

# Educational Service Agency Impact: *A Local and National Review*



Testimony to the House Educational Committee

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# Role of Educational Service Agencies

- The core function on an ESA is to offer services and support. This helps SU/SDs access specialized programs and technical assistance that individual districts, especially smaller or rural ones, might not otherwise afford.
- ESA's in other states also serve very large urban districts with their services. Large scale does not mean that expertise and technical assistance is inherent within a district or that efficiency through shared regional resources is not possible.
- **ESAs do not replace the organization of an SU or SD. ESAs supplement not supplant. ESAs address the identified needs of an SU/SD and build collaborative relationships between SU/SDs.**

# Educational Service Agencies Provide:

VOICE:



CHOICE:



# Member Needs Assessment:

Member needs assessments are the “voice” behind the development of regional services.

A combination of a survey, mixed focus groups, and regional meetings brings together quantitative and qualitative data that will drive strategic planning.

[VTLC FY 26 Needs Assessment](#)

## VTLC Spring 2026 Needs Assessment

### **Objectives:**

Gather Stakeholder feedback to inform the agency’s strategic development of services for the upcoming FY 27 - FY 28 fiscal years.

Understand current barriers existing within districts and supervisory unions that are impacting student success.

### **Stakeholders:**

- Member Superintendents
- Member Special Education Directors
- Member Curriculum Directors
- Member Business Managers
- Member HR Directors
- Member IT Directors
- Member Principals

### **Modalities:**

- Survey
  - Add a question about interest in joining a focus group and day/time.
- Virtual focus groups - Mixed groups based on schedule availability.

# Implications for Southeast Regional BOCES (or CESA) Approval:

01 — Broader responsive  
service abilities

02 — Grant opportunities  
and grant  
administration



03 — Cooperative  
purchasing

04 — Greater capacity  
to hire high  
quality staff.

# The Southeast Regional BOCES (CESA)

## Mission



*The mission of the BOCES is to jointly conduct educational services and programs for member supervisory unions in a cost effective manner in order to increase educational opportunities for children ages 3-22 and build the capacity of the staff serving them.*

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# The Southeast Regional BOCES (CESA)

## Purpose



*The purpose of the BOCES is to improve educational access and outcomes for students by providing:*

- *High quality educational and therapeutic programs, evaluations and related services to children with disabilities who are referred by member and non member supervisory unions;*
  - *High quality professional development to educators;*
  - *Staffing services for supervisory union/district staffing needs including hard to find areas of expertise;*
  - *Coordination of resources amongst member supervisory unions in order to provide cost effective goods and/or services.*
  - *Any other lawful purpose authorized by Title 16 Vermont Statutes Annotated, chapter 10; or as determined by the Board of Directors.*
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# Costs associated with creating a CESA

## Initial phase of program development :

- CESA structure, planning and needs assessment
- \$10,000 provided by BOCES grant
- Training and support provided by Vermont Learning Collaborative

## Staffing phase:

- Job description, recruitment, and hiring
- Salary and benefits \$200,000

## Start Up

- Consultation and AESA membership fees \$5000
- Consultation offered by Vermont Learning Collaborative annually
- Possible annual membership fees, to be eliminated once fee for service covers all costs

# 2024 - 2025 VTLC Member Cost Analysis

24 - 25 Services	Cost	Non Member Cost	Member Savings
<i>Professional Development</i>	\$3,225.00	\$5,480.00	\$2,255.00
<i>SLP Services &amp; Assessments</i>	\$5,843.75	\$7,012.50	\$1,168.75
<i>VTLC Contracted SLP</i>	\$105,014.87	\$126,017.84	\$21,002.97
<i>SLP Evaluation</i>	\$1,343.75	\$1,612.50	\$268.75
<i>Psychoeducational Evaluation</i>	\$2,835.00	\$3,402.00	\$567.00
<i>Program Consultation</i>	\$5,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$1,000.00
<i>Mileage</i>	\$1,868.94	\$1,868.94	
<i>Supplies</i>	\$382.06	\$382.06	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$125,513.37</b>	<b>\$151,775.84</b>	<b>\$26,262.47</b>

