



# **Vermont House Education Committee**

**Education Service Agencies (ESAs)  
History, Governance, Finance & Impact**

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# Purpose of Today's Testimony

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- ◆ Provide neutral, national context on ESAs
- ◆ Share governance and funding models
- ◆ Highlight services and efficiencies
- ◆ Focus on rural sustainability

# What are Education Service Agencies?

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-  Regional shared-service organizations
-  Operate between districts and the state
-  Exist in 44 states - a variety of names

# Why ESAs Were Created

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-  Small and rural districts lack scale
-  Rising complexity and compliance
-  Need for shared expertise

# National ESA Footprint

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- 44 States have ESAs
- Over 500 ESA throughout the USA
- Critical partners in public education

# Governance Models

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-  Superintendent-led boards
-  School board representation
-  Mixed governance models
-  Publicly elected boards

# Voluntary vs Mandatory Participation

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- ❖ Voluntary: fee-for-service
- ❖ Mandatory: baseline equity
- ❖ Many states evolved over time

# How ESAs Are Funded

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-  State-funded baseline
-  Entrepreneurial/Fee-for-service models
-  Blended/hybrid approaches
-  Taxing Authority

# Start-Up & Operating Costs

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-  Leverage existing facilities
-  Shared Staffing
-  Phased service implementation

# Core ESA Services

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- Special Education Supports**
- Professional Development**
- Technology & Cybersecurity**
- Business Services**
- Cooperative Purchasing**

# State Examples

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Wisconsin: \$50M+ health insurance savings



Texas: Statewide professional development & initiatives rollout



Iowa: 20-25% cooperative purchasing savings



Pennsylvania: Regional special education & Compliance

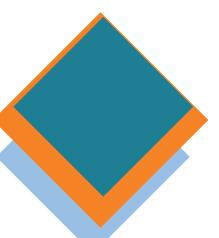
# Rural Sustainability

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-  Shared specialists
-  Lower administrative burden
-  Cost avoidance, not consolidation

# Key Considerations

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-  Governance fit
-  Balanced funding
-  Clear accountability
-  Phased approach

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# AESA

# Thank You!

Join the conversation!

