leadership as a roadmap to effective change).
- Devising, developing, and maintaining additional creative and collaborative approaches. “The SEA must draw on the expertise of other entities to provide assistance as needed, such as institutions of higher education, educational service agencies or other local consortia, or private providers of scientifically-based technical assistance. To the extent practicable, the statewide support system must work with and receive assistance from the comprehensive regional technical assistance centers and regional educational laboratories funded under ESEA, or other providers of technical assistance” (p. 17).

These directives are perhaps the closest that the law comes to defining a statewide system of support, as well as its major components, processes, and contributors. SEAs’ role as technical assistance providers is brought to the forefront, and their reliance on outside entities warrants a comprehensive understanding of how such providers are positioned to be of quality support to SEAs.

This responsibility of SEAs to create and sustain a statewide system of support is central to the discussion that follows. The concept of a statewide system of support may not be new, but the process of developing and nurturing an effective one poses multiple challenges: What does a successful statewide system of support look like? Which areas are in greatest need? Who is best qualified and best positioned to provide necessary programs and services? How will these be funded and monitored for cost-effectiveness? How can it be demonstrated that the statewide system of support is functioning properly and is increasing student achievement?

Redding (2007) argues that “the landscape of American education, especially as it applies to statewide systems of support, is far more complex than a trichotomy of federal, state, and district organization may suggest” (p. 71). This complexity derives from multiple subsidiaries of the state education department (intermediate service units) within the statewide system of support, which may include autonomous and semi-autonomous regional organizations, university-based programs and consultants, private and commercial organizations, various professional associations, and family advocacy groups. For any healthy functioning statewide system of support, “an effective interplay among these units is critical, as [...] relationships evolve in response to new stresses and opportunities that arise,” argues Redding (p. 71).

Redding (2007), expands on this theme, pointing out the following:

Beyond regulatory compliance, a successful statewide system of support will offer incentives, build capabilities, and provide opportunities for change in the desired direction, mediated by personal interpretations, choices, and behaviors. The successful statewide system of support will also honor the ability of parents, teachers, administrators, and local boards of education to make choices, alter environments, and discover their own efficient routes to desired ends, while providing incentives, capacity, and opportunity for them to do so. (pp. 72–73)

The next sections of the report focus on one particular realm of providers—the ESAs—and how they are positioned in the statewide systems of support in the Great Lakes region.

Trends

Over the years, since ESAs were first established in the United States (the oldest being California ESAs, which were established in 1859), they have been engaged in many services and have played multiple support and provider roles—anything from general administrative support, transportation services, and cooperative purchasing to special education, media/technology, and assistance for low-performing districts and schools. Program areas that have remained consistent include cooperative purchasing, data processing, financial consulting, and certification. These have been expanded to include a heavy emphasis on the provision of technical assistance and other services that have recently gained importance: safety, risk, and crisis intervention planning (Stephens & Keane, 2005).

One service area in particular—assistance for low-performing districts and schools—is of special interest in this report. A more extensive analysis is provided on how the five Great Lakes states are defining the area of district and school improvement and what it means in their statewide systems of support. It is especially enlightening to analyze this topic in the context of the rich variety of other services that the state ESAs provide.

Michigan. Historically, ESAs in Michigan have been providing most of their services in special education and vocational and technical education—either through their own career and technical education facilities and programs or in cooperation with a large LEA or community college. In these two core areas, ESAs provide significant levels of support and leadership to this day. They are also highly involved in technology leadership, as mentioned in the questionnaire:

Numerous fiber systems have been cooperatively established throughout the state with ESAs facilitating the agreements. A number of ESAs are involved in data warehousing. They house and oversee the 13 regional educational media centers, which provide training, cooperative purchasing, and networking opportunities.

On the other hand, once a highly state-funded area, talented and gifted programs now have most of their resources cut and continue providing a greatly diminished level of support through ESA funds. The rest of the services that ESAs provide are developed as a result of LEAs establishing the services as priorities and requesting their ESA to help fund and staff them.

Ohio. Contracting for services with LEAs is a common practice in the entire region. In Ohio, ESAs provide a wide variety of services through direct contracts with school districts. Since their inception, ESAs have been providing supervisory services for local districts. They also provide services regarding school improvement; teacher professional development; curriculum development; data-driven decision making; inservice training to special education; speech, language, and hearing services; cooperative purchasing; and related programs and services to increase educational improvement and student performance.

Indiana. Indiana’s ESAs work with their constituents to meet Indiana needs through formal, contractual agreements. As remarked in the questionnaire, they offer services that range from “providing a space for workshops [...] to actually conducting the entire process of delivering the performance improvement series.” Formally and informally, cross-ESA collaboration occurs daily. The ESA staff members also take it upon themselves to stay proactive in the field; according to one survey participant in Indiana, “[We] consider it a duty to be ahead of the curve in understanding emerging research and development trends.”

Wisconsin. In Wisconsin, ESAs provide professional development, leadership networks, curriculum networks built around identified district needs, electronic tools for curriculum mapping, data warehousing, and assessments. As noted in the questionnaire, the special education service area remains the largest programming area of all ESAs in Wisconsin: “Services offered in each [ESA are] extensive, yet there are differences in delivery models and programs.”

This broad and varied menu of the ESA services is reinforced in many of the states’ logos, vision, or statewide mission statements. According to Wisconsin Association of CESA Administrators (n.d.), “CESAs make it possible for us to have the schools we [Wisconsin] want.” Other states articulate similar mission statements as well (see the “Profiles of Educational Service Agency Networks by State” section), and it is noteworthy that almost every ESA in the Great Lakes region across the five states has also formulated an individual mission statement. As the following examples illustrate, most seek dynamic solutions to provide cost-effective services so that students become high achievers academically, socially, and globally:

Illinois (Whiteside County Regional Office of Education [ROE], 2006). “Acts as an advocate for education by providing positive leadership, performing regulatory functions as directed by the Illinois School Code and the Illinois State Board of Education, coordinating and delivering state and local services, and disseminating information for education, school, districts, and the community.”

Michigan (Genesee Intermediate School District [ISD], 2008). “As a premier regional service agency [...] provides leadership that links learners to public schools, the community, private sector and public agencies in order to improve education and enhance lifelong learning for all citizens.”

Wisconsin (Cooperative Educational Service Agency [CESA] 9, n.d.). Provides “leadership for educational improvement and strengthen[s] educational institutions’ capacity to educate all students creating healthy, resilient, successful adults.”

As noted by Stephens and Keane (2005), articulating clear mission statements—especially statewide—is critical to ensuring the stability of ESAs. This essential condition is equally important as clear role responsibilities and definite sources of funding aligned with the mission and the role.

ESAs as a Critical Part of Statewide Systems of Support

The questionnaire responses from the ESA networks within the Great Lakes region illustrate a range of roles that these agencies play in their state’s statewide system of support. Typically, they serve as a regional extension of their SEAs, as service providers to the SEA but with strong linkages to local districts, or as cooperative entities of districts (McIver, 2002, as cited in Morando Rhim, Hassel, & Redding, 2007). Most have had some degree of formal or informal training and involvement in the statewide system of support and, as in Wisconsin, “are able to assist districts if they are officially designated by the state as needing improvement,” and in certain cases are actually a fundamental contributor to the process of “dramatically reinventing the role and structure of ESAs” in their respective states (Hunter, 1996, p. 2).

Illinois. In Illinois, for example, the questionnaire responses indicate that ESAs are “the main player [...] and a necessary and valuable component in the statewide system of support” and that they serve as “the first level of enforcement of state laws, rules, and regulations.” In a case of complaint, ESAs become the first responder before the SEA and the court system. From a policy perspective, ESAs define policy where the SEA or the General Assembly does not provide sufficient supplementation and monitors school district policy through technical assistance visits to school districts. This technical assistance scope ranges from delivering the services specified by NCLB and helping districts and schools develop improvement plans to the provision by the regional service providers (RESPROs) of the coaching necessary to develop and implement the plans and a system to monitor the implementation.

Michigan. In Michigan, ESAs “work in close collaboration with the SEA,” as remarked on the questionnaire. Most of these efforts are aimed at improving the performance of high-priority schools. One noteworthy statewide initiative to improve Michigan’s statewide system of support has involved multiple collaborators from around the state, including a core team composed of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) staff (including fiscal agents for Title I technical assistance funding), along with partners representing Michigan State University (MSU), the School Improvement Facilitators Network (SIFN), the North Central Association (NCA) in Michigan, and Michigan’s Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative (MiBLSi).

The project’s aim is to provide statewide professional development to build the capacity of educators in order to address instructional needs and improve student achievement. The 18 ESAs involved employ four key components—leadership coaches, auditors, consultants, and process mentors—of the current system to assist districts and schools:

- Leadership coaches are trained by MSU to work with principals of high-priority schools for 100 days. They are responsible for helping principals lead staff through the School Improvement Framework.

- Auditors are trained by NCA to review data from high-priority schools and identify why schools did not meet AYP requirements. They also identify steps schools are taking to increase student achievement, increase leaders' awareness of the schools' sanction status, and provide an independent snapshot of school strengths and challenges.
- Consultants are direct employees of the individual 18 ESAs who are trained in school improvement interventions or as curriculum support staff to districts in their regions serving to improve student achievement and address instructional needs as identified in the audit process.
- Process mentors are three-person teams (made up of a district-level leader, an ESA facilitator, and an MDE representative) trained by Michigan's SIFN to facilitate change by ensuring that the School Improvement Plan is being implemented by removing barriers and coordinating services at the district and state levels.

The core team members meet to build a common understanding of Michigan's statewide system of support, to build a communication system that ensures partners are informed regarding all initiatives and feedback as they make decisions related to their individual projects/services, and to implement an evaluation system that showcases the accomplishments of Michigan's statewide system of support for high-priority schools and indicates areas in need of improvement. An advisory committee—composed of members of all the aforementioned stakeholders—oversees and recommends adjustments to the statewide system of support. In January 2008, Michigan's 2007–09 federal grant for school improvement was approved, which will add additional statewide system of support components such as state-level positions, data analysts, academic coaches, and others to support high-priority schools.

Finally, online school improvement portals and templates are available for teams to develop and implement district- and school-level plans. These collaborative initiatives demonstrate the state's efforts to continually improve its statewide system of support and make a concerted effort to implement the “darkening the dotted lines”—as described by Superintendent of Public Instruction Michael P. Flanagan—and strengthen the relationship between the MDE and the state's ESAs (Michigan State Board of Education, 2007).

Ohio. Another state in the Great Lakes region, Ohio, has taken a significant legislative step to connect the components necessary to impact regional delivery of state school improvement and administrative and educational services. Referred to as *regionalization*, the process is designed to create greater alignment and efficiencies among more than 140 regions—separate and uncoordinated heretofore—which had been the victims of redundancy of services. This recently established network is called the educational regional service system (ERSS), and it maintains existing, independent regional service providers, such as the 59 educational service centers (ESCs), 23 Information Technology Centers (ITCs), 16 Special Education Regional Resource Centers (SERRCs), 23 Area Media Centers (AMCs), eight Education Technology Corporations (Ed Techs), and 12 Regional School Improvement Teams (RSITs) (Burford, 2007, p. 35). The amended Substitute House Bill 115 further clarified the roles and responsibilities of these entities

under the new system. ESCs, in particular, play a significant role by providing mandated services and also entering into collaborative agreements for the provision of other services, including any of the following:

- Assistance in improving student performance
- Services to enable a school district or school to operate more efficiently or economically
- Professional development for teachers or administrators
- Assistance in the recruitment and retention of teachers and administrators
- Any other educational, administrative, or operational services

In addition, under the new law, ESCs also implement state- or federally funded initiatives assigned to the service centers by the General Assembly or the Ohio Department of Education.