# Case Study: Professional Development

## Conference Costs outside of BOCES for one day event:

- Conference Fee: *\$325.00*
- Mileage: *\$125 - \$196*
- Hotel: *\$200 - \$400*
- Substitute: *\$150 - \$300*

Total Costs: *\$800 - \$1221*

## BOCES Professional Development one day event:

- Conference Fee: *\$260.00*
- Mileage: *\$0 - \$40*
- Hotel: *\$0*
- Substitute: *\$150*

Total Costs: *\$450*

**Savings: 44% - 63%**

# Case Study: Evaluation Services

## Evaluation Services by a private clinic:

- Academic Evaluation: *(\$200/hr) \$2,000 - \$2,500*
- Autism Evaluation: *\$5,600 - \$7,600*
- Psychoeducational: *(\$200/hr) \$2,500 - \$3,000*
- SLP Evaluation: *(\$165/hr) \$1782*
- Transportation/Mileage: *\$150/hr plus mileage*

## BOCES Evaluation Services:

- Academic Evaluation: *(\$85/\$135) \$850 - \$1,350*
- Autism Evaluation: *\$3,400*
- Psychoeducational: *(\$135/\$175) \$1,600 - \$2,000*
- SLP Evaluation: *(\$125/hr) \$1350.00*
- Transportation/Mileage: *mileage only*

**Savings: 42%**  
**average**



# What we CAN do.

Kentucky Educational Cooperatives and Service Agencies provide a wide range of support and services to school districts, educators, and students. Here's a list of what we **can do**:



## Professional Development & Training

- Offer workshops, training, continuing education, instructional coaching, mentoring and certification programs for teachers, administrators, and support staff.
- Conduct leadership training for school administrators.
- Assist with curriculum development and alignment to Kentucky Academic Standards.
- Offer resources for personalized and competency-based learning.
- Support career and technical education (CTE) programs.



## Special Education Services

- Provide consultation and resources for students with disabilities.
- Offer professional development for special education teachers and staff.
- Assist in compliance with state and federal special education regulations.
- Facilitate Individualized Education Program (IEP) support.



## Technology & Digital Learning Support

- Provide access to technology tools and resources for digital learning.
- Offer training on integrating technology in the classroom.
- Support districts with cybersecurity and IT infrastructure.
- Facilitate virtual learning opportunities.



## Assessment & Data Analysis

- Assist districts with student assessments and data interpretation.
- Provide guidance on data-driven decision-making.
- Support the use of assessment tools for student progress monitoring.



## Cooperative Purchasing & Financial Services

- Facilitate cooperative purchasing for school supplies, technology, and services.
- Offer financial and grant management support.
- Assist with budget planning and fiscal responsibility.



## Fiscal & Legal Accountability

- District Laws
- Board of Superintendents
- Open Records

*Proudly Serving*



81

Kentucky School Districts



597

Kentucky Schools



368,932

Kentucky Students



21,725

Kentucky Teachers



21

States



[www.kedc.org](http://www.kedc.org)

# OHIO'S EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTERS 2024



Ohio's  
51 ESC's  
serve



1.7 million  
students



240,000+  
educators

All data from Ohio Department of Education & Workforce, 2024

ESCs have provided  
**\$2.38 billion**  
in services to Ohio  
schools.

ESCs have saved  
Ohio schools almost  
**\$100 million**  
this year (as compared  
to the cost of purchasing  
or developing services  
themselves).

**All 51 ESCs**  
received the High  
Performing ESC  
designation from the  
Ohio Department of  
Education & Workforce.

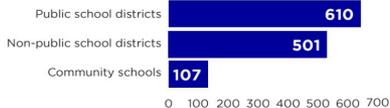
For every \$1 in  
state subsidy

ESCs secured **\$6.97** in  
federal, state and local  
grants for schools.

