

## ESC'S, DEFINED IN BOTH STATE AND FEDERAL LAW AS SCHOOL DISTRICTS, ARE PUBLIC EDUCATION AGENCIES

ESCs are grounded in state and federal law. ESCs are defined as school districts under section 3311.05 of the Ohio Revised Code and, in federal statute, are defined in the Higher Education Act (HEA), Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as such, "(A) -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. (D) The term includes educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies."



## ESC FUNDING: A RETURN ON THE STATE'S INVESTMENT

As public agencies, ESCs receive some state funding to support operations. Despite their public and not-for-profit status, ESCs are unable to generate funds through taxation. Each ESC depends on revenues from contracted delivery of services to districts or competition for public dollars and/or grant funds as their primary source of revenue. On average, 23.51% of an ESC's funding is provided by the state, 8.75% federal, 3.13% other, and 64.61% is generated through fee-for-service contracts with customer school districts.

State funding for ESCs provides an important foundation for ESC programs and services to kids across the state of Ohio regardless of where they live and go to school. For every \$1 provided by the state of Ohio, ESCs produce approximately \$26 in programs and services to school districts, teachers, and students across the state. Over 270,000 students many of whom are special needs and at-risk youth receive direct services from ESCs. ESCs also host over 10,000 different professional development activities attended by more than 240,000 total attendees each year.

Without sufficient funding, the ability for ESCs to continue to provide this tremendous return on investment will be significantly compromised; the excess costs to districts for providing these services to school children and the professionals that serve them will increase.

## ABOUT OESCA

The Ohio Educational Service Center Association (OESCA) is the statewide organization representing the more than 13,000 administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals and other full- and part-time personnel employed by Ohio's 57 Educational Service Centers (ESCs).

OESCA is committed to working in cooperation with school districts, allied educational organizations, state and local policy makers, and other stakeholders to promote and support educational reform efforts that provide for an efficient, effective and quality system of education that is fiscally and academically accountable and which prepares all students to achieve high levels of academic success.

OHIO'S  
EDUCATIONAL  
SERVICE  
CENTERS ARE

MAKING A  
*Difference*

OESCA  
OHIO EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER ASSOCIATION  
OHIO'S VITAL LEARNING LINK SINCE 1914

## ABOUT OHIO'S EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTERS

Educational Service Centers (ESCs) have been making a difference in Ohio's schools for the past 95 years.

ESCs were established in 1914 through an act of the Ohio General Assembly. The law created 88 "County School Districts" and charged them with the task of "elevating the state's system of education to a proper standard." This effort entailed county office staff members drafting courses of study for school systems, providing in-service training for teachers and assuring quality classroom instruction through supervision and evaluation.



## SERVICE IS OUR PURPOSE: AN EVOLUTION

The role of the county offices of education evolved and expanded over the next several decades. In the 1930's, they began assisting districts with fiscal and purchasing services; later in the 1960's, their responsibilities expanded again as they began operating special education programs and increased professional development and technical assistance for schools.

In 1995, Am. Sub. H.B. 117 changed the role of the "County School Districts" by redefining their responsibilities, and renaming them "Educational Service Centers" - a statutory name change intended to reflect the evolving nature of ESC programs and services. The law also encouraged county offices to merge into regional agencies.

## INCREASED CUSTOMER CHOICE: THE EVOLUTION CONTINUES

In June 2003, Am. Sub. H.B. 95 granted local school districts greater choice in selection of ESCs. Districts were granted the ability to sever their districts from the territory of an existing ESC and annex to the territory of another adjacent ESC. *Granting districts greater choice in ESCs, and allowing the ESC's funds to transfer with the districts, insures the ultimate accountability – customer satisfaction, supervision and evaluation.*

## A VITAL COMPONENT OF OHIO'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

ESCs are a vital and necessary component of Ohio's educational system. Am. Sub. H.B. 115 of the 127th General Assembly created the Ohio Educational Regional Service System and positioned ESCs to serve as the conduit and delivery system for Ohio's statewide school improvement and education reform efforts. Under the new law, ESCs must implement state or federally funded initiatives assigned to the service centers by the General Assembly or the Ohio Department of Education.

## UNIQUE ESC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Ohio's ESCs provide a broad range of tailored services to meet the unique needs and priorities of their customer school districts. A snapshot of some of these customized services provided by ESCs in Ohio follows:

- School Safety and Crisis Planning
- Extended School Year Programs
- Professional Learning Communities
- Alternative Teacher Licensure for Foreign Languages
- Behavior Intervention and Mental Health Services
- Juvenile Court Liaisons
- Educational Services to Juvenile Detention Centers and DYS Facilities
- Summer and After School Enrichment Programs
- School Nursing Programs
- Social Work Services
- Substitute Teacher and Substitute Aid Recruiting and Licensure
- Adult Basic Education Programs
- And much, much more



## QUALITY, PROXIMITY, CAPACITY, ACCESSIBILITY: HALLMARKS OF ESC SUCCESS

Ohio's ESCs are geographically distributed across the state and serve the schools in their respective areas. ESCs have a unique understanding of the strengths and needs of their districts and use these insights to positively impact and improve instruction and student achievement outcomes.

- Ohio's ESCs employ over 13,100 individuals (approx. 8,300 are full-time employees)
- 90% of ESC personnel are in the buildings and districts every day providing services to students, teachers and other district personnel at the classroom and building level.
- During the 2007-2008 school year ESCs hosted 10,475 different professional development activities attended by 242,853 total attendees.

ESCs utilized this capacity to deliver the following programs and services to 95% of Ohio's 614 public school districts in the 2007-2008 academic year:



### Special Education Services

- 43 ESCs operate classroom cooperatives for students with emotional disabilities
- 44 operate classroom cooperatives for students with multiple disabilities
- 40 run programs and services for students with autism spectrum disorders
- 53 operate preschool special education programs
- 46 employ occupational and physical therapists
- 52 provide school psychology services

### Student Programs

- 53 ESCs operate gifted and talented programs
- 41 operate public preschools

- 16 operate Head Start programs
- 50 operate Alternative Schools
- 37 coordinate Dual Credit programs in partnership with districts, higher education and the state

### Cooperative Endeavors

- 36 ESCs have established insurance consortia on behalf of their districts
- 16 operate cooperative purchasing consortia
- 52 ESCs employ teachers, administrators and paraprofessionals in cooperation with school districts
- 36 administer state grants and federal title programs on behalf of school districts

### High Quality Professional Development

- 33 ESCs provided professional development services in the area of 21st Century Skills
- 50 conducted leadership development seminars and services
- 54 provided school improvement related professional development
- 54 provided professional development in Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

### Implementation of Federal and State Regulations

- 53 ESCs provide Bus Driver Certification and Physicals
- 7 operate the state's 7 school bus driver training programs
- 54 assist districts and the state with teacher licensure
- 55 conducted FBI and BCI Background Checks
- 54 oversee homeschooling in their respective regions
- 45 provide school attendance officers and related services
- 53 provide Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Training

### Community Partnerships

- 29 ESCs are members of and participate in Regional P-16 Councils
- 53 are members of Family and Children First Councils
- 36 Operate and/or serve on Business Advisory Councils
- 32 actively participate in Workforce Development Boards
- 33 are involved in Community Foundations
- 57 are members of the Regional Advisory Councils (RACs) of the Educational Regional Service System (ERSS)

## ELECTED ESC BOARDS ENSURE PROPER PUBLIC OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Keeping with the tradition of maintaining local control of public schools, ESCs operate under the oversight of a locally-elected Governing Board. The day-to-day operations of ESCs are conducted through ESC superintendents, treasurers and other administrators.