Although not all Great Lakes states have an overarching plan wherein LEAs, ESAs, and SEAs formally coordinate their efforts, some—such as Indiana—have been receiving support from the state government, especially in core service areas.

Indiana. As reported in the questionnaire, “Governor [Mitch] Daniels has been instrumental in assisting Indiana ESCs to better address cooperative efforts in the areas of insurance risk management trusts, natural gas cooperatives, and other cooperative purchasing.” The House Enrolled Act No. 1006 (2006) specifically authorized and encouraged schools and ESAs to consolidate cooperative purchasing services in the areas of utilities, transportation, risk management insurance, and other areas. This consolidation of school district business functions through ESAs has been a common theme, moving ESAs into further cooperative efforts as well as an increased emphasis on accountability:

Separate surveys of consolidated purchasing and shared services practices by schools and ESCs conducted by the Division of Finance of the IDOE indicate that ESCs provide significantly more opportunities for schools to cooperatively purchase or share services than schools do on their own volition. However, the volume of dollars that are spent by schools for services that could be cooperatively provided are still largely untapped.

In addition, Indiana ESAs identify networking and relationship building as strengths, as they work to “bring together people from many school roles who become resources for one another” (a survey response). These collaborative and proactive efforts, enhanced through effective communication and best practice workshops, provide cost-effective opportunities to improve instructional methodologies and school climate as well as impact PK–12 learning.

Wisconsin. Although the primary charge of NCLB is for SEAs to provide technical assistance to Title I schools in improvement, Wisconsin’s statewide system of support has taken a collaborative approach to provide assistance to *districts* with Title I schools in improvement. As provided in the overview of Wisconsin’s statewide system of support, the major components of the state’s system include a district self-assessment, a peer

review, and a technical assistance plan. A district's self-assessment is conducted by participating districts using a rubric to assess the efficacy of their efforts to increase achievement in high-priority schools by analyzing their vision, values, and culture; leadership and governance; decision making and accountability; curriculum and instruction; and professional development (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2006).

A noteworthy initiative in Wisconsin—the statewide system of support pilot—began in August 2005, which involved seven districts charged with developing a self-assessment rubric and peer review process of the statewide system of support. In 2006, the rubric and process were piloted by the districts. The results of this process were used by the SEA and district representatives to determine strategies and funding for formal implementation in the upcoming school year.

As stated on the questionnaire, Wisconsin's ESAs play a significant role in the statewide system of support by providing continuous improvement support and training to all districts, "regardless [of whether] they are identified by the state for being a school in need of improvement." They conduct regular meetings involving representatives from the SEA, along with group members who represent various ESA initiatives such as School Improvement Services, CESA Instructional Technology Services Council, and Regional Service Network. A noteworthy ESA practice of facilitating statewide communication and collaboration among stakeholders is also a collaborative council, consisting of the key education stakeholders at the state level, which aims to provide advice and direction to the state superintendent and guide leadership on educational improvement and student performance in Wisconsin. All 12 ESA administrators serve on this council.

Given such efforts and the prospect of ESEA reauthorization, there is a growing national advocacy for strengthening the role of ESAs. It is further intensified by the focus on a growing number of underperforming schools, as "states and state education agencies are compelled to figure out how they can scale up improvement efforts" (Lane, 2007, p. 11). The Association of Educational Service Agencies (AESA) supports the notable role of ESAs in educational improvement efforts by suggesting that the inclusion of ESAs in the "school support teams" category would be necessary and wise:

ESAs have provided opportunities across the nation to leverage federal, state, and local resources to create innovative solutions to assist state agencies and local school districts to improve student learning. This is particularly evident in areas such as staff quality, including alternative education programs, teacher development and paraprofessional training, and implementation of key aspects of the accountability systems [...] A particular strength of ESAs is the ability to provide a network of success, not only throughout a region or state, but also nationally. There are numerous examples throughout the country of ESAs managing district and school improvement projects and adding ESAs to this list would be beneficial to these Teams, writes AESA Executive Director Brian Talbott to Representatives George Miller, Howard McKeon, Dale Kildee, and Michael Castle (Talbot, 2007, pp. 1–2).

ESA Involvement in School Improvement as Part of Statewide System

The role of ESAs in providing school improvement services has increased dramatically over the years. In 1995, Stephens and Christiansen noted that only one state—Texas—required its ESAs to provide assistance to its low-performing districts and schools. This was “the only case specially cited where a ‘state system’ is charged with playing a major role in what clearly has become one additional focus of much of the recent school reform movement—a concentration on poorly performing local systems and individual schools in a local system” (Stephens & Christiansen, 1995, p. 7). That same year, another state remarked that “There seems to [be] some consensus that ESAs must play an enabling role in school improvement” (Mickler, 1995, p. 36). Today, nearly all the ESAs in the five Great Lakes states report playing a major role in district and school improvement efforts. As several of them noted, everything that ESAs do is connected to school improvement in one way or another.

The ESA role in this area, although occasionally defined and articulated in legislative language, is often in practice applied through myriad local interpretations of school improvement processes, formats, structures, and definitions. As stated in some reports, the NCLB definition (i.e., structured interventions for schools and districts not meeting AYP requirements) is at the core of many states’ activities.

Illinois. Illinois ESAs, for example, provide “training in the development of school improvement plans as an integral NCLB program” (a survey response). As much as one-third of professional development time is dedicated to school improvement activities. Such services specified by NCLB are also applied to districts. ESAs help LEAs develop district and school improvement plans and RESPRO plans.

Wisconsin. As a general practice, ESA involvement in school improvement is “accomplished directly through leadership and staff development activities and resources as part of the instructional support and professional development services” in Wisconsin, as one respondent in Wisconsin noted. Such services, per the survey, include the following:

In-district consultations, ESEA program services, licensure and professional development plans, mentoring and support seminars, instructional technology services, including distance learning and Web-based opportunities. Curriculum and assessment services are focused on standards work, curriculum development, assessment and program implementation, and support. Data analysis and the school improvement planning process are a core of many [ESA] instructional services programs.

Michigan. In Michigan, ESA involvement in school improvement tends to fall under instruction support services. This loosely defined locale for district and school improvement services may stem from a history of ESA services focused on assisting high-needs districts and schools over time, prior to NCLB. As one survey participant from Michigan stated, “ESAs have a history of taking leadership in school improvement and student performance support, most notably beginning with the passage of 1990’s Public Act 25.”

Indiana. In Indiana, the survey respondent indicated that ESAs “have become the ‘point people’ for coaching about school improvement planning and professional development planning.” In terms of services, respondents generally agreed that ESA administrators across the state feel strongly that all services provided lead to school improvement.

Beyond the scope of NCLB-specified interventions, ESAs have been working intensely to reorganize so that they are working toward delivering statewide (and state-funded) school improvement and related initiatives in close collaboration with the SEA.

Ohio. As noted earlier in this report, Ohio’s new ERSS of 16 regions has been established first to determine common geographic boundaries for state-provided regional services and to streamline service administration but, most importantly, to leverage resources focused on direct school improvement assistance (State Regional Alliance Advisory Board, 2007). One of the components of this system is regional advisory councils, which identify regional needs and determine priorities for educational services through formal agreements. “This represents a significant policy shift in which school district and education stakeholder feedback is required in the development of state-funded school improvement and related services” (Burford, 2007, p. 37).

Also, for the first time in Ohio’s history, the accountability mechanism is now in place via the regional advisory council that ensures that the terms of the performance contracts are being met. It is noteworthy that each council can establish multiple subcommittees, one of which specializes in addressing areas such as school improvement. This subcommittee can make recommendations to the regional advisory council regarding the implementation of state and regional school improvement efforts and include strategies to tailor state education initiatives to regional needs and priorities or to maximize funds (Burford, 2007).

When surveyed for their definition of school improvement, Ohio’s ESAs responded that, in general, their school improvement activities are data- and research-based and designed to assist their constituent districts in reaching continuous improvement goals. As the Ohio respondent explained, ESAs essentially serve as liaisons between state-level school improvement teams and the district.

Regional school improvement teams (or state support teams) cannot “drill down” to the school buildings or specific teachers as effectively, so ESC school improvement teams work with individual teachers and building and district leaderships in their respective areas to support and enhance the work of the state support teams.

These 16 regional school improvement teams partner with the other 43 ESAs—which do not contract directly with the state as fiscal partners—to serve both the targeted school improvement districts as well as the nontargeted districts. As indicated in one questionnaire response, “These local partnerships are critical in order to make sure all schools are honored in their current school improvement efforts and that the work within districts is seamless.” The areas of school improvement services range from professional development, curriculum mapping, data-driven decision making, differentiated instruction, and resource management to cooperative learning and classroom climate, just to name a few.

A noteworthy statewide initiative called ESC Progress Network was launched in April 2007 through Battelle for Kids. The network provides participating ESCs with access to school improvement resources to support their districts.

The Ohio regionalization effort emphasizes the importance of member districts feeling that “ESA decisions, actions, and programs are responsive and accountable to districts and their needs” (Mickler, 1995, p. 36). The major studies on school improvement indicate that this locally based, accessible, and responsive infrastructure of support is an essential element for success (Mickler, 1995, p. 38). In conclusion, Mickler states the following:

If ESAs are to be constructive mediators and facilitators of educational improvement, they must be seen as agencies which know the constituents they serve; are skilled service providers; are knowledgeable about substantial improvement and can offer “images of the possible”; are responsive; serve districts and schools directly; and share a common vision of what the ESA should be and do. (p. 36)

Examples of School Improvement Programs and Services

Many regional ESAs take challenges such as Mickler’s very seriously by offering—in addition to the aforementioned traditional services—such services as administration of special schools that are the outcome of new policy pressures that were generally not major priorities in past decades (e.g., alternative schools, charter schools, magnet schools, and preschools) as well as services such as security and background checks, which have become more necessary in recent years (Stephens & Keane, 2005, p. 151). It is the stated intent of this report, however, to focus on the service and programming areas that most directly relate to the areas of district and school improvement/student achievement, particularly as defined by NCLB requirements.

Indiana

- One ESA (Southern Indiana Education Center—Region 1) offers the Building Professional Knowledge to Impact Student Learning Project, which examines current research about teaching and learning to determine which content and instructional strategies give teachers the greatest opportunity to impact student achievement. Training, based on work of Robert J. Marzano, Ph.D., is provided to school leadership teams, and a mentor/coach is assigned to each school during the workshops and throughout the time the school works to implement the strategies from the presentations.
- Indiana ESAs make more widespread use of “cadres”—groups of teachers, administrators, and consultants who have demonstrated expertise and skills in presenting—to help meet the individual needs of schools in need of assistance. Cadre members are contracted to work on-site with the school, based on a number of days needed, to accomplish identified goals.
- Other initiatives described as highly successful include Teaching Optimization Producing Higher Achievement Trends, which is expected to address needs of schools on the watch list, and a series of four-day Data-Driven Decision Making workshops with Victoria Bernhardt, Ph.D., and other presenters,

facilitated by ESAs, funded by the Indiana SEA, and utilized in collaboration with a variety of state stakeholders.

Michigan

Michigan ESAs have been particularly instrumental in technology leadership by facilitating numerous fiber systems throughout the state, while also housing and overseeing 13 regional educational media centers that provide training and networking opportunities.