For every \$1  
in State &  
local funds

ESCs provided **\$9-\$14** in  
cost savings and funding  
to school districts.

ESCs serve



ESCs **employed 14,785 personnel** statewide, most of  
them working directly in schools.



of ESC expenditures were  
direct services to Ohio  
schools.



EFFICIENT. EFFECTIVE. ESCS.



# ESC Impact: ROI



Each year Ohio's ESCs are required to compare the cost of their services to those of third-party providers and/or client districts providing the services themselves. Initially, to retain the \$26 per pupil state operating subsidy, ESCs were required to demonstrate a minimum of 5% cost savings across 5 service areas. This is only 5 out of the more than 85 identified service areas ESCs provide. Today, the high-performing ESC designation provides information about the efficacy of the ESC system and is one of 3 conditions required for ESC services to be exempt from competitive selection under state/federal procurement laws.

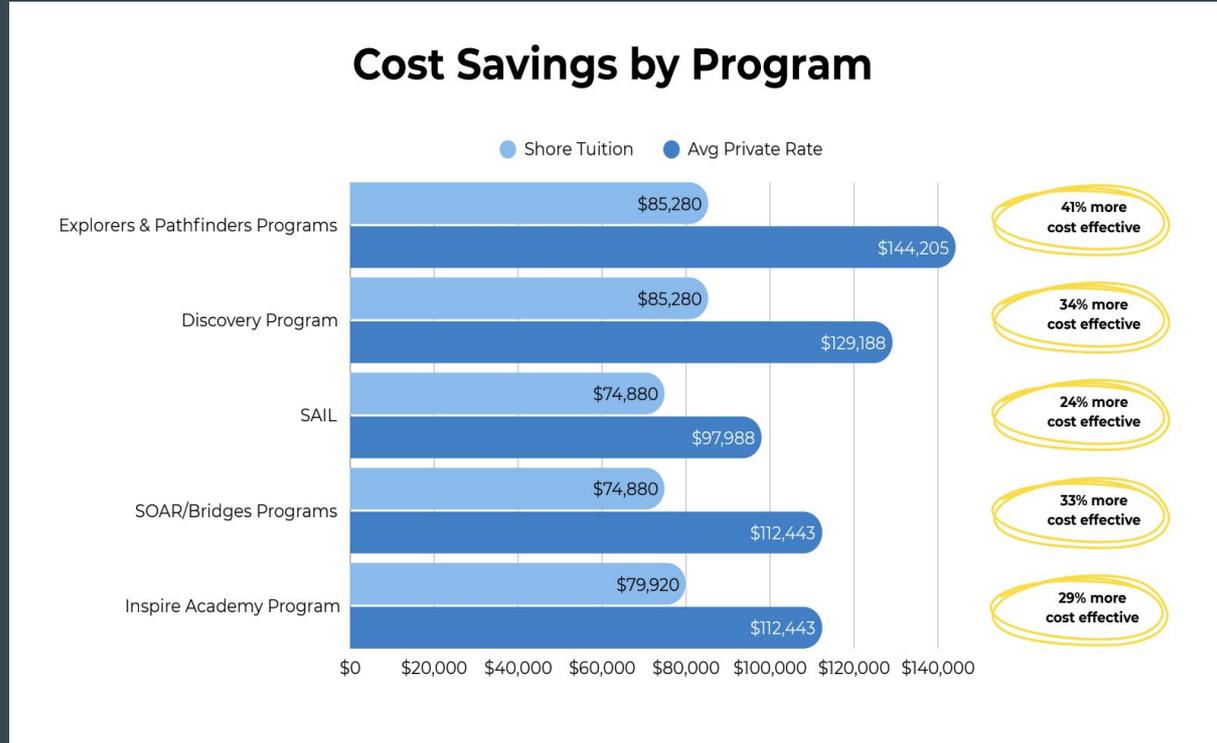
	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	9-year Average	Total Savings
# of High Performing ESCs	52	52	52	52	51*	51	51	51	51		
Avg. % Cost Savings	32.57%	35.14%	33.74%	36.96%	33.74%	37.79%	37.20%	40.49%	39.32%	35.95%	
Total Cost Savings (5 areas only)	\$54,146,789	\$64,907,480	\$63,901,047	\$81,913,080	\$78,940,115	\$75,345,360	\$77,678,411	\$90,763,269	\$100,039,905	\$76,403,940	\$687,635,457