Wisconsin

- Wisconsin's ESAs have attempted to lead the way in utilizing technology to deliver services, with online learning/registration, list serves, webinars, Moodle, distance learning, webcasting/podcasting, SMART Board, and portal technologies commonly used, as remarked in the survey.
- The School Improvement Network is a statewide group of ESA school improvement consultants who meet monthly with SEA staff to discuss "timely issues such as data collections, testing/assessments updates, updates from district and school assessment coordinators, and ELL issues, just to name a few," explained one of the Wisconsin respondents. The SEA also updates the group on new initiatives, such as high school reform, and ESA staff share what is happening in their regions and the types of services their districts need. As noted on the questionnaire, ESA representatives identify this network as "extremely valuable for the consultants in their work for school improvement. It is often where they get the needed support and information from [the SEA] and where they develop new ideas for expanded or new services."
- The Response to Intervention programs address universal, selected, and targeted instruction. As noted on the questionnaire, they promote the concept that "failing is not an option, thus targeting students who need specific instruction and support to achieve their highest potential."
- CESA 6's efforts in Web-based products and services include products such as Link4Learning, a Web-based application that improves communication within the school district with online forms, a resource library, and other paperless office tools; and CMS4Schools, a powerful website content management system that is customizable to meet district needs and allows it to fully maintain every aspect of individual websites. These two tools are provided to support school improvement and increased student learning. A third example is the Wisconsin Virtual School hosted by CESA 9. These examples include some of the many statewide and multiregion projects that have a technological base.

These types of initiatives are perhaps the most intriguing and may hold the greatest potential for expanding ESA capacity. Beyond the fact that these types of technology-based partnerships are specifically called for by NCLB, Web-based, multiregion, or statewide collaboratives may simply be the most efficient and cost-effective means of reaching an audience in light of growing

district and school improvement responsibilities, flat or decreased funding for staff hiring and training, and increasing numbers of schools that need higher levels of assistance.

Professional Development Services

Given the widely acknowledged and increasingly research-based documentation of the critical nature of having high-quality teachers in every classroom, it stands to reason that ESA involvement in the professional development of teaching faculty and other related staff should be a high priority in the states studied. Indeed, this was reflected in the responses illustrating regional and state efforts, with more than one state specifically mentioning that at least 10 percent of staff time is devoted to professional development.

Indiana. In Indiana, professional development consists of collegial meetings, series workshops, overtime academies (which are intensive workshops and classes that extend over a period of time), licensure and graduate credit programs, and electronic support/forums for new teachers. As noted on the questionnaire, these services are “determined through data from needs assessment surveys, structured forum discussions with teachers and administrators, as well as recommendations by central administrative staff” and configured at the “awareness and skills-building” levels through the end-of-event surveys and post-event impact evaluations over time. One example of an ESA’s efforts is Indiana Region 3, which hosts an NCLB Consortium for member schools and provides workshops on reading improvement, professional learning communities, mathematics strategies, and science inquiry. A professional development director works with member school corporations to implement on-site professional development to help them obtain their school improvement goals.

Michigan. Michigan reports a number of ESAs facilitating collaborative professional development within multiple service areas, as opposed to more fragmented individual efforts. In addition, its state association—in cooperation with AdvancED, a parent organization of the Michigan North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement—is working with seven ESAs to pilot a voluntary accreditation process.

Ohio. In Ohio, professional development “delivery, quality, and availability are evaluated by the school district customers” for most ESAs, according to a survey respondent, though ESCs providing services on behalf of the state are evaluated through the state’s System To Achieve Results for Students (STARS). Individual ESAs generally collect data related to the professional development provided and the impact of the training (direct or indirect) on student development and achievement, although there is no formal evaluation for this from the state. As explained by the Ohio respondent, accountability is up to the consumer, who can take programs and services (and connected state funding) to another provider if they are not satisfied. The respondent also noted that new services are based on “emerging trends as well as upon customer requests and the identified needs and priorities in their service areas.”

Wisconsin. According to one questionnaire respondent, Wisconsin’s ESAs are “very active in providing a variety of professional development” by collecting feedback/evaluation forms at the end of each offering “in order to learn how participants plan to use the knowledge, skills, and attitudes achieved to impact student learning.” The

respondent further noted that professional development is based on customer needs, is usually ongoing and sustainable rather than a one-time event, and is designed to maximize student learning.

Collaborations Within Statewide Systems of Support

A web of collaborations, which is inherent to any successful statewide system of support, comes in a variety of incarnations—from loosely aligned groups bound only by common interests to formal, legally recognized partnerships tied to common funding sources and bylaws.

Because of their access to and familiarity with a variety of stakeholders, their traditional blend of theory and best practices with direct application and training, and their reliance on and knowledge of multiple sources of funding, ESAs in the Great Lakes states are often well placed as primary conduits in the development of such collaborations. Their specific roles range widely—from coordination, facilitation, and participation to simply a provision of the impetus or venue for broader networking and communication. Regardless of the precise nature of ESA roles and responsibilities, it is probably safe to predict that their willingness, ability, and leadership in the overall process of promoting, developing, and helping to sustain such collaborations will be closely tied to their relative influence and viability as educational institutions in the coming years.

This is not to imply that building collaborations among current and prospective members of the statewide system of support is easily accomplished. Although many such partnerships exist, the potential for a great many more is there. However, Hacker and Wessel (as cited in Stephens & Keane, 2005) point out the following:

Creating an effective interagency collaboration is hard work, even when individual autonomy is maintained. The process challenges the comfortable environment of individual organizations acting alone. It changes interactions among people within the organization and requires the creation of new relationships [...] and a re-thinking of financial structures and sources. (p. 165)

Collaborations that successfully negotiate these challenges, according to Winer and Ray (1994), typically attend to such factors as the following:

- Environment, such as a history of collaboration or cooperation in the community, or a favorable political and social climate
- Membership characteristics such as mutual respect, understanding, trust, recognition of the collaboration as being in their mutual self-interests, and an ability to compromise
- Processes and structures that incorporate multiple layers of participation, flexibility, clear roles and guidelines, and adaptability
- Communication that is open and frequent
- A sense of unique purpose, with shared vision and clear, concrete, attainable goals
- Resources such as skilled leadership, sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time

The involvement of ESAs in such partnerships, of course, most often occurs with other educational entities, such as SEAs (see next section), LEAs, other ESAs; special education, alternative education, and career and tech prep cooperatives; and institutions of higher education (e.g., colleges, universities, community colleges, and technical institutions) that regularly provide research results, graduate credit, certification, and development activities for staff.

In some states, professional education associations play a more prominent role in these collaborations:

Indiana. Indiana ESAs, for instance, have partnered at various times with the Indiana Association of School Principals, Indiana Principal Leadership Academy, Indiana Staff Development Council, and Indiana Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Foundations are also significant collaborators. In addition, frequent partnerships occur with local, state, and national nonprofit educational laboratories and foundations, as well as for-profit educational vendors and consultants.

Another important, yet more recent, sector with which many ESAs have established a wide array of rich and mutually beneficial collaborations is that of community and human service agencies. These agencies include organizations with a school- and/or student-specific focus:

Michigan. Michigan ESAs partner with the state's comprehensive school health education initiative—known as the Michigan Model for Health[®]—and Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

Ohio. Ohio ESAs' work with Head Start, AmeriCorps, Junior Achievement, and High Schools that Work. Other noneducation-specific agencies represented in these collaboratives include chambers of commerce, United Way, family and health and human services networks, career and tech-prep centers, and parenting organizations.

These partnerships had begun to develop, even before the most recent expectations prescribed in statewide systems of support, based on increasing recognition among concerned professionals that adequately meeting the needs of all young people—particularly those most at risk—necessitated greater cooperation (and, subsequently, less duplication and fragmentation of services) between organizations with regular knowledge and involvement of youth and families. This common acknowledgement of a correlation between difficult home lives and failure in school is still a guiding factor in these professional relationships; however, research has been mounting in recent years that supports the particular importance of having caring, quality teachers in every classroom in order to most effectively impact student achievement and development. As a result, their role in these collaboratives cannot be overstated.

Another long-standing source of collaborations is that of the business community. Although business-education partnerships have frequently been a source of some controversy among the public and certain members of the educational realm, there is little question that they, and their foundations—if acting altruistically—have great potential to fill many of the wide gaps that exist between the public and private sectors in funding, training, expertise, technology, and “real-world” applications of knowledge. Many in the profession maintain their belief in the importance of a “classical” education; however, frequent reminders from 1983's *A Nation At Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education) and more recently *The World Is Flat* (Friedman, 2005)

serve to illustrate the need to educate and prepare our young people to be citizens of an increasingly global and competitive workforce, culture, and economy.

Wisconsin. One example of a worthy effort by ESAs to advance this type of cooperation is being led by Wisconsin's CESA 1, whose Center for Education Innovation and Regional Economic Development is a regional service designed to build partnerships between K–12 education, businesses, regional economic development agencies, and workforce development agencies.

Ultimately, the motivation for such collaborative partnerships will come from a variety of sources. In addition to the mandated development of networks of support, Stephens and Keane (2005) point out that educational institutions are faced with the knowledge that it is increasingly difficult to survive financially without the human and financial resources that will rise from joining efforts, a growing sense of the positive opportunity to build a better system, and the need to avoid unnecessary fragmentation/duplication of services by multiple agencies in an age of greater accountability. Another catalyst for partnerships is through government funding mechanisms that encourage these types of relationships, rather than traditional modes that foster only competition and secrecy between the various entities.

ESAs in each of the Great Lakes states are, of course, most closely connected to their respective SEAs and LEAs. As mentioned earlier, the nature, ratio, and scope of these two critical partnerships varies significantly, from ESAs that serve, in part, as a de facto regional arm of the SEA to ESAs that provide services to both based on current needs and to cooperative entities most strongly tied to the needs of local districts. Throughout the region, the percentage of services directly provided to SEAs ranges from approximately 5 percent to 15 percent.

Illinois. Illinois ESAs, for example, have a relationship with the SEA that is perhaps unique among the Great Lakes states in that they not only monitor compliance issues among districts but also have their own professional development offerings monitored and receive technical assistance from the state.

Ohio. Particularly because of its recent restructuring process, Ohio has become more closely tied in its partnership with the SEA; representatives from both organizations work as key members of school improvement teams to evaluate, plan for, and monitor progress in districts in need of assistance.

Michigan. Michigan reports that, historically, it has worked closely with its SEA to support LEAs in the state. Although they receive little direct funding from the state, a number of ESAs administer SEA federal grants. As noted on the questionnaire, a recent, “formal agreement between MAISA and MDE has been established to work cooperatively to expand the capacities of the SEA and ESAs to provide support for LEAs, especially around high-priority schools,” and successful implementation of the partnership agreement to build capacity to serve is deemed critical.

Wisconsin. Wisconsin ESAs, whose role as cooperative partners with local districts is well established, report “many examples of partnerships with the SEA [specifically] in coordinating services and administering grants in areas such as special education, school improvement, technology, alcohol and other drug abuse, and early childhood services,” according to the survey respondent.

Indiana. Indiana is another state with a history of cooperative relationships with LEAs. Through its ESAs, Indiana occasionally assists the SEA and other partner agencies by collecting and evaluating data. The SEA, in turn, provides a senior staffer to serve as a liaison to the Indiana Association of Educational Service Centers, links to the Association website from the SEA website, and uses the ESC network to convey information about its projects to the intended audience in schools.

Ultimately, the role of ESAs in the development of healthy statewide systems of support will continue to advance only to the extent that, as Redding (2007) argues, there is “an effective interplay among these (disparate) units,” evolving relationships “in response to new stresses and opportunities that arise,” and an intentional, truly collaborative network which will enhance its probability of success by offering incentives, building capabilities, and providing “opportunities for change in the desired direction.” Of these developing relationships, those between ESAs and their respective SEAs are clearly some of the most important—given a perception in some areas that there has heretofore been “an under-appreciation of ESA capacity by (state) officials” as well as a belief in some areas that ESAs have only recently been “discovered” as a major resource (or, in some extreme cases, have yet to *be* discovered).

Findings

Despite the relative disparity of organizational cultures and limited educational service agency (ESA) data throughout the various states in the Great Lakes region, several common, regional findings emerge in the data regarding ESA capacity.

Finding 1. Literature Supports the Potential of ESAs to Make a Difference in the Statewide Systems of Support.

Perhaps the most repetitive strand of data to come through in the literature was the acknowledgment of ESA involvement's ability to make a difference in statewide systems of support.

The No Child Left Behind mandate authorizes utilization of ESAs in the provision of professional development services, school improvement activities, programs designed to improve academic achievement of disadvantaged students, and development of partnerships to enhance education through technology (Stephens & Keane, 2005). School improvement, among other areas, has been highlighted as an area where the role of ESAs is particularly important. Given that the school improvement work requires local and idiosyncratic efforts, active engagement of local educators is critical for success (Arsen, Bell, & Plank, 2004). A comprehensive review and audit of Texas' ESAs in 2004 also indicates that "ensuring quality technical assistance to low performing schools is a critical [ESA] role, as is assistance in quality school improvement planning" (MGT of America, 2004, p. 15). Arsen et al. (2004) report multiple advantages of ESAs in addressing school and district improvement from the perspective of capacity, scale, and trust. ESAs "appear to have significant potential, but largely untested, advantages [...] for the task of turning around 'failing' schools" (p. 15). Schools have a relatively high degree of trust in ESAs, which is "facilitated by the fact that there is less uncertainty about durability of [ESA] affiliation with a district or school" (Arsen et al., 2004, p. 12).

The dramatic growth of ESA involvement as a formalized component of state school improvement systems—from one state initiative more than a decade ago to a "consensus that ESAs must play an enabling role in school improvement" (Mickler, 1995, p. 36)—is evidenced by multiple examples, including several in the Great Lakes region, of being fundamental contributors to the process of "dramatically reinventing the role and structure of ESAs" in their respective states (Hunter, 1996, p. 2). It is also true of other ESAs in the country, as the 2007 performance audit report of Washington ESAs indicates: The ESAs "provide quality services that meet the needs of school districts" and they "should vigorously continue their efforts toward being recognized as a statewide 'system' of [ESAs]" (Association of Educational Service Districts, 2007, pp. 1–2).

The national support for ESA inclusion in school support teams is growing, as "states and SEAs are compelled to figure out how they can scale up improvement efforts" (Lane, 2007, p. 11). This is based in part on ESAs' demonstrated ability "to leverage federal, state, and local resources to create innovative solutions to assist state agencies and local school districts to improve student learning" (Talbot, 2007, p. 1).

Finding 2. ESAs Continue Building a Network of Support Through Exemplary Programs and Services (But Not Always With Universal Access).

Numerous examples were shared in which local, regional, and even statewide ESA initiatives have had a noteworthy involvement with participating schools and districts. These best practice exemplars can be found throughout the Great Lakes region in the form of professional development programs, innovative involvement in school support teams, leadership in technology, and school improvement consulting, as well as in the efforts of ESAs acting as catalysts or hubs for collaborations with state education agencies (SEAs), local education agencies (LEAs), human service agencies, and businesses. Such collaborations are typically Web-based, multiregion, or statewide collaboratives and have been implemented by ESAs as the most efficient and cost-effective means of reaching an audience—in light of growing district and school improvement responsibilities, flat or decreased funding for staff hiring and training, and increasing numbers of schools that need higher levels of assistance. These types of efforts perhaps hold the greatest potential for expanding ESA capacity.

Concerns were voiced, however, that accessibility to such initiatives and programs can often be limited by distance, discrepancies in revenue sources, state and regional structures, and limited staff available to provide training for new programs. Where lack of funding or staffing has been an issue, initiatives that emphasize multiregion collaboration, creativity, technology-based solutions, and systemic capacity building have been particularly promoted. Establishing an ESA systemwide best practices database (maintained by ESA core team) and developing marketing plans that advertise these initiatives can bring value and broaden access for school districts and other external clients, according to MGT of America (2004), but ESAs need to determine what they want to make more visible.

Finding 3. There Is a Lack of Formalized Agreements Between SEAs, LEAs, and Legislatures Regarding the Roles and Responsibilities of the ESAs.

Another clearly and frequently stated concern among state network representatives, as evidenced in the questionnaire, is the need for “building understanding and support by policymakers at the state level for the role and importance of [...] ESAs.” This finding resonates with other ESAs in the country. In 2004, a comprehensive review and audit of 20 regional education service centers in Texas resulted in multiple recommendations for legislators, agency management, and the individual service centers. One of the recommendations was to clarify the definition of core services in Texas Education Code and to specify which services should be required by all ESAs. As a result of identifying a common definition, “the Legislature and [SEA] can obtain a better understanding of the budgetary needs of the centers [and ensure that the ESAs and the SEA] do not create situations of unwarranted duplication of services, therefore ensuring greater operational efficiency” (MGT of America, 2004, p. 5).

Just as indicated in the Texas ESA audit report, the Great Lakes states’ ESA leaders unanimously indicate in the questionnaire that a clearer definition of the roles and responsibilities of ESAs in state statute is needed, along with the “genuine support of the state board of education and state department of education,” in order to better develop “quality delivery standards, effective

systems of technical assistance to ensure quality and capacity to deliver needed programs and services to support student learning for all [students] in all school buildings and districts.”

In some states, this concern is manifested in a desire for nascent formalized partnerships with SEAs to continue to develop and move toward lasting and legitimate implementation. This can be seen as a matter of mutual benefit: as SEA roles and expectations increase, it will become ever more critical for them to partner with multiple entities and affiliates to build quality systems of support. As mentioned earlier, ESAs have been reorganizing in many states to deliver statewide (and state-funded) school improvement and related initiatives in close collaborations with SEAs. A few examples are as follows:

- In Ohio, as noted on the questionnaire, the SEA contracts with 16 educational service centers under the new educational regional service system to “deliver school improvement services to districts in various levels of school improvement status.” The two areas of work of regional advisory councils involve “1) defined, state- and federally funded school improvement and related education initiatives and 2) undefined, regional collaborative efforts utilizing existing resources and expertise of each region to deliver services in a more coordinated, cost-effective, and efficient manner,” according to the Ohio respondent. State-funded school improvement services will be provided to districts or schools based on the degree of academic need.
- In Michigan, a formal agreement between the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators and the Michigan Department of Education has been established “to work cooperatively to expand the capacities of the SEA and ESAs to provide support to LEAs, especially around high-priority schools,” as noted on the questionnaire. However, ESAs will continue to receive the bulk of their funding (specifically in special education and career-tech) through property tax millages, which must be locally approved.

Despite some apparent and developing relationships between ESAs and SEAs and other state organizations, the questionnaire shows that a number of challenges remain, including “an under-appreciation of ESA capacity by (state) officials,” a perception in some areas that ESAs have only recently been “discovered” as a major resource, or that ESAs “have been under the radar screen for a long time.” As summed up well by MGT of America (2004), SEAs and ESAs “should be afforded the opportunity to deliberately and collaboratively develop roles, expectations, and an overall structure for operating and working together” (p. 16).

Finding 4. Resources Available to ESAs in Their Educational Improvement Work Are Not Adequate.

Another stated challenge in the questionnaire is “finding a balance between economic efficiencies and quality services/programs and fluctuations in funding in areas that support professional development and student achievement support.” This observation represents a general concern over “efforts (that) can dilute [ESA] focus from what really counts in helping our schools with school improvement issues.” Furthermore, one survey participant stated the following:

There needs to be a shift in understanding that [...] our greatest benefit should be in supporting effective instruction. This recognition could bring about greater cooperation with the [SEA] and other state agencies, and thus added financial support from the state; we could then better address the needs of our member districts.

The general inadequacy of funding is more problematic because of inconsistent ways of determining the funding. Even in states where a more formalized relationship with the SEA exists, the plea for more stable and commensurate funding to directly support student achievement and district and school improvement efforts comes through clearly. Rather than having their resources enhanced since the advent of increased NCLB expectations, each of the states identified some variation of the theme that funding has instead been reduced or remained flat. Even more so, discrete federal funding sources carry their own compliance requirements that make a more flexible targeting of services to diagnostically assessed district and school needs difficult.

Respondents point out that a decrease and/or inflexibility in funding often compromises the ability to hire and train quality staff and subsequently limits the availability of necessary services and programs. This phenomenon can be further exacerbated in states with little or no formally identified state role and stable revenue stream, as higher service costs must often be passed on directly to local districts, many of which cannot afford it.

Stephens and Keane (2005) identify the critical importance of the state's role in facilitating ESA programming efforts as being "indisputable" and go to great length to provide success stories in states that have ensured adequate resources; however, they also state the following:

Most service agencies do not possess taxing authority for the acquisition of facilities or any other purpose, and capital improvement funds are not part of most state aid. The lack of state incentives facilitating greater ESA involvement in provision of services is puzzling. Clearly states have a vital interest in organizational capacities of every school/district in its education system. Though service agencies are only one resource states can utilize in strengthening schools, they are generally more accessible, cost-effective than other options. Current practices often force ESAs to provide all of their management support services through fees and assessments. However, these assessments frequently hurt, and often exclude, the very schools and districts that might benefit most from participation, especially rural/small districts and fiscally poor urban/suburban systems.

Although there was great disparity in terms of the overall amount of ESA budgets spent on school improvement—based in part, perhaps, on the lack of a specific, commonly known, and agreed-upon definition of what constitutes school improvement—some states reported that as little as 5 percent to 10 percent of their overall budgets could be devoted to school improvement initiatives. Furthermore, *within* some states, regional ESAs cited an even greater variance, with some indicating that only 3 percent of their budget was being spent on school improvement activities and others claiming that virtually their entire allocation of resources went toward school improvement.

Finding 5. ESAs' Standardized Evaluation and Accountability Processes Are Emerging But Remain Sporadic.

Finally, the issues of more standardized systems of needs assessment, evaluation, and accountability were mentioned multiple times in the questionnaire. This significant deficiency exists at both local and more systemic levels: 1) Metrics and procedures for determining baseline school and district operational performance and progress benchmarks, and 2) Metrics and procedures for evaluating the effectiveness of the ESA services—as well as the larger statewide system of support network—that are provided. Although all state ESA network representatives expressed confidence in their regional members' ability to positively impact district and school improvement (and corresponding student achievement) through the services they provide, they also acknowledge that “no formal, aligned, and consistently applied process of evaluation exists, linking these services to student achievement.”

Some states cite current or past efforts to pilot accountability initiatives, but they seem to be, at best, works in progress and, in some cases, experiments which, for a variety of reasons, appear not to have taken root. Given the call for the strengthening of ESA roles in this regard, it seems logical that systemic approaches to adequately fund and ensure evaluation and accountability that link services and programs—particularly in the professional development arena—to demonstrated district and school improvement/student achievement should intensify. ESAs may soon need to take a more active role in promoting and developing such statewide systems, particularly given the climate of heightened accountability, which is likely to remain a part of the educational landscape for the foreseeable future. Relating the cost/benefit discussions surrounding ESAs that often take place in state policy decision-making, Stephens and Keane (2005) note the following:

State interests and the ESA community share responsibility for the frequent absence of timely, policy-relevant cost-analysis studies on the operations of ESAs. They need to do a better job of collecting data about the work of ESAs and making this data available to legislators. Only in the presence of sound data can legislators make enlightened policy decisions. ESA leaders in each state should be proactive in insisting on the collection of such data and in taking a leading role in gathering it.