In 2024 ESCs reported \$100.039 Million in savings. Additionally, ESCs identified, pursued and procured \$317.34 Million in grants for their client districts. Total leverage dollars were \$417.388 Million. Meaning that ***for every \$1 in state operating subsidy, ESCs generated \$8.83 cents in cost savings and outside grants in return.***

# Massachusetts: Shore Collaborative

Annually, Massachusetts Collaboratives publicly report and submit to the Department of Education a summary of their progress towards their stated agency goals and their cost savings to their members.

This data is sourced from Shore Collaborative's 2024 - 2025 Annual Report. This graphic demonstrates the annual tuition for Shore's specialized programs compared to other similar private programs in the state.



# Massachusetts: South Shore Collaborative

The South Shore Educational Collaborative sponsors advanced energy purchasing through an RFP bid process for natural gas and electricity.

Several south shore towns have participated in this joint purchasing program. The data collected provides significant savings.

The electricity and gas bids result in significant savings to the participants when comparing the open market price to the 24-month bid price of the contracts. The approximate savings for each participant are listed.

<b>GAS</b>	<b>Savings</b>	<b>ELECTRIC</b>	<b>Savings</b>
Plymouth Public Schools	\$122,672	Plymouth Public Schools	\$180,630
Town of Plymouth	\$67,679	Town of Plymouth	\$154,867
Cohasset PS	\$68,926	Cohasset PS	\$38,606
Cohasset Town	\$11,739	Cohasset Town	\$82,332
Scituate schools	\$90,388	Scituate Schools	\$49,793
Norwell schools	\$19,425	Norwell schools	\$38,019
Hull	\$24,985	Hull	\$0
<b>SSEC</b>	<b><u>\$798</u></b>	<b>SSEC</b>	<b><u>\$0</u></b>
<b>Total gas Savings</b>	<b>\$406,616</b>	<b>Total electric saving</b>	<b>\$544,247</b>



## The Value of Education Service Agencies (ESAs)

*How ESAs Help School Districts Operate More Efficiently and Effectively*

Across the United States, Education Service Agencies (ESAs) are called different names such as ESCs, ESDs, AEAs, ESUs, Intermediate Units, and Cooperatives. What they do is similar in that they serve as the shared services infrastructure for public education. Their purpose is consistent nationwide: help districts stretch limited resources, strengthen instruction, and successfully implement state priorities.

### Driving Efficiency: Doing More with Fewer Dollars

- Provide shared services for Business Managers, HR, technology, purchasing, compliance, and legal support.
- Offer cooperative purchasing and regional contracts that reduce costs through economies of scale.
- Deploy shared specialists (special education, technology, cybersecurity, curriculum, and behavior supports).
- Support grant development and management, bringing external dollars directly into districts.

Example: Ohio's ESC network documented over \$417 million in combined cost savings and external grants in one year, returning \$8.83 for every \$1 of state operating subsidy. Texas ESCs also provide a similar study to show savings for school districts on a biennial basis.

[Article Link](#)

*“Bottom Line: Education Service Agencies are the infrastructure that allows school systems to operate efficiently, deliver high-quality services, and ensure students—regardless of ZIP code—receive strong educational support.”*

~ John Bass, Senior Advisor  
The Association for Educational Service Agencies

*Thank you for the opportunity to share the impact of educational service agency models within the state of Vermont and nationally.*

*ESA's are a viable, scalable model and one component to support the advancement of Act 73.*

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