This focus on demonstrated student learning and academic achievement, in addition to acknowledging NCLB's directive in this area, also reflects the work of authors, like Hunter (1996), who advocate for a new perspective that “requires assessing the contribution of ESAs to student achievement” (p. 2), not unlike similar scrutiny being placed on the other key players in the initiative for improving education. Hunter notes that the constant challenge for ESAs will be to show how they can “assist schools to accomplish the mission of bringing every student to high levels of achievement, cost effectively,” since they are “the least expensive, most readily available infrastructure available. Other sources of educational infrastructure...have a different mission and are difficult for schools to access (but) ESAs are an institution whose time has come.” If ESAs did not exist during this era of increased expectations and accountability, Hunter posits, “they would have to be invented” (p. 6).

Once again, given the pressure on states, districts, and schools to bring about continuous and measurable growth in student achievement, the intermediary presence of ESAs, and the

established historical relationships between these entities, it seems intuitive that further development of these bonds can do nothing but strengthen the statewide systems of support. If states are willing to work to establish policies identifying clear missions and role responsibilities for ESAs within the statewide system of support, as well as to secure more stable sources of funding aligned with these missions and roles, in doing so, they will address some of the previously identified circumstances necessary for ESAs to maximize their success.

Concluding Remarks

The findings of this study seem to bear out previous assertions that ESAs—whose ranks have nearly doubled in the last 20 years, are present in some iteration in nearly every state in the country, and have had close relationships with local districts for a long time—are well positioned to provide much-needed support in district and school improvement efforts. The necessity for ESAs to focus their efforts on services directly related to improving student achievement, the pressure to keep up with changes in the breadth and depth of programming areas, and the resulting necessity of hiring appropriate staff have been significant.

The study shows that, regionally, ESAs can and do have the capacity—and, to varying degrees, the mandate—to play a significant, impactful role in their respective statewide systems of support. This fact is verified repeatedly in the accounts from multiple respondents and stakeholders that point to exemplary programs and services throughout the region. Although discrete, these findings illustrate the potential for ESAs, working in partnership with other stakeholders in statewide systems of support, to assist in building capacity to impact student achievement and school improvement targets. This endeavor is increasingly important, given an era of remarkable change and daunting challenges in the field of education, which has demanded of its institutions an unprecedented degree of understanding, collaboration, and accountability.

Given what has been documented about SEA and LEA capacity to support change in terms of professional development, district and school improvement will continue to have a very slow growth, as evidenced by student achievement both nationally and internationally unless the ESAs—“the least expensive, most readily available infrastructure available” as Hunter (1996, p. 6) notes—can better be utilized and mobilized.

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Appendix A. Great Lakes ESA Questionnaire

Purpose of the Questionnaire

To better understand the structure, capacity, services, policy, resources, funding, and status of ESAs in the Great Lakes states (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin).

Overall Study Question

What is the capacity of ESAs in the Great Lakes states (Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin) to play a more prominent role in their respective statewide systems of support to assist districts and schools in the work of educational improvement that will positively impact student performance?

State:

Respondent Name(s) and Title(s):

Directions: Please fill in the text fields for each question by providing the quantitative data and/or qualitative data in a narrative format. Feel free to provide web links and additional resources to support the statements.

STRUCTURE AND CAPACITY

1. How are ESAs in your state structured (e.g., by region, by district, or both)?
2. Approximately how many districts, schools, students, and teachers does each ESA serve in your state? (*See the List of ESAs by State at the end of this questionnaire for entering the data and providing comments below.*)
Comments:
3. How are staffing levels allocated across departments and functions to provide support to school districts with professional development targeted toward more effective instruction, curriculum development and alignment, assessment, and data?
4. Approximately how many staff members do the ESAs in your state employ (2006–07 school year)?
Certified staff: Classified (noncertified/support) staff:
Comments:
5. What is the general background of the certified staff employed by the ESAs in your state (e.g., level of education and experience)?

6. Describe the role of ESAs in your state’s overall statewide system of support to increase educational improvement and student performance.

7. What are the governing practices of the ESAs (e.g., boards, advisory groups, etc.)? Please explain.

8. What is the overall mission statement of the ESAs? If each ESA has an individual mission statement, please provide a representative sample as well.

9. Are the ESA facilities independently owned, state owned, or cooperatively owned?

SERVICES

10. What is the percentage of services delivered to schools, districts, and the SEA?

Schools: % Districts: % SEA: %

11. In what key areas do the ESAs in your state focus their services?

- Professional development
Comments:
- Content areas. Please list:
Comments:
- Instruction
Comments:
- Curriculum development and alignment
Comments:
- Assessment and accountability
Comments:
- School improvement/planning
Comments:
- Alternative education
Comments:
- Talented and gifted/high ability
Comments:
- Special education
Comments:
- Vocational/technical
Comments:

Technology
Comments:

Other:
Comments:

12. Which approaches (in terms of capacity) do ESAs currently use to provide the above-listed services?

Technical assistance staff
Comments:

Professional development staff
Comments:

Technology/media
Comments:

Materials
Comments:

Business office services
Comments:

Other:
Comments:

13. How are the services determined and prioritized?

14. What types of laws and regulations (or other mechanisms) determine the services that ESAs provide?

15. Do the ESAs in your state collaborate with other organizations or service providers (public and/or non-public) to carry out their work? If yes, who are the major collaborators, and what is the general nature of the collaborations (e.g., businesses, community agencies, unions, intra-education and interagency partnerships, joint services, etc.)?

16. Describe the general ESA accountability and accreditation practices in your state (e.g., state accreditation system, annual report cards, voluntary accountability, etc.).

17. How are services evaluated and by whom? Is success linked to student improvement?

18. How are professional development delivery, quality, and availability evaluated? Can professional development be demonstrated as leading to improved student development and achievement?

19. What is the nature of the services provided (e.g., developmental, continual, one-time)?
20. To what extent is technology available and implemented to deliver, maintain, and lead in today's digital environment?

POLICY

21. What are the existing state and/or district policies that define the role of ESAs in your state?
22. How does state law affect the role of ESAs as administrative agencies in your state?
23. How does state law define ESAs?
24. Who are the policymakers?
25. What structure exists for policy evaluation and development?
26. Who is responsible for monitoring and evaluating policy implementation and maintenance?
If there are multiple accountability mechanisms for SEA and LEAs, please explain.

FUNDING AND RESOURCES

27. How are the ESAs in your state funded, and what is the percentage of funding (i.e., where do the checks come from)?

Federal: %
Dollar amount: \$
Comments:

State: %
Dollar amount: \$
Comments:

Local: %
Dollar amount: \$
Comments:

Other: % Please list:
What is the percentage allocated for school improvement? %

What dollar amount is allocated for school improvement? \$

Comments:

28. What percentage of the ESAs' expenditures is dedicated to school improvement and related expenses or activity?

Expenditures: %

Dollar amount: \$

Comments:

29. How does state law affect public funding for ESAs in your state?

30. What kinds of support and/or resources does the SEA provide to ESAs in your state?

31. If public funding supports the ESAs in your state, to what extent are earmarks and/or restrictions attached to the funds received (i.e., funds must be allocated in specific ways)? Please explain.

32. What other kinds of funding, resources, or support do the ESAs in your state receive?

STATUS

33. What have been the major challenges that ESAs in your state have faced in carrying out their work (i.e., staff turnover, young staff, etc.)?

34. Do the ESAs in your state have sufficient staff, funding, and other resources that are necessary to carry out their work? Please explain.

35. What are the needs of the ESAs in your state to effectively carry out their work?

List of ESAs by State

ILLINOIS

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
1	Adams/Pike ROE 1					
2	Alexander/Johnson/Massac/ Pulaski/Union ROE 2					
3	Bond/Effingham/Fayette ROE 3					
4	Boone/Winnebago ROE 4					
5	Brown/Cass/Morgan/Scott ROE 46					
6	Bureau/Henry/Stark ROE 28					
7	Calhoun/Greene/Jersey/ Macoupin ROE 40					
8	Carroll/Jo Daviess/ Stephenson ROE 8					
9	Champaign/Ford ROE 9					
10	Christian/Montgomery ROE 10					
11	Clark/Coles/Cumberland/ Douglas/Edgar/Moultrie/ Shelby ROE 11					
12	Clay/Crawford/Jasper/ Lawrence/Richland ROE 12					
13	Clinton/Marion/ Washington ROE 13					
14	DeKalb ROE 16					
15	DeWitt/Livingston/ McLean ROE 17					
16	DuPage ROE 19					
17	Edwards/Gallatin/Hardin/ Pope/Saline/Wabash/ Wayne/White ROE 20					
18	Franklin/Williamson ROE 21					
19	Fulton/Schuyler ROE 22					
20	Grundy/Kendall ROE 24					
21	Hamilton/Jefferson ROE 25					

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
22	Hancock/McDonough ROE 26					
23	Henderson/Mercer/Warren ROE 27					
24	Iroquois/Kankakee ROE 32					
25	Jackson/Perry ROE 30					
26	Kane ROE 31					
27	Knox ROE 33					
28	Lake ROE 34					
29	LaSalle ROE 35					
30	Lee/Ogle ROE 47					
31	Logan/Mason/Menard ROE 38					
32	Macon/Piatt ROE 39					
33	Madison ROE 41					
34	Marshall/Putnam/Woodford ROE 43					
35	McHenry ROE 44					
36	Monroe/Randolph ROE 45					
37	Peoria ROE 48					
38	Rock Island ROE 49					
39	Sangamon ROE 51					
40	St. Clair ROE 50					
41	Suburban Cook ROE 14					
42	Tazewell ROE 53					
43	Vermilion ROE 54					
44	Whiteside ROE 55					
45	Will ROE 56					
	TOTAL					

INDIANA

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
1	Central Indiana Education Service Center (Region 9)					
2	East Central Educational Service Center (Region 4)					
3	Northern Indiana Educational Service Center (Region 7)					
4	Northwest Indiana Educational Service Center (Region 6)					
5	Region 8 Education Service Center (Region 8)					
6	Southern Indiana Education Center (Region 1)					
7	Wabash Valley Education Center (Region 5)					
8	West Central Indiana Educational Service Center (Region 3)					
9	Wilson Education Service Center (Region 2)					
	TOTAL					

MICHIGAN

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
1	Allegan Area ESA					
2	Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona ESD					
3	Barry ISD					
4	Bay-Arenac ISD					
5	Berrien RESA					
6	Branch ISD					
7	Calhoun ISD					
8	Char-Em ISD					
9	Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Isle ESD					
10	Clare-Gladwin RESD					
11	Clinton County RESA					
12	C.O.O.R. ISD					
13	Copper Country ISD					
14	Delta-Schoolcraft ISD					
15	Dickinson-Iron ISD					
16	Eastern Upper Peninsula ISD					
17	Eaton ISD					
18	Genesee ISD					
19	Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD					
20	Gratiot-Isabella RESD					
21	Hillsdale County ISD					
22	Huron ISD					
23	Ingham ISD					
24	Ionia County ISD					
25	IOSCO RESA					
26	Jackson County ISD					
27	Kalamazoo RESA					
28	Kent ISD					
29	Lapeer County ISD					
30	Lenawee ISD					
31	Lewis Cass ISD					

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
32	Livingston ESA					
33	Macomb ISD					
34	Manistee ISD					
35	Marquette-Alger RESA					
36	Mason-Lake ISD					
37	Mecosta-Osceola ISD					
38	Menominee County ISD					
39	Midland County ESA					
40	Monroe County ISD					
41	Montcalm Area ISD					
42	Muskegon Area ISD					
43	Newaygo County RESA					
44	Oakland Schools					
45	Oceana ISD					
46	Ottawa Area ISD					
47	Saginaw ISD					
48	Sanilac ISD					
49	Shiawassee RESD					
50	St. Clair County RESA					
51	St. Joseph County ISD					
52	Traverse Bay Area ISD					
53	Tuscola ISD					
54	Van Buren ISD					
55	Washtenaw ISD					
56	Wayne RESA					
57	Wexford-Missaukee ISD					
	TOTAL					

OHIO

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
1	Allen County					
2	Ashtabula County					
3	Athens-Meigs County					
4	Auglaize County					
5	Belmont County					
6	Brown County					
7	Butler County					
8	Clark County					
9	Clermont County					
10	Columbiana County					
11	Darke County					
12	Delaware-Union					
13	Erie-Huron-Ottawa					
14	ESC of Cuyahoga County					
15	ESC of Franklin County					
16	Fairfield County					
17	Gallia-Vinton					
18	Geauga County					
19	Greene County					
20	Hamilton County					
21	Hancock County					
22	Hardin County					
23	Jefferson County					
24	Knox County					
25	Lake County					
26	Lawrence County					
27	Licking County					
28	Logan County					
29	Lorain County					
30	Lucas County					
31	Madison-Champaign					
32	Mahoning County					
33	Medina County Schools					

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
34	Mercer County					
35	Miami County					
36	Mid-Ohio					
37	Montgomery County					
38	Muskingum Valley					
39	North Central Ohio					
40	Northwest Ohio					
41	Ohio Valley					
42	Perry-Hocking					
43	Pickaway					
44	Portage County					
45	Preble County					
46	Putnam County					
47	Ross-Pike					
48	Sandusky County					
49	Shelby County					
50	South Central Ohio					
51	Southern Ohio					
52	Stark County					
53	Summit County					
54	Tri-County					
55	Trumbull County					
56	Tuscarawas-Carroll-Harrison					
57	Warren County					
58	Western Buckeye					
59	Wood County					
	TOTAL					

WISCONSIN

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
1	CESA 1					
2	CESA 2					
3	CESA 3					
4	CESA 4					
5	CESA 5					
6	CESA 6					
7	CESA 7					
8	CESA 8					
9	CESA 9					
10	CESA 10					
11	CESA 11					
12	CESA 12					
	TOTAL					

Appendix B. State Data by Individual ESA

ILLINOIS¹⁷

No.	Name of ESA	Public Districts Served	Schools		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Recognized Non-Public		
1	Adams/Pike ROE 1	9	46	5	14,827	847
2	Alexander/Johnson/Massac/ Pulaski/Union ROE 2	19	40	1	10,369	707
3	Bond/Effingham/Fayette ROE 3	11	37	4	12,883	993
4	Boone/Winnebago ROE 4	13	107	17	68,042	3,555
5	Brown/Cass/Morgan/Scott ROE 46	11	36	10	10,223	940
6	Bureau/Henry/Stark ROE 28	26	54	4	16,788	1,172
7	Calhoun/Greene/Jersey/ Macoupin ROE 40	15	45	6	14,884	1,511
8	Carroll/Jo Daviess/ Stephenson ROE 8	14	45	7	14,395	1,314
9	Champaign/Ford ROE 9	16	64	10	26,201	2,936
10	Christian/Montgomery ROE 10	9	36	5	11,297	768
11	Clark/Coles/Cumberland/ Douglas/Edgar/Moultrie/ Shelby ROE 11	25	97	13	24,700	2,150
12	Clay/Crawford/Jasper/ Lawrence/Richland ROE 12	12	38	2	12,790	1,106
13	Clinton/Marion/ Washington ROE 13	33	52	12	16,785	1,200
14	DeKalb ROE 16	8	43	2	18,000	1,500
15	DeWitt/Livingston/ McLean ROE 17	21	88	9	38,866	3,010
16	DuPage ROE 19	42	242	85	158,911	12,541
17	Edwards/Gallatin/Hardin/ Pope/Saline/Wabash/ Wayne/White ROE 20	20	55	1	14,589	1,243
18	Franklin/Williamson ROE 21	14	39	7	16,514	1,274
19	Fulton/Schuyler ROE 22	8	23	0	6,793	520

¹⁷The data are based on the 2006–07 school year information.

No.	Name of ESA	Public Districts Served	Schools		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Recognized Non-Public		
20	Grundy/Kendall ROE 24	18	62	2	32,367	2,127
21	Hamilton/Jefferson ROE 25	18	28	1	7,526	550
22	Hancock/McDonough ROE 26	11	30	3	7,500	800
23	Henderson/Mercer/Warren ROE 27	5	20	1	5,351	470
24	Iroquois/Kankakee ROE 32	20	67	11	26,700	1,900
25	Jackson/Perry ROE 30	13	30	12	10,404	981
26	Kane ROE 31	9	166	30	127,195	10,161
27	Knox ROE 33	5	26	2	7,544	609
28	Lake ROE 34	44	221	58	148,682	10,963
29	LaSalle ROE 35	26	65	8	20,600	1,646
30	Lee/Ogle ROE 47	16	42	2	15,000	1,200
31	Logan/Mason/Menard ROE 38	13	33	3	9,899	870
32	Macon/Piatt ROE 39	12	76	6	23,007	1,717
33	Madison ROE 41	13	92	32	48,538	3,561
34	Marshall/Putnam/Woodford ROE 43	12	33	1	10,500	850
35	McHenry ROE 44	18	78	12	58,451	3,347
36	Monroe/Randolph ROE 45	9	26	10	11,268	834
37	Peoria ROE 48	18	97	4	34,831	7,606
38	Rock Island ROE 49	10	63	7	25,857	1,779
39	Sangamon ROE 51	10	65	16	33,677	3,057
40	St. Clair ROE 50	27	105	23	53,500	3,650
41	Suburban Cook ROE 14 ¹⁸	143	674	640	378,362	31,454
42	Tazewell ROE 53	18	50	4	20,000	1,400
43	Vermilion ROE 54	12	12	5	15,159	985
44	Whiteside ROE 55	10	35	8	11,213	806
45	Will ROE 56	29	171	24	121,202	8,846
	TOTAL	865	3,554	1,125	1,772,190	141,456

Note: The Chicago Public Schools District—not listed in the table above—serves 655 public schools, 335 recognized non-public schools, and 411,841 students and employs 24,664 teachers.

¹⁸This data are an aggregate for the three Intermediate Service Centers (North Cook, South Cook, and West Cook).

INDIANA

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (non-members in parenthesis)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
1	Central Indiana Education Service Center (Region 9)	17 (1)	272	0	170,000	13,000
2	East Central Educational Service Center (Region 4)	48 (2)	235	3	95,277	7,000
3	Northern Indiana Educational Service Center (Region 7)	33 (5)	118	4	59,201	3,455
4	Northwest Indiana Educational Service Center (Region 6)	23 (4)	161	5	94,460	5,006
5	Region 8 Education Service Center (Region 8)	33 (1)	214	12	96,380	6,797
6	Southern Indiana Education Center (Region 1)	34 (3)	139	7	53,822	3,218
7	Wabash Valley Education Center (Region 5)	37 (5)	178	4	74,229	4,400
8	West Central Indiana Educational Service Center (Region 3)	25 (6)	121	0	56,665	4,565
9	Wilson Education Service Center (Region 2)	27 (0)	153	12	76,400	5,500
	TOTAL	277 (27)	1,591	47	776,434	52,941

MICHIGAN

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students (public and non-public)	Total # of All Teachers
			Public (incl. charter schools)	Non-Public		
1	Allegan Area ESA	8	55	NA	15,199	1,178
2	Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona ESD	4	28	NA	6,970	407
3	Barry ISD	2	12	NA	5,141	297
4	Bay-Arenac ISD	8	80	NA	19,071	1,074
5	Berrien RESA	16	119	NA	30,004	1,726
6	Branch ISD	3	25	NA	6,255	423
7	Calhoun ISD	13	106	NA	25,734	1,758
8	Char-Em ISD	11	55	NA	11,217	696
9	Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Isle ESD	10	50	NA	11,894	626
10	Clare-Gladwin RESD	5	32	NA	9,036	536
11	Clinton County RESA	6	35	NA	11,321	565
12	C.O.O.R. ISD	6	37	NA	9,505	585
13	Copper Country ISD	13	37	NA	6,865	445
14	Delta-Schoolcraft ISD	7	38	NA	7,856	470
15	Dickinson-Iron ISD	6	29	NA	6,621	351
16	Eastern Upper Peninsula ISD	13	46	NA	8,293	564
17	Eaton ISD	6	49	NA	14,642	879
18	Genesee ISD	21	240	NA	87,189	4,544
19	Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD	7	25	NA	3,047	217
20	Gratiot-Isabella RESD	9	64	NA	15,448	885
21	Hillsdale County ISD	8	37	NA	7,691	442
22	Huron ISD	15	36	NA	5,476	288
23	Ingham ISD	12	153	NA	50,186	2,946
24	Ionia County ISD	9	48	NA	12,406	642
25	IOSCO RESA	4	27	NA	5,231	309
26	Jackson County ISD	12	85	NA	29,162	1,618
27	Kalamazoo RESA	9	106	NA	38,887	2,134
28	Kent ISD	20	390	NA	123,038	6,421
29	Lapeer County ISD	5	41	NA	15,865	814
30	Lenawee ISD	12	66	NA	19,369	1,091

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students (public and non-public)	Total # of All Teachers
			Public (incl. charter schools)	Non-Public		
31	Lewis Cass ISD	4	29	NA	7,805	419
32	Livingston ESA	5	54	NA	32,486	1,676
33	Macomb ISD	21	329	NA	154,814	7,580
34	Manistee ISD	4	26	NA	3,810	233
35	Marquette-Alger RESA	12	50	NA	10,578	648
36	Mason-Lake ISD	6	32	NA	5,727	378
37	Mecosta-Osceola ISD	5	41	NA	10,469	647
38	Menominee County ISD	4	24	NA	3,588	215
39	Midland County ESA	4	44	NA	15,032	855
40	Monroe County ISD	9	66	NA	26,958	1,465
41	Montcalm Area ISD	7	52	NA	14,055	778
42	Muskegon Area ISD	12	113	NA	34,800	1,905
43	Newaygo County RESA	6	40	NA	9,494	559
44	Oakland Schools	28	510	NA	230,850	12,135
45	Oceana ISD	3	21	NA	3,555	232
46	Ottawa Area ISD	11	134	NA	55,373	2,714
47	Saginaw ISD	13	139	NA	34,694	2,112
48	Sanilac ISD	7	38	NA	8,182	465
49	Shiawassee RESD	8	46	NA	14,640	815
50	St. Clair County RESA	8	84	NA	29,292	1,661
51	St. Joseph County ISD	9	51	NA	12,397	711
52	Traverse Bay Area ISD	16	94	NA	27,725	1,542
53	Tuscola ISD	9	41	NA	12,193	682
54	Van Buren ISD	12	63	NA	18,039	1,136
55	Washtenaw ISD	10	135	NA	52,114	2,955
56	Wayne RESA	34	1,000	NA	365,965	19,627
57	Wexford-Missaukee ISD	7	43	NA	10,179	586
	TOTAL	554	5,450	NA	1,823,433	99,662

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
1	Allen County	8	8	—	11,984	841
2	Ashtabula County	10	9	1	18,004	1,000
3	Athens-Meigs County	8	30	—	11,389	904
4	Auglaize County	8	6	2	8,238	256
5	Belmont County	7	—	—	8,570	269
6	Brown County	6	16	1	8,158	701
7	Butler County	15	85	3	58,164	3,208
8	Clark County	7	—	—	23,394	742
9	Clermont County	9	48	1	28,000	938
10	Columbiana County	14	13	1	15,077	1,006
11	Darke County	8	16	—	9,139	288
12	Delaware-Union	29	28	1	24,082	815
13	Erie-Huron-Ottawa	30	102	7	41,857	2,964
14	ESC of Cuyahoga County	28	28	—	121,669	3,971
15	ESC of Franklin County	30	29	1	225,000	12,500
16	Fairfield County	7	7	—	18,857	639
17	Gallia-Vinton	2	2	—	5,120	148
18	Geauga County	7	7	—	13,010	806
19	Greene County	8	35	2	23,135	1,475
20	Hamilton County	22	—	—	82,239	2,735
21	Hancock County	8	—	—	11,376	370
22	Hardin County	6	6	—	5,892	447
23	Jefferson County	7	33	7	12,000	900
24	Knox County	5	—	—	8,532	264
25	Lake County	10	10	2	35,000	3,000
26	Lawrence County	6	—	—	9,160	277
27	Licking County	11	11	—	28,000	1,120
28	Logan County	4	—	—	7,391	234
29	Lorain County	140	308	84	178,623	11,900
30	Lucas County	9	—	—	54,788	1,204

¹⁹The data in the cells were pulled from two main sources—the individual ESAs (41) and the Ohio Education Management Information System (18) as of February 8, 2008.

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
31	Madison-Champaign	9	—	—	12,411	471
32	Mahoning County	16	56	2	37,000	2,100
33	Medina County Schools	7	44	6	29,343	1,217
34	Mercer County	6	13	—	8,410	588
35	Miami County	13	10	3	20,000	116
36	Mid-Ohio	18	61	—	27,867	3,000
37	Montgomery County	15	—	—	58,265	1,852
38	Muskingum Valley	12	47	3	25,000	1,910
39	North Central Ohio	16	—	—	23,928	742
40	Northwest Ohio	27	92	7	26,000	2,400
41	Ohio Valley	11	—	—	20,056	626
42	Perry-Hocking	7	5	2	10,906	30
43	Pickaway	4	4	—	10,321	643
44	Portage County	15	15	—	24,600	102
45	Preble County	5	16	—	7,127	467
46	Putnam County	9	—	—	6,387	211
47	Ross-Pike	11	11	—	17,300	1,031
48	Sandusky County	4	—	—	9,269	285
49	Shelby County	8	8	—	9,094	573
50	South Central Ohio	12	—	—	14,235	465
51	Southern Ohio	12	12	—	26,114	816
52	Stark County	17	—	—	61,609	1,950
53	Summit County	26	140	18	81,127	4,200
54	Tri-County	19	88	3	30,674	2,567
55	Trumbull County	20	20	—	33,445	1,903
56	Tuscarawas-Carroll-Harrison	13	48	—	18,300	1,536
57	Warren County	23	20	3	32,427	39
58	Western Buckeye	6	—	—	3,379	299
59	Wood County	127	43	8	17,537	1,496
	TOTAL	957	1,590	168	1,807,979	89,557

WISCONSIN

No.	Name of ESA	Districts Served (incl. non-members)	Schools Served		Total # of All Students	Total # of All Teachers
			Public	Non-Public		
1	CESA 1	45	561	362	330,000	19,500
2	CESA 2	74	309	58	144,000	18,000
3	CESA 3	31	99	13	20,663	1,844
4	CESA 4	26	90	43	40,168	2,674
5	CESA 5	35	161	5	60,400	4,210
6	CESA 6	42	242	111	101,386	7,970
7	CESA 7	38	187	384	85,000	5,500
8	CESA 8	27	45	9	22,350	2,200
9	CESA 9	22	102	35	43,480	3,530
10	CESA 10	30	119	46	36,633	2,918
11	CESA 11	39	124	31	50,041	3,719
12	CESA 12	18	40	12	17,841	2,254
	TOTAL	427	2,079	1,109	951,962	74,319

Appendix C. ESA Contact Information

Illinois

No.	Name of ESA	Street Address	City	ZIP Code	Telephone No.
1	Adams/Pike ROE 1	507 Vermont St.	Quincy	62301	217-277-2080
2	Alexander/Johnson/Massac/Pulaski/Union ROE 2	0017 Rustic Campus Drive	Ullin	62992	618-634-2292
3	Bond/Effingham/Fayette ROE 3	300 S. Seventh St.	Vandalia	62471	618-283-5011
4	Boone/Winnebago ROE 4	300 Heart Blvd.	Loves Park	61111	815-636-3060
5	Brown/Cass/Morgan/Scott ROE 46	110 N. West St.	Jacksonville	62650	217-243-1804
6	Bureau/Henry/Stark ROE 28	107 S. State St.	Atkinson	61235	309-936-7890
7	Calhoun/Greene/Jersey/Macoupin ROE 40	220 N. Broad St.	Carlinville	62626	217-854-4016
8	Carroll/Jo Daviess/Stephenson ROE 8	500 N. Rush St.	Stockton	61085	815-947-3810
9	Champaign/Ford ROE 9	200 S. Fredrick St.	Rantoul	61866	217-893-3219
10	Christian/Montgomery ROE 10	1 Courthouse Square, Room 202	Hillsboro	62049	217-532-9591
11	Clark/Coles/Cumberland/Douglas/Edgar/Moultrie/ Shelby ROE 11	730 Seventh St., #A	Charleston	61920	217-348-0151
12	Clay/Crawford/Jasper/Lawrence/Richland ROE 12	103 W. Main St.	Olney	62450	618-395-8626
13	Clinton/Marion/Washington ROE 13	930 B Fairfax	Carlyle	62231	618-594-2432
14	DeKalb ROE 16	245 W. Exchange St., Suite 2	Sycamore	60178	815-895-3096
15	DeWitt/Livingston/McLean ROE 17	905 N. Main St., Suite 1	Normal	61761	309-888-5120
16	DuPage ROE 19	421 County Farm Road	Wheaton	60187	630-407-5800
17	Edwards/Gallatin/Hardin/Pope/Saline/ Wabash/Wayne/White ROE 20	512 N. Main St.	Harrisburg	62946	618-253-5581
18	Franklin/Williamson ROE 21	202 W. Main St.	Benton	62812	618-438-9711
19	Fulton/Schuyler ROE 22	P.O. Box 307	Lewistown	61542	309-547-3041
20	Grundy/Kendall ROE 24	1320 Union St.	Morris	60450	815-941-3247
21	Hamilton/Jefferson ROE 25	1714 Broadway St.	Mt. Vernon	62864	618-244-8040

No.	Name of ESA	Street Address	City	ZIP Code	Telephone No.
22	Hancock/McDonough ROE 26	130 S. Lafayette, Suite 200	Macomb	61455	309-837-4821
23	Henderson/Mercer/Warren ROE 27	200 W. Broadway	Monmouth	61462	309-734-6822
24	Iroquois/Kankakee ROE 32	189 E. Court St.	Kankakee	60901	815-937-2950
25	Jackson/Perry ROE 30	1001 Walnut St.	Murphysboro	62966	618-687-7290
26	Kane ROE 31	210 S. Sixth St.	Geneva	60134	630-232-5955
27	Knox ROE 33	121 S. Prairie St.	Galesburg	61401	309-345-3828
28	Lake ROE 34	800 Lancer Lane, Suite E-128	Grayslake	60030	847-543-7833
29	LaSalle ROE 35	119 W. Madison St.	Ottawa	61350	815-434-0780
30	Lee/Ogle ROE 47	7772 Clinton St. (Grand Detour)	Dixon	61021	815-652-2054
31	Logan/Mason/Menard ROE 38	122 N. McLean	Lincoln	62656	217-732-8388
32	Macon/Piatt ROE 39	1690 Huston Drive	Decatur	62526	217-872-3721
33	Madison ROE 41	157 N. Main St., Suite 438	Edwardsville	62025	618-296-4530
34	Marshall/Putnam/Woodford ROE 43	117 S. Jefferson St.	Washburn	61570	309-248-8212
35	McHenry ROE 44	667 Ware Road	Woodstock	60098	815-334-4475
36	Monroe/Randolph ROE 45	107 E. Mill St.	Waterloo	62298	618-939-5650
37	Peoria ROE 48	324 Main St., Room 401	Peoria	61602	309-672-6906
38	Rock Island ROE 49	3430 Avenue of the Cities	Moline	61265	309-736-1111
39	Sangamon ROE 51	200 S. Ninth St., Room 303	Springfield	62701	217-753-6620
40	St. Clair ROE 50	1000 S. Illinois St.	Belleville	62220	618-825-3900
41	Suburban Cook ROE 14	10110 Gladstone St.	Westchester	60154	708-865-9330
42	Tazewell ROE 53	414 Court St., Suite 104	Pekin	61554	309-477-2290
43	Vermilion ROE 54	200 S. College St.	Danville	61832	217-431-2668
44	Whiteside ROE 55	1001 W. 23rd St.	Sterling	61081	815-625-1495
45	Will ROE 56	702 W. Maple St.	New Lenox	60451	815-740-8360

Indiana

No.	Name of ESA	Street Address	City	ZIP Code	Telephone No.
1	Central Indiana Education Service Center (Region 9)	6321 LaPas Trail	Indianapolis	46268	317-387-7100
2	East Central Educational Service Center (Region 4)	1601 Indiana Ave.	Connersville	47331	765-825-1247
3	Northern Indiana Educational Service Center (Region 7)	56535 Magnetic Drive	Mishawaka	46545	574-254-0111
4	Northwest Indiana Educational Service Center (Region 6)	2939 41st St.	Highland	46322	219-922-0900
5	Region 8 Education Service Center (Region 8)	107 N. Walnut St.	Columbia City	46725	260-244-9000
6	Southern Indiana Education Center (Region 1)	1102 Tree Lane Drive	Jasper	47546	812-482-6641
7	Wabash Valley Education Center (Region 5)	3061 Benton St.	West Lafayette	47906	765-463-1589
8	West Central Indiana Educational Service Center (Region 3)	P.O. Box 21	Greencastle	46135	765-653-2727
9	Wilson Education Service Center (Region 2)	2101 Grace Ave.	Charlestown	47111	812-256-8000

Michigan

No.	Name of ESA	Street Address	City	ZIP Code	Telephone No.
1	Allegan Area ESA	310 Thomas St.	Allegan	49010	269-673-2161
2	Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona ESD	2118 U.S. Highway 23 South	Alpena	49707	989-354-3101
3	Barry ISD	535 W. Woodlawn Ave.	Hastings	49058	269-945-9545
4	Bay-Arenac ISD	4228 Two Mile Road	Bay City	48706	989-686-4410
5	Berrien RESA	711 St. Joseph Ave.	Berrien Springs	49103	269-471-7725
6	Branch ISD	370 Morse St.	Coldwater	49036	517-279-5730
7	Calhoun ISD	17111 G Drive North	Marshall	49068	269-781-5141
8	Char-Em ISD	08568 Mercer Blvd.	Charlevoix	49720	231-547-9947
9	Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Isle ESD	6065 Learning Lane	Indian River	49749	231-238-9394
10	Clare-Gladwin RESD	4041 E. Mannsiding Road	Clare	48617	989-386-3851
11	Clinton County RESA	1013 S. U.S. Highway 27, Suite A	St. Johns	48879	989-224-6831
12	C.O.O.R. ISD	P.O. Box 827	Roscommon	48653	989-275-9555
13	Copper Country ISD	809 Hecla St.	Hancock	49930	906-482-4250
14	Delta-Schoolcraft ISD	2525 Third Ave. South	Escanaba	49829	906-786-9300
15	Dickinson-Iron ISD	1074 Pyle Drive	Kingsford	49802	906-779-2690
16	Eastern Upper Peninsula ISD	315 Armory Place	Sault Sainte Marie	49783	906-632-3373
17	Eaton ISD	1790 E. Packard Highway	Charlotte	48813	517-543-5500
18	Genesee ISD	2413 W. Maple Ave.	Flint	48507	810-591-4400
19	Gogebic-Ontonagon ISD	P.O. Box 218	Bergland	49910	906-575-3438
20	Gratiot-Isabella RESD	1131 E. Center St.	Ithaca	48847	989-875-5101
21	Hillsdale County ISD	310 W. Bacon St.	Hillsdale	49242	517-437-0990
22	Huron ISD	711 E. Soper Road	Bad Axe	48413	989-269-6406
23	Ingham ISD	2630 W. Howell Road	Mason	48854	517-676-1051
24	Ionia County ISD	2191 Harwood Road	Ionia	48846	616-527-4900

No.	Name of ESA	Street Address	City	ZIP Code	Telephone No.
25	IOSCO RESA	27 N. Rempert Road	Tawas City	48763	989-362-3006
26	Jackson County ISD	6700 Browns Lake Road	Jackson	49201	517-768-5200
27	Kalamazoo RESA	1819 E. Milham Road	Kalamazoo	49002	269-385-1500
28	Kent ISD	2930 Knapp St. N.E.	Grand Rapids	49525	616-364-1333
29	Lapeer County ISD	1996 W. Oregon St.	Lapeer	48446	810-664-5917
30	Lenawee ISD	4107 N. Adrian Highway	Adrian	49221	517-265-2119
31	Lewis Cass ISD	61682 Dailey Road	Cassopolis	49031	269-445-3891
32	Livingston ESA	1425 W. Grand River Ave.	Howell	48843	517-546-5550
33	Macomb ISD	44001 Garfield Road	Clinton Township	48038	586-228-3300
34	Manistee ISD	1710 Merkey Road	Manistee	49660	231-723-4264
35	Marquette-Alger RESA	321 E. Ohio St.	Marquette	49855	906-226-5100
36	Mason-Lake ISD	2130 W. U.S. Highway 10	Ludington	49431	231-757-3716
37	Mecosta-Osceola ISD	15760 190th Ave.	Big Rapids	49307	231-796-3543
38	Menominee County ISD	1201 41st Ave.	Menominee	49858	906-863-5665
39	Midland County ESA	3917 Jefferson Ave.	Midland	48640	989-631-5890
40	Monroe County ISD	1101 S. Raisinville Road	Monroe	48161	734-242-5799
41	Montcalm Area ISD	621 New St.	Stanton	48888	989-831-5261
42	Muskegon Area ISD	630 Harvey St.	Muskegon	49442	231-777-2637
43	Newaygo County RESA	4747 W. 48th St.	Fremont	49412	231-924-0381
44	Oakland Schools	2111 Pontiac Lake Road	Waterford	48328	248-209-2000
45	Oceana ISD	844 Griswold St.	Hart	49420	231-873-5651
46	Ottawa Area ISD	13565 Port Sheldon St.	Holland	49424	616-738-8940
47	Saginaw ISD	6235 Gratiot Road	Saginaw	48603	989-399-7473
48	Sanilac ISD	175 E. Aitken Road	Peck	48466	810-648-4700
49	Shiawassee RESD	1025 N. Shiawassee St.	Corunna	48817	989-743-3471
50	St. Clair County RESA	499 Range Road	Marysville	48040	810-364-8990

No.	Name of ESA	Street Address	City	ZIP Code	Telephone No.
51	St. Joseph County ISD	62445 Shimmel Road	Centreville	49032	269-467-5400
52	Traverse Bay Area ISD	P.O. Box 6020	Traverse City	49696	231-922-6200
53	Tuscola ISD	1385 Cleaver Road	Caro	48723	989-673-2144
54	Van Buren ISD	490 S. Paw Paw St.	Lawrence	49064	269-674-8091
55	Washtenaw ISD	1819 S. Wagner Road	Ann Arbor	48106	734-994-8100
56	Wayne RESA	33500 Van Born Road	Wayne	48184	734-334-1300
57	Wexford-Missaukee ISD	9907 E. 13th St.	Cadillac	49601	231-876-2260

Ohio

No.	Name of ESA	Street Address	City	ZIP Code	Telephone No.
1	Allen County	1920 Slabtown Road	Lima	45801	419-222-1836
2	Ashtabula County	1565 State Route 167	Jefferson	44047	440-576-9023
3	Athens-Meigs County	507 Richland Ave., Suite 108	Athens	45701	740-593-8001
4	Auglaize County	1045 Dearbaugh Ave., Suite 2	Wapakoneta	45895	419-738-3422
5	Belmont County	101 N. Market St., Suite C	St. Clairsville	43950	740-695-9773
6	Brown County	325 W. State St.	Georgetown	45121	937-378-6118
7	Butler County	1910 Fairgrove Ave., Suite B	Hamilton	45011	513-887-3710
8	Clark County	25 W. Pleasant St.	Springfield	45504	937-325-7671
9	Clermont County	2400 Clermont Center Dr.	Batavia	45103	513-735-8300
10	Columbiana County	38720 Saltwell Road	Lisbon	44432	330-424-9591
11	Darke County	5279 Education Drive	Greenville	45331	937-548-4915
12	Delaware-Union	4565 Columbus Pike	Delaware	43015	740-548-7880
13	Erie-Huron-Ottawa	2900 Columbus Ave.	Sandusky	44870	419-625-6274
14	ESC of Cuyahoga County	5811 Canal Road	Valley View	44125	216-524-3000
15	ESC of Franklin County	2080 Citygate Drive	Columbus	43219	614-445-3750
16	Fairfield County	955 Liberty Drive	Lancaster	43130	740-653-3193
17	Gallia-Vinton	P.O. Box 178	Rio Grande	45674	740-245-0593
18	Geauga County	470 Center St.	Chardon	44024	440-279-1700
19	Greene County	360 E. Enon Road	Yellow Springs	45387	937-767-1303
20	Hamilton County	11083 Hamilton Ave.	Cincinnati	45231	513-674-4200
21	Hancock County	7746 County Road 140	Findlay	45840	419-422-7525
22	Hardin County	1211 W. Lima St., Suite A	Kenton	43326	419-674-2288
23	Jefferson County	2023 Sunset Blvd.	Steubenville	43952	740-283-3347
24	Knox County	308 Martinsburg Road	Mt. Vernon	43050	740-393-6767

No.	Name of ESA	Street Address	City	ZIP Code	Telephone No.
25	Lake County	30 S. Park Place, Suite 320	Painesville	44077	440-350-2563
26	Lawrence County	111 S. Fourth St., Room 3	Ironton	45638	740-532-4223
27	Licking County	675 Price Road	Newark	43055	740-349-6084
28	Logan County	121 S. Opera St.	Bellefontaine	43311	937-599-5195
29	Lorain County	1885 Lake Ave.	Elyria	44035	440-324-5777
30	Lucas County	2275 Collingwood Blvd.	Toledo	43620	419-245-4150
31	Madison-Champaign	1512 U.S. Highway 68, Suite J100	Urbana	43078	937-484-1557
32	Mahoning County	100 DeBartolo Place, Suite 220	Boardman	44512	330-965-7828
33	Medina County Schools	124 Washington St.	Medina	44256	330-723-6393
34	Mercer County	441 E. Market St.	Celina	45822	419-586-6628
35	Miami County	2000 W. Stanfield Road	Troy	45373	937-339-5100
36	Mid-Ohio	890 W. Fourth St., Suite 100	Mansfield	44906	419-774-5520
37	Montgomery County	200 S. Keowee St.	Dayton	45402	937-225-4598
38	Muskingum Valley	205 N. Seventh St.	Zanesville	43701	740-452-4518
39	North Central Ohio	65 St. Francis Ave.	Tiffin	44883	419-447-2927
40	Northwest Ohio	602 S. Shoop Ave.	Wauseon	43567	419-335-1070
41	Ohio Valley	128 E. Eighth St.	Cambridge	43725	740-439-3558
42	Perry-Hocking	1605 Airport Road	New Lexington	43764	740-342-3502
43	Pickaway	2050 Stoneridge Road	Circleville	43113	740-474-7529
44	Portage County	326 E. Main St.	Ravenna	44266	330-297-1436
45	Preble County	597 Hillcrest Drive	Eaton	45320	937-456-1187
46	Putnam County	124 Putnam Parkway	Ottawa	45875	419-523-5951
47	Ross-Pike	475 Western Ave., Suite E	Chillicothe	45601	740-702-3120
48	Sandusky County	500 W. State St., Suite A	Fremont	43420	419-332-8214
49	Shelby County	129 E. Court St.	Sidney	45365	937-498-1354
50	South Central Ohio	411 Court St., Room 105	Portsmouth	45662	740-354-7761

No.	Name of ESA	Street Address	City	ZIP Code	Telephone No.
51	Southern Ohio	3321 Airborne Road	Wilmington	45177	937-382-6921
52	Stark County	2100 38th St. N.W.	Canton	44709	330-492-8136
53	Summit County	420 Washington Ave, Suite 200	Cuyahoga Falls	44221	330-945-5600
54	Tri-County	741 Winkler Drive	Wooster	44691	330-345-6771
55	Trumbull County	6000 Youngstown Warren Road	Niles	44446	330-505-2800
56	Tuscarawas-Carroll-Harrison	834 E. High Ave.	New Philadelphia	44663	330-308-9939
57	Warren County	320 E. Silver St.	Lebanon	45036	513-695-2900
58	Western Buckeye	202 N. Cherry St.	Paulding	45879	419-399-4711
59	Wood County	1867 N. Research Drive	Bowling Green	43402	419-354-9010

Wisconsin

No.	Name of ESA	Street Address	City	ZIP Code	Telephone No.
1	CESA 1	19601 W. Bluemound Road, Suite 200	Brookfield	53045	262-787-9500
2	CESA 2	448 E. High St.	Milton	53563	608-758-6232
3	CESA 3	1300 Industrial Drive	Fennimore	53809	608-822-3276
4	CESA 4	923 E. Garland St.	West Salem	54669	608-786-4800
5	CESA 5	626 E. Slifer St.	Portage	53901	608-742-8811
6	CESA 6	P.O. Box 2568	Oshkosh	54903	920-233-2372
7	CESA 7	595 Baeten Road	Green Bay	54304	920-492-5960
8	CESA 8	P.O. Box 320	Gillett	54124	920-855-2114
9	CESA 9	304 Kaphaem Road	Tomahawk	54487	715-453-2141
10	CESA 10	725 W. Park Ave.	Chippewa Falls	54729	715-723-0341
11	CESA 11	225 Ostermann Drive	Turtle Lake	54889	715-986-2020
12	CESA 12	618 Beaser Ave.	Ashland	54806	715-682-2363

Appendix D. Acronym List

AESA	Association of Educational Service Agencies
AMC	Area Media Center
AYP	adequate yearly progress
CESA	cooperative educational service agency
CEU	continuing education unit
Ed Techs	Education Technology Corporations
ERSS	educational regional service system
ESA	educational service agency
ESC	educational service center
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act
IARSS	Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools
IDOE	Indiana Department of Education
ISBE	Illinois State Board of Education
ISD	intermediate school district
ITC	Information Technology Center
LEA	local education agency
MAISA	Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators
MDE	Michigan Department of Education
MiBLSi	Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative
MSU	Michigan State University
NCA	North Central Association
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
ODE	Ohio Department of Education
RESA	regional educational service agency
RESPRO	regional service provider
ROE	regional office of education
RSIT	Regional School Improvement Teams
SEA	state education agency
SERRC	Special Education Regional Resource Center
SIFN	School Improvement Facilitators Network
STARS	System To Achieve Results for Schools

